



Meeting County Council

Date 28 June 2007 agenda item number

REPORT OF THE LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCE

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN 2007-08

Purpose of Report

1. To seek full Council's approval and adoption of the Annual Performance Plan including plans for improvement over the next year.

Background

2. Under the Local Government Act 1999, local authorities are required to produce a Best Value Performance Plan summarising the Council's strategic objectives and priorities for improvement and detailing performance against Best Value Performance Indicators. However, since the introduction of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment the statutory requirements for high performing councils are reduced compared to poorer performing councils.
3. Though as a Four Star authority the minimum reporting requirement relates to performance and targets against Best Value Performance indicators, there is a clear expectation in the guidance that these Councils will be publishing their annual plans and the performance information is seen as an adjunct to that. This is the approach that has been taken this year.
4. Senior Management Board (5 June 2007) and Cabinet (6 June 2007) have been consulted on the content of this year's plan.

Structure of the Plan

5. The Annual Performance Plan this year seeks to perform a number of functions:
 - It looks back and reports on our performance and progress with development and improvement work last year (2006-07)
 - It looks forward, setting out our plans for this year (2007-08), describing the developments and improvements for each service area and spelling out the improvement plans for the Authority
 - It sets out the targets for the County Council Strategic Plan and for the best value performance measures set by Government for the next three years (2007-8 to 2009-10).

6. The Plan follows the structure of the County Council's Strategic Plan "All together better" which was adopted in 2006. This Plan contains five themes and for each of these themes the County Council have adopted a number of specific commitments.

Overall Performance

7. In 2006 the County Council again retained the top four star status as judged by the Audit Commission's comprehensive performance assessment. Across all services the Council was judged to be consistently good achieving scores of at least 3 out of 4. Use of Resources was also consistently good with scores of three in all categories. The Council also retained its Improving Well judgment for its Direction of Travel. These achievements take on even more significant when looked at in the context of a year of major restructuring for the Council.
8. The Direction of Travel assessment stated that the Council has made good progress in improving services. It specifically commented that:
 - The number of pupils getting five GCSEs at grade C or better improved faster than the national average halting last year's decline
 - The sustained focus on adult social care has led to improved efficiency and better value for money
 - The council exceeded its recycling target
 - The quality of the A road network improved with fewer people killed or seriously injured on county roads
 - More elderly people were supported to live in their own home
 - The council adopted a new corporate plan with clear ambitions linked to the community strategy and funded through the medium term financial plan
 - Restructuring has led to efficiency savings, whilst working with partners has also produced results.
9. The Direction of Travel statement also indicates some areas where the Council needs to improve:
 - Sickness absence remains high and continues to affect capacity and value for money
 - Data quality is in need of improvement in some areas and this reduces the effectiveness of otherwise robust performance management arrangements
10. In relation to the Strategic Plan, 73% of our performance targets across all strategic themes were met or exceeded. The best performing themes were Cleaner & Greener and Safer & Stronger. The theme with the least measures on or above target was Learning and Earning.
11. Three quarters of our Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) improved between 2005-06 and 2006-07. 58% of these were on or above target compared to only 48% last year. Notable improvements include the reduction in waste sent to landfill where the Council has moved from one of the worst authorities (bottom quartile) to one of the best (top quartile).
12. In 2006-07 the triennial Best Value User Satisfaction Survey was undertaken. Overall satisfaction with the Council was at a similar level to the previous

survey three years ago but fell below the average for County Councils. Satisfaction with specific services scored more highly and satisfaction with bus services was the highest in the Country. The survey also asked about residents' attitude to the area in which they live. 84% were satisfied with the area in which they live and 68% felt that people from different backgrounds got on well together.

Future challenges

13. The Council will continue to operate in a rapidly changing environment and will need to continue to develop while maintaining high levels of service delivery. The Local government White Paper "Strong and Prosperous Communities" proposes significant developments for local authorities to respond to. Future challenges include:

- A Corporate Assessment of the Council to be conducted by the Audit Commission along with a Joint Area Review of Children's Services in May 2008
- The negotiation of a new Local Area Agreement between the Nottinghamshire Partnership and Government with just 35 negotiated and 18 mandatory targets to be in place by April 2008
- Replacement of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment national performance management system with Comprehensive Area Assessment which will focus on the effectiveness of public organisations working in partnership to meet the needs of their local community.

Annual Improvement Programmes

14. Each year's Annual Performance Plan contains a plan for organisational development and improvement. As last year, the Plan is set in the context of the four improvements priorities for "The way we work" contained in the Strategic Plan. This year the Council has adopted a new approach to corporate management reflecting the new organisational structure. Five strategic programmes have been developed to take forward key organisational priorities through specific programmes. The programmes, their linkage to the Strategic Plan and the projects included in them are listed in the table below:

Strategic Plan improvement priority	Improvement Programmes	Improvement Projects
Being civic leaders and good partners	Community Strategy	Sustainable Community Strategy
		Local Area Agreement
		Nottinghamshire Partnership
		Localities
		Service & Budget Devolution
		The 'Regional' Project
		Community Engagement Strategy
		Community Cohesion Strategy

	Member Support	Effective Scrutiny
		SMB & Cabinet Leadership
		Frontline Councillor
		Member Training and Development
		Constitutional Review
Being responsive	Access & Communications	Communicating with the public
		Notts Connect
		Customer First
		Customer Insight
Designing the future	Service Development	Every Child Matters
		Our health, our care, our say
		Building schools for the future
Working effectively	Resources	Policy Options Reviews
		Sickness Absence
		Pay Strategy (Phase II)
		Performance Initiatives
		Equality Mark Assessment
		Risk Assessment
		Shared Services

Statutory and Policy Implications

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, personnel, crime and disorder and those using the service. Where such implications are material, they have been described in the text of the report.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Full Council approve and adopt the Annual Performance Plan 2007-08.

COUNCILLOR DAVID KIRKHAM
Leader of the County Council

COUNCILLOR JOHN STOCK
Cabinet Member for People and Performance

Director of Resources' Financial Comments

The anticipated cost of producing and distributing this Annual Performance Plan is £12,000 (including design, print and materials). This cost will be contained within the budget for Performance within the Chief Executive's Department. [NS 17/05/07]

Legal Services Comments

None.

Background Papers Available for Inspection

None

Electoral Divisions Affected All