

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT
(Report by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panels for Social Well-Being, Economic Well-Being and Environmental Well-Being have considered a report by the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships on the Council's performance against its priority objectives. This report sets out the Panels' views on the performance levels achieved.

2. COMMENTS

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panels have endorsed the comments of the Corporate Plan Working Group, which are reflected in the following paragraphs.

Social Well-Being

- 2.2 The Social Well-Being Panel's attention has been drawn to the "number of admissions/participants in activities provided or promoted by the Council". Given the Council's investments in its Leisure Centres, Members expect the figures should show an increase in attendances. Members have noted that this increase has been factored into the target and that the downward direction of travel can partially be attributed to the fact that, owing to poor weather during November and December, the Council has been forced to cancel some activities at the St Ives Outdoor Centre. It has not necessarily been the case that there has been a fall in uptake of One Leisure services. Members have been made aware that there have been instances when One Leisure has struggled to cope with demand; however, this matter is currently being addressed by One Leisure.
- 2.3 Members have noted the figures achieved for households living in temporary accommodation. Although the target has not been reached, a considerable improvement has been made compared with the figure for the last quarter, and performance is now rated as amber.
- 2.4 The Panel has been informed of the reasons why the target relating to affordable housing (commitments) on qualifying sites is rated as red. In so doing, Members have queried whether, given the patterns of building employed by developers when constructing sites, the target figure of 40% is too high. Members have also noted that owing to a change in the way information is collected, a combined figure has been reported for the targets for housing completions on qualifying sites that are affordable in market towns, key settlements and smaller settlements.

Environmental Well-Being

- 2.5 The Environmental Well-Being Panel has noted that all the targets relating to the Council's priorities in this section of the report have been achieved or exceeded and there had been no adverse directions of travel. Members have

been pleased to note that the target for energy efficiency and renewable energy measures carried out as a result of Council schemes and promotions has been exceeded by a considerable margin.

- 2.6 With regard to the focus on the low carbon agenda in Leisure Centres, the Panel has noted that there is some uncertainty over available funding for energy saving measures which will deliver only long term savings. However Environmental Management is working actively with the Leisure Division and a suite of proposals will be available in due course

Economic Well-Being

- 2.7 The Economic Well-Being Panel has noted that the Council's performance against some of the targets that fall in its remit is amber. Members are of the view that this is to be expected as the financial constraints on the Council take effect. Moreover, from a theoretical perspective, it is not necessarily desirable continually to exceed targets by a significant margin as this may indicate that too much resource might have been dedicated to their achievement. Occasional amber performance suggests that resource allocation has been appropriate. Members will monitor performance for instances when targets are not being achieved by a significant margin for prolonged periods
- 2.8 The Panel has been acquainted with the fact that the Council's average sickness levels of 6.6 days in a rolling 12 month period compare favourably with the situation nationally in the public sector (9.6 days) and the private sector (6.7 days). In order fully to understand the underlying trends, Members have requested the figures at various percentiles. On a similar subject, they have commented that monitoring should be undertaken of the impact of the ongoing process to reduce employee numbers on those employees that remain.
- 2.9 The Panel has drawn attention to an inconsistency in the figures reported for the Leisure Centres income and expenditure compared with those recently reported at a meeting of the Leisure Centres Working Group. It has also been suggested that the Council should adopt a more rigorous approach to the identification and management of risks that might affect the Council's ability to achieve its priorities.
- 2.10 The Panel has also noted that a review of the Council's partnership working is currently being undertaken.
- 2.11 With regard to the figures for actual performance against the target for internal promotions as a percentage of all vacancies filled, the Panel has acknowledged that this may in part be a consequence of Officers' desire to secure their future employment during the period when voluntary release was available.
- 2.12 As a result of questions raised at a previous meeting in relation to the way in which the measure for the percentage of employees who are still in post after twelve months is recorded, the Panel has noted that it would not be appropriate to discount those on fixed term contracts that expire during the reporting period. The current approach enables trends to be monitored and it is anticipated that the Council's short-term practice of preferring fixed term contracts will shortly end.

- 2.13 The Panel has also agreed that the One Leisure Working Group should be asked to examine the impact on One Leisure of the County Council's decision to devolve budgets for swimming to schools.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 All three Overview and Scrutiny Panels have reviewed the performance levels that the Council has achieved in the period to 31st December 2010. The Cabinet is invited to consider the Panels' comments as part of its deliberations on the report by the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Corporate Plan Working Group Notes of the meeting held on 17th February 2011.

Minutes and Reports of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) on 1st March 2011, Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) on 8th March 2011 and Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) on 10th March 2011.

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