
Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being)

**Report of the meetings held on 2nd June and 7th July
2015.**

Matters for Information

**1. CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT
(Q4)**

In conjunction with the Panels for Economic and Environmental Well-Being, the Panel has received an update on progress achieved against the Key Activities and Corporate Indicators identified in the Council's Corporate Plan 2014/2015 for the period 1st January to 31st March 2015.

The Panel has been informed that the Key Actions and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are set in the Corporate Plan and remain relatively unchanged throughout the year, allowing Members to clearly see progress that is made on a consistent basis. The only exception would occur if the Corporate Plan is altered; in that case, some KPIs and Key Actions may be changed. The Panel has also been advised that the report for Quarter 4 may also be viewed as an end of year report.

The Corporate Team Manager has explained the colour-coding system used for the Summary included in Appendix A. This is used throughout the Appendices to show progress made in a simple and clear manner. The tables included in Appendix B depict the Status, Definition, Date, Portfolio Holder and the Heads of Service for each Key Action and provide a progress update. Narrative within the report provides more detailed information on progress and the KPIs are also marked with the Red, Amber and Green colour-coding system.

In response to a query regarding the colour-coding system, whether the criteria against which performance is monitored are consistent and what such criteria are measured against, the Corporate Team Manager has explained that the Key Actions act as a narrative and are more subjective than the KPIs, which are clear and fixed goals.

The Panel has queried whether targets relating to the support the District Council provides to parish councils when preparing Local Plans are realistic. The Head of Community has informed the Panel that the support provided by the District Council for Local Plans is engaged on request from the parishes themselves and that the targets are achievable.

The Panel has been informed that the measure relating to whether food establishments within the district are "broadly compliant" with food hygiene law is the percentage of all food establishments in

Huntingdonshire. The Head of Community has undertaken to make the report clearer in relation to this measure.

2. CUSTOMER SERVICE MONITORING REPORT

The Panel has received information on the performance and activities of the Customer Services Team over the period October 2014 to March 2015. The report now includes details of the Council's website and its re-development. The Panel has been informed that the report is a legacy report, questioning whether current policies and practices are fit for purpose as in the future senior officers will be asked to do more with less resources.

Further background information on the report has been presented to the Panel and has also highlighted issues such as recruitment and problems faced when more experienced staff leave the Council.

The Chairman of the Panel has suggested that it would be useful for such information to be presented to the Panel annually and the Panel has requested an update on the development on the new Council website and the proposed Autumn relaunch early in 2016.

3. CUSTOMER SERVICE STRATEGY 2015 - 2018

A revised Customer Service Strategy has been considered by the Panel. The report is a key corporate document, currently under review, which establishes how customer service will be delivered across the Council.

A summary 'on a page' document of the Customer Service Strategy has been presented to the Panel prior to a final version of the Strategy being presented to Members later in 2015.

Members have been informed that the Customer Service Strategy addresses the whole Council rather than the Customer Service Department alone and it is intended that the information included is clear and useful. The new Strategy is being constructed by revisiting the Corporate Plan, the Code of Conduct and development within the Council, including savings that need to be achieved.

4. PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS INCLUDING FACING THE FUTURE

In conjunction with the Panels for Economic and Environmental Well-Being, the Panel has received an update on changes to the way that projects are managed within the Council.

All existing projects have now been categorised by strategic priority and allocated to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

The Programme and Projects Team has developed a Pre-Initiation Process Map, which concentrates on the early stages of projects, detailing the steps taken in order to initiate new projects.

A pre-project proposition form must now be completed, reviewed and approved before any financial or other resource requirements can be committed to take new ideas forward.

5. CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES UPDATE

The Panel has received an update on the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). Mr L Miller, Senior Programme Manager for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group, presented an outline of the challenges faced by the service and has described progress to date and longer term plans for improvement.

The Panel has been informed that the key points to the report were as follows -

- Waiting times in specialist CAMHS are too long, with some cases waiting for over 52 weeks;
- Waiting lists have been temporarily closed for Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) referrals where there are no associated Mental Health needs; and
- CAMHS Emergency assessments in Emergency Department settings have increased threefold in recent years.

Additional resources equivalent to an 11% increase in funding have been invested into the service for 2015/16, aimed at clearing the waiting list backlog and sustaining this. However, urgent redesign work is required across the whole pathway for Emotional Health and Wellbeing and proposed improvement actions include redesigning the pathway as soon as possible. This will involve services currently commissioned by the CCG and Local Authority commissioned services. The CCG has agreed to employ a Project Lead (currently being advertised) to enable this redesign work to take place quickly and effectively.

The Panel has requested progress reports from CAMHS be presented to future meetings of the Panel.

6. BENEFITS RISK BASED VERIFICATION POLICY

(The following item was considered as a confidential item under Paragraph 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972)

The Panel has reviewed the Benefits Risk Based Verification Policy. Members have been informed that the risk-based approach is currently used for new claims of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support and the proposed extension of the scheme would see this applied to changes of circumstances as well.

The Benefits Manager has advised the Panel of the key points of the report including -

- details of new claims being processed using the Risk Based Verification (RBV) Policy since 2013;
- the RBV has been a great success with a majority of claims made low risk and the performance of the Benefit Team has increased dramatically;
- that correct information protects claims and ensures that new claims are accurate; and
- a need to focus RBV on changes to circumstances which will also increase accuracy for claims.

The Panel has commented on the clarity of the report and has been informed that the specialist software used for RBV determines whether a claim is a low, medium or high risk case using previous statistics and the claim form itself.

Additional funding from the Department for Work and Pensions has been received which will assist with any further software costs to set up RBV for changes of circumstances, however these costs will be minimal due to the initial outlay when the software was first purchased.

Other Matters of Interest

7. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel has been acquainted with the contents of the Notices of Key Executive Decisions which have been prepared by the Executive Leader.

8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SOCIAL WELL-BEING) – PROGRESS

The Panel has reviewed its programme of studies at each of its meetings. In doing so, the Panel has noted the expected timescales for the current Operations Review and it has been noted that the Review is anticipated to be completed during Autumn 2015.

9. WORKPLAN STUDIES

The Panel has received details of the studies being undertaken by the other Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

10. SCRUTINY

The Panel has considered the latest editions of the Decision Digest and discussed matters contained therein.

S J Criswell
Chairman