

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CABINET

Date of Meeting: 22 December 2009
Report of: Head of Policy and Performance
Subject/Title: Mid Year Performance
Portfolio Holder: Councillor David Brown

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet Members with an overview of 2009 – 2010 mid year performance for Cheshire East Council.

The report highlights areas of good performance whilst also indicating areas where performance is currently below targeted levels. In the areas where performance improvement is required, the report also illustrates the nature of the remedial action that is being taken.

2.0 Decision Requested

Cabinet are requested to;

- 2.1 Note the overview of performance detailed and consider issues raised in the report in relation to potential underperformance against targets and how these will be addressed.
- 2.2 Note the need to further develop local performance targets identified by the Audit Commission in the Council's provisional Organisational Assessment.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To ensure that the Cabinet has a clear view of performance across the Council and the local area and that issues of underperformance are addressed, particularly in respect of targets included in the Local Area Agreement. Cabinet also needs to make sure that the National Indicator Set is appropriately performance managed through the setting of local targets against which performance can be developed and assessed.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 All

6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change - Health

6.1 Performance management supports delivery of all key Council policies including climate change and health.

7.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

7.1 None

8.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

8.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report.

9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

9.1 The Council is required to report to Government on its performance against measures in the National indicator Set.

10.0 Risk Management

10.1 Services are required to carry out risk assessments as part of their performance planning.

11.0 Background and Options

The local government performance framework

11.1 A new performance framework for Local Government was introduced in April 2008. It comprises some 190 indicators, including ten statutory education indicators. New statutory arrangements for Local Area Agreements (LAAS) were introduced at the same time and LAAs were agreed for the County Council and each District. These were modified in April 2009 to reflect the new unitary structures.

11.2 The performance framework for Local Authorities and Local Authority partnerships focuses on outcomes delivered through partnership working. The full set of national indicators is reported for every Local Strategic Partnership. Through the LAA, each Local Strategic Partnership sets up to

thirty-five targets against indicators from the national set, plus statutory education targets which are negotiated with Government and which form the basis of a performance agreement. Targets are set to deliver locally identified and agreed priorities. Cheshire East LSP has agreed thirty-four targets. These are three-year outcome targets with annual progress measures. Partnerships are also able to agree national indicator set local targets to complement agreed targets to deliver priorities. These do not form part of the LAA negotiation and monitoring but equally commit partners to deliver. Cheshire East has set 11 local targets.

National indicators – measuring and monitoring performance

- 11.3 The new national indicator set takes forward some measures that had previously been developed as Best Value Indicators or as part of other performance management frameworks. For these measures, baseline data against which to set performance has been available. Some measures are new and setting baselines has involved more complicated calculation. Establishment of the new Unitary Council's has required re-compilation of a full dataset: bringing together performance data from the three predecessor districts and weighting this to reflect different levels of activity, and re-calculating Cheshire County Council data for Cheshire East and West. In this way, baseline performance for 2008-09 has been established for a large proportion of indicators.

Sound performance management has three components:

- Understanding each performance issue and its drivers in order to analyse the basis of performance
- Tracking and comparing performance over time to complement this detailed understanding of performance drivers and set targets
- Benchmarking performance with others in order to challenge and compare performance.

- 11.4 The new national data set followed by LGR in 2009 has created some discontinuities for performance monitoring. In particular, trends over time and benchmarking comparisons have been disrupted. In respect of benchmarking, many external comparison arrangements have not yet been updated to include the new unitary organisations. The Council has subscribed to a benchmarking 'club' managed on behalf of almost 100 Councils by Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC). Quarterly performance data are entered into a data collection system and quality assured and checked by PWC who then compile ranked performance analyses and statistical comparisons. These are available during the quarter following submission. This provides a quick and on-going source of comparison, controlled by the Councils that own the data. Relative quartile performance derived from this PWC benchmarking for 2008-09 out-turn has been used to support this mid year performance review. It has not been possible to use first quarter comparison data since the Council did not submit sufficient data for comparison. Full data will be submitted in future for all quarters.

- 11.5 A number of different benchmarking frameworks are available for different services. These offer more refined benchmarks based on specific characteristics of Councils. In order to create our own benchmarking sub-set within the PWC system, the Performance Team will be reviewing benchmarking comparisons over the coming period.
- 11.6 Some further issues in relation to the new national indicator set that impact performance monitoring include:
- The NI set collects outcomes for the whole local area across all public services. This includes collection of data from a number of partner organisations. The Council is the lead authority, and is responsible for ensuring that information is collected and compiled. There are some gaps in the data collected at mid-year where data come from partner organisations. Partner performance management arrangements are being strengthened to ensure that local performance management is effective and that information is gathered, analysed and used in a timely way.
 - Some indicators are based on information supplied by Government departments. Much of this data is slow in arriving. In particular, a number of measures are to be based on the outcomes of national surveys (e.g Tell Us survey of young people). This data is not yet available and in some cases, there is no information about when surveys will be undertaken.
 - The calculation of some measures has yet to be agreed by the relevant Government departments.
 - There are different reporting and collection arrangements for some measures, including quarterly and annual reporting. Measures need to be reviewed to determine the appropriate timeframe for reporting for Cheshire East and data availability for those indicators where government requires only an annual return. Similarly, we need to decide where monthly reporting is needed for our own management purposes and put those arrangements in place.

Local indicators

- 11.7 National indicators are not the only, nor always the best means of monitoring our own performance. Performance indicators need to be established by services to match their own delivery priorities and effectively monitor them. Across the Council, services have begun to develop their own measures, but more needs to be done. A number of former Best Value Indicators that have been well designed and are well understood have been retained as local indicators to support performance management, particularly around corporate functions. Outcomes on some of these measures are included in this report. There will be more work in the coming period to develop relevant local indicators and it is intended that business plans for 2010-2011 will be fully supported by local performance management arrangements.

2009-2010 Mid year performance

- 11.8 Mid year performance data has been received for 78 indicators. This includes 21 out of 34 designated LAA targets. Many measures are not available at mid-year because they are collected on an annual basis. There remains a strong focus on collecting all available information.
- 11.9 Overall performance for the 78 returns is reasonably good with 60% of indicators (47 number) having reached or exceeded their target. Some areas of particularly good achievement include:
- ✓ Achievement of 5 or more A* - C grades at GCSE or equivalent, including maths and English – 58% (national average 2008 = 48%)
 - ✓ Percentage of vulnerable adults achieving independent living (Supporting People) – 83.5 % increased from 55%
 - ✓ Percentage of household waste sent for re-use, recycling and composting – 52% increased from 42.6%
 - ✓ Number of households living in temporary accommodation – reduced from 18 to 11
 - ✓ Satisfaction of business with local authority regulatory services – increased from 76% to 89%
 - ✓ Deliberate primary fires – 202 in 2008-09; 79 2009-10 mid year.
 - ✓ First time entrants to Youth Justice System – 518 in 2008-09; 72 in first quarter 2009-10.
- 11.10 The 40% of indicators that are currently underperforming have been analysed and Corporate Management Team supported by service management teams have considered the underlying issues and the best means of addressing them. Some identified areas for improvement include:
- Residual household waste per household. The total KG was slightly higher than the target set for quarter 1 (annual target = 594 kg, quarter 1 target = 142kg; Q1 = 155Kg). The measure was in the top quartile PWC benchmarked performance in 2008-09.
 - *Seasonal adjustments now indicate that this is now back on target. Alternate weekly collections and free garden waste collection have reduced the residual waste figure. Quarter-on-quarter reductions are now anticipated for the remainder of this year.*
 - Processing of major planning applications. Performance is 48.39% against a target of 60%. Aspects of Planning performance had been flagged as needing improvement in predecessor councils.
 - *Some backlog of major applications have been brought forward from predecessor councils and there have been delays in completing these applications and their associated legal agreements. The Borough Solicitor and the Strategic Director Places are currently reviewing the legal workload in this area. The Planning Service are implementing a new single system and tackling some inherited system problems. They are also implementing additional performance measures that will help track over-running applications.*

- People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents – 2008-09 number was 311; target 2009-10 – reduce to 233. Mid year number is 134.
- *An action plan has made good progress to deliver : Driver Engagement Days, Rider Engagement Days, Drive Survive Courses, Community Speed Watch, Occupational Road User events, School Education Visits, Enforcement activities and public engagement at various events. Scrutiny is reviewing the statistics and causes however this remains a very challenging target for the council.*

- Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods. Target to reduce percentage by 0.33% in 2009-10. There has been an increase from 26.30% to 27.3% year-on-year and the latest quarter shows 29.9% (provisional).
- *This is one of a number of indicators that are showing adverse response to the recession. Others include young people not in employment, education or training, especially those in Council care or in contact with the Youth Justice System. In response Cheshire East has been part of a successful bid in which 200 jobs are to be created for 18-24 year olds by end of 2011. Jobs commenced in October and the first review will take place in December. This provides, for appropriate 18-24 year olds reaching 6month+ claim stage, referral to Future Jobs Fund jobs within all areas of JCP. Referral of 25+ year old customers at 6m+ claim stage who have significant barriers to employment, is made at adviser's discretion. Other actions include:*
 - Day One Offer
Support for those customers under threat of redundancy or newly redundant. There have been 514 referrals (last update 11/9/09)
 - 6 Month Offer
Opportunities of employment, enhancement of skills via short courses/voluntary work & advice & guidance on self employment to all 25+ year customers at 6m+stage. There have been 1,999 referrals (last updated 11/9/09)

- Repeat incidents of domestic violence. The domestic abuse team are flagging up that their repeat incidence level has been steadily increasing over the last six months. They are not sure of the causes, which may include better reporting or a real increase.
- *A Steering Group is in place which is addressing a detailed analysis of repeats to identify learning and action points. As the repeat target is a rolling previous 12 months figure the impact of actions will not be seen for some time. For example we know there was a reduction in police repeats in September but the steady rise in repeat rate will not be influenced by such changes for some time.*
 - They have also organised a training event on 30/11 to ensure criminal and civil justice sectors as well as services for victims are aware of the potential for enhanced safety through Section 12 implementation – the provision of protection orders even where an alleged offender is found not guilty.*

- Achieving independence for older people through rehabilitation and intermediate care. Against a target of 74% performance was 70%. This measure was in the PWC benchmarking third quartile for 2008-09.
 - *The plans to address this area relate to the developments in enhancing the current intermediate care and rehabilitation services. Joint Commissioning arrangements for intermediate services have been established and three work streams developed focusing on bed based services, homes based services and the hub. This project will report to the newly formed Joint Commissioning Group for older people which in turn reports to the Health and Well Being Group. A project plan has been agreed and mapping of existing services has commenced*
- Timeliness of social care assessments for adults. A target of 70% has been set against which mid year performance is 66.5%. This indicator is in the PWC benchmarking bottom quartile.
 - *Work to improve performance is being carried out through client record reports being made available to team managers, to help target areas of poor performance for remedial action.*
- Top 5% of earners with a disability (target of 3.3%, mid year performance 1.7%) and overall percentage of employees with a disability (Target 1.6%, mid year performance, 0.98%).
 - *This issue has been identified for early action in newly adopted Council Single Equality Scheme.*

11.11 In addition to the work of CMT and service management teams, the Scrutiny Committees are also taking an oversight of performance. For the third quarter, they will focus their attention on underperforming areas and how improvement is being implemented. They will challenge service Portfolio Holders and the Portfolio Holder for Performance and Capacity on the actions being taken forward and future plans for improvement.

11.12 The Council remains fully committed to developing a comprehensive performance management framework that supports the Councils ambition and seeks to drive performance improvement in all priority areas. Over time, the performance framework will also include a range of qualitative service measures such as customer and employee satisfaction to ensure a balanced scorecard of measures is in place covering all aspects of the councils operation.

12.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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