

## Cheltenham Borough Council

### Social & Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee –

February 19, 2007

#### Group performance at the third quarter

#### Report of the Performance Manager

**1. Executive Summary and recommendation**

1.1 This report provides two kinds of performance information: firstly, on corporate performance issues (see 3-7); secondly, on detailed performance figures arranged by group (see section 8).

1.2 The detailed figures cover the period October to December 2006, and are reported by exception - i.e. only those performance indicators and business plan actions which are outside their agreed tolerance levels feature. For a fuller view of group performance see the Council's electronic performance management system, TEN, which is accessible via a link on the home page of the intranet.

**1.3 I therefore recommend that:**

**1.3.1 The Committee reviews the performance variances reported and takes whatever actions it feels are required to address them.**

**1.3.2 The Committee notes the high-level performance issues raised.**

**1.4 Summary of implications**

1.4.1 Financial    None

1.4.2 Legal    None

1.4.3 Other    None

## **1.5 Implications on corporate and community plan priorities**

**1.5.1** The Social & Community group's progress against its business plan actions is set out within this report.

## **1.6 Statement on Risk**

**1.6.1** The Social & Community group's position against its most significant business risks will be reported at the year end. In the interim period group risks can be viewed via TEN.

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## **2. Introduction**

**2.1** This report provides two kinds of performance information: corporate performance issues (see sections 3-7); and detailed performance figures by group (see section 8).

**2.2** The latter are reported by exception - i.e. only those performance indicators and business plan actions that are outside their agreed tolerance levels feature.

## **3. Performance issue (1) – TEN**

**3.1** New software has been installed to the Council's electronic performance management system, TEN. The main benefit of the software is to introduce a new updating function, which enables wider access to and ownership of the system. Assistant Directors and their managers can now update their respective performance measures without having to go through an editor first. This development enables officers to keep their content up-to-date, for their own management purposes and for the monitoring purposes of their director and deputy.

**3.2** Interest in the TEN system has increased – and not only within the Council. Enquiries have been received from the media as to whether the system will be made available on the Council website. It has always been the intention to make the corporate model available in this way. It would give the public and the media unprecedented access to the Council's key performance measures – increasing transparency and accountability. No date has yet been set for this development, but it could be implemented sometime after the new business plan takes effect, in April 2007. This will depend upon technical feasibility and conflicting demands.

**3.3** A note of caution should be issued in relation to TEN: it will only ever be as accurate, timely and relevant as the information that is entered into it - and it will only be useful if it is used. Members and officers alike have a role to play in addressing these issues: members by accessing the system and questioning the quality and accuracy of what they find within; officers by embracing TEN as a management tool, and recognising that it can help them promote their services and publicise their successes. TEN also allows both groups the opportunity to react to, and learn from, shortfalls – much quicker than they could through the conventional, paper-based reporting system.

## **4. Performance issue (2) – CPA Indicators**

**4.1** A recent Audit Commission report showed that 63% of the Council's CPA indicators have improved since 2002/03 – well above the national average (56%) The same study showed that the proportion of the Council's CPA indicators that are in the upper performance quartile, 50%, is also well above average for authorities rated excellent in CPA terms (34%) The study focused on indicators covering Environment, Culture, Housing (Community), Housing (Management) and Housing Benefit & Council Tax Benefit. The results are very encouraging, and put the Council in a strong position for

CPA re-categorisation. However there are outstanding organisational issues, such as capacity management arrangements, which were picked up by the CPA and are still to be addressed conclusively.

## **5. Performance Issue (3) – Use of Resources**

- 5.1** Draft results from the Council's second Use of Resources assessment have been received. The assessment is conducted annually by the Audit Commission. As the title suggests, the exercise tries to ascertain how effectively and responsibly the Council spends its resources, financial and otherwise. The exercise is split into the following categories: Financial Management, Financial Reporting, Financial Standing, Value for Money and Internal Control. Initial feedback suggests that there are no significant, unresolved issues and that the Council is likely to retain its robust 3 score, which is equivalent to good in CPA terms.

## **6. Performance Issue (4) – Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA)**

- 6.1** The LPSA was launched in the period prior to CPA. It effectively involved an agreement between local authorities and the Government to meet certain performance targets during the period 2002/03 to 2005/06. Cheltenham's commitment was made through a suite of twelve indicators, covering issues such as electronic service delivery, the processing of planning applications, sickness absence and recycling. Cheltenham was set a weighted improvement target of 33, and achieved an improvement total of 43 – exceeding target by 10. A monetary incentive was offered by the Government to those authorities that exceeded their target. Cheltenham *should* qualify for this, wholly or in part, but this is still to be confirmed.

## **7. Performance Issue (5) – Culture**

- 7.1** The results reported above continue a positive trend that extends from the 2004 CPA to the 2006 VaLUENTIS study of local government (a comparative exercise which placed the Council 6<sup>th</sup> best out of 237 local authorities). These results provide indisputable evidence of the benefits of performance management - in terms of reputation, motivation and money. They have provided the Council with some of the best media coverage it has ever had. They should conclude the debate about the usefulness of performance management information.

## **8. Performance position by Group – Social and Community**

### **8.1 Performance indicators above target**

BVPI127a – Violent crimes per 1,000 population. Division: Public Protection.

BVPI170a – Visits/usages of museum per 1,000 population. Division: Health and Wellbeing.

BV170b - Visits to museum in person per 1,000 population. Division: Health and Wellbeing.

BV183a - Number of weeks stay in B&B accommodation. Division: Community Services.

BV183b - Average number of weeks stay in hostel accommodation. Division: Community Services.

BVPI203 - % change in the average number of families placed in temporary accommodation. Division: Community Services.

BV213 - Housing advice, preventing homelessness. Division: Community Services.

BVPI214 – Repeat homelessness. Division: Community Services.

CS23 - Actual number of homelessness applications accepted. Division: Community Services.

CS50 - Number of households in temporary accommodation. Division: Community Services.

NR11 - Number of affordable homes enabled. Division: Neighbourhood Regeneration.

NR13 - Satisfaction rating good/excellent. Division: Neighbourhood Regeneration.

NR 19 - Total number of affordable houses enabled. Division: Neighbourhood Regeneration.

## **8.2 Performance indicators below target and reasons**

BVPI126 - Domestic burglaries per 1,000 households. Division: Public Protection. Reason: Towards the end of last year the number of domestic burglaries began to increase quite dramatically, coinciding with the release from prison of a large number of 'professional' burglars. Police recognised this at force level and put an action plan in place to target such offenders, working together with the Prolific and Priority Offenders Units, supported by target hardening initiatives and CDRP funding. As a result, offences are now beginning to plummet.

BVPI127b - Robberies per 1,000 population. Division: Public Protection. Reason: With the escalation of this category of crime, police intelligence sources identified two suspect gangs and, following a number of operations, all have now been arrested and are being dealt with. Again it is anticipated that figures will now decrease.

BVPI128 - Vehicle crimes per 1,000 population. Division: Public Protection. Reason: Theft of Sat Nav equipment is the cause for the rise in vehicle crime. This is national problem, not just confined to Cheltenham or the county. Pro-active policing operations are taking place, both covert and overt, supported by target-hardening initiatives such as post-coding property, assisted by CDRP funding and working with Day Safe, linking into businesses. A number of offenders have been arrested and this will be reflected in later figures.

BVPI174 – Racial incidents recorded. Division: Public Protection. Reason: 2 reported incidents involving the same victim and alleged offender are continuing from a previous complaint in 2005. These are being dealt with by CBH staff.

BVPI216b - % (contaminated land) sites for which information is available. Division: Public Protection. Reason: In common with all other local authorities in Britain, Cheltenham has a variety of sites in its area where there is residual pollution of land as a legacy as previous uses. Since 2000 the council has had a duty to investigate such contaminated land and adopted a strategy in 2001 to address these responsibilities. Our estimate is that we have up to 615 potentially contaminated sites. The large majority of these will not be problematic, but until they are assessed we can not definitely establish that fact. Most construction in town occurs on brownfield land; much of which is contaminated. Obviously this is desirable from a sustainable development point of view and also means that site clean-up costs are borne by developers rather than the public purse. The drawback for the planned survey work in executing our strategy means that work to investigate other sites has not kept to the initially predicted timescale of completion by December 2005. Additional demands have occurred through the major site investigation at Marle Hill and increasing numbers of land charge enquiries (as homebuyers become more

aware of pollution matters around houses being purchased). It is now estimated that this proactive work of surveying such sites will be completed by December 2010.

CS14 - number of Lifeline customers. Division: Community Services. Reason: The first two quarters saw an underperformance against target. A new Lifeline Marketing Officer started w/c 2.10.06. The third quarter saw an increase in application requests - and 50 have been sent out already. This could be a direct result of the radio campaign which ran from 20/11/06 for 4 weeks, and ran again from 4/01/07 for a further 4 weeks.

**8.3** The Social & Community Group has 48 performance indicators in its TEN model. Though there are still issues regarding the accuracy and completeness of some of the data entered into TEN, the fact that only six of the group's most significant indicators are below target at this stage suggests a positive year end result. There is clear evidence that the group is embracing TEN to manage and monitor its performance and this is very encouraging.

#### **8.4 Business plan actions above target**

None. However, three Social & Community business plan actions have been completed at the third quarter. These are as follows:

BP reference 1.2. Aim: Consult with St Paul's local residents and stakeholders leading to making area improvements. Progress: Consultation in connection with option appraisal complete.

BP reference 1.11.1. Aim: Recruit an additional member of Lifeline staff. Progress: Additional Lifeline Marketing & Installations Officer recruited in 2006 (part-time).

BP reference 6.09.2. Aim: Improvements to softland, spin bike & pool inflatable sessions at Leisure@. Progress: inflatable and spin bike improvements went ahead as planned and have proven popular. Improvements to softland were not undertaken in the way originally planned. The aim is now to increase early years' activity using existing space provision.

#### **8.5 Business plan actions below target and reasons**

BP reference 5.03. Aim: to reduce health inequalities in Cheltenham by 10% by 2010. Action: prepare a detailed action plan by June '06. Progress: delayed due to PCT reorganisation and uncertainty regarding future priorities. A report was taken to cabinet on December 12th to reaffirm commitment to tackling health inequalities and working in partnership with PCT to create a Healthy Lifestyles post.

BP reference 6.09. Aim: to deliver a programme of improvement at Leisure@. Action: To improve financial performance and service standards at Leisure @ by 10% by March 2007. Progress: There was a shortfall against quarter three income targets. This may be due to the closure of certain facilities for repair – e.g. the boom, squash courts and dry-side activity spaces. A series of planned activities will take place throughout quarter four to stimulate additional revenue.

BP reference 6.9.1. Aim: to deliver the 50K capital investment programme to the Prince of Wales stadium. Action: to improve the Prince of Wales stadium by July 2006. Progress: Phase 1 completed in respect of meeting rooms, foyer area, and studio. Phase 2, ground floor changing rooms, was completed by the end of January 2007. The remaining areas of ground floor ablutions and basement changing areas remain outstanding. We are still awaiting confirmation of the completion date.

BP reference 6.9.3. Aim: introduce on-line booking at Leisure@. Action: introduce on-line booking by July '06. Progress: Work was originally delayed due to the knock-on effect of the delay to the installation of the new corporate telephony system. There were also delays due to the practicalities of installation and training. The intention now is to introduce the on-line booking system during the fourth quarter of 06/07.

BP reference 6.11.1. Aim to install automatic doors at the Art Gallery & Museum. Action: to complete the task by August 2006. Progress: meetings held with Conservation Officer, English Heritage and project team resulted in delays to the installation. Planning permission is no longer required and a competitive cost for the doors will be sourced by March '07.

**8.6** The business plan updates provide further evidence of the Social & Community group's increased emphasis upon performance management in general and its use of TEN in particular. The Health & Wellbeing division is a very good example of how the system should be used. Though 8.5 shows a number of business plan actions that are behind target, the encouraging point to note is that shortfalls are being shared openly with the organisation, the reasons are explained in some detail, and the division is reacting to and learning from these shortfalls. In short, though performance is not quite what we would have wished, it is being managed. If we are to avoid a blame culture, and instead create one in which we are open about and learn from our shortfalls, this kind of approach should be encouraged.

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<b>Background Papers</b>	See TEN performance management system
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<b>Accountability</b>	Councillor Andrew Wall – Deputy, Internal Performance and Service Improvement
<b>Scrutiny Function</b>	Economy and Business Improvement