



## Meeting Agenda

**Performance Improvement Scrutiny Committee**  
**Town Hall, St Annes**  
**Thursday 22 January, 7:00pm**

**The main doors will be open to the public at 6:40pm**

# **PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

## **MEMBERSHIP**

CHAIRMAN - Councillor Christine Akeroyd

VICE-CHAIRMAN – Councillor Cheryl Little

### **Councillors**

Craig Halewood

Keith Hyde

John Singleton

Kathleen Harper

Ken Hopwood

Linda Nulty

Paul Hayhurst

Contact: Peter Welsh, St. Annes (01253) 658502, Email: [peterw@fylde.gov.uk](mailto:peterw@fylde.gov.uk)



## **Our Vision**

*To establish Fylde Borough Council as a high performing local authority*

## **Our Corporate Objectives**

To improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of our communities through:

- The promotion and enhancement of the natural built environment
- Increasing the availability and access to good quality housing for all
- Maintaining healthy and safe communities to reduce the fear of crime
- Supporting and sustaining a strong and diverse Fylde coast economy to further enhance employment prospects

## **We will achieve this by:**

Focusing on customer requirements  
Clear community and organisational leadership  
Delivering high quality, cost-effective services  
Partnership working



## A G E N D A

### PART I - MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE

<b>PUBLIC PLATFORM</b> <i>To hear representations from members of the public in accordance with Committee procedure rules</i>	
<b>ITEM</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
1. <b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:</b> <i>If a member requires advice on Declarations of Interest he/she is advised to contact the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting. (For the assistance of Members an extract from the Councils Code of Conduct is attached).</i>	4
2. <b>CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES:</b> <i>To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Performance Improvement Scrutiny Committee held on 20 November 2008 Attached at the end of the agenda.</i>	4
3. <b>SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS:</b> <i>Details of any substitute members notified in accordance with council procedure rule 25.3</i>	4
4. <b>THE CORPORATE PERFORMANCE QUATERLEY REPORT (3<sup>RD</sup> QUARTER: APRIL 1<sup>ST</sup> 2008 TO DECEMBER 31<sup>ST</sup> 2008)</b>	7 – 13
5. <b>REPORT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES PERFORMANCE UPDATE</b>	14 – 19
6. <b>VACANT POST IMPACT AND STRATEGY</b>	20 – 25
7. <b>PROPERTY MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT WITH WYRE BC</b>	26 – 28

**Personal interests**

**8.—(1)** You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where either—

(a) it relates to or is likely to affect—

- (i) any body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by your authority;
- (ii) any body—
  - (aa) exercising functions of a public nature;
  - (bb) directed to charitable purposes; or
  - (cc) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union),

of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management;

- (i) any employment or business carried on by you;
  - (ii) any person or body who employs or has appointed you;
  - (iii) any person or body, other than a relevant authority, who has made a payment to you in respect of your election or any expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties;
  - (iv) any person or body who has a place of business or land in your authority's area, and in whom you have a beneficial interest in a class of securities of that person or body that exceeds the nominal value of £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital (whichever is the lower);
  - (v) any contract for goods, services or works made between your authority and you or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi);
  - (vi) the interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25;
  - (vii) any land in your authority's area in which you have a beneficial interest;
  - (viii) any land where the landlord is your authority and you are, or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi) is, the tenant;
  - (xi) any land in the authority's area for which you have a licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy for 28 days or longer; or
- (b) a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well-being or financial position or the well-being or financial position of a relevant person to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward, as the case may be, affected by the decision;

(2) In sub-paragraph (1)(b), a relevant person is—

- (a) a member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association; or
- (b) any person or body who employs or has appointed such persons, any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are directors;
- (c) any person or body in whom such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or
- (d) any body of a type described in sub-paragraph (1)(a)(i) or (ii).

**Disclosure of personal interests**

- 9.—(1)** Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) to (7), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you attend a meeting of your authority at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.
- (2) Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority which relates to or is likely to affect a person described in paragraph 8(1)(a)(i) or 8(1)(a)(ii)(aa), you need only disclose to the meeting the existence and nature of that interest when you address the meeting on that business.
  - (3) Where you have a personal interest in any business of the authority of the type mentioned in paragraph 8(1)(a)(viii), you need not disclose the nature or existence of that interest to the meeting if the interest was registered more than three years before the date of the meeting.
  - (4) Sub-paragraph (1) only applies where you are aware or ought reasonably to be aware of the existence of the personal interest.

- (5) Where you have a personal interest but, by virtue of paragraph 14, sensitive information relating to it is not registered in your authority's register of members' interests, you must indicate to the meeting that you have a personal interest, but need not disclose the sensitive information to the meeting.
- (6) Subject to paragraph 12(1)(b), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you have made an executive decision in relation to that business, you must ensure that any written statement of that decision records the existence and nature of that interest.
- (7) In this paragraph, "executive decision" is to be construed in accordance with any regulations made by the Secretary of State under section 22 of the Local Government Act 2000(d).

#### **Prejudicial interest generally**

- 10.—**(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority you also have a prejudicial interest in that business where the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.
- (2) You do not have a prejudicial interest in any business of the authority where that business—
- (a) does not affect your financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in paragraph 8;
  - (b) does not relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or any person or body described in paragraph 8; or
  - (c) relates to the functions of your authority in respect of—
    - (i) housing, where you are a tenant of your authority provided that those functions do not relate particularly to your tenancy or lease;
    - (ii) school meals or school transport and travelling expenses, where you are a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or are a parent governor of a school, unless it relates particularly to the school which the child attends;
    - (iii) statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, where you are in receipt of, or are entitled to the receipt of, such pay;
    - (iv) an allowance, payment or indemnity given to members;
    - (v) any ceremonial honour given to members; and
    - (vi) setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

#### **Prejudicial interests arising in relation to overview and scrutiny committees**

- 11.—** You also have a prejudicial interest in any business before an overview and scrutiny committee of your authority (or of a sub-committee of such a committee) where—
- (a) that business relates to a decision made (whether implemented or not) or action taken by your authority's executive or another of your authority's committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees; and
  - (b) at the time the decision was made or action was taken, you were a member of the executive, committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee mentioned in paragraph (a) and you were present when that decision was made or action was taken.

#### **Effect of prejudicial interests on participation**

- 12.—**(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority—
- (a) you must withdraw from the room or chamber where a meeting considering the business is being held—
    - (i) in a case where sub-paragraph (2) applies, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence;
    - (ii) in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at that meeting;
 unless you have obtained a dispensation from your authority's standards committee;
  - (b) you must not exercise executive functions in relation to that business; and
  - (c) you must not seek improperly to influence a decision about that business.
- (2) Where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority, you may attend a meeting (including a meeting of the overview and scrutiny committee of your authority or of a sub-committee of such a committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

# REPORT

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
PERFORMANCE & IMPROVEMENT	PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT	JAN 22 <sup>ND</sup> 2009	4

## THE CORPORATE PERFORMANCE QUARTERLY REPORT (3<sup>RD</sup> QUARTER: APRIL 1<sup>ST</sup> 2008 TO DECEMBER 31<sup>ST</sup> 2008)

### Public item

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

### Summary

The report outlines the performance to date against national and supplementary performance indicators in place at Fylde Borough Council since April 1<sup>st</sup> 2008. Performance has been reported against the indicators where it is possible to report performance to date. The purpose of the report is to ensure that the committee has the latest performance information available to make informed decisions on any potential performance shortfalls and areas that may require further scrutiny in order to support performance. Update information about the Place Survey and Data Quality work has been included in the report.

### Recommendations

1. That the committee scrutinise the performance to date against the national and supplementary indicators published in Appendix 1 to this report and make any appropriate improvement recommendations to officers or Portfolio Holders.
2. That the committee support a revised target of 11.5 days sickness absence per employee per annum by March 31<sup>st</sup> 2009 from the current target of 10.5 days.
3. That the committee support a revised target for online transactions of 20,000 from the current target of 16,000 based on the current exceptional performance.

## Portfolio Holder

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Policy & Performance is Councillor Paul Rigby.

## Report

1. Appendix 1 provides details of the performance to date against national and local performance indicators. Performance to date is reported against those indicators where it is possible to provide information to date. In many circumstances it is not possible to report the performance to date because of the nature of the indicator e.g. several of the national indicators that will be drawn from the results of the Place Survey will not be available until early 2009. In most cases the performance is up to the end of the third quarter for the current financial year (December 31<sup>st</sup> 2008) though in some cases the figure is up to November 30<sup>th</sup> 2008.
2. Members of the performance committee that access and use the Escendency performance management system can track and monitor the latest live performance data.
3. This report normally includes a second appendix that includes the General Fund Budget Monitoring Report 2008/09 Position outlining progress against the agreed savings targets for 2008/09 and any budget areas that are over or under spent by more than £5000 to date. This appendix could not be completed in time for the publication date of this report because of the time required for managers to carry out checks on the savings and budget position. A verbal update will be provided at the committee meeting and any supporting papers will be published with the minutes to the report.
4. The service performance to date in Appendix 1 shows that the authority is performing well in several key areas:
  - The number of hits to the website (FYS09) are above target at 124186
  - The increase of online services (FYS10) reaching 17959 means that the target of 16,000 for the year has been exceeded. Members are asked to support a revised target of 20,000 online transactions by March 31<sup>st</sup> 2009.
  - The percentage of employee appraisals is significantly up on the 2007/08 figure (FYS11) at 79.65%
  - Serious violent crime remains amongst the lowest in the country (NI015) and other crime rates are very low making Fylde one of the safest places to live in the region
  - The cleanliness of local streets and the surrounding environment (N!195 a – d) is exceptionally good
  - The payment of undisputed invoices within 30 days (FYS02) is performing above the target at 96.54%
5. The majority of the other indicators included in Appendix 1 are performing to target and in most cases currently improving on the performance achieved in 2007/08. The recycling figure (NI192) is estimated to experience a seasonal drop to 42% as a result



of the reduced garden waste during the winter months. This figure will recover to deliver the target of 44% by March 31<sup>st</sup> as garden waste increases again in the early spring. Recycling performance at Fylde has remained exceptional for several years and members should note that the national target was to achieve 40% recycling by April 2010, a figure Fylde exceeded by April 2008.

6. A separate report on sickness absence (FYS03) was presented to this committee in November 2008. The current performance of 11.85 days per employee per year represents a decrease from over 13 days per employee per year however a revised target of 11.5 days by March 2009 should be supported by members.
7. The time taken to determine planning applications (NI157 a to c) are performing below the targets set for the current year. The Head of Planning and the Director of Strategic Development attended the Performance Improvement Committee meeting on September 25<sup>th</sup> 2008 and outlined to the committee the actions that would be taken to improve the current performance. The commitments made are included in the minutes of that meeting. Over the last four months several actions have been implemented and the performance has improved in the second quarter of the year. Several of the actions will take longer to have an impact and the commitment to ensure a quality determination will be upheld. The service is continuing to work closely with the Planning Advisory Service to deliver the necessary improvements.

### **Performance Management Updates**

8. The authority has taken a lead role regionally on the production of data for National Indicator 14 which examines the amount of avoidable customer contact that a council deals with. This is a very complex national indicator that every local authority has struggled to implement effectively. The Customer Service Manager and the Transformational Officer at Fylde have been working with colleagues across the North West to develop the most effective means of measuring against this indicator. Between September and December 2008 Fylde has piloted a scheme that has proved to be accurate and reliable. As a consequence Fylde is one of the few authorities across Lancashire that has made progress against this measure and through regional networks will be sharing our best practice with others.
9. The Place Survey has been carried out by MORI on behalf of all the Lancashire District councils. The field work was completed early in January 2009 and the data is being prepared for submission to the Audit Commission where it will be subject to verification and weighting to ensure that it is statistically representative of the community. The results of the Place Survey will be published in March 2009 and provide the data for 25 of the national performance indicators.
10. The external auditors KMPG have produced a draft of their Data Quality audit work that confirms the authority has improved from an 'adequate' performance status in 2007 to a 'performing well' status in 2008. Data Quality inspection work covers all the performance management arrangements in place at the authority including the level of knowledge and engagement demonstrated by elected members. Fylde has improved year on year in respect of performance management work and the final report from the external auditors will be reported to this committee.
11. A members Learning Hour on Escendency was held on December 22<sup>nd</sup> 2008 which proved to be a success and as a result a further session will be put on the Learning

Hour time table for 2009. Several members are regularly using the system to monitor and track performance on an ongoing basis. Advice and support on the system is available to members from Alex Scrivens (alex@fylde.gov.uk).

## Conclusion

12. The overall performance of services across the authority is very good with only a couple of exceptions where the target is not being achieved. Members are being asked to support two changes to the target figures for the current year and to be aware of the additional work that is being carried out in respect of the performance management arrangements at Fylde.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.
Legal	There are no direct legal implications arising from the report.
Community Safety	There are no direct community safety implications.
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no direct human rights and equalities implications arising from the report.
Sustainability	There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no direct health & safety and/or risk management implications arising from this report.

Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
<b>ALLAN OLDFIELD</b>	<b>(01253) 658576</b>	<b>JANUARY 10<sup>TH</sup> 2009</b>	

List of Background Papers		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
The New National Performance Indicators	January 2008	<a href="http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/performance">www.audit-commission.gov.uk/performance</a>
The Library of Local Performance Indicators	March 2004	<a href="http://www.local-pi-library.gov.uk">www.local-pi-library.gov.uk</a>

The New Place Survey	January 2008	<a href="http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/newplacesurvey">www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/newplacesurvey</a>
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List of appendices

**Appendix 1:** The Corporate Performance Report (April – December 2008)

	<b>Appendix 1: Corporate Performance Report (To December 31st 2008 unless stated)</b>					
<b>Ref</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Progress to Date</b>	<b>2007/08 Figure</b>		
<b>FYS01</b>	The Level of the Equality standard for Local Government to which authority conforms in respect of gender, race and disability (level 1,2,3,4,5)	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	Allan	Oldfield
<b>FYS02</b>	Percentage of undisputed invoices which were paid within 30 days of receipt or within agreed payment terms	<b>96%</b>	<b>96.54%</b>	<b>93.56%</b>	Greg	Markham
<b>FYS03</b>	The number of days sickness absence per employee (all sickness)	<b>10.5 days</b>	<b>11.85 days</b>	<b>12.53</b>	Allan	Oldfield
<b>FYS04</b>	The percentage of long term sickness	<b>55%</b>	<b>64.00%</b>	<b>New</b>	Allan	Oldfield
<b>FYS09</b>	The number of unique hits on the council web site www.fylde.gov.uk	<b>155000</b>	<b>124186</b>	<b>148069</b>	Andy	Cain
<b>FYS10</b>	The number of customer transactions carried out online	<b>16000</b>	<b>17959</b>	<b>13779</b>	Andy	Cain
<b>FYS11</b>	The percentage of employee appraisals completed	<b>90%</b>	<b>79.65%</b>	<b>32%</b>	Allan	Oldfield
<b>FYS13</b>	The percentage of overdue Freedom of Information requests	<b>0</b>	<b>6.78</b>	<b>7.97</b>	Ian	Curtis
<b>FYS14</b>	The average number of days to respond to all Freedom of Information	<b>6</b>	<b>7.62</b>	<b>8.01</b>	Ian	Curtis
<b>FYS15</b>	The number of missed bins per 100,000 collections Fylde service	<b>50</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>New</b>	Kathy	Winstanley
<b>FYS17</b>	The percentage of council employees trained in customer care	<b>95%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>91%</b>	Allan	Oldfield
<b>FYS18</b>	The percentage of phone calls to 01253 658658 answered	<b>84%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>88%</b>	Joceline	Greenway
<b>FYS19</b>	The percentage satisfaction with the service delivered by Customer Services	<b>98%</b>	<b>89%*</b>	<b>95%</b>	Joceline	Greenway
<b>FYS33</b>	Total amount of Section 106 contributions received to date	<b>Not Applicable</b>	<b>2450115.76*</b>	<b>New</b>	Karen	Hodgkiss
<b>FYS34</b>	Total amount of Section 106 contributions comitted/spent to date	<b>Not Applicable</b>	<b>2449264.06*</b>	<b>New</b>	Karen	Hodgkiss
<b>NI 015</b>	Serious violent crime per 1000 population	<b>7.3</b>	<b>0.63</b>	<b>New</b>	Bryan	Ward
<b>NI 016</b>	Serious acquisitive crime per 1000 population	<b>6.8</b>	<b>3.02*</b>	<b>New</b>	Bryan	Ward
<b>NI 020</b>	Assault with injury crime rate per 1000 population	<b>New</b>	<b>3.27</b>	<b>New</b>	Bryan	Ward
<b>NI 154</b>	Net additional homes provided across the borough	<b>205</b>	<b>143*</b>	<b>New</b>	Lucy	Edwards
<b>NI 155</b>	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	<b>50</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>New</b>	Lucy	Edwards
<b>NI 156</b>	Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>19</b>	Lucy	Edwards
<b>NI 157a</b>	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'major' applications	<b>60%</b>	<b>54.55%</b>	<b>52.94%</b>	Mark	Evans
<b>NI 157b</b>	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'minor' applications	<b>65%</b>	<b>47.31%</b>	<b>65.91%</b>	Mark	Evans
<b>NI 157c</b>	Processing of planning applications as measured against targets for 'other' application types	<b>90%</b>	<b>70.09%</b>	<b>79.76%</b>	Mark	Evans

Ref	Title	Target	Progress to Date	2007/08 Figure		
<b>NI181</b>	The time taken to process Housing Benefit and / or Council Tax benefit new claims or change of event	<b>15.8 days</b>	<b>18.23 days*</b>	<b>Changed</b>	Lance	Postings
<b>NI191</b>	The amount of residential household waste generated per head of population	<b>To be set</b>	<b>370kg (est)</b>	<b>402kg</b>	Kathy	Winstanley
<b>NI 192</b>	The percentage of household waste recycled and composted	<b>44%</b>	<b>42% (est)</b>	<b>41.79%</b>	Kathy	Winstanley
<b>NI 195a</b>	Improved street and environmental cleanliness: levels of litter	<b>8%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>9.76%</b>	Kathy	Winstanley
<b>NI 195b</b>	Improved street and environmental cleanliness: levels of detritus	<b>14%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>Changed</b>	Kathy	Winstanley
<b>NI 195c</b>	Improved street and environmental cleanliness: levels of graffiti	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>2%</b>	Kathy	Winstanley
<b>NI 195d</b>	Improved street and environmental cleanliness: levels of fly posting	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	Kathy	Winstanley
	<b>* The figure is for the period to November 30th 2008</b>					

# REPORT

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
PERFORMANCE & BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT CUSTOMER SERVICES	PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	22 <sup>ND</sup> JANUARY 2009	5

## REPORT OF CUSTOMER SERVICES PERFORMANCE UPDATE

### Public Item

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

### Summary

This report provides an update on the performance of the Customer Services Team along with a progress report on current changes and developments within the service area. This separate service performance report has been produced as part of a performance reporting programme agreed when the service was scrutinised by a Task and Finish Group in 2006.

The performance has been tracked and monitored by the committee for in excess of 2 years since the Task and Finish group scrutiny work. This report is the final separate service performance report subject any future requests by the committee that may be triggered by performance exceptions identified in the Corporate Performance Report.

### Recommendations

1. That the committee recognise the continued development of Customer Services at Fylde subject to any appropriate comment and or recommendation.
2. That the committee support the continued use of the LSP Community Engagement Vehicle as a means of taking service provision and information to local communities across the Borough.

- |   |
|---|
| 3. That the committee agree to have all future performance reporting on the Customer Services Team integrated in the Corporate Performance Report that is regularly presented to the committee. |
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## **Cabinet Portfolio**

The item falls within the following Cabinet portfolio:

Customer Services & Partnerships      Councillor Albert Pounder

## **Report**

The Customer Service Team is now part of the new Directorate for Business Performance and Improvement that was established under the new senior management structure put in place from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2008. The Team have been directly engaged in a series of 'quick win' changes and improvements to ensure that the integration into the new Directorate. A long term strategic improvement plan is being developed in January 2009 that will focus on more efficient means of working designed to migrate customer contact to online transactions and reduce avoidable contact in line with national objectives.

The number of enquiries over the phone, online and face to face has increased over the last six months. The current economic credit crunch has led to an increase in enquiries about benefits, council tax concessions and housing. However, there has been a decrease in the number of enquires about development control, land searches, licensing and building regulations.

The call centre as at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008 answered 80% of all calls offered from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008, and in person dealt with over 24,000 customers during this period. The number of emails received via [listening@fylde.gov.uk](mailto:listening@fylde.gov.uk) continues to increase and 100% of these are currently actioned within 24 working hours. Customer Satisfaction based on the responses to the online customer survey and questionnaires completed at the Fylde Direct office is at 89% for this current financial year. All the performance data is submitted into Escendency on a regular basis and members can access the latest data online at any time.

The lunch breaks on the phones and in the One Stop Shop continue to be staggered over a 3 hour period and staff are also utilised from the Corporate Admin Team to cover busier periods. The Corporate Administration Staff do provide cover for the Customer Service Team and knowledge and skills are shared between the two teams whenever the opportunity arises. Employees that demonstrate the desire and ability to make the transition from the Corporate Administration Team to the Customer Service Team as a career move are supported in this through their Personal Development Appraisal.

In an effort to reduce the pressure during the busier periods the current full time vacant post has been advertised as 2 part time posts, one at 15 hours (all day Monday & Friday) and one at 20 hours (11am until 3pm Monday to Friday) targeted at the busier periods. Effective performance management has made it possible to target the busy periods and allocate resources according to greatest need.

During the summer of 2008, the LSP Community Engagement Vehicle has been used to provide an outreach service across the Fylde borough. This partnership initiative was led by Fylde Borough Council and supported by officers from Lancashire County Council, Fylde's One Stop Shop, LSP, the FLoWe project, and Fire and Rescue. The aim of this pilot was to take services directly to those communities that may find it difficult to access them both physically and through the web. Part of the work with the County Council has been to promote the use of free web facilities for residents in local libraries and other community based locations. The use of local Post Offices to make cash payments and obtain information about local services has also been extensively promoted.

The pilot project proved to be a major success and as a result the scheme will continue to operate on a permanent programmed basis with the current proposed locations and dates outlined in Appendix 1 to this report.

In the last few months there has been an increase in the number of liaison meetings between the Customer Services Team and the new shared service team at Blackpool Council for Revenues and Benefits, all Fylde Direct staff have now spent time at Blackpool and have now all received training in basic amendments to the Council Tax system, this will be rolled out further over the next few months with a number of the Fylde Direct team being fully trained to process Housing and Council Tax Benefit claims.

This work has been part of a number of initiatives designed to improve the communication process between the front and back office teams. Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) work across the authority has been led by the Customer Services Manager and the Transformational Services Officer and is systematically examining each process to ensure that the front and back office systems work efficiently. The BPR work requires employees from the front and back office teams to work together and review the service from the customer perspective removing any failure or waste in the system. By working together on more efficient processes the team members develop a stronger working relationship and understanding of the challenges that each team faces.

Fylde is working closely with Lancashire County Council to deliver a district proposal for face to face access the Fylde. This proposal will provide Fylde Direct staff with access and training to Lancashire County Councils Acorn system (A-Z enquires), the introduction of a telly talk (video conferencing) facility within the Borough with a direct link to Lancashire County's call centre and more joined up working between County Council and Borough Council staff.

In response to feedback from an elected member enquiry about the effective and proper use of the voicemail facility by back office employees a series of spot checks have been carried out to identify staff that require further advice and support. Reminders to all staff have been published on the intranet and in Grapevine and where staff required further support Line Managers have raised the issue at their Team Brief meeting. The Customer Service Manager will continue to track and monitor use of voicemail facility across the authority.

## **Conclusion**



The last 6 months have been both challenging and exciting for the Customer Services Team. Once a full complement of staff is in place the percentage of calls answered and customer waiting times will improve.

The benefit to our customers of more qualified and multi skilled staff dealing with enquires through more seamless transactions developed through the BPR work will transform their experience when contacting the authority by whichever channel of enquiry.

The joint work with the County Council will add benefit for the customer and ensure that contact with either the Borough or County Council will be a seamless service.

Improvement planning over the long term will focus on process efficiency and the migration of customers to online transactions in line with changing customer demands. Another key element of this work will be improvements to communication processes between the front and back office teams.

Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
Joceline Greenaway	(01253) 658495	January 10 <sup>th</sup> 2009	

List of Background Papers		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Document name		Council office or website address

#### **Attached documents**

Appendix 1: The LSP Community Engagement Vehicle Programme

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.
Legal	There are no direct legal implications arising from the report.
Community Safety	There are no direct community safety implications.
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no direct human rights and equalities implications arising from the report.
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report.

Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no direct health & safety and/or risk management implications arising from this report.
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# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACROSS FYLDE



Starting **Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 09** at the following locations

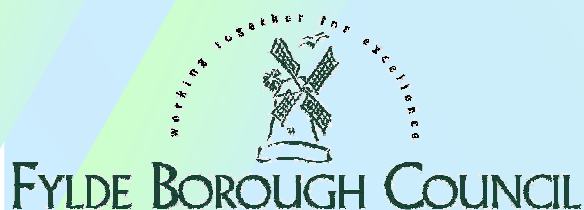


**Freckleton (outside the  
Coach & Horses Car Park)**  
1st Tuesday of every month  
10am – 4pm

**Kirkham (Morrison's  
Car Park)**  
3rd Thursday of every month  
10am – 4pm

From January 2009 representatives from Fylde Borough Council, Lancashire County Council and the Local Strategic Partnership will be boarding the Community Engagement Vehicle to answer your questions and deal with your enquiries relating to all Council and Partner Services with benefit advice also being available.

Information on Council Services is always available by calling -  
Fylde Borough Council: 01253 658658  
Lancashire County Council: 0845 053 0000



# REPORT

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
PERFORMANCE & IMPROVEMENT	PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT	JANUARY 22 <sup>ND</sup> 2009	6

## VACANT POST IMPACT & STRATEGY

### Public item

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

### Summary

The report has been produced in response to a request by the committee to examine the current level of vacant posts across the authority and the impact on service provision. The report also clarifies the approach to filling vacant posts and the benefits of implementing a flexible and responsive establishment.

### Recommendations

1. That the committee support the approach taken to fulfilling vacant posts and the implementation of a flexible approach.
2. That the committee scrutinise the current vacant posts and the impact on service delivery making any appropriate recommendations to officers or Portfolio Holders to improve the position.

### Portfolio Holder

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Policy and Performance is Councillor Paul Rigby.

### Report

1. As part of a number of initiatives designed to achieve budget savings during the current financial year the Council has been holding several posts vacant for as long as possible. Members should note that this is only one of a number of initiatives that

have been put in place to address the current budget position and that each decision to hold a post vacant is taken after an appropriate risk assessment.

2. Whenever a post becomes vacant at Fylde the Line Manager responsible for the post is required to consider whether simply replacing 'like for like' is the best option for the service. Because the requirements of service delivery change so quickly a 'like for like' replacement is not always the best option. Every vacancy is viewed as opportunity to introduce change and improvement to the service. This may be achieved by redesigning the duties and responsibilities of the post and bringing in different skills, knowledge and experience or by reallocating existing resources to remove the need for the post.
3. Members should note that this approach to vacant posts has been in place at Fylde for several years and has led to several alternative options being considered rather than simply replacing a 'like for like' person in a similar post. By applying this strategy it is possible to achieve incremental change over a period of time that is consistent with the changing requirements of the service. For example, computer skill is a more common essential criterion on person specifications than maths or English. On some occasions a post will remain vacant for a period of time as a result of this approach rather than the need to save money.
4. Over the last 12 months this flexible approach has been supplemented by the need to justify any decision to fill a vacancy 'like for like' on economic grounds as a result of the need to manage the budget and achieve maximum savings across every service area. If a Line Manager decides that a 'like for like' post is required then they must carry out a service based risk assessment outlining the impact on the service if the post was not filled for a period of time. The risk assessment does include taking on board the views and opinions of the other employees in the service team concerned.
5. The Line Manager will discuss the risk assessment with the Director and may determine that the service can continue to perform for a given period of time with the post remaining vacant. This decision will be communicated to the rest of the team, the Management Team and the Portfolio Holder with a commitment to keep the situation under review during the period that the post will remain vacant.
6. In the event that the Line Manager and Director believe that the post cannot remain vacant for any period of time or for any longer where a post has been vacant for some time the authority to recruit to the post belongs to the Chief Executive. The case to recruit to the post must be submitted to the Chief Executive who will liaise with the Section 151 Officer before making a decision. The Chief Executive will take into consideration all the details presented by the Line Manager, the latest financial position and other resource allocation options as part of the decision making process.
7. A number of other initiatives have been put in place to provide support across the authority where vacancies may occur. These include resources being shared across Directorates and the re-prioritisation of tasks to reduce the impact of vacant post on service delivery. This involves senior managers working closely together to understand service priorities and needs and to ensure that processes between front and back office teams are as efficient and effective as possible. Managers have taken a corporate 'one team' approach to tackling the current budget position and reducing the impact of vacant posts on service delivery.

8. Appendix 1 to this report is a list of the posts that are currently being held vacant across the authority as part of the initiative to achieve budget savings. The table in Appendix 1 also includes details of the impact on service delivery from holding the post vacant. The impact assessment details have been provided by the Line Manager for the service. Every current vacancy and the impact on service delivery are reviewed at the regular team brief meetings held by Line Managers.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.
Legal	There are no direct legal implications arising from the report.
Community Safety	There are no direct community safety implications.
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no direct human rights and equalities implications arising from the report.
Sustainability	There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no direct health & safety and/or risk management implications arising from this report.

Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
<b>ALLAN OLDFIELD</b>	<b>(01253) 658576</b>	<b>JANUARY 11<sup>TH</sup> 2008</b>	

List of Background Papers		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection

List of appendices

## **Appendix 1: Vacancy List & Impact Assessment.**

## Appendix 1: Vacancy List & Impact Assessment

Title of Vacancy	Number of Hours	Impact of Vacancy
ICT Projects Officer	37 hours	Delays in moving forward with several projects and upgrades on major systems are taking longer. Rolling programme of improvements is being delayed and service cover is difficult.
Corporate Administrator	17 hours	Delays and reduction in range of administrative support that can be delivered across the authority and can be difficult to provide necessary service cover on occasions when there are high levels of sickness and holiday absence.
Corporate Administrator	18.5 hours	Delays and reduction in range of administrative support that can be delivered across the authority and can be difficult to provide necessary service cover on occasions when there are high levels of sickness and holiday absence.
Support Assistant to Chief Executives & Directors Personal Assistant	37 hours	Delays in responding to correspondence, production of reports for Cabinet, Committees and Council and delays in responding to enquiries or requests for information from Members and key stakeholders. Delays in processing invoices & payments.
Scrutiny & Improvements Officer	37 hours	The approved scrutiny work programme has been reduced for the remainder of the financial year. The impact of not filling this vacancy would be to continue to work with a limited scrutiny work programme. This post is split between the scrutiny and external inspection functions. Therefore, not filling this post will also impact on the council's ability to respond to the new Comprehensive Area Assessment. It had also been envisaged that the postholder would support the Assistant Chief Executive in developing and implementing a new Consultation Strategy and progress in this will be limited without this support.
Auditor	37 hours	Unable to achieve the approved Audit Plan. Proposals for a reduced plan will be submitted to the Audit Committee later this month. Audits are currently being prioritised on the basis of greatest need/risk.
Senior Highways Technician	37 hours	Post vacated in June 2006, two attempts to recruit but no success. Post then frozen pending joint working with Wyre BC. Duties mainly now

Title of Vacancy	Number of Hours	Impact of Vacancy
		absorbed amongst remaining team with relevant honorariums being paid for additional duties. Post may be considered for deletion from establishment pending a mini restructure of the Tech services team to formalize these interim arrangements, This will leave Team void of its only Senior Engineer and will limit capacity but is achievable.
Highways Technician	37 hours	Post vacated in Oct 08. This is an essential post in the Team primarily delivering the councils flood management and land drainage responsibilities together with the management of council's pumping stations. The recent Pitt Review has placed increasing duties on the council and its role in terms of flood risk responsibilities. This role is essential to meet those requirements. The postholders duties are currently not being carried out due to reduced capacity and this will continue to be the case until an appointment is made. I therefore do not recommend deleting this post from the establishment particularly if the Senior Engineer post above is not to be filled.
Senior Waste Minimisation Officer	37 hours	Vacancy has created significant capacity issues within the team. For example reduction in promotional / education activities that could ultimately impact on the recycling rate and the waste services generally.
Parks Community Assistant	37 hours	Reduced support to the Fylde in Bloom initiative. Unable to take forward national initiatives' in terms of the Governments health agenda. NI 197 improved local biodiversity active management of local sites. Delays to the allotment review detailed in the corporate plan. FBC are missing out on external funding opportunities and an increased customer demand for additional parks supporters groups e.g. King George V, Hope Street, Mornington and Waddington playing Field are increasingly difficult to support.
Chargehand Gardener	37 hours	Front line staff position, the loss of this post combined with 2008/9 budget savings will have a long term impact on the grounds maintenance standards across the boroughs parks and green spaces. Additionally we have an increased customer expectation in terms of improvements to the boroughs parks and open spaces for example Park View 4 You, St Annes



<b>Title of Vacancy</b>	<b>Number of Hours</b>	<b>Impact of Vacancy</b>
		Square. These sites are more labour intensive to maintain. The maintenance of which has been contained within the capacity of the parks operational team. Fylde has a reputation for highly quality parks which are at the forefront of the tourism offer. A reduction of which will impact on the local economy.
Director of Operational Services	37 hours	Senior Operational Services Manager is currently acting up and filling this role. Capacity within the team has been reduced resulting in some delays in completing work.
Transport Manager	37 hours	This role is temporarily being filled by the Senior Operational Services Manger and through an interim arrangement with Preston. The arrangement with Preston is only temporary and is due to finish at the end of March 2009. It is essential that a full-time Transport Manager is in recruited and approval to proceed is currently being sought.
Workshop Manager (CVMU)	37 hours	Vacancy currently being covered through an interim arrangement with Preston.
Labourer – Fylde x 3 posts	37 hours	Vacancies currently being covered by agency staff.
Labourer – Wyre x 2 posts	37 hours	Vacancies currently being covered by agency staff.
Non LGV Driver - Wyre	37 hours	Vacancy currently being covered by agency staff.

# REPORT

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DIRECTOR STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES	PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	22 <sup>ND</sup> JANUARY 2009	7

## PROPERTY MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT WITH WYRE BC

### Public item

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

### Summary

The report provides information on the property maintenance agreement with Wyre BC which has come to an end and seeks members input into its review.

### Recommendation

That Members make recommendations to officers for the future delivery of the service.

### Cabinet Portfolio

The item falls within the following Cabinet portfolio:  
Corporate Resources & Finance: Councillor Roger Small

### Report

#### 1. Previous decisions

- 1.1. The Committee considered a report at its meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2008 on progress with the Council's Asset Management Plan. The Committee resolved that officers report back on the buildings and maintenance contract partnership with Wyre after the evaluation process in September 2008.

#### 2. Current arrangements

- 2.1. As part of the Best Value review of Asset Management in 2003 members agreed to buy in the relevant professional property services which would be overseen by the in-house Corporate Property Manager. This included estates surveying, property maintenance surveying, architectural services, quantity surveying, etc.
- 2.2. In 2004 officers approached Wyre Borough Council (WBC) to seek help and assistance in providing property maintenance surveying services on an ad hoc basis. This arrangement worked well and in 2005 a 3 year agreement was negotiated and entered into with WBC. The agreement includes management and supervision of the following:

- Day to day repairs and maintenance
- Annual servicing and repairs and maintenance
- Planned repairs and maintenance
- Asbestos management and control
- Legionella management and control
- Additional specialist advice and assistance as requested.

- 2.3. Wyre BC provide a full time surveyor, senior professional management of the service, an administrative resource along with specialist advice and assistance such as mechanical & electrical, asbestos, DDA, etc. WBC source, appoint, supervise and pay individual contractors employed which means FBC receives one invoice per month which includes a breakdown of work undertaken.
- 2.4. The current agreement expired at the end of September 2008 and has been continued on a month to month basis. It is timely that the agreement is reviewed and that members have an input into this process.

### 3. Review of service

- 3.1. There is a two stage process in reviewing these arrangements. Firstly decide upon the scope of the services to be provided. Will the services be the same or different (e.g reduction or enhancement)? Secondly who will provide the service?
- 3.2. With regard to the first issue officers consider the following services should be included in the revised arrangements:
- Energy monitoring
  - Maintenance and improvement of CCTV systems
- 3.3. With regard to the second issue there are broadly three options available:
- Renegotiate the arrangements with Wyre BC for the same or different level of service
  - Seek tenders for the work from a select list of potential providers (which may include the existing provider)
  - Bring the work in-house and FBC appoint its own resources to undertake the services required.
- 3.4. At the meeting officers will present members with more details of current performance with the arrangements and also an analysis of the pros and cons of each option. Members are asked to make recommendations for future delivery of the service.

Implications	
Finance	No direct implications
Legal	No direct implications
Community Safety	No direct implications
Human Rights and Equalities	No direct implications
Sustainability	No direct implications

Health & Safety and Risk Management	No direct implications
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Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
Paul Walker	(01253) 658431	13 <sup>th</sup> January 2009	

List of Background Papers		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection

#### Attached documents

**Performance  
Improvement Scrutiny  
Committee**



Date	20 November 2008
Venue	Reception Room, The Town Hall, Lytham St Annes
Committee members	Christine Akeroyd (Chairman)  Linda Nulty, Kathleen Harper, Paul Hayhurst, Ken Hopwood, Cheryl Little
Other Councillors	
Officers	Dave Joy, Allan Oldfield, Alex Scrivens, Annie Womack
Others	

1. Declarations of interest

Members were reminded that any personal/prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct adopted in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000.

2. Confirmation of minutes

Cllr Nulty advised that a line of discussion from the last meeting had been omitted. It had not been a recommendation of the full committee, however it was decided that it was appropriate to record the issue here: A suggestion had been made that it would be desirable to synchronise meetings of the Performance Improvement Scrutiny Committee with the Financial Monitoring reports, and the suggestion met with general consensus from the committee. The reporting officer will look at financial monitoring reporting dates for the next financial year and liaise with the Democratic Services team.

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Performance Improvement Scrutiny Committee meeting held 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008 as a correct record for signature by the chairman.

3. Substitute members

No substitutions were reported.

4. Escendency Demonstration

A demonstration of this software, and the benefits it brings to performance management, was given by Alex Scrivens (Performance and Efficiency Officer) and Cllr Cheryl Little.

All of the council's national and local indicators are loaded into the software, and the performance data for each of them is available to every councillor electronically, through Escendency.

The software is designed so as to send reminders to officers when an indicator is due to have an update with the latest performance figures, and a failure to act on this reminder by any officer would show on the system as a "no-return".

Mr Scrivens showed the committee how to choose any indicator and view it, and explained how it was possible to select more than one indicator and display them in a bar chart to permit comparisons. Indicators can also be shown as a coloured dial which gives a clear signal as to whether we are meeting the selected indicator or not.

The committee was advised that there would be a member learning hour for Escendency in December .

Escendency will also be available as a regular slot at future Performance Improvement scrutiny committee meetings so that members can examine national and local indicators of their choice in real time, and according to any exceptions which may have been highlighted in the performance reports.

Members commended the development of the software, thanked Mr Scrivens and Cllr Little for their presentation and RESOLVED:

1. To note the report

## 5. Capital Programme

This report, presented by Mr Dave Joy, Director of Corporate Resources, was brought as a result of a request from the District-Parish Liaison meeting for a review of the criteria currently being used by the Council to prioritise its capital programme. It was felt that the current requirement for a capital scheme to demonstrate borough-wide benefit excludes many parish council bids for schemes that only have a local benefit. A Task & Finish Group was convened to investigate practices in other local authorities with regard to providing capital finance for parish councils.

Mr Joy outlined the work that the group undertook. First they looked at the criteria currently being used to prioritise the council's capital programme, which is outlined in the report. They noted that the current capital programme did include schemes submitted by parishes and concluded that the current criteria was not totally excluding parishes from accessing the Council's capital programme.

The group's next task was to research how other councils prioritised their capital programme and in particular, how they dealt with parish council bids for capital finance. A short questionnaire was sent out to each of the Lancashire district councils and to each council in the Council's CIPFA 'family' group.

The results showed that most of the local authorities who responded did not include parish council bids in their capital programme. The reason given was that parish and town councils are able to borrow money for capital schemes in the same way that district councils are able to, via the Public Works Loan Board. The group then investigated the

implications of a parish council in the borough of Fylde funding its capital expenditure through the mechanism of a loan from the Public Works Loan Board. It found that the implications are related to the same issue of 'double taxation' that the borough council addressed through the introduction of differential council tax and the charging of 'special expenses' for concurrent services.

The Group concluded that neither the current situation nor the differential taxation option made much difference to the borough council's finances. However, the differential approach could give a parish council the freedom to progress with its own capital works without the fear of double taxation. They resolved to consult with the parish councils on this matter. The majority of town and parish councils that responded were in favour of applying the differential taxation approach to capital finance.

The group concluded that the key scoring criteria for the council's capital programme should be as follows:

- Health & Safety
- Statutory Responsibility
- Corporate Objectives
- Value for Money

But they were also of the view that whatever prioritisation criteria were used, the likelihood would be that parish council bids would not score highly when compared with the Council's own internal bids. And, that with the likely shortage of funds due to the current economic climate, this would be the situation for the foreseeable future.

Mr Joy then took the committee through the options appraisal and explained how the Task and Finish Group had reached their recommendation.

The group identified and considered six possible options and concluded that the course of action that would be in the best interest of the town and parish councils would be for them to make their own arrangements for capital funding and for the borough council to apply to capital funding the same differential taxation approach it currently applies to revenue (Option 6), i.e. –

- Parish Councils would no longer be invited to submit capital bids to FBC
- Parish Council would make their own arrangements to borrow capital and the repayments would be raised through the parish precept
- FBC would raise the repayments on borrowed capital for concurrent services, through special expenses in the area in question.
- FBC would continue to raise the repayments on borrowed capital for all other services through the general council tax.

The committee discussed the topic at length. Cllrs Hayhurst and Nulty provided a parish council perspective from their experience of being parish councillors. They highlighted the problems that face parishes in raising money for improvements, and in particular with applications to the Public Works Loan Board, where loans obtained might have to be paid back for many years and have a disproportionate cost to the amount borrowed. However, if parishes can obtain part capital funding from the Council, this enables them to find matched funding from elsewhere. They stated that matched funding is not available when

loans come from the Public Works Loan Board, meaning that the full cost of repayment for a project has to be found from parish precepts. In reality, without matched funding, most projects are too expensive and therefore are never realised.

The committee acknowledged that the current criteria mean that parishes are seldom able to obtain any money from the Council as borough-wide schemes take priority. Their ability to raise money is very limited.

They discussed whether it was preferable to set up a parish pot whereby parishes and local community groups, for example from an unparished area such as Lytham, could bid for capital to pay for urgently needed projects, where they would not be competing for money against borough-wide schemes.

The Task & Finish Group had considered the creation of a 'parish pot' in the options appraisal but had not recommended this as the preferred option.

The committee decided to change the recommendation from the Task & Finish group, and following a full discussion RESOLVED:

1. To recommend to Cabinet the creation of a borough capital pot that parishes and unparished communities can bid to.
2. The committee recognises that in the current economic climate this can only be an "in-principle" decision and recommends to Cabinet that until financial circumstances permit the above recommendation to be reviewed, the current arrangements should prevail.

## 6. Sicknesss Absence Performance Report

Mr Allan Oldfield (Director of Performance and Business Improvement) presented this report, which had been requested at the previous Performance Improvement scrutiny committee meeting. The report recorded that sickness and absence levels at Fylde over the 12 months preceding 30 September 2008 currently stand at 13.41 days per employee per year. However, Mr Oldfield was able to advise the committee that he had recently received the latest figures which showed a drop to 11.17 days per employee per year.

He explained that the Council has experienced worst quartile levels of sickness absence for the last 18 months. The new figure was certainly an improvement but still fell short of our target of 10.5 days.

The committee was told that, as usual, long term absence had a disproportionate effect on the figures. However, performance is now reported on a 12 month rolling period so it is possible to track the real rate for the previous 12 months and part year figures are not reported against the target. Targets can also be applied to each month to provide short term focus and a table of targets set for each of the next 12 months aimed at reducing the levels of sickness absence was provided. Mr Oldfield advised the committee that in his view it would be prudent to keep the targets under review.



Mr Oldfield explained the national terms and conditions for payment of salary during periods of absence. He covered the actions that had already been taken to try to contain the level of sickness absence, and outlined others that had been proposed such as reviewing the sickness absence management policy, with a stronger emphasis on supporting staff to a quicker return to work and the option of applying capability procedures on the grounds of frequent or continued absence leading to the inability to undertake duties and responsibilities. Other initiatives could be considered, including a non-financial reward and recognition scheme.

In response to a question, Mr Oldfield advised that 8 employees, who had been off work in excess of 2-3 months had returned to work in the last 12 months.

He was asked whether the national terms and conditions for sick pay would ever be exceeded, and said that this would only be in the most exceptional, and brief, circumstances.

The committee wanted to know what effect working from home could have on sickness records and was advised that the effect was good - people who were unable to come into work were in some circumstances able to work from home.

Closing his report, Mr Oldfield explained that this indicator will be tracked in the quarterly report.

Following the debate it was RESOLVED:

1. To approve the proposed actions outlined in the report to address poor performance in sickness absence.
2. To approve the target framework for the number of days per person per employee to be achieved over the next 12 month period.
3. To recommend that the above target frameworks be tracked to ensure that they remain challenging enough.

## 7. The Corporate Performance Quarterly Report (April - September 2008)

Allan Oldfield (Director of Performance and Business Improvement) presented a report detailing the performance to date against national and supplementary performance indicators.

The report included two appendices - the first providing the detail of the performance to date against indicators, and Appendix 2 laying out the General Fund Monitoring Report position, including progress against agreed savings targets, and any budget areas which are under- or overspent (with a variation in excess of £5000) to date. Explanations were provided from officers within the appendix of such variations in their department.

With regards to performance against indicators, Mr Oldfield reported that the Council was performing well in several key areas, and is performing to target in the majority of other indicators, two exceptions being sickness absence, and the determination of planning applications.

However, since the Head of Planning had outlined the actions he proposed to take towards improving current performance to the last Committee meeting, there had been an upturn in performance during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.

Mr Oldfield advised the committee that The Place Survey was underway, the results would be published in the New Year, and would provide the data for 25 of the NPIs.

Members wanted to know what exactly the monies referred to in FYS34 (total amount of s106 contributions committed/spent to date) had been spent on. Mr Oldfield did not have that information to hand but promised to forward it to the committee members.

They also queried NI195d - levels of flyposting, and why the target was nil. It was asked whether this indicator included lamppost signage and A-boards. Mr Oldfield explained that the indicator was at nil because we do not have a problem with flyposting here, in the accepted sense of the word i.e. illegal posting of paper notices on walls and windows. It was suggested that perhaps we could look at having a local indicator which would measure other signage.

Members commented on the number of vacant posts which had been highlighted in the Financial Monitoring Hotspots report as a reason for underspends, and were concerned about the impact on services of posts remaining unfilled.

Following the debate it was RESOLVED:

1. To request Mr Oldfield to bring to the next meeting an analysis of vacant posts, and a risk assessment of the consequences of leaving those posts unfilled.

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