

**Performance  
Improvement Scrutiny  
Committee**



Date	23 July 2009
Venue	Reception Room, The Town Hall, Lytham St Annes
Committee members	Keith Hyde (Chairman) Christine Akeroyd (Vice Chairman) Linda Nulty, Kathleen Harper, Ken Hopwood, Lyndsay Greening, John Singleton, Craig Halewood
Other Councillors	
Officers	Allan Oldfield, Paul Walker; 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

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Performance Improvement Scrutiny Committee meeting held 23 April 2009 as a correct record for signature by the chairman.

3. Substitute members

The following substitutions were reported under council procedure rule 22.3:

No substitutions

4. Skills Audit

Mr Allan Oldfield, Director of Customer and Operational Services, presented this topic to the committee. The purpose of the report was to provide members with details of the outcome of the recent skills audit undertaken at Fylde BC.

He explained that at a previous committee meeting there had been a report on vacant posts, as a result of which the committee had recommended a council-wide skills audit to obtain an up-to-date and accurate picture of the skills and abilities of the workforce that

could be used in workforce and succession planning. The skills audit would also support decisions made about project teams and potential secondment or resource reallocation opportunities.

It was intended that the information collected would be put into the online HR Vision system to help maintain an accurate record for each employee, which would be updated as appropriate.

The skills audit form was promoted for a period of six weeks , but unfortunately the response had been poor with only 8.4% of staff completing it. It is not a compulsory requirement to complete a skills audit form.

Mr Oldfield asked members to consider the approach taken to this work to date and make any appropriate suggestions that would support increased participation.

After some debate the committee RESOLVED:

- 1 To commend those employees who had taken the time to complete the form
- 2 To recommend that the skills audit should be an integral part of the appraisals process for 2010/11, and for all new employees thereafter
- 3 That Mr Oldfield should be asked to update the appraisal forms for the following year to incorporate the skills audit.

## 5. Corporate Complaints Process

Mr Oldfield introduced this report also, which had been produced in response to a request from the Leader of the Council to review the systems and procedures in place for capturing, reporting and analysing complaints against the Council. The focus of the review was to establish a process across the authority for capturing and reporting all complaints that are made against the Council.

The review team had mapped the existing procedures in place across the authority; constructively challenged the way things are currently done and developed a revised process that will be implemented across the organisation.

Mr Oldfield explained that the review had revealed that a number of different processes were in place across the authority. Although these worked well, no overall corporate record of complaints was maintained.

They had also identified that very few service areas had established written procedures in place to record and analyse complaints. There was no evidence of complaints being evaluated to look for trends or identify the root cause. He said that the failure to record complaints effectively removes the opportunity to evaluate and review them and subsequently improve service delivery.

Mr Oldfield presented the committee with a proposal for dealing with complaints corporately, recording them accurately to enable analysis, responding to them quickly and appropriately, and a process for escalation of unresolved complaints.

Mr Oldfield explained that the review team will monitor the application of the process over the first six months and obtain feedback from users to establish their levels of satisfaction with the process and identify any areas for improvement.

He further said that the Corporate Complaints Group would be responsible for co-ordinating all the data from the corporate system and service based systems in order to compile performance data for Escendency, web publication and reports to this committee the first one of which would be in October 2009.

The committee RESOLVED:

1. To recommend approval of the proposed complaints procedure subject to an initial six months pilot and review.
2. To advocate that all elected members support and champion the single corporate complaints system in order to receive the most efficient service.
3. To receive a dedicated performance report every six months providing full details of complaints received and actions taken.

#### 6. The Place Survey Results Analysis

This report was introduced to the committee by Mr Alex Scrivens, Performance and Efficiency Officer. It provided further details of the key outcomes from the National Place Survey and placed them in context with the national results that were published in June 2009. Details of the national averages for district councils appeared in the report with Fylde's performance placed in context, enabling members to better understand the Place Survey outcomes and identify the strengths and weaknesses at Fylde.

Mr Scrivens went through the relevant data with the committee, highlighting specific areas where responses indicated that Fylde was doing very well, and also those where it was apparent that some improvement could be made.

Overall, the picture for Fylde was good. In particular, 86% of Fylde residents were satisfied with their local area as a place to live. However, sport and leisure had a low approval rating and requires work to be done in that area. Parks and open spaces had an average rating.

The committee was told that the data gave a reliable picture of performance and satisfaction and could be used for decision-making and setting service priorities.

The committee RESOLVED:

- 1 To recommend that all members recognise and champion the positive outcomes from the Place Survey.
- 2 To recommend that all members take account of service areas where performance needs to be improved, and take that into consideration in the scrutiny of performance.

7. 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Performance Progress Report 2009/10

This report was also presented to the committee by Mr Oldfield, detailing the performance against national and local performance indicators. It also outlined some changes made to performance reporting arrangements.

The purpose of the report was to ensure that the committee has performance information available to make informed decisions on any potential performance shortfalls and areas that may require further scrutiny in order to support performance.

Mr Oldfield highlighted areas where the authority has performed well, and also where it has performed less well.

He mentioned the authority's failure to improve the equality standard score, which will make a significant contribution to the CAA score. The Leader of the Council is undertaking IDeA training as part of CAA peer inspection work and will be lending support to the equality work, to enable the council to progress against the new national criteria.

Sickness levels remain high, though there have been new procedures in place for the last month which may provide for improvements as they bed in. However, there were concerns that swine flu could have an adverse impact.

The number of missed bins had risen sharply and officers have been asked to focus on quality of service rather than speed.

Mr Oldfield advised the committee that changes had been made to performance reporting arrangements, with Cabinet agreeing that the Performance Improvement Committee should take the lead role on all performance reporting matters. The Performance Exception Report that had been presented at every Cabinet meeting was now removed from the agenda as a standing item. The reason for this was because the Chairman of the Performance Improvement Committee presents scrutiny recommendations, including those relating to performance issues to every Cabinet meeting.

Members asked questions regarding certain of the indicators and targets, such as the number of homeless people in temporary accommodation.

Previously the question of s106 monies had been raised, including queries about the figures given as received and committed.

Mr Walker, Director of Strategic Development had attended this committee for the specific purpose of providing detail for the members. He explained to them about planning obligations, the planning applications process and legal frameworks. He explained that s106 monies due were closely monitored through building completion certificates.

He provided detailed charts to the members which showed very clearly what monies had been paid by developers to the Council and what was still due. It showed where money had been spent by the Council, and also where it had been committed but not yet spent.

Members asked some questions about specific developments, and overall were pleased to have such a clear explanation given to them.

Following the debate it was RESOLVED:

1. To note the report and in particular the change to the reporting arrangements.
2. To thank Mr Walker for his presentation

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