



FYLDE BOROUGH COUNCIL



Meeting Agenda

Performance Improvement Scrutiny Committee
Town Hall, St Annes
20 July 2006, 7.00pm

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP

CHAIRMAN - Councillor Keith Hyde
VICE-CHAIRMAN – Councillor Fabian Wilson

Councillors

Christine Akeroyd	Derek Lancaster
Eric Bamber	Keith Wright
Elizabeth Clarke	Hilda Wilson
John Dolan	

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



CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

The Council's investment and activities are focused on achieving our five key objectives which aim to :

- Conserve, protect and enhance the quality of the Fylde natural and built environment
- Work with partners to help maintain safe communities in which individuals and businesses can thrive
- Stimulate strong economic prosperity and regeneration within a diverse and vibrant economic environment
- Improve access to good quality local housing and promote the health and wellbeing and equality of opportunity of all people in the Borough
- Ensure we are an efficient and effective council.

CORE VALUES

In striving to achieve these objectives we have adopted a number of key values which underpin everything we do :

- Provide equal access to services whether you live in town, village or countryside,
- Provide effective leadership for the community,
- Value our staff and create a 'can do' culture,
- Work effectively through partnerships,
- Strive to achieve 'more with less'.



A G E N D A

PART I - MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE

ITEM	PAGE
1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: <i>In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, members are 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.</i>	4
2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES: <i>To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the Performance Improvement Community Forum held on 25 May 2006.</i>	4
3. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS: <i>Details of any substitute members notified in accordance with council procedure rule 25.3</i>	4
4. FIRST QUARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT 2006/07	5 – 11
5. THE EFFICIENCY STATEMENT PROGRESS REPORT	12 – 33
6. ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANNING	33 – 43
7. REVIEW OF CUSTOMER SERVICES	44 – 48
8. LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL LETTER AND REPORT 2005/06	48 – 55

REPORT



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
POLICY & CHANGE MANAGEMENT	PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE	JULY 20 TH 2006	4

FIRST QUARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT 2006/07

Public/Exempt item

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

Summary

The report outlines the performance of the Council during the period April 1st 2006 to June 30th 2006 measured against key performance indicators agreed by the committee. Performance in other key areas and any significant performance issues during the first quarter are highlighted in the report.

Recommendations

1. That the committee scrutinises the first quarters performance against the key indicators and makes any appropriate recommendations to officers and / or portfolio holders to ensure that all indicators are on target.
2. That the committee agrees the revised target for BVPI 2b (the duty to promote race equality) from 80% to 50%.
3. That the committee agrees the revised target for BVPI 8 (the payment of undisputed invoices within 30 days) from 100% to 97%.
4. That the committee agrees the revised local performance target for the number of online transactions from 50 to 800.
5. That the committee agrees for the Chair and Vice Chair to receive the benefits service and Streetscene BVPI 199 first quarter figures as soon as they are available and make any appropriate recommendations to the portfolio holder.

Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder for corporate performance is Councillor Sue Fazackerley.

Report

1. Appendix 1 provides the first quarter performance figures against the key national and local performance indicators that the committee agreed to have presented throughout 2006/07. The performance is placed in context with the target for 2006/07, the final out turn for 2005/06 and the latest available top, bottom and average performance figures for all district councils in England.
2. The green highlight indicates that performance is on track to achieve the end of year target agreed by the committee. The red highlights indicate that performance is not on track to achieve the end of year target agreed. An explanation is provided below for those indicators that are highlighted red, along with details of the actions to be taken to ensure that performance will be improved.
3. The figures for the benefits service key quarterly BVPI's (78a, 78b, 79a and 79bi) and the Streetscene BVPI 199 could not be produced in time for the committee reporting deadline due to the nature of the calculations and the systems used to produce the figures. The reporting time frame from June 30th on this occasion is quite tight for some of the indicators required. The first quarter figures will be reported to the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee as soon as they are available and if any necessary action is required it will be arranged through the Portfolio Holder. This will allow any necessary corrective action to take place immediately. The figures will also be presented to the committee on September 21st 2006.
4. The duty to promote race equality has now been integrated with the wider duty to promote equality along the six key criteria of gender, sexual preference, age, ethnicity, religion and disability. The performance measure though currently only deals with race (ethnicity) and Fylde has bigger challenges with age, disability and gender issues that resources will be dedicated to addressing. As a result the initial target of 80% for the duty to promote race alone has been revised to 50% for the 2006/07 financial year. Members are asked to approve this change to the target figure.
5. BVPI 8, the payment of undisputed invoices within 30 working days is below target for the first quarter and therefore when the cumulative figure is calculated for the year end it will be impossible to achieve 100%. As a result the target has been reviewed and adjusted to 97% in line with the top quartile for all England district councils. Performance is monitored each month by the Management Team and the reasons for unpaid invoices that are not disputed are investigated with the aim of preventing future late payment.
6. BVPI 12, the sickness figure is on target to achieve the end of year performance of 10.5 days. If levels can be kept at the current rate the end of year figure would be 9.56 days per employee, however, the winter months traditionally witness greater levels of sickness. The council currently only has 4 employees on long term sick leave that are going through the back to work policy. Two employees have recently come off long term sick leave that immediately reduces sickness by 40 days a month.
7. Council tax and business rates collection for the quarter are in line with the same period last year and it is normal to have more than a quarter of amount collected during the first period because several accounts are paid in full at the beginning of the year. The council now has 70.8% of council tax customers on direct debit arrangements, one of the highest figures in the region.

8. Although the percentage of household waste recycled is slightly below the target of 18% the trend is for a greater amount of waste to be recycled in the summer and autumn months. The situation is different for the garden waste sent to compost (BVPI 82bi) which is above target but the spring and summer months are the best.
9. BVPI 64 the number of private sector dwellings returned to occupation is currently below target having achieved 10% of the target 25% into the year. The target was set based on the number of known private sector dwellings that are unfit for occupation. The Housing team sends out a questionnaire every month to the owners of each property that is unfit. At present the majority of these properties are on the market for sale in their current state or there is renovation work already under way. This means at present there is limited demand although there are several currently in the system to be returned back to occupation. At this stage the target is being retained and will be reviewed after the second quarter figures are published.
10. The tonnage of waste collected is slightly above target (BVPI 84a) with the out turn forecast at 451 kg at the current level. However, there are seasonal fluctuations in the amount of waste collected and the figure is less than the same period last year.
11. The reporting and removal of abandoned vehicles is slightly behind target at the first quarter. The percentages only represent a small number of incidents and the Streetscene team is confident that they will recover the performance during the year to achieve the target.
12. Performance against the planning indicators 109b and 109c is well below target. The planning team is working to address a backlog of applications that have built up since December 2005. Current performance levels are in the bottom quartile when compared against all English district councils. The officers in charge of the planning service will be present at the committee to outline the actions being taken to address this performance.
13. The performance of the customer service team in respect of answering the calls is below target. In April and early May the figure was influenced by large mail shots to customers from three key areas simultaneously (Council Tax, Benefits and Trade Waste) resulting in several thousand additional calls over this period. Closer working between the various teams has been established and the council is learning from this experience. Since early May the answered call rate has been as high as 92% in any week and the figure for June was 81%. The Portfolio Holder for customer services is monitoring performance on a weekly basis and the Overview and Scrutiny committee has commissioned a full review of the service to date. Performance from the customer satisfaction survey is excellent, even the one area slightly behind target shows 93% customer satisfaction.
14. The number of on line requests for services or information has increased from 203 to 1062 when compared with the same period last year. The continued development of on line services is one of the means of addressing the volume of calls channelled through the call centre. The target of 5000 will be achieved with the planned increase in the number of on line services and the national take up campaign.
15. The online applications represent the planning and job applications. Later in the year licensing applications will be possible on line and work is under way to have every form of application to the council available on line. The significant increase in performance has led to a review of the target figure from 50 on line applications to 800 for the year.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
Legal	There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.
Community Safety	There are no direct community safety implications arising from this report.
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no direct human rights and equalities implications arising from this 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
ALLAN OLDFIELD	(01253) 658576	JULY 10TH 2006	

List of Background Papers		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Audit commission bvpi definitions	January 2006	www.audit-commission.gov.uk/performance/guidance.asp
Audit commission bvpi out turns	January 2006	www.audit-commission.gov.uk/performance/dataprovision.asp

List of appendices

Appendix 1: The key performance indicators first quarter out turns 2006/07.

KEY: Performance Context

	Performance is not on target
	Performance is on target
	Information was not submitted for the report

National BVPI Indicator to be reported on a quarterly basis		All England Top	All England Average	All England Bottom	Actual 2005/06	1 st Quarter Progress to Date	Target 2006/07
BVPI 2 b)	The duty to promote race equality.	63%	48.96%	37%	37%	37%	80%
BVPI 8	Percentage of undisputed invoices which were paid within 30 days of receipt or within agreed payment terms.	97%	93.28%	91.06%	92.29%	95.18%	100%
BVPI 9	The percentage of Council Tax collected by the Authority in the year.	98.5%	97.8%	97.31%	97.46%	30.24	98.1%
BVPI 10	The percentage of Non-Domestic Rates collected by the Authority in the year.	99.2%	98.63%	98.22%	97.33%	31.49	98.4%
BVPI 12	Number of working days/shifts lost to the Authority due to sickness absence (per FTE)	8.48 days	9.78 days	11.10 days	11.67 days	2.39 days	10.5 days
BVPI 64	The number of private sector vacant dwellings returned into occupation or demolished during the financial year as a direct result of action by authority.	25	19.83	2	8	2	20
BVPI 202	The number of people sleeping rough within a single night within the area of the Authority.	New PI no comparison data			5	0-5	0-5
BVPI 203	The % change in the average number of families placed in temporary accommodation compared with the average from the previous year.	-9.40%	12.87%	25.21%	54.55%	-48%	-5%
BVPI 213	The number of households who considered themselves as homeless, who approached the LHA's housing advice service and for whom housing advice casework intervention resolved their situation (No. per 1000 households).	New PI no comparison data			0	0.14	1

National BVPI Indicator to be reported on a quarterly basis		All England Top	All England Average	All England Bottom	Actual 2005/06	1 st Quarter Progress to Date	Target 2006/07
BVPI 214	The proportion of households accepted as statutorily homeless who were accepted as statutorily homeless by the same Authority within the last 2 years.	New PI no comparison data			0%	0%	0%
BVPI 78 a)	Housing/Council Tax Benefit - Average time for processing new claim (calendar days)	28 days	35.6 days	40.6 days	43.1 days	Data unavailable	35 days
BVPI 78 b)	Housing/Council Tax Benefit - Average time for processing notifications of changes in circumstances (calendar days)	6.8 days	10.5 days	12.4 days	7.9 days	Data unavailable	7 days
BVPI 79 a)	Percentage of cases within a random sample for which the calculation of benefit due was correct.	99%	97.56%	96.8%	98.60%	Data unavailable	98.6%
BVPI 79 bi)	The amount of Housing Benefit overpayments recovered during the period being reported on as a percentage of HB deemed recoverable overpayments during that period.	53.59%	44.71%	35.10%	85.81%	Data unavailable	87%
BVPI 82 ai)	The percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the Authority for recycling	19.33%	16.08%	12.36%	15.93%	15.43	18%
BVPI 82 bi)	The percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the Authority for composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion .	10.55%	6.49%	4.24%	20.46%	26.78%	22%
BVPI 84 a	Kilogrammes of household waste collected per head of authority population.	380.4kg	412.3kg	442.8kg	426.1kg	112.80kg	418kg
BVPI 199 a)	The proportion of relevant land and highways (%) that is assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus that fall below an acceptable level.	10%	16.3%	21.5%	8.1%	Data unavailable	8%
BVPI 166 a)	Score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for - Environmental Health	90%	79%	70%	98.6%	TBA	100%
BVPI 218 a)	The percentage of new reports of abandoned vehicles investigated within 24 hours of notification.	New PI no comparison data			41.67%	63%	70%

National BVPI Indicator to be reported on a quarterly basis		All England Top	All England Average	All England Bottom	Actual 2005/06	1 st Quarter Progress to Date	Target 2006/07
BVPI 218 b)	The percentage of abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours from the point at which the Authority is legally entitled to remove the vehicle	New PI no comparison data			90.91%	80%	95%
BVPI 109 a)	The percentage of major commercial and industrial planning applications determined within 13 weeks	71.25%	59.05%	46.87%	43.1%	100%	65%
BVPI 109 b)	The percentage of minor commercial and industrial planning applications determined within 8 weeks	75.28%	67.56%	61%	72.00%	40.63%	75%
BVPI 109 c)	The percentage of other planning applications determined within 8 weeks	88.01%	82.79%	79.98%	83.27%	54.95%	90%
BVPI 205	The Authorities score against a 'Quality of Planning Services' checklist	88.9%	77.5%	72%	77.7%	77.7%	90%

Local Indicator (Various)	Actual 2005/06	1st Quarter Progress to Date	Target 2006/07
The percentage of phone calls answered within 30 seconds	50%	35%	65%
The percentage of phone calls to 01253 658658 answered during working hours	77%	73%	85%
The percentage satisfaction with the service delivered by the customer service team	96%	98%	98%
The percentage of people satisfied with the length of time they had to wait when contacting the council	95%	93%	96%
The percentage of people who felt that the level of comfort and facilities in the one stop shops were 'good' or 'very good'	96%	100%	98%
The total number of online applications made to the Council	9	274	800
The total number of online requests for service / information to the Council	2511	1062	5000
The total number of unique visitors to the web site www.fylde.gov.uk	49080	19633	62000
The number of days sickness and absence per employee that is not long term sickness	5.16 days	1.01	4 days
The number of missed bins per 100,000 collections	30	24	<50

REPORT



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
FINANCE & EFFICIENCY	OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT	JULY 20 TH	5

THE EFFICIENCY STATEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

Public item

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

Summary

The report provides an update on the efficiency work at Fylde in the format agreed by the committee and details of the backward looking statement submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Recommendations

1. That the committee examines the detail of the report and outlines any appropriate actions or further reporting that will support the delivery of the efficiency programme at Fylde.
2. That the committee approves the action plan for 2006/07 and agrees to receive progress reports throughout the year.

Executive brief

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Efficiency is Councillor Paul Rigby.

The Report

1. This is the third progress report to the committee on the efficiency work being carried out at Fylde.
2. The table included in Appendix 1 is presented in the format agreed by the committee at the July 25th 2005 meeting and provides the end year position of the actions carried out to achieve the efficiency savings at Fylde in 2005/06.

3. The actions highlighted in green have been achieved and the savings realised, the actions highlighted in red have not been achieved. Despite some of the intended savings not being made the Council has achieved the required efficiency savings for 2005/06 (subject to audit) of £270,000 of which at least £135,000 must be cash savings. The Council had always planned to undertake more than enough actions to achieve the required savings in order to allow for some actions not being possible during 2005/06.
4. The key specific actions that have contributed to the efficiency savings are listed below:
- Shared service arrangements in place with Blackpool to deliver a joint revenues and benefits service.
 - An increase in the number of electronic payments to and from suppliers, customers and contractors.
 - An increase in the number of planning applications dealt with using the same resources.
 - Winning two grounds maintenance tenders in open competition.
 - Merging the streetscene services and delivering the waste collection and cleansing services for Wyre Borough Council.
 - Transferring employees from weekly pay to monthly pay and streamlining the pay roll system.
 - Use of OGC (Office of Government Commerce) frameworks and contract agreements for the procurement of goods and services.
 - Development of in house expertise and skills through training and developing rather than external consultants and agency employees.
 - Improved IT systems to support transactions e.g. revenues, benefits, finance, planning and licensing.
 - Partnership working with friends groups and training providers to improve the local community, sharing resources to achieve more.
5. Appendix 2 is a copy of the Forward Looking Efficiency Statement that the Council submitted in April 2006. The Forward Looking Statement outlines the efficiency savings that will be achieved during the previous 12 months. The format of the Forward Looking Statement is determined by the DCLG and focuses on the higher level outcomes as opposed to the individual actions.
6. Appendix 3 are the key actions extracted from the 2006/07 Forward Looking Statement and placed in the action plan format that the committee has previously agreed to use for reporting progress. The efficiency agenda is going to become more challenging because the Council has to achieve further savings this year. The Section 151 Officer and the Executive Manager for Policy and Performance will be implementing a more systematic approach to the measurement and management of efficiency savings that will include process improvement reviews of key back office functions.

7. Members of the committee are reminded that the efficiency savings cannot come from front line or service cuts, the extract below from the guidance produced by the DCLG is a reminder to members of what is included as an efficiency and more importantly what is not included:

Efficiency is **not about cuts**, but about **raising productivity** and **enhancing value for money**. Efficiency gains accrue when projects achieve one or more of the following:

- Reducing inputs (money, people, assets, etc) for the same outputs
- Reducing prices (procurement, labour costs, etc) for the same outputs
- Getting greater outputs or improved quality (extra service, productivity, etc) for the same inputs
- Getting more outputs or improved quality in return for an increase in resources that is proportionately less than the increase in output or quality

Certain types of activity **are not** acceptable as efficiency gains:

- Re-labelling of activity (e.g. reclassifying inspection as advice)
- Cuts that result in poorer services for the public
- Increased income purely from higher prices in fees and charges to the public

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The council is committed to delivering at least £270,000 of efficiency savings in 2005/06 with at least £130,000 being direct cash savings.
Legal	There are no direct legal implications.
Community Safety	There are no direct Community Safety implications.
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no direct Human Rights and Equalities implications.
Sustainability	The efficiency savings must be sustainable because the savings have to be carried through year on year achieving a total efficiency saving of £810,000 over a three year period.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no direct H&S or Risk Assessment implications.

REPORT AUTHOR	TEL	DATE	DOC ID
Allan Oldfield	(01253) 658576	July 10 th 2006	

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS		
NAME OF DOCUMENT	DATE	WHERE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION
Efficiency Technical Note and Guidance	May 2006	DCLG or http://www.dclg.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1133902
Efficiency Review	December 2004	www.audit-commission.gov.uk

Attached documents

Appendix 1: The Efficiency Action Plan 2005/06 – Progress to March 31st 2006

Appendix 2: The 2005/06 Backward Looking Efficiency Statement

Appendix 3: The Efficiency Action Plan 2006/07 – Progress to June 30th 2006.

THE EFFICIENCY STATEMENT ACTION PLAN 2005/06

Implement the trust option report recommendations	Paul Norris	Number of options implemented by March 2006	Minimal £'s / service improvement	The options plan has been completed but any efficiency savings will be realised in the next financial year and beyond.
Deliver new grounds maintenance contracts	Paul Norris	Contracts in place and implemented	£28,000*	Action completed by May 2005.
Develop 'sweat equity' programme to more areas	Paul Norris	Number of volunteer schemes in place in new locations.	£8000	Several successful schemes are already in place with Friends groups e.g. Park View and other schemes are being planned.
Achieve sponsorship of community landscaped areas	Ian Curtis	Contracts signed for sponsorship deals for at least £1000.	£1000 (income)	Practices and policies have been examined at other local authorities but this income efficiency has not been achieved due to the lack of capacity to take on the work.
Develop user take up strategy for leisure services in Fylde	Paul Norris	Strategy approved by committee and being implemented.	Improved service	Actions from the strategy are being implemented across the council leisure services and in partnership with other leisure providers.
Achieve on line interactive e-applications for all services	Allan Oldfield	Percentage of services delivered on line that can be e-enabled.	Improved service through efficiency	The Council has achieved 100% against BVPI 157 and on line interactions are increasing exponentially.
Restructure supervisory arrangements in Streetscene	David Jenkinson	New structure on establishment.	£50,000*	Action completed by May 2005 and there has been an increase in performance levels as evidenced by BVPI 199 indicator.
Achieve economies of scale through the Wyre contract	David Jenkinson	Economies of scale in place and evidence in budgets.	£50,000*	Action completed by May 2005 and efficiencies have been realised.

THE EFFICIENCY STATEMENT ACTION PLAN 2005/06

Key Action	Lead Officer	Measurement	Efficiency Saving (£)	Progress / Status Report
Merge grounds maintenance with Streetscene services	David Jenkinson	One service area responsible for Streetscene services & grounds maintenance.	£10,000*	The grounds maintenance and parks service are now part of the Streetscene unit and shared resources are delivering benefits.
Provide in house service to manage DFG's & grants	John Cottam	In house service in place and managing grants.	£30,000	New employees have been appointed to operate the in house service but the income from the service will not be fully realised until the new financial year.
Cease to use bed and breakfast option in homeless service	John Cottam	No bed and breakfast services evident in BVPI.	£1000*	Bed and breakfast provision is on an emergency basis only and limited to single people – reductions are being achieved.
Reduce paper use & postage through e-communication	Allan Oldfield	Budget at end of year shows the reduction.	£5,000*	New systems in place to provide information to stakeholders will realise the savings in 2006/07.
Transfer all employees on to monthly pay terms	Lorraine Charlesworth	Payroll records have no weekly paid full time staff.	£3000*	Action completed by May 2005
Implement changes to legal team to save on fees	Ian Curtis	End of year budget shows reduction in fees.	£8000*	Recent changes in roles and responsibility have ensured that the legal team has the capacity to focus on taking on board legal work that would have gone to consultants.
Implement document imaging system	Allan Oldfield	At least four service areas using system by March 2006.	£2000* and improved services	Progress on this project has met several challenges with linking various electronic systems. The planning and building control service are live with revenues and benefits to go live in September 2006.

THE EFFICIENCY STATEMENT ACTION PLAN 2005/06

Key Action	Lead Officer	Measurement	Efficiency Saving (£)	Progress / Status Report
Develop & implement business process re-engineering	Allan Oldfield	BPR plan and process approved and being implemented.	Improved services through efficiency	Process improvement mapping is currently taking place and baseline costs established.
Integrate debtors, creditors & internal cashiers	Brian White	New arrangements represented on the establishment.	£9000*	Integration has taken place and the new systems are now in place. The accounts team is being restructured to reflect the new working practices.
Electronic payments to reduce bank charges	Brian White	Percentage of all payments made electronically.	£3000*	Almost 50% of payments to suppliers are now being made by BACS as opposed to a cheque being sent (this impacts on the postal costs as well).
Implement corporate research initiatives	Paul Norris	Research process in place and evidence of implementation.	Improved services through efficiency	Listening Day has been carried out and proved to be a success and the Statement of Community Involvement has been approved and is in place. On line consultations and polls are being used.
Develop and implement an Access to Services strategy	Allan Oldfield	Strategy approved by committee and being implemented.	Improved services through efficiency	The strategy has been integrated into the Communications Strategy and approved by Council.
E-enable internal expense claim processes	Lorraine Charlesworth	On line system in place and users registered.	Improved services through efficiency	On line is being piloted by three sections and will be rolled out across the Council in 2006.
Restructure corporate phone system to reduce rental charges	Allan Oldfield	End of year budget shows an appropriate reduction in costs.	£15,000*	Several recurring charges have been removed and savings realised from the closure of the Wesham office and the use of interfaces to convert mobile calls to a cheaper rate.

THE EFFICIENCY STATEMENT ACTION PLAN 2005/06

Key Action	Lead Officer	Measurement	Efficiency Saving (£)	Progress / Status Report
Implement E-auctions and e-tender process	Allan Williams	Evidence of e-auction procurement.	Improved services through efficiency	The Procurement Officer is working with the North West Centre of Excellence on forthcoming e-auctions – to date Fylde has not been involved in any e-auctions.
Use the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) services to reduce administration / paper / time	Allan Williams	Reduction in time of tender process and secure best market prices / discounts through joint procurement terms.	£2000	OGC already used for phones, utilities and recent tenders – efficiencies are being achieved and may be even higher than £2000 when the budgets are published.
Increased joint procurement through partnerships	Allan Williams	Savings achieved by procuring in partnership in £'s.	Improved services through efficiency	The Procurement Officer has set up several joint procurement arrangements with Wyre for stationery, travel and furniture securing better prices through the guarantee of greater volume.
Engage in Centre of Excellence projects	David Jenkinson	Officer engagement and council involvement evident in projects.	Improved services through efficiency	Fylde is a member of the Centre of Excellence and is involved in several projects.
Implement 'Jobsgopublic' initiative for all posts	Lorraine Charlesworth	Reduction made to initial budget and advertisement costs.	£8,000*	Action completed by May 2005 and efficiencies are being achieved.
Develop & promote the use of purchase cards	Brian White	Increased number of transactions made through the cards.	Improved services through efficiency	Cards are being used for more and more small transactions to reduce the invoice processing cost. The Procurement Officer will be transferring the card scheme to OGC terms.
Procure alternative transport arrangements for the Mayor	Ian Curtis	End of year budget shows appropriate savings.	£26,000*	Action completed by May 2005
Introduce corporate fleet fuelling service	David Jenkinson	End of year budget shows appropriate savings.	£5000*	Action completed by May 2005

THE EFFICIENCY STATEMENT ACTION PLAN 2005/06

Key Action	Lead Officer	Measurement	Efficiency Saving (£)	Progress / Status Report
Develop and introduce a Home Working Policy	Allan Oldfield	Policy approved by committee and is being implemented.	Improved services through efficiency	Action completed by May 2005
Enforce sickness & absence procedures to reduce days sick	Lorraine Charlesworth	Monthly monitoring & quarterly reporting of figures.	£5,000	Policy and monitoring are in place but the sickness rates have not improved over the year, they have remained constant.
Increase e-payments and reduce paper based invoices	Brian White	Number of e-payments increased & number of paper ones reduced	£4000	E-payment systems for BT, mobile phones, stationery and other goods in place. This contributes to savings on postage and administration as well.
Reduce cash and cheque payments	Brian White	End of year budget shows appropriate savings.	£2000*	Cash payments reduced at One Stop Shops and an increasing number of people are paying for services by debit cards with credit cards also being introduced.
Increase income from planning application increases	Mark Evans	End of year income shows appropriate increase.	£75,000*	Increased income has been realised and the efficiency target is likely to be met.
Extend use of Box Office facility to leisure services	Paul Norris	Number of bookings taken for all services through Box Office.	£4000	Use of the Box Office facility has increased however no progress has been made to date on extending electronic bookings to other leisure services.
Implement new revenues & benefits system with Blackpool	Brian White	Project plan delivered with Anite.	£60,000*	Shared IT platforms are in place and new systems procured in partnership that is saving a minimum £50,000 on systems revenue support costs.

THE EFFICIENCY STATEMENT ACTION PLAN 2005/06

Key Action	Lead Officer	Measurement	Efficiency Saving (£)	Progress / Status Report
Extend use of network copier facility & reduce desktops	Andrew Marriott	End of year reduction in printer and print consumable costs.	£5000*	Networked copying is in place but there is still evidence of extensive use of desktop printers in some areas and the efficiency savings not achieved.
Closure of the Wesham office facility	Paul Walker	End of year budget shows appropriate savings.	£10,000*	All employees out of Wesham by May 2005 – action is complete though the office is still used for some meetings.
Integrate more services into the call centre & One Stop Shop	Dave Joy	Percentage of contacts handled at first point by staff.	Improved services through efficiency	Customer services staff handle most customer calls for CTAX, benefits, streetscene, cultural services, planning and consumer well being.
Restructure management in response to personnel changes	Phil Woodward	Changes shown on establishment.	£20,000*	Management structure changes have taken place and savings reported to Cabinet.
Review books and periodical subscriptions	Ian Curtis	End of year budget shows appropriate savings	£1000*	Some subscriptions have shifted to electronic formats and others are under review to be stopped in 2006 – the saving will be achieved.
Planning costs reduced as a result of Acolaid system	Mark Evans	End of year budget shows appropriate savings	£5,000*	Extension of the Acolaid planning systems capability has been implemented.
Achieve maximum use for all council assets	Paul Walker	Accommodation and associated plans realise full potential.	Improved services through efficiency	The revised Asset Management Plan is in place and a review of all assets is being carried out.
Delivering the same level of service performance with reduced resources	Brian White	Reduction on salary cost in areas where service has been maintained with fewer resources	£30,000*	Several service areas have been able to maintain service performance with a temporary reduction in resources.

Many of the improved service efficiencies will lead to savings that it is not possible to quantify at this stage and it is likely they will be realised in the second and third year efficiencies.

The * represents cash savings as opposed to efficiency gains that are translated into cash equivalents. An example of an efficiency gain being represented as a cash equivalent (termed non cashable) is sickness absence that translates as a £52 per day per employee cost based on national local authority standard measurement.

Annual efficiency statement - backward look

Details

Local authority Fylde Borough Council

Contact name Allan Oldfield

Job title Executive Manager for Policy and Performance

Email address allano@fylde.gov.uk

Statement

Key actions undertaken to achieve efficiency gain

The Council has implemented a strategy to secure efficiency gains since April 2003 introducing new administrative structure as part of a wider culture change programme to move from a traditional bureaucratic local authority to a modern efficient business. This structure has been further modernised and has improved the capacity and resource allocation across the Council.

To improve efficiency and effectiveness the Council has extended partnership work with the public, private and voluntary sector. Work already undertaken has led to the transfer of services to partners, the outsourcing of services to a third party, an increase in the use of shared technology to deliver services and a corporate call centre and one stop shop that has seen the transfer of resources from 'back office' to 'front end' service delivery. This approach fits with the national efficiency review and the council has implemented changes that have resulted in all first point of customer contact being channelled through a corporate service team. Technology has been used to remove paper from all systems and transactions that has sped up service delivery, increased the quality of the customer experience with Fylde and released additional resources for front end service delivery. The IEG outcomes have been achieved by the Council and the technological solutions have been integrated through business process improvement to achieve the transformational strategy requirements.

Strong leadership, the development of effective corporate planning systems and the introduction of good performance management practices are foundations that the council have put in place to deliver the efficiency and transformation strategy. Several systems have been implemented to support the efficiency work at Fylde which include:

1. Improved service and financial planning frameworks to ensure that plans are developed in line with available resources and that continuous improvement is built into service delivery.
2. An effective joint procurement strategy with Wyre Borough Council and an associated e-procurement

strategy that 'fit' with the organisational requirements and e-government outcomes.

3. The development and implementation of a project management framework in line with Prince 2 principles and regular monitoring of project work at senior management level.
4. A performance management framework that has been developed and improved over the last 3 years and makes a clear link between the corporate objectives and priorities to the work carried out on the ground at the front end of service delivery.
5. Change management and capacity building initiatives implemented to support the improvement agenda based around business process improvement methods.
6. Maximum use of council assets through an effective strategic approach and a clear government approved 'good' asset plan.

A key theme running through the efficiency agenda at Fylde is the creation of capacity to release resources from non-priority areas and transfer them to priority areas. The commitment to this has been backed up by an extensive capacity building programme delivered in partnership with the IDeA and the Audit Commission. In 2006 the Council will be actively promoting the take of e-services to achieve the efficiencies required from the IEG outcomes. A Transformational Strategy will be developed to bring together the process re-engineering and the technological solutions that will create the necessary culture change.

Several key specific efficient gains have been achieved over the last 12 months including:

1. Shared service arrangements in place with Blackpool to deliver a joint revenues and benefits service.
2. An increase in the number of electronic payments to and from suppliers, customers and contractors.
3. An increase in the number of planning applications dealt with using the same resources.
4. Winning two grounds maintenance tenders in open competition.
5. Merging the streetscene services and delivering the waste collection and cleansing services for Wyre Borough Council.
6. Transferring employees from weekly pay to monthly pay and streamlining the pay roll system.

7. Use of OGC frameworks and contract agreements for the procurement of goods and services.
8. Development of in house expertise and skills through training and developing rather than external consultants and agency employees.
9. Improved IT systems to support transactions e.g. revenues, benefits, finance, planning and licensing.
10. Partnership working with friends groups and training providers to improve the local community, sharing resources to achieve more.

Warning highlighted on submission:

"The total of your 'other cross-cutting efficiencies' values is more than 50% of your total 'Cumulative gains as at end of 2005/06'."

The council has more than 50% of the savings in the 'other cross cutting' areas because as a small district council that is LSVT we do not directly deliver the larger services e.g. social services, housing, education, transport etc that offer the potential for significant service efficiencies. Every effort will be made to achieve greater service based efficiencies in future years but the greatest potential lies in cross cutting areas.

There is however £400,000 savings declared in the environment section alone which is greater than 50% of the cumulative total.

	Ongoing gains sustained from 2004/05 (£)		Further gains achieved in 2005/06 (£)		...of which expected to be ongoing (£)		Cumulative gains as at end of 2005/06 (£)		
Title	Total gains	...of which cashable (£)	Total gains	...of which cashable (£)	Total gains	...of which cashable (£)	Total gains	...of which cashable (£)	Related links
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • People • Projects

Adult social services	2005/06 Primary quality cross check								
	Quality cross check						2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met?		
	No efficiency gains to be reported in this sector, (enter 0 in 2004/05 and 0 in 2005/06)						0	0	Yes
	Overarching key actions taken:								
Overarching quality crosscheck information:									
Children's services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Documents• People• Projects
	2005/06 Primary quality cross check								
	Quality cross check						2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met?		
	No efficiency gains to be reported in this sector, (enter 0 in 2004/05 and 0 in 2005/06)						0	0	Yes
Overarching key actions taken:									
Overarching quality crosscheck information:									
Culture and sport	0	0	36,000	28,000	36,000	28,000	36,000	28,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Documents• People• Projects
	2005/06 Primary quality cross check								
	Quality cross check						2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met?		
	Customer/user/resident satisfaction						60	81	Yes
Overarching key actions taken: Additional grounds maintenance contracts awarded with £14000 additional staff resources, £16,000 outlay for maintenance / equipment and net income for the Council of £58,000 - efficiency savings of £28,000. 'Sweat Equity' achieved through volunteer resources allowing significant improvement of parks and open spaces replacing labour costs that the Council does not have to meet. A non cashable value of £8000.									
Overarching quality crosscheck information: Contracts awarded in place and being delivered to the agreed specification. Satisfaction from the customer. New facilities and ground improvements at local parks and open spaces including Park View and achievement of grant funds to support further improvement - high levels of satisfaction amongst the users and the members of the 'Friends' group.									
	0	0	400,000	400,000	100,000	100,000	400,000	400,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Documents• People• Projects

25

Environmental services	2005/06 Primary quality cross check								
	Quality cross check						2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met?		
	Percentage sum of household waste arisings that have been:(a) sent by the Authority for recycling (BV82a i); (b) sent by the Authority for composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion (BV82b i); and (c) used to recover heat, power and other energy sources (BV82c i)						32.1	36.43	Yes
	Overarching key actions taken: Rationalisation of waste collection service enabling the Council to take over the waste collection service in the neighbouring Wyre Council, won in competition. Also favourable recycling rates enabled the Council to take early advantage of the new payment mechanism from the County Council.								
Local transport (highways)	Overarching quality crosscheck information:								
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • People • Projects
	2005/06 Primary quality cross check								
	Quality cross check						2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met?		
Local transport (non-highways)	No efficiency gains to be reported in this sector, (enter 0 in 2004/05 and 0 in 2005/06)						0	0	Yes
	Overarching key actions taken:								
	Overarching quality crosscheck information:								
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • People • Projects
LA social housing	2005/06 Primary quality cross check								
	Quality cross check						2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met?		
	No efficiency gains to be reported in this sector, (enter 0 in 2004/05 and 0 in 2005/06)						0	0	Yes
	Overarching key actions taken:								
	Overarching quality crosscheck information:								
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • People • Projects

(capex)	2005/06 Primary quality cross check Quality cross check 2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met? No efficiency gains to be reported in this sector, (enter 0 in 2004/05 and 0 in 2005/06) 0 0 Yes Overarching key actions taken: Overarching quality crosscheck information:								
LA social housing (other)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • People • Projects
Non-school educational services	2005/06 Primary quality cross check Quality cross check 2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met? No efficiency gains to be reported in this sector, (enter 0 in 2004/05 and 0 in 2005/06) 0 0 Yes Overarching key actions taken: Overarching quality crosscheck information:								
Supporting people	6,125	6,125	6,000	6,000	3,000	3,000	12,125	12,125	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • People • Projects
	2005/06 Primary quality cross check Quality cross check 2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met? Non-approved indicator (enter 0 in 2004/5 and 1 in 2005/6 and explain in the text box) 0 1 Yes Overarching key actions taken: Continued support for community training programmes supporting vulnerable people back to work and providing work for people with disabilities.								

Overarching quality crosscheck information: The number of people supported on training programmes delivered by partners (Lancashire Wildlife Trust, West Coast Training and Omerod Trust) increased by over 100 in 2005/06 from 2004/05 figure.																		
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>										0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0											
Homelessness	2005/06 Primary quality cross check																	
	Quality cross check						2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met?											
	No efficiency gains to be reported in this sector, (enter 0 in 2004/05 and 0 in 2005/06)						0	0	Yes									
	Previous primary quality cross check (if different)																	
	Previous primary quality crosscheck						2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met?											
Non-approved indicator (enter 0 in 2004/5 and 1 in 2005/6 and explain in the text box)						0	1	Yes										
Overarching key actions taken: The Council will be looking at actions that can be taken to achieve efficiencies in the homeless service from March 2006.																		
Overarching quality crosscheck information: The previous quality cross check was the reduction in the length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation, however, the Council did not achieve this efficiency and has therefore removed the figures from the statement.																		
Other cross-cutting efficiencies not covered above																		
Corporate services	36,285	36,285	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500	39,785	39,785	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents People Projects 									
	2005/06 Primary quality cross check																	
	Quality cross check						2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met?											
	No new qualifications on the financial accounts (0=No, 1=Yes)						0	0	Yes									
	Overarching key actions taken: Transfer of weekly to monthly paid staff resulting in lower payroll contract costs.																	
Overarching quality crosscheck information:																		
	3,415	1,374	49,021	42,404	49,021	42,404	52,436	43,778	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documents People Projects 									
	2005/06 Primary quality cross check																	
	Quality cross check						2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met?											
Corporate procurement strategy in place and/or updated in the last year (0=No, 1=Yes)						1	1	Yes										

Procurement	<p>Overarching key actions taken: Previously the Mayors Car was hired from a private firm as and when required but as a result of a value for money review the Council now leases the vehicle resulting in substantial savings (£26,860)</p> <p>Use of internet site 'jobsgopublic to advertise council jobs.</p> <p>The low value transactional cost calculator produced an efficiency figure of £6,617 for 2005/06.</p> <p>Savings achieved through the restructure of the rental agreements with telephone providers and use of the OGC framework agreements to procure telecoms has achieved an annual saving of £15,544 on rental charges.</p> <p>All energy procurement is now sourced through an OGC agreement in partnership with other local authorities.</p> <p>Telecoms procurement is sourced through OGC nationally agreed contracts with Orange and BT.</p> <p>Several new agreements have been established to achieve better value for money for stationery, paper and other fast moving consumables that will realise efficiency savings in future years.</p> <p>Overarching quality crosscheck information: The corporate procurement strategy has been updated during 2005/06 and a dedicated, qualified officer appointed to address the procurement activity at Fylde.</p>								
Productive time	0	0	9,734	0	9,734	0	9,734	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • People • Projects
	<p>2005/06 Primary quality cross check</p> <p>Quality cross check 2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met?</p> <p>Overall customer satisfaction 82 90 Yes</p>								
	<p>Previous primary quality cross check (if different)</p> <p>Previous primary quality crosscheck 2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met?</p> <p>Working days lost to sickness absence (BV12) 10.8 11.65 No</p>								
	<p>Overarching key actions taken: Employment of 4 trainee employees replacing the need for 3 seasonal employees at the same cost. However, the trainees work an average of 190 days per year with college time taken out and the seasonal employees worked 130 days per year. The council has an additional 370 productive days per annum (190 for an additional trainee and 60 days for each of the other trainees). The day rate for a trainee is £26.31p therefore an efficiency of £9734 has been achieved in productive time. There are no college costs to the council.</p>								
	<p>Overarching quality crosscheck information: The council has been unable to achieve the efficiency savings anticipated from a reduction in sickness and absence. The baseline figure is the 2004/05 at 10.8 days. The efficiency declared for 2004/05 was based on a reduction per employee from the 2003/04 figure of 14.3 days. If the baseline was 2003/04 the council would achieve an efficiency saving of £108,772.</p>								

Transactions	30,627	18,018	68,460	68,460	68,460	68,460	99,087	86,478	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents • People • Projects
	2005/06 Primary quality cross check								
	Quality cross check 2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met?								
	Percentage of invoices paid on time (BV8) 90.28 92.3 Yes								
Miscellaneous efficiencies	Overarching key actions taken: Moved management of Revenues and Benefits IT systems from Lancashire County Council to Blackpool Council as first stage in a proposed process to fully amalgamate the 2 operations.								
	Overarching quality crosscheck information:								
	11,399	11,399	82,032	82,032	15,000	15,000	93,431	93,431	
	2005/06 Primary quality cross check								
Miscellaneous efficiencies	Quality cross check 2004/05 2005/06 Quality cross check met?								
	Non-approved indicator (enter 0 in 2004/5 and 1 in 2005/6 and explain in the text box) 0 1 Yes								
	Overarching key actions taken: Development Control fees reduced as a result of implementing the Acolaid e-planning system. The planning service increased income from fees by £178,330 with £105,798 as a result of increases in the fee charges. This was achieved without any additional staff resources. The efficiency is therefore £75,532 - it is expected to be less in future years as a result of being able to employ additional resources.								
	Overarching quality crosscheck information: Overall satisfaction with Fylde as a place to live from resident survey, the figure was 82% in 2004/05 and 90% in 2005/06. Satisfaction with the planning service overall in 2004/05 it was 24% in 2005/06 it is 52%.								
Total	87,851	73,201	654,747	630,396	284,715	260,364	742,598	703,597	

THE EFFICIENCY STATEMENT ACTION PLAN 2006/07

Key Action	Lead Officer	Measure of service.	Efficiency Saving (£)	Review of Progress / Status Report
Further partnership work with Wyre on waste and vehicle maintenance contracts.	Jenkinson	Increased quality of service. Reduced cost from integration.		Review of progress and integration of services is ongoing.
Implement joint service reviews with Wyre and carry out process improvement work across all service areas.	Dave Joy	Service review programme. % of reviews completed.	£30,000	Application has been made to North West Improvement Network for a grant to support the process improvement work across Fylde and Wyre.
Develop the revenues and benefits partnership with Blackpool to achieve greater integration and shared working.	Brian White	Partnership arrangements firmly in place. Shared service delivery in place.	£20,000*	New revenues and benefits systems have been implemented and plans are being progressed to share service delivery and resources.
Use of joint stationery suppliers with Wyre integrated into the new financial systems.	Allan Williams	On line catalogues. On line ordering. Discounts from economy of scale.	£4000*	Already in place from April 2006. All items in the catalogue have been reduced on 2005/06 prices.
Use of construction line instead of suppliers lists.	Allan Williams	Removal of suppliers list.	£3000*	Already in place from April 2006.
Reduced number of tender exercises due to increase in the financial threshold to £50,000.	Allan Williams	Reduction in actual tenders. Streamlined process in place.	£3000	Already in place from April 2006 – process in place to monitor the cost of each tender.
Use of joint travel and subsistence supplier with Wyre.	Allan Williams	Reduced prices secured through economies of scale.	£1000*	Already in place from April 2006 and on line booking facility set up.
Improvement in procurement arrangements, training and electronic systems.	Allan Williams	On line systems extended and used across the council. Training & development in procurement practices.	£6000	Work with the North West Centre of Excellence and the procurement network is under way to look at shared systems, on line solutions, training and shared procurement.
Reduction of sickness and absence by at least one day per employee	Lorraine Charlesworth	BVPI 12 out turn shows reduction.	£30,000	First quarter figures show that the council is on target to achieve this figure. Back to work

THE EFFICIENCY STATEMENT ACTION PLAN 2006/07

Key Action	Lead Officer	Measurement	Efficiency Saving (£)	Progress / Status Report
per year.				programme is applied rigorously.
Increased revenue from maximising use of assets within existing resources.	Paul Walker	Increased income (profit) from use of existing assets.	£20,000*	Negotiations are in place to secure new tenants in existing assets and extend concessions.
Develop the use of electronic payments, catalogues and invoices.	David Bennett	% reduction of paper invoices. Number of on line payments made.	£18,000	The new financial system is being implemented and will be live in October 2006.
Anite document imaging implemented in revenues and benefits.	Alex Scrivens	Number of on line forms completed. Reduction in file management time.	£3000	Mobile working facilities have been purchased for visiting officers and Anite document imaging will be live in September 2006.
Increase the number of BACS payments.	David Bennett	Reduction in cheques raised.	£3000	The accounts team are continually increasing the number of suppliers paid by BACS.
Self service facilities developed on the web site.	Andrew Cain	Increase in on line transactions. Reduced calls to call centre.	£5000	A new web content system will be in place in August 2006 that will enable greater on line services.
Management changes implemented without any impact on service delivery.	Phil Woodward	Reduced cost of management function to the Council.	£30,000*	Management arrangements are continually under review and every opportunity investigated to realign management activity as part of the commitment to achieve savings.
Review mobile and landline telephone contracts to secure greater discount and savings.	Allan Oldfield	Reduced costs of call charges. Reduced costs of rentals. Reduced use of mobiles. Improved administration.	£4000*	Landline to mobile calls has already been reduced through the use of new systems. A dedicated officer monitors and manages the accounts and contracts.
Review of network copier facilities and procurement of print	Dean Atherton	Reduced use of print consumables. New copier contract in place.	£3000*	New contracts for copiers and consumables are currently being negotiated to secure better

THE EFFICIENCY STATEMENT ACTION PLAN 2006/07

Key Action	Lead Officer	Measurement	Efficiency Saving (£)	Progress / Status Report
consumables.		Improved service to users.		machines at less cost.
Review of payroll service and extension of on line mileage claims / payments.	Lorraine Charlesworth	Reduced administration. Reduced cost per payslip. Improved service delivery.	£2000* £3000	The review of the pay roll service is planned for September 2006. The on line mileage and payments will be extended across the council in the autumn.
Reduction in paper documents posted to all stakeholders in favour of electronic means of communication.	Allan Oldfield	Reduced use of paper. Saving on administration time. Reduced cost of postage.	£8,000* £8,000	A new system has been implemented to communicate with all key stakeholders by electronic means where possible and savings are being realised.

Many of the improved service efficiencies will lead to savings that it is not possible to quantify at this stage and it is likely they will be realised in the second and third year efficiencies.

The * represents cash savings as opposed to efficiency gains that are translated into cash equivalents. An example of an efficiency gain being represented as a cash equivalent (termed non cashable) is sickness absence that translates as a cost (£) per day per employee.

REPORT



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
STRATEGIC PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT	PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	20 JULY 2006	6

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Public/Exempt item

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

Summary

The report presents for consideration a progress report on asset management planning as requested by the Policy & Service Review Community Forum.

Recommendation/s

That members comment appropriately and make any recommendations to Cabinet.

Cabinet Portfolio - Finance and efficiency, Councillor Paul Rigby

Report

Background

The Government has in recent years required local authorities to prepare and submit an annual Asset Management Plan (AMP)/Capital Strategy (CS) which sets out how the Council is to manage and look after its land and property assets. Following a 'Poor' assessment in 2003 the council has been working towards improving the way its manages and makes best use of its assets.

Earlier this year officers submitted the revised AMP/CS, which received a 'Good' assessment from the Government Office for the North West. This means that the council

no longer has to submit an annual plan for assessment although the Government hopes local authorities will continue to improve the way they manage their assets. As part of this overall plan it is important that councils constantly review and challenge why they hold particular assets and consider if they could be put to better use.

In April 2005 as part of the background work to improve the council's AMP, the Policy & Service Review Community Forum approved an asset review policy and procedure. This was centred on the following aims and priorities:

Aim:

'To maximise the use of all the council's assets in supporting quality service delivery'

Service priorities:

- providing assets that are 'fit for purpose' in supporting service delivery
- obtaining the maximum income from property and land used for purposes other than service delivery
- disposing effectively of assets that are not supporting service delivery or generating appropriate income for the council.

The process for reviewing assets is set out in appendix A. The Asset Management Group (AMG) has a key role in identifying which assets to review and to consider the different perspectives of the council (i.e. legal, financial, housing, health, planning, leisure, etc) in arriving at a recommendation. The attached list of interrogative questions at appendix B is used by the AMG to review each asset. Those assets that have been so far reviewed are detailed on the attached appendix C.

Last year the Executive Committee resolved that it wished to see a more robust asset disposal programme which would see some sites being sold to fund the council's capital programme ambitions. However, recently progress has slowed with the reviews. This is in part due to the ending of the UBM's asset secondment as of 31st March 2006 to take up the role of Executive Manager Strategic Planning & Development and also in part due to the council's Corporate Property Officer (CPO) being on sick leave since 5th June 2006.

Many of the asset review questions at appendix B can take some time to research, especially when the CPO relies on the assistance of other units. In addition, it is usual to obtain a current valuation, which requires the instruction of an external property Valuer.

Clearly more progress needs to be made and in the absence of the CPO, arrangements are in hand to bring in the services of a Surveyor/Valuer to accelerate the review process and report to the Asset Management Group/Cabinet as necessary. An update on this will be reported to members at the meeting.

When members previously approved the asset review policy and procedure they made two specific suggestions.

- To make appropriate arrangements to visit a Beacon Council to look at best practice in asset management. To date this has not occurred although the UBM has visited two local authorities (Cherwell DC and Staffordshire CC) to help undertake Gateway reviews involving council accommodation projects. This has proved invaluable experience in helping to inform work at Fylde.
- To provide details on the Intranet of all the assets that borough council holds. This information is now available in News and updates section of the Intranet.

Earlier this year the Policy and Service Review Scrutiny Committee considered a request for 'call-in' in relation to a decision by the Cabinet not to transfer Mill Street car park to Kirkham Town Council. The decision was based on the council getting best consideration for the asset. The P&SRSC however felt that there was a need for Cabinet to introduce a policy on the transfer/disposal of Council assets to Town and Parish Councils. Current policy as mentioned above is that assets should only be disposed of if they are not supporting service delivery or generating appropriate income for the council. Again resourcing issues have prevented this report being brought forward.

Members' questions

Members may wish to address the following general areas when devising their questions and agreeing their comments and recommendations:

1. Do members have any specific comments on the reviews carried out to date?
2. What do Members feel are the main areas where good progress has been made?
3. What are the main areas where Members feel more progress needs to be made?
4. Any other comments, for example, areas where Members can suggest improvements?
5. What are the Committee's conclusions and recommendations?

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	There are no implications
Legal	There are no implications
Community Safety	There are no implications
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no implications
Sustainability	There are no implications
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no implications

REPORT AUTHOR	TEL	DATE	DOC ID
Paul Walker	(01253) 658431	Date of report	10 TH July 2006

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS		
NAME OF DOCUMENT	DATE	WHERE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION
AMP/CS Appendices	November 2005	http://www.fylde.gov.uk/ccm/content/website/economic-wellbeing-and-regeneration/asset-management.en

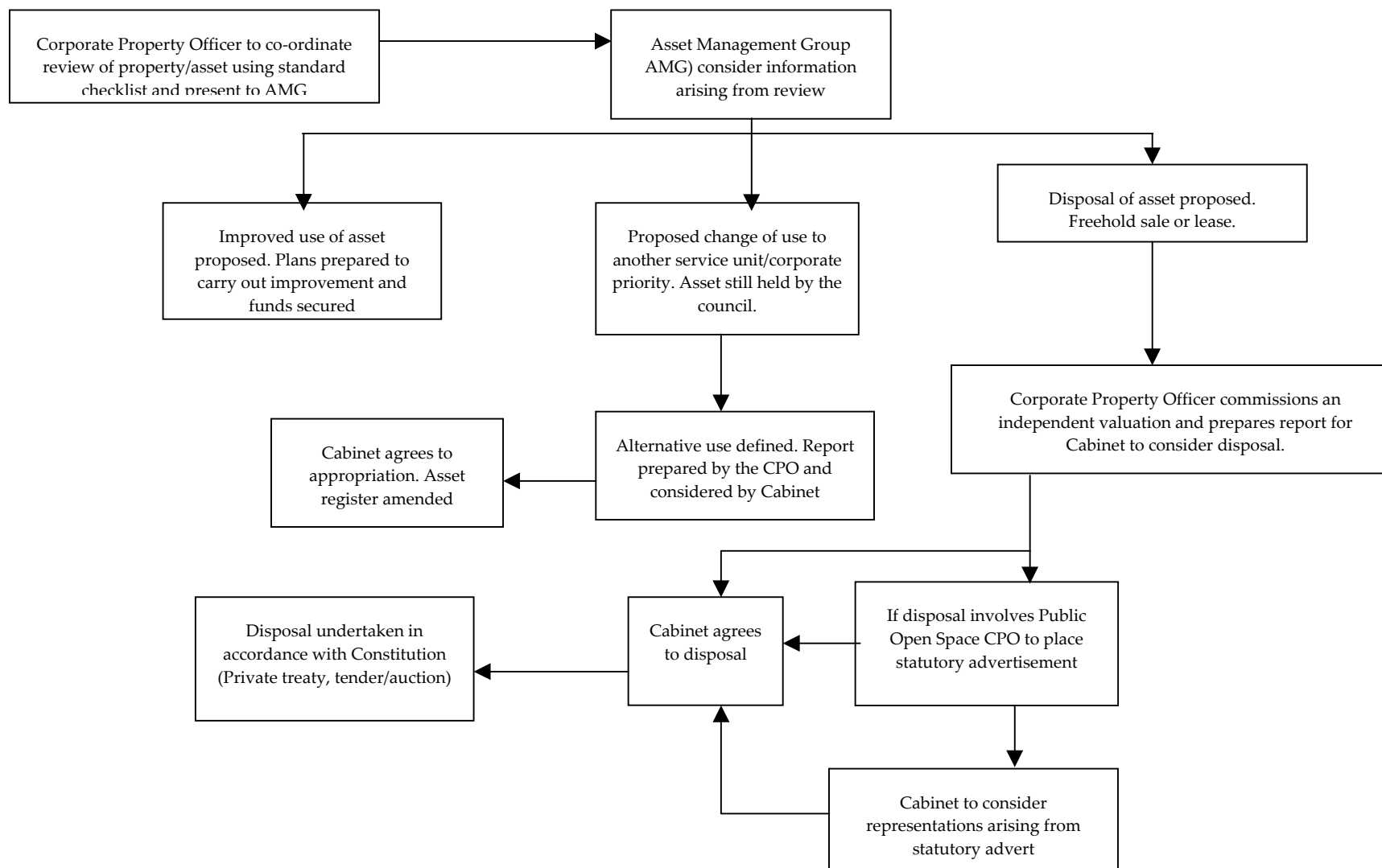
Attached documents

Appendix A – Asset review process

Appendix B – Asset review questions

Appendix C - Asset review progress table

ASSET REVIEW PROCEDURE



APPENDIX A

APPENDIX B

ASSET REVIEW CRITERIA/PROCESS

Tenure

- Does the council own the asset or have a responsibility for management?
- What is the statutory/legislative framework relating to the asset?
- Do we have agreements with others for their use of the asset?
- Are there any legal covenants/restrictions/impediments in relation to the asset?

Historical data

- What historical information exists on the asset? Previous committee reports/minutes?

Plans

- What plans, policies or strategies are there at a borough council, county council or regional level that might influence disposal or support changing the use of the asset?
- Is the asset surplus to service needs (i.e. Not usable or not contributing to the needs of the service) set against corporate priorities/service plans/strategies?
- What are the planning policies that need to be considered?

Constraints

- What physical, legal, or other constraints are there in relation to the asset?

Alternatives

- What other use has been suggested for the asset (either within the council, by one of our partners organisations or externally)?
- What would the asset realise if put to another use (best consideration)?
- Would a different use of the asset free up resources for use on other council priorities?
I.e. To support pre-agreed service development plans

Performance

- What performance data do we have?
- Cost to manage, how does this compare with any benchmarking data?
- Cost to repair or bring up to standard, is the asset suitable or adequate for needs (considering the cost of refurbishment)?
- Income derived, does the asset generate (or is capable of generating) significant income in support of the council's financial strategy?
- Energy consumption, does the asset use an excessive amount of energy when compared to other similar assets/facilities?

Asset review summary			APPENDIX C
Asset	Current role/purpose	Outcome of review	Latest situation/comments
Lytham Library	Used by LCC Library service, LCC Registrar, Blackpool & Fylde college, Lytham Heritage Group and FBC community room	Retain with existing tenants but ensure more effective use is made of the premises	Small working group of local members and officers from FBC/LCC have met to consider
Pleasant Street Garages	Garages generating small amount of income	Terminate existing lease, demolish garages and extend car park to generate increased income	Lease terminated, garages demolished and car park extended
RNLI Boathouse	RNLI	Undertake essential repairs and lease to Lytham Heritage group	Repairs nearly complete and heads of terms agreed
Clifton Drive shelter	Former transport shelter	Uncertainty over the council's case for adverse possession	Situation unchanged
Field at top of Wrea Crescent, Wrea Green	Former housing land currently let on a Grazing licence	Suggested use for affordable housing	Objections/representations from Parish Council
Paintings	Art collection	Long term loan of the majority of Ansdell paintings to Booths Display of selected items at Lytham Hall Loan of the Fussli to a major, national/regional gallery	Awaiting construction of new store Awaiting further development of Hall Fussli has been on loan
Staining Recreation Ground	Parish Council maintain under licence	Lease to Parish Council to enable improvement grants to be secured	Lease in place

Continued....

Asset review summary			APPENDIX C
Asset	Current role/purpose	Outcome of review	Latest situation/comments
Garages at Moreland Road (Wesham) and Wrea Crescent (Wrea Green)	Garages generating small amount of income	Demolish unused/dilapidated garages and re-let remainder to existing occupiers under new terms. Not to let any new/vacant sites.	Unused/dilapidated garages demolished and users of remaining garages given new contracts of use. Wrea Green PC wishes to see vacant plots re-let.
Kirkham Car Parks	Free car parks	Retain as free public car parks and carry out improvements.	Orders Lane car park resurfaced and improved
Solarium, North Promenade	Public shelter	Consider redevelopment of the site as part of regeneration of Promenade	Windows removed to reduce further vandalism.
North Promenade beach	Beach	Consideration for siting beach huts may conflict with policy EP17. Further consideration needed.	Other priorities in planning and regeneration have prevented further consideration.
Oxford Road, St Annes	Open space	Retain as open space and undertake work to improve maintenance.	Area landscaped
Graving Dock Road, Lytham	Unused	Should be retained until the proposed redevelopment of Dock Road is clearer.	Valuation sought
North Beach car park	Free car park	Dispose of for residential use to fund capital programme	The accommodation group considered that the current levels of affordable housing required may mean the full value of the site will not be realised.
Blackpool Road Playing	Formal recreation	That there was potential to improve the	Discussions have been undertaken

Asset review summary			APPENDIX C
Asset	Current role/purpose	Outcome of review	Latest situation/comments
Fields	area/open space	recreational facilities in the area, provide affordable housing and generate a capital receipt.	with local ward members. Awaiting consideration and clarification of the wider masterplan for the airport.
The Cottage (Fairhaven Lake)	Residential property generating rental income	Potential for sale although the wider use of Fairhaven Lake should be considered. A plan is needed considering the future potential of the Lake and how it could be managed.	To be progressed upon return of Corporate Property Officer (CPO).
Tourist Information Centre, St Annes	As a TIC	Retain as a TIC and improve accessibility	Works underway.
Ashton Gardens nursery	Operational depot	Demolish glasshouses and procure seasonal bedding plants. Consider future of facility in the light of Streetscene rationalisation	Glasshouses demolished. Enquiries received for use as training base.
Moreland Road Allotments	Allotments	That the main Moreland Ave site should be considered for disposal and that an outline planning be submitted to confirm its value.	To be progressed upon return of CPO.
Land adjacent East End bowling green, Lytham	Unused open space	That subject to planning permission, the site is offered for disposal.	To be progressed upon return of CPO.
Ground rents, St Annes	Strategic/Modest income	A valuation of the capital value should be obtained which needs to be considered against the current revenue income.	To be progressed upon return of CPO.
Surplus public toilets	Public toilets	Moor Street (Kirkham), Fairhaven Lake and Wrea Green are to be closed. Consult with	Consultation commenced.

Asset review summary			APPENDIX C
Asset	Current role/purpose	Outcome of review	Latest situation/comments
		stakeholders over alternative uses.	
Carr Bridge Caravan Park	Investment income	Valuation sought.	To be progressed upon return of CPO.
Lytham marsh	Unused	To be progressed upon return of CPO.	

REPORT



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY	PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	20 JULY 2006	7

REVIEW OF CUSTOMER SERVICES

Public/Exempt item

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

Summary

This report is a preliminary one, to prepare for an in-depth review of customer services. "Customer services" in this report refers to the Call Centre and the One Stop Shops. A draft scoping document for the review is attached.

Recommendation/s

1. That the attached document be approved as an accurate record of the terms of reference for the review of customer services.
2. That the timescale laid out in the attached document is agreed.
3. That a Task and Finish Group is appointed to undertake the review.

Executive Portfolio

The item falls within the following executive portfolio[s]:

Customer Relations & Partnerships (Councillor Albert Pounder)

Report

Customer services was identified in a recent IDeA training session for Cabinet and Scrutiny Members as an area of concern which needed to be addressed as a priority through an in-depth review.

As a result a preliminary scoping meeting was held with the responsible officers, the Executive Portfolio Member and the PI Scrutiny Chairman, in order that issues could be identified and an approach to the review recommended.

The attached draft scoping document sets out the proposed terms of reference for the review of customer services, which will commence when a Task and Finish Group has been appointed.

The document identifies the principal areas of concern to be addressed, details the research methodology, the objectives of the review, indicators of success and timescales.

Implications	
Finance	None arising from this report
Legal	None arising from this report
Community Safety	None arising from this report
Human Rights and Equalities	None arising from this report
Sustainability	None arising from this report
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None arising from this report

Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
Annie Womack	(01253) 658423	10 July 2006	Customer Services – report on TOR

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

Attached documents

1. Draft scoping document for review of customer services

Scoping Document – DRAFT July 2006

Review Topic (name of Review)	Review of Customer Services - Call Centre and One Stop Shops
Lead Member Review Group (Cllrs involved)	Cllr Keith Hyde Task & Finish Group to be appointed
Officer Support (Scrutiny Review Officer lead)	Annie Womack (Senior Overview & Scrutiny Officer) Tracy Scholes (Overview and Scrutiny Manager) Paul Norris (Executive Manager Community & Cultural Services)
Rationale (key issues and/ or reason for doing the Review)	<p>This issue was highlighted as an area for concern and as a subject for in-depth scrutiny during a workshop run by the IDeA for Cabinet Members and Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs. Although customer satisfaction overall appears to be good, there are some performance problems which lead to service user complaints.</p> <p>This review will focus on the performance of customer services and in particular the call centre and one stop shops. It will look at the dynamics and processes between front and back office, customer service staff training needs, access problems for service users, resourcing and accommodation issues, and ways in which performance overall can be improved to reduce complaints and to ensure that residents of Fylde BC receive the best possible service.</p>
Purpose of Review/Objective (specify exactly what the Review should achieve)	<p>To consider the customer service strategies and how these link with services across the Council, including planning for cover in peak user periods.</p> <p>To consider Key Performance Indicators and improvement targets, and the Plans that are currently in place to achieve them</p> <p>To understand how customer services impacts our residents</p> <p>To consider how customer services can be improved, and in particular how the concerns raised by Members and the public can be addressed</p> <p>To consider how the relationship and communication between front-line and back office services can be improved</p> <p>To consider what role back office services should play in customer service functions</p>
Indicators of Success (what factors would tell you what a good Review should look like)	<p>Measurable improvement in the performance of customer service</p> <p>Increased customer satisfaction/fewer complaints</p> <p>Provision of better services overall to customers</p> <p>Improved communication and processes between customer services and back office services</p>

Methodology/ Approach (what types of enquiry will be used to gather evidence and why)	Mystery shopping Survey of public who have recently used call centre/one stop shop Survey of Members & other stakeholders' views of CS Follow-up in-depth interview with selected responders Benchmarking with/ visits to selected "CiPFA family" LAs Members to sit with call centre staff Detailed officer reports on key performance issues <i>Any other method which may help the Task and Finish Group to achieve the Review's aims.</i>
Specify Witnesses/ Experts (who to see and when)	To be confirmed by Task & Finish Group, but to include customer services staff and managers, both here and in selected other Local Authorities
Specify Evidence Sources for Documents (which to look at)	Customer Services Strategy Customer Services Workplan Customer Services targets and PI's Customer Services working practices and procedures Customer Services Training Needs Analysis Results of recent surveys
Specify Site Visits (where and when)	To be selected as appropriate from neighbouring and CiPFA Family Group authorities, by Task and Finish Group
Specify Evidence Sources for Views of Stakeholders (consultation/ workshops/ focus groups/ public meetings)	To be confirmed
Publicity requirements (what is needed – fliers, leaflets, radio broadcast, press-release, etc.)	None at this stage – need for any such requirements will be addressed during the course of the review
Resource requirements • Person-days • Expenditure	Significant Scrutiny Officer support for Task & Finish Group, but not directly quantifiable Expenditure – related principally to site visits. Other potential expenditure will be brought to the attention of the budget holder before any commitment is made.
Barriers/ dangers/ risks (identify any weaknesses and potential pitfalls)	

Projected start date	24 July 2006	Draft Report Deadline	23 November 2006
Meeting Frequency	Every 2 months	Projected completion date	25 January 2007

REPORT



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND MEMBER SUPPORT	PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT COMMUNITY FORUM	20 JULY 2006	8

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL LETTER AND REPORT 2005/06

Public/Exempt item

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

Summary

To advise members of the contents of the Annual Letter which has been received from the Commission for Local Administration in England upon complaints relating to the Council for the period 2005/2006

Recommendation/s

To note the Annual Report and make comments as necessary

Executive brief

The item falls within the following executive brief[s]: Corporate Performance and Development Quality of life (Councillor Susan Fazackerley).

Report

Background

The Local Government Ombudsmen investigates complaints of injustice arising from maladministration by local authorities and certain other bodies. There are three Local Government Ombudsmen in England and they each deal with complaints from different parts of the country. They investigate complaints about most council matters including housing, planning, education, social services, consumer protection drainage and council tax. The Ombudsman can investigate complaints about how the council has done something but they can not question what a council has done simply because someone does not agree with it.

A complainant must give the council concerned an opportunity to deal with a complaint first. It is best to use the council's own complaints procedure, if it has one. If the complainant is not satisfied with the action the council takes he or she can send a written complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman or ask a councillor to do so on their behalf.

The Ombudsman's Annual Letter (attached at appendix?) reflects on the complaints made to the Ombudsman about Fylde borough over the last year and is supported by statistical data governing a three year period and a note to help the interpretation of the statistics. The letter also gives the average time taken by the council to respond to Ombudsmen enquiries and includes comments on the effectiveness of the liaison arrangements between the Council and the Ombudsman's. Suggestion for improvements is also made. This year, lists have also been provided showing which cases are covered by each data sets complaints received, complaints determined and response times.

For the year ending 31 March the Ombudsman received 13 complaints against the Council (a slight fall in the number of complaints (18) received in the previous period. It is noted that complaints about planning matters make up the single largest group of complaints. There were no findings of maladministration. There were 12 decisions made during the year, three of which were determined to be premature.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	
Legal	
Community Safety	
Human Rights and Equalities	
Sustainability	
Health & Safety and Risk Management	

REPORT AUTHOR	TEL	DATE	DOC ID
Lyndsey Lacey	(01253) 658504	11 July 06	21 June 2006

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS		
NAME OF DOCUMENT	DATE	WHERE AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION
Letter – Local Government Ombudsman	21 June 2006	On the council's website at www.fylde.gov.uk
Ombudsman file	2006/2007	Democratic Services and Member Support Town Hall, St Annes, FY8 1LW.



21 June 2006

FIRST CLASS

Mr B Taylor
Acting Chief Executive
Fylde Borough Council
Town Hall
LYTHAM ST ANNES
FY8 1LW

The Commission for
Local Administration in England

Anne Seex
Local Government Ombudsman

Neil Hobbs
Deputy Ombudsman

Our Ref: Annual Letter 06/C/AS3/sh
(Please quote our reference when contacting us)

If telephoning contact: Mrs Agnew's Personal Assistant on 01904 380201
If e-mailing: st3york@lgo.org.uk

Dear Mr Taylor

Annual Letter 2005/06

I am writing to give you my reflections on the complaints received against your authority and dealt with by my office over the last year. I hope that in reviewing your own performance you will find this letter a useful addition to other information you hold highlighting how people experience or perceive your services.

This year we will publish the letters on our website and share them with the Audit Commission as there was widespread support from authorities for us to do this. We will wait for four weeks after this letter before making it more widely available in these ways to give you an opportunity to consider and review the letter first. If a letter is found to contain any factual inaccuracy we will reissue it.

In addition to the narrative below there are two attachments which form an integral part of this letter: statistical data covering a three year period and a note to help the interpretation of the statistics.

Complaints received

In the year ending 31 March 2006 I received 13 complaints against the Council a figure which shows a slight fall from the number of complaints [18] received in the previous year. Nothing, I suggest, should be read in to such a small reduction over such a short period of time. No trends emerged to alarm me although noting, once again, that complaints about planning matters make up the single largest group of complaints I

/...

Beverley House 17 Shipton Road York YO30 5FZ
Tel 01904 380200 Fax 01904 380269
DX 65201 York 5
www.lgo.org.uk

should point out to the Council that while these complaints comprise some 46% of all complaints against the Council, nationally the figure is about 23% for planning matters. Although the numbers of complaints made against the Council is relatively small this may be something the Council will want to reflect upon.

Decisions on complaints

I took decisions on 12 complaints in the year in question. This figure differs from the number of complaints I received because of work in hand at the beginning and at the end of the year. Three of the complaints sent to me were sent prematurely in the sense that the Council appeared to be unaware of the complaints and to have been given no opportunity to address them. In each of these cases I sent the complaint to you with the request that the matter be dealt with through the Council's internal complaints procedure. One complaint was outside of my jurisdiction while in 3 other cases I exercised the discretion available to me not to pursue the complaints. In the remaining 5 complaints I found no evidence of maladministration by the Council.

Other findings

As you know I ask for comprehensive replies to my enquiries to reach me within 28 days. The average time taken by the Council this year was a little over 45 days. This is very disappointing and I ask that the Council gives greater priority to the way in which it responds to complaints bearing in mind that in every case there is an aggrieved complainant anxious to know what is happening with their complaint.

Training in complaint handling

Our training in complaint handling is proving very popular with authorities and we continue to receive very positive feedback from participants. Over the last year we have delivered more than 100 courses from the range of three courses that we now offer as part of our role in promoting good administrative practice.

Effective Complaint Handling was the first course we developed, aimed at staff who deal with complaints as a significant part of their job. Since then we have introduced courses in complaint handling for front line staff and in handling social services complaints.

All courses are presented by an experienced investigator so participants benefit from their knowledge and expertise of complaint handling.

I have enclosed some information on the range of courses available together with contact details for enquiries and bookings.

Conclusions/general observations

I welcome this opportunity to give you my reflections about the complaints my office has dealt with over the past year. I hope that you find the information and assessment

/...

provided useful when seeking improvements to your Council's services. I would again very much welcome any comments you may have on the form and content of the letter.

I would again be happy to consider requests for myself or a senior colleague to visit the Council to present and discuss the letter with councillors or staff. We will do our best to meet the requests within the limits of the resources available to us.

I am also arranging for a copy of this letter and its attachments to be sent to you electronically so that you can distribute it easily within the council and post it on your website should you decide to do this.

The Council should know that some re-organisation has taken place within my office and that the Assistant Ombudsman leading the team with responsibility for complaints against the Council is now Mrs Rosemary Agnew. Mrs Agnew will be very pleased to deal with any queries you may have about this letter and will be equally happy to be your first point of contact during the coming year should you have any issues of concern or should you need advice about a complaint within your own system.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Anne Seex'.

Anne Seex
Local Government Ombudsman

Enc: statistical data
note on interpretation of statistics
information on complaints handling training courses

Complaints received by subject area	Highways	Housing (not incl. HB)	Housing Benefit	Local Taxation	Other	Planning	Total
01/04/2005 - 31/03/2006	1	1	0	1	3	7	13
2004 / 2005	0	0	1	3	2	12	18
2003 / 2004	0	0	2	0	5	8	15

Note: these figures will include complaints that were made prematurely to the Ombudsman and which we referred back to the authority for consideration.

Decisions	MI reps	LS	M reps	NM reps	No mal	Omb disc	Outside jurisdiction	Premature complaints	Total excl premature	Total
01/04/2005 - 31/03/2006	0	0	0	0	5	3	1	3	9	12
2004 / 2005	0	2	0	0	8	0	0	4	10	14
2003 / 2004	0	2	0	0	6	2	1	7	11	18

See attached notes for an explanation of the headings in this table.

Response times	FIRST ENQUIRIES	
	No. of First Enquiries	Avg no. of days to respond
01/04/2005 - 31/03/2006	4	45.3
2004 / 2005	7	28.7
2003 / 2004	7	33.1

Average local authority response times 01/04/2005 to 31/03/2006

Types of authority	<= 28 days %	29 - 35 days %	> = 36 days %
District Councils	53.2	25.3	21.5
Unitary Authorities	41.3	34.8	23.9
Metropolitan Authorities	41.7	30.5	27.8
County Councils	55.9	26.5	17.6
London Boroughs	39.4	39.4	21.2
National Park Authorities	100.0	0.0	0.0

REPORT



REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
FINANCE	PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	20 JULY 2006	

Benefit Investigation - Quarterly Report Q1 – 2006/7

Public item

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

Summary

The Benefit Review Unit will provide the Performance Improvement Scrutiny Committee with their first quarterly report. The report will provide members with information on the current performance and challenges of the Benefit Review Unit.

Recommendation/s

That the Committee notes the first quarter's performance against the key indicators.

Cabinet Portfolio

The item falls within the following Cabinet portfolio[s]:

Finance and Efficiency Councillor Paul Rigby

Report

Report and appendices attached.

Continued....

Implications	
Finance	None
Legal	None
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	None
Sustainability	None
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None

Report Author	Tel	Date	Doc ID
Tony Kendall	(01253) 658417	19 July 06	Benefit Investigation Quarterly Report Q1 – 2006/07

List of Background Papers		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Benefit Investigation Quarterly Report Q1 – 2006/07	19 July 2006	www.fylde.gov.uk

Attached documents

1. Benefit Investigation - Quarterly Report Q1 – 2006/7
2. Appendix 1
3. Appendix 2

Benefit Investigation

Quarterly Report Q1 – 2006/7

Summary

PERFORMANCE

- To date there have been 58 full investigations closed and a further 70 cases being undertaken by the Benefit Review Unit. The target set for 2006/7 is 292 investigations.
- To date a total of 10 sanctions have been applied against benefit fraud offenders this year. The target set for 2006/7 is 60 sanctions.
- To date the Fraud Management System has recorded a total of £20057.51 in overpaid benefit as a result of fraudulent activity.
- The unit employs 2 full time investigators and three visiting officers, one of whom is on maternity leave until September. In the first three months of this year we have visited 509 claimants in their homes. An ongoing customer satisfaction survey clearly shows that claimants prefer this form of contact, this being especially true amongst the elderly. We expect to reach our target of 2450 by the end of the financial year. See appendix 1 for Best Value Performance Indicator data (BVPI) & appendix 2 for calculation of the BVPI's

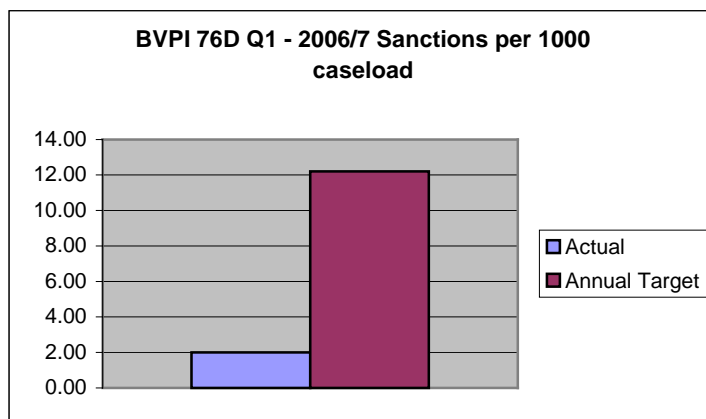
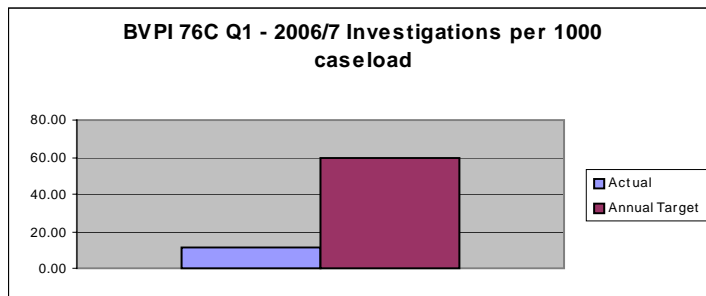
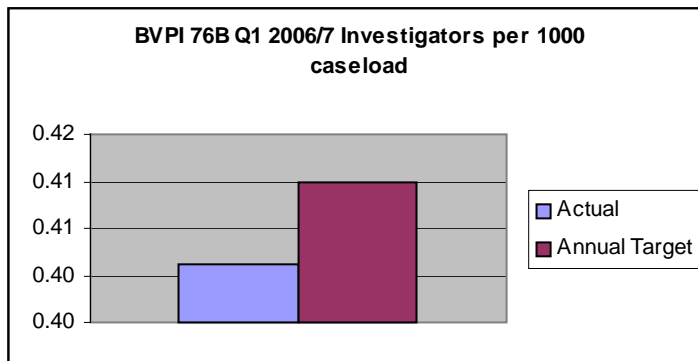
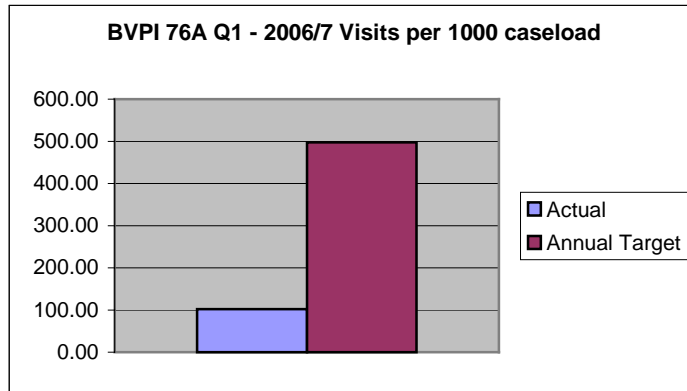
CHALLENGES

- The challenges this year are to reach set targets whilst at the same time:
- Adapt to new Data Image Processing System [DIPS] that is due to be implemented this year.
- Transfer the management of the visiting function from an access database to that of a mobile hand held system.
- To iron out issues that prevent the automatic transfer of data from the Housing Benefit mainframe to the fraud management system.
- As reported last quarter the DWP Debt Management and Decision-Making agencies have severe back-log problems. Problems still continue, but the impact has lessened because we have concentrated on HB only cases when possible.
- It was reported in last quarters report that the Council could not prosecute offences against the DWP as they were previously permitted to do. A Crown Court case [McCarthy v Epsom & Ewell] appears to have reversed the position. The Council's SLA does tie FBC to using the DWP Solicitors Branch in the first instance. However, after discussion with FBC Legal & Democratic Services it has been decided that FBC will prosecute such cases, if it appears that using the DWP pathway would jeopardise the case. The DWP are currently consulting LA's on prosecuting National Benefits.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- It is still early in the year to establish if the performances of the various functions undertaken within the Benefit Review Unit are to be of concern. Traditionally the summer months are not as productive as staff take annual leave more in these months than others.
- The investigation caseload should be examined to ensure that the right balance of case types are being targeted and that resource heavy case types are at a moderate level.
- The intervention team will be reviewed to ensure that visits are undertaken in the economic and efficient manner.

Graphical illustration of performance in the first quarter against the annual target for 2006/7



Fylde Borough Council
Q1
2006/7

Legend

Actual figure

Actual figure converted to BVPI

BVPI annual target

Case Load Figure used

4985

BVPI76a visits per 1000 caseload

Result	Total Of Date closed	DH	LA
Vor - Closed Change	263	150	113
Vor - Closed no change	209	89	120
Vor - Closed Un-Notified Change	3	3	
Vor - Closed Un-Notified No Change	4	4	
Vor - Postal Closed No Change	9	9	
Vor -Closed Welfare Visit	8	2	6
Vor -Passed for investigation	9	5	4
VOR Residency check completed	3		3
Total	509		

Actual

Annual Target

BVPI 76A

102.11

498.00

BVPI76b investigators per 1000 caseload

2

Actual

Annual Target

BVPI 76B

0.40

0.41

BVPI76c investigations per 1000 caseload

Investigations closed:

Passed for investigation	2
Proven	14
No Fraud	42
Total	58

Actual
Annual Target

BVPI 76C
11.63
59.35

BVPI76d sanctions per 1000 caseload

Number of sanctions

Cautions	2
Administrative Penalty	6
Summons	0
Prosecutions	2

Total of all sanctions	10
------------------------	----

Actual
Annual Target

BVPI 76D
2.01
12.20

© Fylde Borough Council copyright [2006]

You may re-use this document/publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium. You must re-use it accurately and not in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Fylde Borough Council copyright and you must give the title of the source document/publication. Where we have identified any third party copyright material you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This document/publication is also available on our website at www.fylde.gov.uk

Any enquiries regarding this document/publication should be sent to us at the Town Hall, St Annes Road West, St Annes FY8 1LW, or to listening@fylde.gov.uk.