

To: City Executive Board

Date: 9 March 2010

Item No: 4a

Report of: Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee – Finance and Performance Panel

Title of Report: 3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr. Performance Report

### Summary and Recommendations

**Purpose of report:** To report the views and recommendations of the Finance and Performance Panel (FPP) on the Councils performance against its targets at the third quarter

**Key decision?** No

**Scrutiny Lead Member:** Councillor Van Coulter

**Executive lead member:** Councillor Bob Price

**Policy Framework:** All areas

**Recommendation(s):**

1. Clarification is provided on achieving level 2 of the Equalities Standard by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011. Are we on target to do this or not (paragraph 4)
2. That the Equalities Impact Assessment that accompanies the budget is revisited to reflect the issues highlighted here within our workforce (paragraph 5)
3. That reassurance is given that the time to process benefits will be stabilised and sustained to at least that being achieved now as the service moves through its fundamental review (paragraph 7)
4. That results are provided against the value for money indicators at paragraph 8
5. To explain why improvements to target have not materialised within CP16.10 Customers getting through first time to the Council's main line, as promised and to give reassurance that the situation can improve quickly to at least the outcomes of a year ago (paragraph 11)
6. To clarify the procurement result matched against the budget performance (paragraph 12)

**7. To provide more details of the number of on line transactions achieved by the best performing and how our ambitions match this (paragraph 13)**

**8. To provide the Panel, as previously requested and agreed, with the future thinking and options for the Performance Framework from April (or the Framework if this has already been agreed). To include within this the fit and links within corporate and service monitoring**

## **Introduction**

1. The Finance and Performance Panel met on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. March to consider performance against target for the third quarter and progress made on their agreed recommendation at the first quarter.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **Performance against target**

2. The FPP offer the following comments against the indicators below. In addition the FPP had particular concerns in some areas and these are highlighted to City Executive Board for action in the recommendations
3. **NI 156 – Households in temporary accommodation.** This indicator is on target and has shown improvement. The comparative quartile position shows us in a poor position and the FPP understood the housing reasons which might bring this about. There are a number of indicators that might arguable work together to challenge the housing situation in the City (ready to develop housing sites, additional homes provided, affordable homes delivered, build new council homes, developed land vacant or derelict, homelessness cases prevented, private landlord accreditation, HMO licensing) and targets and outcomes from these show the trends and effects of our interventions and actions. If these are to move forward into the performance framework for next year the FPP would like to understand more about how actions and outcomes are coordinated and articulated into targets across this range so as to better understand and scrutinise performance in this important area
4. **BV002a – Local Government Equality Standard Level** – It has been a long standing ambition of the Council to be excellent in this field. We are currently at level 1 of 3 with the target of reaching level 2 by 31<sup>st</sup>. March 2011. The Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee heard that this target will not be met yet the detail here says we are on target. Clarification is required in this area
5. **BV017a – Employees from BME communities.** The FPP would like to raise issues here for action. This target shows our workforce

unrepresentative within this equality strand with the worsening picture explained by the reductions made to the workforce as part of the budget. When the FPP considered the budget they asked to see an Equalities Impact Assessment that considered not only the effects of our budget within communities but within our workforce as well. The comments and issues identified here are clearly known and should be considered within the budget equality impact assessment but are not. The Panel ask that this is revisited to consider the effects of the budget on our workforce across the equality strands not only within individual services but the implications for the workforce as a whole. Organisation Change policies consider services individually, the FPP consider that this has the potential to mask effects across equality strands within the Council's workforce overall

6. **CP17.2 – Implement the Oxford Regeneration Framework (and the like).** The FPP see little point in performance measures that set one target for the delivery of often large and diverse frameworks and strategies. They can never give an accurate picture of performance. For the future the FPP would wish to see targets such as this dropped and consideration given to the key drivers within these frameworks and strategies where an accurate and useful reflection of progress can be given
7. **NI181 – Time to process benefits** – This is an area the FPP would wish to highlight for action. At quarter 2 the FPP expressed its concern about performance in this area and the need to stabilise performance at a good level whilst the service went through the significant change ahead of it. The consequence of poor performance in this area is very real in communities. The Director said that this was recognised and performance would be bought back to target for the 3<sup>rd</sup>. quarter. This has not happened. The Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee saw more up to date information that showed improvement from this point but this has to be sustained whilst the service improves and reduces its cost. The FPP want reassurance that this will be the case
8. **BT3 - Service Quality Benefits from transformation projects realised**  
**BT5 – Financial Benefits from transformation projects realised**  
**NI179 – Value for money gains since April 2008**  
These transformation targets are all detailed as having no result. The FPP were not clear why these factual targets cannot report an outcome. These are requested
9. **BV012 – Days lost to sickness** – This continues to show performance off target and further the target aspires to compare poorly to other organisations. The Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee is considering this in detail with the Head of Service so no detailed comments are offered here other than to highlight the significant number of posts this equates to and the increasing difficulties this must pose within a shrinking budget

10. **BV066a – Housing rents collected - BV012** – Whilst performance is on target the FPP note that this still reflects our outcomes within the 3<sup>rd</sup>. quartile. It is hoped that new targets can challenge us to perform amongst the best
11. **CP16. 10 – Customer getting through first time on the Council’s main service lines (%)**. This is an area the FPP would wish to highlight for action. This is part of the Customer First Programme which is a key priority within Council 2012, the FPP were therefore disappointed to see once again performance significantly off target. At the second quarter managers said that improvements would be seen at the 3<sup>rd</sup>. quarter. This has not happened. It is of significant note that our performance at this time last year was considerably better and during the year investment has been made to improve outcomes through the Customer First programme. It is probably of significant frustration to residents who find difficulty in getting through and the service must be stabilised at the position of a year ago as it moves through further transformation
12. **Proc1 – Procurement Strategy to reduce costs** – Outcomes here are shown as on target whilst the 3<sup>rd</sup>. quarter spending report highlights procurement planned savings within the budget that will not be achieved. These 2 pieces of information are clearly inconsistent either in targets set or outcomes measured or both. Consistency of outcome and monitoring is essential here and across all indicators for transparency and usefulness. This target needs adjusting to match budget expectations
13. **CP16.11 – Increase the number of on-line transactions** – As commented before the number of transactions completed on line whilst improving is still seem very low. We must improve more quickly in this area as a key efficiency measure. The FPP have seen investment within our web site and would like to see this converted into improvements at a faster rate. It is understood that this is challenged through the Customer First Programme (“click”) and the FPP requests details on the performance of the best and how our ambitions currently compare
14. **BV009 – Council Tax collected** – This indicator shows the potential to be off target with performance comparatively amongst the worst. Our ambitions are for performance within the 3<sup>rd</sup>. quartile and it is hoped that for the future we can improve and be more ambitious in this area

### **Future Performance Management**

15. At the City Executive Board in September the Board agreed with recommendations from the Panel to look at the performance framework for 11/12 and beyond once National Frameworks end. The Panel has still not seen any thinking or proposals for the performance framework,

methods of target setting and links to service plans and strategies etc. beyond the end of March. The only document made available has been the proposed Corporate Plan which does not equate to SMART targets. This is disappointing and the FPP request again to see forward thinking and plans

16. The FPP highlight that a number of targets appear within the current framework that relate to the environment around peoples homes e.g. litter, fly tipping, fly posting, clean streets and it is often these very issues that residents judge the performance of their council on. National indicators and their method of measuring have produced bizarre results that don't match perception (no street below standard for litter). For the future the FPP would suggest that these indicators and outcomes are reworked within the Cleaner Greener Corporate Objective and the measurement of performance outcomes is given to Area Forums

**17. Comments from the Director of Finance and Efficiency –**

**18. Comments from the Board Member – Councillor Price**

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**List of background papers:**

**Version number:**