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Council
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**TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE
CUSTOMER AND CENTRAL SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

03 December 2010

Dear Councillor

**CUSTOMER AND CENTRAL SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
MONDAY, 13 DECEMBER 2010**

Further to the Agenda and papers for the above meeting, previously circulated, please find attached the following late report:-

10. Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring

To consider performance monitoring information for the second quarter of 2010/11.

Should you have any queries regarding the above please me.

Yours sincerely

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Committee Services Officer

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Meeting: Customer & Central Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date: 13th December 2010
Subject: Quarter 2 Performance Report
Report of: Cllr Richard Stay, Deputy Leader
Cllr Maurice Jones, Portfolio Holder for Finance & Governance
Cllr Steve Male, Portfolio Holder for Customer, Systems & Assets
Summary: The report highlights Quarter 2 performance against the Corporate Health Indicators and Key Performance Indicators for the Customer and Shared Services (CSS) directorate, and Office of the Chief Executive (OCE)

Advising Officer: Richard Ellis, Director of Customer & Shared Services
Contact Officer: Ian Porter, AD Strategy and Performance
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision No
**Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** N/A

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The quarterly performance report underpins the delivery of the Council's key priorities.

Financial:

There are a number of performance indicators within the corporate suite that have a strong financial link – most notably:

- The amount of debt outstanding,
- The percentage of council tax offered,
- Invoices paid within 30 days and
- The time taken to process housing benefit, council tax, new claims and change events

It will be important to consider any financial implications of decisions taken to address ongoing areas of under performance.

Legal:

None.

Risk Management:

Areas of ongoing underperformance are a risk to both service delivery and the reputation of the Council.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

The corporate performance suite includes indicators on sickness absence within the Council and the number of Carlisle Management Solutions agency staff. The Council has additionally provided information relating to the average number employed. The average number employed is defined as the total FTE employed (i.e. all employees on permanent, fixed term and temporary contracts averaged over the quarter).

Equalities/Human Rights:

This quarterly performance report highlights performance against indicators which seek to measure how the Council and its services impact across all communities within Central Bedfordshire, so that specific areas of underperformance can be highlighted for further analysis/drilling down as necessary.

As such it does not include detailed performance information relating to the Council's stated intention to tackle inequalities and deliver services so that people whose circumstances make them vulnerable are not disadvantaged. The interrogation of performance data across vulnerable groups is a legal requirement and is an integral part of the Council's equalities and performance culture which seeks to ensure that, through a programme of ongoing impact assessments, underlying patterns and trends for different sections of the community identify areas where further action is required to improve outcomes for vulnerable groups.

Community Safety:

None.

Sustainability:

No direct implications.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee notes and considers this report, and any associated actions that need to be taken, to ensure a rigorous approach to performance management within CSS and OCE
2. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee considers any issues from this report that could form part of its work programme.

Introduction

1. The Council's framework for performance management supports the delivery of CBC's priorities. Those indicators that have been identified as 'critical' now form the quarterly corporate performance suite – included at Appendix A. The full set of all of the Council's indicators is available with the 7 December Executive papers.
2. The Budget Monitoring Report will be presented to the Committee at the same time as this Quarterly Performance Report, to provide a better link between performance and finance issues.
3. Three key themes were identified for the overarching performance position for Quarter 1. Broadly, these themes remain for Quarter 2, and where these impact upon CSS these are highlighted below:

Key theme (1): Impact of the economic climate

4. There has been an increased demand on the Housing Benefits service as a consequence of more customers submitting a claim for housing benefit. Numbers on 'out of work' benefits remains worse than target, though at a similar level to the previous quarter and significantly below regional and national levels.

Key theme (2): Impact of management action

5. The amount of short term debt has reduced significantly and attention in the next quarter will focus on tackling medium term debt.

More services have been migrated to the Contact Centre since the beginning of this performance year. Currently, the services that have been migrated into the contact centre in 2010/11 are:

- Music
- Revenues and Benefits
- Planning South

Services due to be migrated before 31 March 2011:

- ICT Helpdesk
- Licensing
- Free school meals
- Transport

Key theme (3): Focussed use of resources

6. Corporately, the impact of continued focus on resources (including staffing) are beginning to show by, for example, improved sickness levels when compared with the same point in 2009/10 and slightly reduced numbers of staff employed and agency staff used. The information reported for overall staffing numbers reflects the numbers actually employed rather than numbers on the establishment.

DIRECTOR'S PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Corporate Health Performance Indicators

7. A slightly expanded set of Corporate Health indicators now includes measures to track and monitor the scale and make up of the workforce. These will be compared against the previous period in order to establish the trend.
8. Sickness absence across CBC has seen a slight increase in Q2 (at 2.13 days per employee), which is consistent with seasonal trends, but still remains lower than the same period last year (2.61 days per employee). This indicator is heavily skewed by long term absences and consequently this will be separated out in future reports.
9. Much attention is being paid to this indicator and management action is focussed on reducing the levels of absence across the piece.
10. Significant progress has been made to integrate the new organisational structures into SAP. To track the full time equivalent (FTE) establishment total and headcount, for CBC, a new indicator has been established, which again, will show the trend against the previous period to show how our staffing levels are changing.
11. The Council has contracted with Carlisle Managed Solutions to provide temporary agency staff. This is now being carefully monitored to understand where we may be able to reduce the requirements for this type of staff, given that they are generally more expensive than permanently employed staff. It is worth noting however, that the largest group of agency workers in the Council continue to be care workers, who fulfil a vital role in covering sickness absence in this service.
12. Undisputed invoices paid within 30 days (85%), has seen a slightly reduced performance against Q1, and is still below target at 90%. However, this is slightly up on the same period last year, and a concerted and proactive effort to clear these invoices is now being pursued.
13. We are continuing to monitor the levels of debt outstanding. The Council will be seeking to re-instate the issue of County Court Judgements on those accounts applicable and will identify best practise in the management of outstanding debts.

Customer & Shared Services Performance Indicators

14. Council tax collection is a vital indicator for the Council and needs to be very closely monitored given the likely impact of the challenging economic environment on many of our local residents. Q2 performance is slightly off target, but should recover in the second half of the year.

15. First point resolution of customer queries dropped significantly in Q2. This was a result of a large increase in the overall number of calls during the period at a time when the service was undergoing a significant change to the operation, with the creation of the single telephony centre at Technology House. Now that the teams have settled in and further training has been undertaken on Revenues and Benefits calls, it is anticipated that this indicator will see a marked improvement in Q3.
16. The CBC infrastructure was up and available for 99.10% of the time during Q2. However, there were 3 main power outages during this time and every effort was made to restore services as quickly as possible. For example, we experienced two major power outages over one weekend, one at Borough Hall and another at Priory House. ICT worked through the weekend and all services were restored prior to normal business on Monday with only minimal impact on the business. This example highlights the need to prioritise the CBC Network project to get all of remaining BBC sites connected to the CBC network as this enables us to quickly provide alternative access methods in the event of system failures in the future.
17. Time taken to process new Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit claims and change events remains significantly off target. There was a 12% increase in the number of claims for Housing Benefit during Quarter 1, reflecting the impact of the economic climate, which has hampered the work to reduce the backlog of new claims quickly during Q2. This indicator is a major priority and already significant management action has been put in place to reduce the backlog. This should show a marked improvement in the second half year, with an expectation that the target is achieved by year end.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

18. The Committee is also asked to consider any issues from this report that could form part of its work programme.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Corporate Health People (Quarter 2 Performance Indicators)
Appendix B – Corporate Health Finance (Quarter 2 Performance Indicators)
Appendix C – Customer and Shared Services (Quarter 2 Performance Indicators)

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

Executive 7 December 2010 – (Quarter 2 Performance Report)

Location of papers:

Priory House, Bedfordshire

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Indicators	Linked to LAA	National PwC 09/10	Unit	Good Is	Outturn 09/10	Quarter 1 Apr-Jun	Quarter 2 Jul-Sept	Quarter 3 Oct-Dec	Quarter 4 Jan-Mar	Trend Comparison	Year to Date	Performance (0 compared with Q)	Target 10/11	Comments
Total corporate sickness absence - number of days lost						1.8 (09/10 2.3)	2.13 (09/10 2.61)	-	-					During a time of increasing organisational change as a result of budgetary challenges and service redesign, it is pleasing to note the positive impact that management decisions have had on the (decreasing) levels of corporate sickness absence. During quarter 2, there were a number of employees in all Directorates who were on 'long term' sickness (20 or more consecutive days) and HR resources were focused on supporting line managers to manage these cases. Managers have been trained to use the Council's Sickness Absence policy, which is a robust policy for dealing with sickness absence issues. Training has also been provided to those employees, in all service areas who are responsible for completing E forms to provide accurate and timely reporting. During Q3 HR resources will be committed to supporting the council wide Change agenda.
Office of the Chief Executive						2.18	4.05	-	-					
Customer & Shared Services						1.37	1.61	-	-					
Children's Services	No		No. Days	Low	9.9	1.26	1.41	-	-	Seasonal	3.93	↑G	8.0	
Social Care, Health & Housing						2.92	3.30	-	-					Performance is on target and it is an improvement on the figure reported during Q2 2009/10.
Sustainable Communities						1.51	1.85	-	-					From Q3 we will be reporting on the long term sickness figures, as these tend to skew the numbers. This will provide us with a better overall trend. The data will be ready for Q3.
Total number of Carlisle Managed Solutions agency staff						207	190.7	-	-					This indicator presents a snap shot view of the numbers (FTE) of Carlisle Managed Solutions Staff working in the Council at the end of the Quarter 2 reporting period.
Office of the Chief Executive						1	3.97	-	-					
Customer & Shared Services	No		No.			53	41.22	-	-	Qtr on Qtr	190.7		NA	CMS improvement plan in place to improve efficiency opportunities and deliver improved value for money. Including the implementation of an automated authorisation pathway for all agency workers with CMS. The aims of which is to enable us to effectively manage agency demand and associated costs in an efficient way.
Children's Services						63	58.23	-	-					
Social Care, Health & Housing						79	75.88	-	-					
Sustainable Communities						11	11.4	-	-					
Average number employed (FTE)						2153.15	2134.29	-	-					This indicator has been revised and the new definition is the total FTE employed, ie all employees on permanent, fixed term and temporary contracts averaged over the quarter. Therefore the Q1 data has been amended to reflect this new definition.
Office of the Chief Executive						57.35	59.21	-	-					With effect from 1st June the new structures were effective within SAP and the figures reported reflect the new structures.
Customer & Shared Services	No		No.			480.39	450.17	-	-	Qtr on Qtr	2134.3		NEW	The overall FTE shows a reduction and this will continue as organisational restructures are implemented. In some areas positions are now filled with permanent employees replacing long term agency staff.
Children's Services						503.03	514.41	-	-					
Social Care, Health & Housing						550.93	555.66	-	-					
Sustainable Communities						561.46	554.84	-	-					

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Indicators	Linked to LAA	National PwC 09/10	Unit	Good is	Outturn 09/10	Quarter 1 Apr - Jun	Quarter 2 Jul - Sept	Quarter 3 Oct - Dec	Quarter 4 Jan - Mar	Trend Comparison	Year to Date	Performance Judgement (Q compared with Q)	Target 10/11	Comments
Invoices paid within 30 Days						88%	*85%	-	-					Payment of invoices
Office of the Chief Executive						82%	65%	-	-					Quarter 2 performance (85%) is a decrease on the (revised) performance figure for Quarter 1 (previously reported as at 86%).
Customer & Shared Services					82.6%	71%	71%	-	-	Qtr on Qtr	85.0%	↓ R	90%	The management team have clearly identified a number of actions:- - Need for training and support to be delivered across the staff group
Children's Services	No	90.9%	%	High		79%	81%	-	-					The Council is developing a "Streamlined Requisitioning" Programme reducing the number of requisitioners to improve the levels at which the Council pays all of its invoices.
Social Care, Health & Housing						86%	84%	-	-					This should start to have a significant impact on the performance for this measure.
Sustainable Communities						84%	76%	-	-					*The SWIFT payments are included in the overall figure but are not included in the directorate analysis: This will be addressed for the Quarter 3 report.
Amount of debt outstanding - 61 - 90 days (£m)	No	-	No.	Low	NA	1.442m	0.486m	-	-	Qtr on Qtr (When available)	0.486m	-	-	The Council is currently reviewing the 'Reminder Issuing' process for outstanding debt with the intention that reminder letters will now be automated through the system. Currently, the last issued reminder is manually produced.
Amount of debt outstanding - 91 - 365 days (£m)	No	-	No.	Low	NA	1.941m	3.773m	-	-	Qtr on Qtr (When available)	3.773m	-	-	During Q3 the Finance Team will be seeking to re-instate the issue of County Court Judgements on applicable accounts. Work has already started with the Rents & Housing Team to seek the best procedures of how to chase these debts and have plans to liaise with other departments where debts seem to be static.
Amount of debt outstanding - over 1 year (£m)	No	-	No.	Low	NA	0.006m	0.144m	-	-	Qtr on Qtr (When available)	0.006m	-	-	Legacy debts are being sent to Debt Collectors in batches. CBC debts over 1 year old under £500 will be looked at during November to actively chase.

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Indicators	Linked to LAA	National PwC 09/10	Units	Good is	Outturn 09/10	Quarter 1 Apr-Jun	Quarter 2 Jul - Sept	Quarter 3 Oct - Dec	Quarter 4 Jan - Mar	Trend Comparison	Year to Date	Performance Judgement (Q compared with Q)	Target 10/11
The percentage of Council Tax due, collected	No	-	%	High	97.19%	28.79%	27.82%	-	-	Seasonal	56.61%	↔A	98.50%
The percentage first point resolution by Customer Service Centre	No	-	%	High	76.00%	68.00%	50.00%	-	-	Qtr on Qtr	59.00%	↔R	80.00%

Customer & Shared Services

Director : Richard Ellis

Indicators	Comments
<p>The percentage of Council Tax due, collected</p>	<p>The amount of Council Tax due for the year: £139,707,208. The amount of Council Tax collected: £79,089,924.</p> <p>The performance judgement is based on the seasonal activity of this KPI. It is rated as amber because performance is behind the Q2 target of 57.54%.</p> <p>The percentage of Council Tax collected is slightly behind that which was collected during Q2 2009/10. However, performance remains good.</p> <p>700 (2010/11) debts with an overall value of £500k have recently been passed to the Council bailiffs for collection, which should produce a positive impact on the collection performance.</p>
<p>The percentage first point resolution by Customer Service Centre</p>	<p>The purpose for this indicator is to ensure that the Council's Customer Service Contact Centre works towards resolving 80% of calls at first point of contact. There have been several reasons for the performance in Q2. These include an increase in the number of calls, relocation of the Contact Centre, bringing together staff from different sites into one building and the migration of Revenues and Benefits calls to the Contact Centre. There is a strategic plan in place to invest in systems, refine processes and move more services into the Contact Centre. Ongoing training and development of the team continues to help improved performance since the end of Q2, and this should manifest itself in the Q3 numbers.</p>

Indicators	Linked to LAA	National PwC 09/10	Units	Good is	Outturn 09/10	Quarter 1 Apr - Jun	Quarter 2 Jul - Sept	Quarter 3 Oct - Dec	Quarter 4 Jan - Mar	Trend Comparison	Year to Date	Performance Judgement (Q compared with Q)	Target 10/11
The percentage system availability for the corporate network (CITRIX)	No	-	%	High	NA	99.95%	99.10%	-	-	Qtr on Qtr	99.10%	↕G	99.00%

Customer & Shared Services

Director : Richard Ellis

Indicators	Comments
<p>The percentage system availability for the corporate network (CITRIX)</p>	<p>July There was a 90 minute outage of the Citrix gateway on 6 July, caused when replacing the faulty one of the pair. Although it is a fault tolerant system further changes of this nature will be carried out outside of normal hours. All systems, apart from OpenRevenues were at or above SLA. Monthly overall CITRIX systems availability for July was 99.1%</p> <p>August Monthly overall CITRIX systems availability for August was 99.52%.</p> <p>September On the 8th September there was a power outage affecting the whole of Bedford. Borough Hall UPS and generator failed to kick in resulting in our Citrix gateway being corrupted. All CBC based users were back on at 10:00 the following day (2 hour outage) using alternate access methods (approx 75% of users). BBC based users did not have service restored until the new gateway was rebuilt: this was on 10:30 Friday. This highlights the need to give top priority to the CBC Network project to get all of remaining BBC sites connected to the CBC network as this enables us to quickly provide alternate access methods in the event of large scale failures like this.</p> <p>As a result of the external power failure overall CITRIX systems availability for September was 98.69%</p> <p>Across the quarter, the overall CITRIX systems availability was 99.1%, which is slightly above the SLA.</p> <p>We will be developing an additional performance indicator, to measure the user experience of systems within the Council, that are vital to frontline services.</p>

Indicators	Linked to LAA	National PwC 09/10	Units	Good is	Outturn 09/10	Quarter 1 Apr - Jun	Quarter 2 Jul - Sept	Quarter 3 Oct - Dec	Quarter 4 Jan - Mar	Trend Comparison	Year to Date	Performance Judgement (Q compared with Q)	Target 10/11
NI 181 - Time taken to process Housing Benefit, Council Tax, new claims and change events	No	16.9	No. Days	Low	29	54	54	-	-	Qtr on Qtr	54	● R	29

Customer & Shared Services

Director : Richard Ellis

Indicators	Comments
<p>NI 181 - Time taken to process Housing Benefit, Council Tax, new claims and change events</p>	<p>There was a 12% increase in the number of customers who are entitled to Housing Benefit during Quarter 1. This increase in workload has hampered the ability to reduce the backlog of new claims quickly. The new claims backlog of 570 cases has reduced from its peak of 800 in Quarter 1. This number will continue to fall in Quarter 3. There has also been a 22% reduction in the overall number of items of outstanding correspondence in September. However, performance on this indicator is still poor. This is being addressed through restructuring the team, moving to a single team in a single location, using a single system. The migration of all incoming telephone calls to the Contact Centre has also helped officers concentrate on processing of claims. October's performance was 39 days and the aim is to reach 29 days for Q4.</p>