

**CORPORATE SERVICES
DEPARTMENT**

PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

JUNE- AUGUST 2006

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1. OUR OUTCOMES IN RESPECT OF THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN AND IMPROVEMENT AGENDA

Protecting and improving our environment

The consultation on the local development framework's statement of community involvement has now been completed and will move to an independent examination in October 2006.

Promoting and Supporting the Economic Regeneration of Wirral

Open 2006

This Open Championship has been one of the most successful ever held by the R&A. Visitor numbers have exceeded all previous records in England with 230,000, spectators pouring into Hoylake over the week. There has been an unprecedented amount of positive media interest in Hoylake and Wirral as a result of the Championship, and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

The Wirral council marquee, located in a secure area adjacent to the player's facilities and trophy room, played host to almost 500 key partners, potential investors and guests during the five main days of the Open Championship at Hoylake.

Working in partnership with the Northwest Regional Development Agency, The Mersey Partnership and Liverpool Culture Company, the themed days were designed to maximise the benefits of The Open for tourism, investment and collaboration of businesses in Wirral, Merseyside and across the Northwest.

Feedback from partners and guests alike has been excellent and it is hoped that positive partnerships and relationships have been forged and continue to grow for the good of Wirral, both nationally and internationally.

Brand New Brighton

The proposed scheme represents a key opportunity in realising the vision for the physical and economic regeneration of the New Brighton waterfront. The £75m mixed use development comprises a mix of leisure, retail and residential elements.

The proposals for New Brighton have evolved over a 4-year period between the Special Initiatives Team and the authority's preferred developer, Neptune Developments. These were subject to a Public Inquiry in February 2006. The Secretary of State, Ruth Kelly has subsequently ruled that planning permission for the development be refused. She did however recognise there were positive aspects of the proposals and their wider regenerative impact on the town, which both officers and Neptune will now be exploring.

Excellent Events

The Wirral Tourism Awards for Excellence 2006 launched this month has 12 award categories for those working in tourism in Wirral. The awards are a joint initiative between Wirral Council, The Wirral Tourism Business Network, & TMP with additional sponsors. This year the awards dinner will be held at Thornton Hall Hotel 2nd November and will incorporate the Best Bar None Awards.

The Economic Policy Team has continued to develop strategic regeneration policy. Key achievements include better co-ordination of socio- economic data and Information, to contribute to a better understanding of Wirral's economy, including labour market and business profile. This has informed the development of the Wirral Investment Strategy, which aims to bring together key discussions and activity regarding the future of Wirral's economy. Central to this piece of work is the development of the Wirral Enterprise Strategy and Wirral's Full Employment Plan, the team has been working with the consultants to develop these two strategies.

Meeting the Housing Needs of Wirral

The council has commissioned a housing needs assessment and housing market assessment. Whilst it was intended that these assessments could support submissions to the RSS examination in public in September/October 2006, it is now unlikely that can be achieved, however, input to that process will still involve substantial staffing resources in the Forward Planning Team.

Significant staff resources will be expended on the Examination in Public into the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West, which is due to be heard from November 2006 to January 2007. The Forward Planning team will be leading on evidence on housing matters for the examination, in addition to supplying evidence to other officers throughout Merseyside on other matters.

Continuously Improving Our Services

Progress continues on the key priorities within the Wirral People Strategy. The focus this period has been on a range of initiatives to build organisational capacity for improvement including the development and approval of a corporate approach to leadership development including support for a corporate leadership development programme.

In order to achieve milestones associated with becoming an employer of choice, schemes aimed at extending benefits to employees have been developed. A new employee suggestion scheme has been launched this period as well as a new childcare benefit scheme, which has been implemented in conjunction with Bentley Jennison.

The new Head of Policy, Russ Glennon, joined Corporate Services in July. Russ will initially be focussing on corporate and service planning, strengthening the performance management framework of the council and the local strategic partnership, as well as the co-ordination of the local area agreement. He will also have responsibility for developing the area forums and the corporate approach to equality and diversity.

1 Business / Transformational Change

The new Head of Transformational Change, Jacqui Roberts, is now in post. She will be initially focussing on the customer access strategy and teleworking. There will be close monitoring of the current pilot project being undertaken in Adult Social Services. There will also be a particular emphasis on care procurement, adaptations and Streetscene phase 2.

A council-wide draft change programme has been configured and a number of scoping studies is progressing through the 1Business Board. A programme of support and guidance is being developed, in liaison with the Organisational Development section, informed by the set of change management handbooks.

2. EXTERNAL CHALLENGE AND INSPECTIONS

The local strategic partnership was successful in securing the services of a neighbourhood renewal advisor to review barriers to implementing the local area agreement. This review raised a number of significant issues for the local strategic partnership particularly the complexity of the current partnership environment and how performance is monitored and managed by partnerships. These issues will be addressed by a review of partnership arrangements.

The statutory requirement to produce a Best Value Performance Plan was met within the required deadlines. It is anticipated that this be unqualified by the audit commission, which indicates statutory requirements were met.

The audit commission have undertaken a structured review of the Council's approach to corporate and service planning, using Technical Services as the "probe area" to establish how arrangements are being implemented at departmental level. As part of this review work the audit commission conducted a series of key interviews, focus groups and observations. The outcome of this review will be reported in September.

Comprehensive Performance Assessment

The audit commission forms a judgement on the council's ability to secure economy, effectiveness and efficiency. This is often referred to as the value for money judgement. This judgement is made on the basis of twelve criteria, which are categorised under the following themes:

Data quality assessment

This assessment is conducted in three stages:

Stage 1 – review of the council's arrangements to secure data quality

Stage 2 – completeness of data (desktop exercise conducted off site)

Stage 3 - performance indicator audit (conducted on site)

This assessment is currently underway and the outcome should be known in September.

Use of resources

This assessment looks at five themes: financial reporting, financial management, financial standing, internal control and value for money. The value for money element contributes to 8 of the 12 criteria for the value for money judgement. As a 2* authority the council is not required to undertake a new self-assessment, however there is a requirement to update the existing assessment. This is currently being completed

Best value performance plan

There is a requirement for each authority to produce a best value performance plan by 30th June each year. This statutory deadline was met and it is expected that it will be unqualified but the formal judgement will be made later this year.

3. REVIEW OF RISKS AND CONTINGENCIES

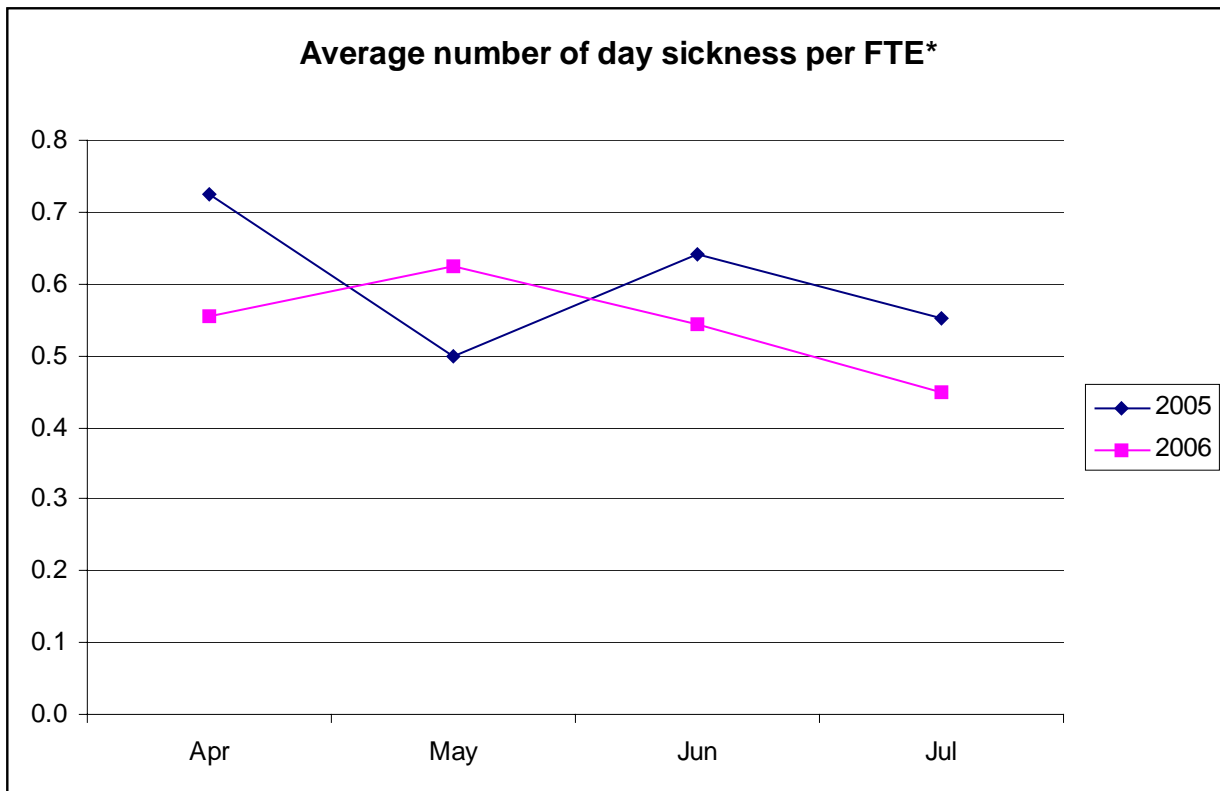
The Department takes a pro active approach to managing risk and keeps a departmental risk register outlining risks, control measures as well as risk scores. The departmental management team identified the following issues and managed their impact on achieving departmental objectives during this period:

- ❖ Public Inquiry into the New Brighton proposals
- ❖ Issues relating to the hosting of the Golf Open
- ❖ Implementation of the local area agreement
- ❖ Mott Macdonald MIS contract negotiations
- ❖ Implementation of 1Business

4. MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES, IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICES AND VALUE FOR MONEY

The number of days sickness per full time equivalent (fte) is calculated by taking the total number of days sickness during the month, per fte divided by the number of ftes employed during that month.

The chart below depicts the average for April, May, June and July for both 2005 and 2006. The trend for 2006 and shows a general improvement on the 2005 figures.



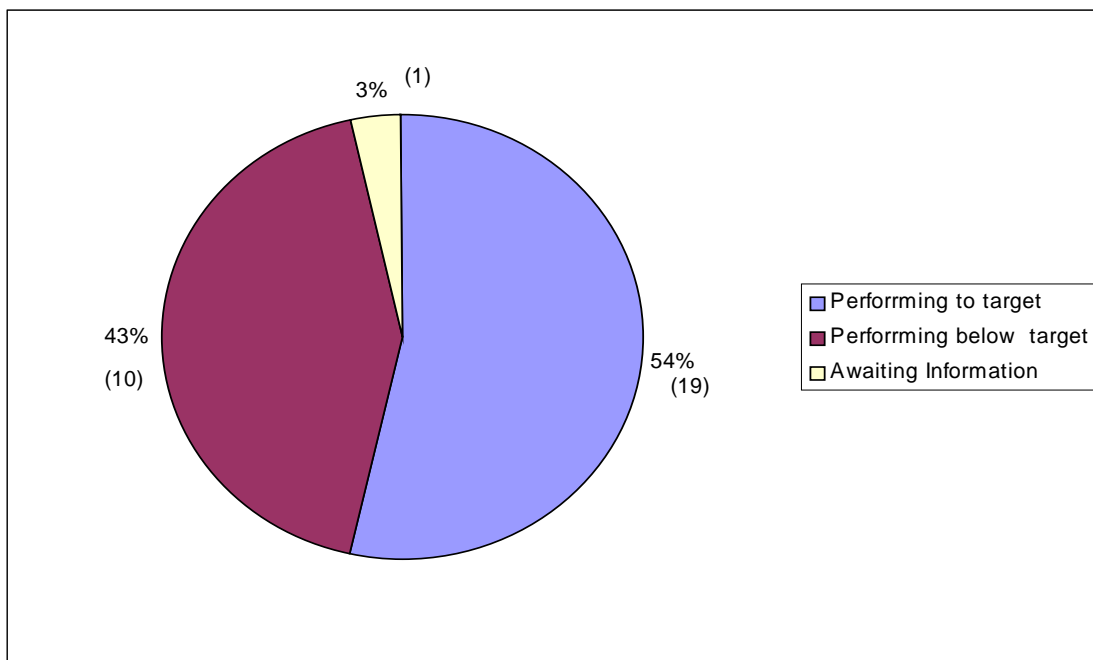
*Full-time equivalents

5. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

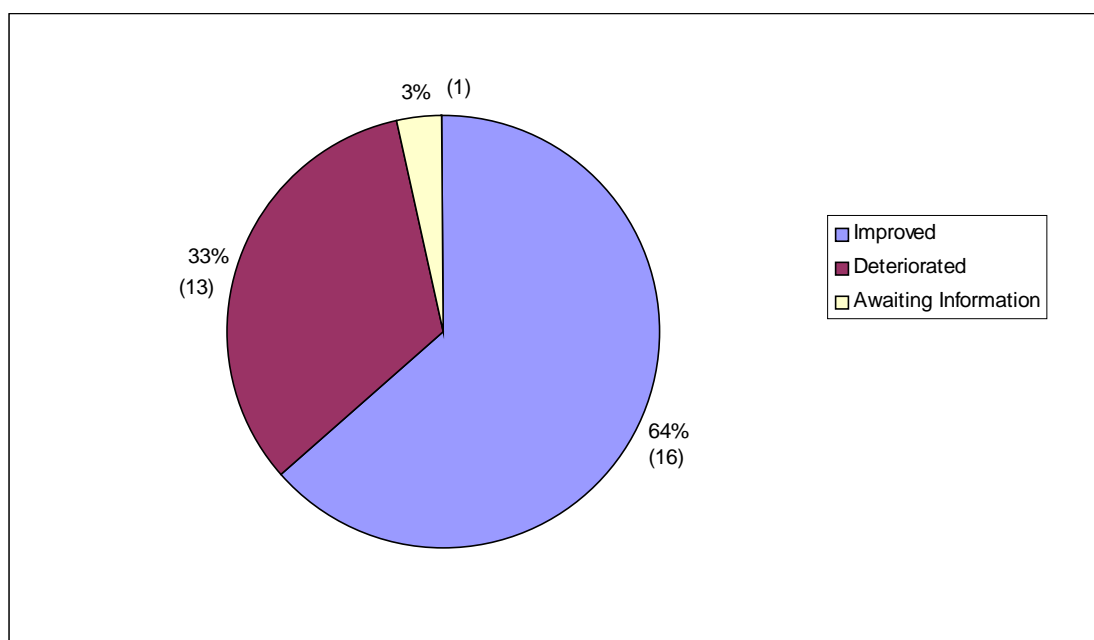
Performance Indicators

There are 52 best value performance indicators and corporate plan indicators for the corporate services department. Due to the nature of some of the performance measures it is not possible to report on all indicators on a quarterly basis. Those that do lend themselves to quarterly reporting are listed in appendix b.

The chart below depicts the number of indicators that are considered to be on target.



The chart below depicts the number of indicators that have improved or deteriorated when compared with the same quarter last year.



6. SUMMARY OF NEXT QUARTERS ACTIVITIES

The focus for the next quarter will be to:

- develop further and embed major improvement and planning frameworks such as the corporate workforce development plan.
- co-ordinate progress corporately towards achievement of the Investors in People (IiP). An initial corporate assessment will be undertaken in November '06.
- review the coverage and the effectiveness of the KIE process including conducting consultation and involvement
- complete the review of corporate behaviours/leadership behaviours. The purpose of the review is to ensure that they are used and that they have a clear 'link' to improving individual performance across Wirral. Consultation on any potential changes will take place in September with all appropriate stakeholders.
- Review of partnership arrangements and governance
- Mid-year performance review and refresh of the local area agreement
- Support of the public examination of the statement of community involvement, in October 2006.
- Major development opportunities will be pursued with other partner local authorities and private sector partners.