*Scrutiny Standing
Panel Agenda*

SCRUTINY

Epping Forest District Council

Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel
Tuesday, 15th August, 2006

Place:	Committee Room 1, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping
Time:	7.00 pm
Democratic Services Officer:	A Hendry - Democratic Services Officer Tel: 01992 564246 Email: ahendry@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

Members:

Councillors J M Whitehouse (Chairman), J Hart (Vice-Chairman), Mrs R Gadsby, R Church, M Colling, Mrs A Cooper, R D'Souza, P House, D Jacobs and R Morgan

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PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS MEETING IS OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS TO ATTEND

1.   APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.   SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)

(Head of Research and Democratic Services) To report the appointment of any substitute members for the meeting.

3.   DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

(Head of Research and Democratic Services). To declare interests in any items on the agenda.

In considering whether to declare a personal or a prejudicial interest under the Code of Conduct, Overview & Scrutiny members are asked pay particular attention to paragraph 11 of the Code in addition to the more familiar requirements.

This requires the declaration of a personal and prejudicial interest in any matter before an OS Committee which relates to a decision of or action by another Committee or Sub Committee of the Council, a Joint Committee or Joint Sub Committee in which the Council is involved and of which the Councillor is also a member.

Paragraph 11 does not refer to Cabinet decisions or attendance at an OS meeting

purely for the purpose of answering questions or providing information on such a matter.

4.   NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING - 1 JUNE 2006 (Pages 3 - 12)

To consider and agree the notes of the meeting of the Panel held on 1 June 2006.

5.   TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 13 - 16)

(Chairman/Lead Officer) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed the Terms of Reference of this Panel and associated Work Programme. This is attached. The Panel are asked at each meeting to review both documents.

6.   KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2006/07 (Pages 17 - 22)

(Head of Human Resources and Performance Management) To consider the attached report on Key Performance Indicators.

7.   SRAFF VACANCIES (Pages 23 - 26)

(Head of Finance) to consider the attached report.

8.   DATA QUALITY AUDIT AND VALUE FOR MONEY STRATEGY (Pages 27 - 62)

(Head of Human Resources and Performance Management) to consider the attached report.

9.   QUARTERLY FINANCIAL MONITORING 2006/07 (1ST QUARTER) (Pages 63 - 76)

(Head of Finance) to consider the attached report.

10.   REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

To consider which reports are ready to be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its next meeting.

11.   FUTURE MEETINGS

To consider the forward programme of meeting dates for the Panel. Meetings are programmed in for:

14 November 2006;
15 January 2007; and
12 February 2007.

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
NOTES OF A MEETING OF FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY PANEL
HELD ON THURSDAY, 1 JUNE 2006
IN CIVIC OFFICES, HIGH STREET, EPPING
AT 7.00 - 9.20 PM

Members Present:	J M Whitehouse (Chairman), (none), R Church, M Colling, Mrs A Cooper, Mrs R Gadsby, P House and R Morgan
Other members present:	J Knapman
Apologies for Absence:	J Hart
Officers Present	P Haywood (Joint Chief Executive), T Tidey (Head of Human Resources and Performance Management), R Palmer (Head of Finance), A Scott (Head of Information, Communications and Technology), A Hall (Head of Housing Services), C O'Boyle (Head of Legal, Administration and Estates), Mrs J Tautz (Senior Local Land Charges Officer), J Gilbert (Head of Environmental Services), J Preston (Head of Planning and Economic Development), Mrs L MacNeill (Assistant Head of Leisure Services), S Tautz (Senior Performance Management Officer) and A Hendry (Democratic Services Officer)
Also in attendance:	(none)

1.   **WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed the new members to this the first meeting of the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel and briefly outlined the purpose of the panel.

2.   **CONFIRMATION OF MEMBERS, CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN.**

The Committee noted that since the agenda was printed, the membership had been slightly altered. Councillor Morgan was now a member in place of Councillor Knapman and Councillor Jacobs had replaced Councillor Goold.

3.   **SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (COUNCIL MINUTE 39 - 23.7.02)**

No Substitute members had been appointed to the meeting.

4.   **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

5.   **NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The notes of the meeting of the Panel held on 25 April 2006 were agreed as a correct record.

6.   TERMS OF REFERENCE / WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel noted the work programme for 2006/07. Members were informed that if they wished to add anything to the work programme they should get into contact with Tony Tidey, the Lead Officer or the Chairman.

7.   KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2005/06 AND 2006/07

The Head of Human Resources and Performance Management introduced the report on the Key Performance Indicators. The system uses a traffic light system, Red and Green to indicate the performance against the target for the year. Red means that the target was not achieved and Green that the target was achieved.

Of the 100 or so performance indicators, the Cabinet chose 40 of these as key performance indicators as crucial targets, and aims to have 40% of these indicators in the top quartile. The panel noted the 40 key performance indicators listed in the agenda.

Progress in achieving top quartile performance is reported to the Scrutiny Panel and the relevant Portfolio Holder at the conclusion of each quarter. Performance reports in respect of all other BVPI's and LPIs are placed in the Members' Room on a quarterly basis.

Using the latest figures the overall position of top quartile status was reported as follows:
        (a)   19 (47.7%) met the top quartile target (Green); and
        (b)   21 (52.3%) failed o meet the top quartile target (Red).

This is comfortably above our 40% target. Given this, the panel could recommend to the Cabinet that a 50% target should be set for next year.

The panel noted the key performance indicators outturn for 2005/06, the outturn related to the whole year. The Senior Performance Management officer reported that from June this year a performance management ICT system would provide improved KPI monitoring reports.

The Panel went through the KPIs, where the following was noted:

BV2b (The Duty to Promote Race Equality) – was 2% below target, but there is an action plan for improvement, which will be implemented in the autumn.

EH6 (Process all Licence Applications within the Statutory Period) – was doing well – but circumstances beyond the Council's control stopped us getting 100% - because of this the Council might need to review the target of 100%.

BV82a(i) (Household Waste Management (Recycling))- The Head of Environmental Services updated the figures for this indicator changing the 2005/06 Q4 figure to 16.2%.

BV82a(ii) (Household Waste Management (Recycling))– The Head of Environmental Services reported the outturn for 2005/06 Q4 figure was 8044.

BV82b(i) (Household Waste Management (Composting))– The Head of Environmental Services reported the outturn for 2005/06 Q4 was 7.3%.

BV82b(ii) (Household Waste Management (Composting)) – The Head of Environmental Services reported the outturn for 2005/06 Q4 was 3617.

BV199a (Local Street and Environmental Cleanliness – Litter and Detritus) – The Head of Environmental Services reported the outturn of 2005/06 Q4 was 13% (in this case a low figure is good).

BV199b (Local Street & Environmental Cleanliness – Graffiti) – The Head of Environmental Services reported the outturn of 2005/06 Q4 was 0% (in this case a low percentage is good).

BV199c (Local Street & Environmental Cleanliness – Fly-posting)) – The Head of Environmental Services reported the outturn for 2005/06 Q4 was 0% (again low is good).

BV82 and BV199 have improved significantly.

The Chairman asked if there were any discernable differences between areas with wheeled bins and those without. The Head of Environmental Services replied that they cannot tell about individual areas, but they were sending 3.5 thousand tonnes less to landfill this year compared to last year, which was good progress.

Councillor Mrs Gadsby said that the street cleansing in Waltham Abbey was not very good and asked why the BVPIs showed an improvement. The Head of Environmental Services said that the areas that they gathered the figures from was prescribed by the Government; these remain the same year on year and are not sensitive to these cases.

Councillor Morgan commented that flytipping was getting worse in the rural areas, and asked how it should be controlled. The Head of Environmental Services replied that getting evidence was difficult, there was now more flytipping with no corresponding prosecutions. The Head of Legal Administration and Estates clarified that the evidence was not difficult to obtain, it was just difficult to prove. In order to keep on top of this the council needs all its officers looking out for fly-tipping when they travelled around the district.

BV8 (Percentage of Invoices Paid on Time) - The corrective action proposed should have read:
"A further request to pass invoices more promptly has been made. The indicator is to be monitored monthly by officers to check progress. The figure for April 2006 is encouraging."

BV9 (Percentage of Council Tax Collected) – was just under target, but two extra staff have now been recruited to help.

BV78b (Speed of Processing Change in circumstances for Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit Claims) – has now had a change of definition – the DWP is now advising that it is now 9 days and not 11 days. 9 days is a difficult target to achieve as a lot of claims do not always come in with all the information and have to be sent back for completion, which we then give the claimant a month to reply to. Officers had improved from 25 days to 11 days.

BV63 (Energy Efficiency of Housing Stock) – The Head of Housing Services commented that this figure should be indicated as being in the top quartile and not the median.

BV64 (Vacant Dwellings Returned to Occupation or Demolished) – The Head of Environmental Services explained that it was difficult to set a target for this KPI. He asked that it be taken out for now and reinstated if need be later, if thought warranted. On consideration, the Panel agreed to remove this indicator.

Agreed to remove BV64 from the KPIs.

BV183a (Length of Stay in Temporary Accommodation (Bed & Breakfast) in weeks) – The Head of Housing Services noted that the target for 2006/07 should be 0%.

BV184a (Non-Decent Local Authority Dwellings (percentage) – The Head of Housing Services indicated that the target for 2006/07 should be 6% and for 2007/08 should be 5.2%.

BV15b (Affordable Housing) – This is a case for member consideration at the various Planning Sub-Committees. Councillor Knapman commented that sometimes the council gets money instead of affordable housing, and asked how this is recorded. The Head of Housing Services replied that this is included in the Capital Programme and in the progress report on Section 106 agreements but is not noted here in the BVPIs.

BV11b (Top 5% Earners: Ethnic Minorities) – The Head of Human Resources and Performance Management noted that although the outturn is red, it is only under by one member of staff.

BV12 (Working Days Lost Due to Sickness Absence) – The Head of Human Resources and Performance Management noted that last year and the year before that the figures were estimated. This year the figures were obtained by accurate monitoring, so this will be taken as the base line figure. New procedures have been put in place for the Services to follow.

BV157 (E-Government: E-enabled interactions) – this is being removed as E-Government has moved to regional centres. New ways of monitoring will be introduced along with a new BVPI.

BV106 (New Homes on Previously Developed Land) – The Head of Planning and Economic Development said performance was pleasing. The most recent figures show that only 3 properties were built on greenfield sites. This BVPI should be cross-referenced with Housing Services' Affordable Housing figures.

BV109a, b & c (Major, Minor and Other Planning Applications) - The Head of Planning and Economic Development noted that these had improved from last year. They have met their figures because of their new IT system restructure and new (temporary) staff, the 'hit squad'. The Chairman asked if they are able to maintain their improvements. The Head of Planning replied that they would report on their situation with the use of the 'hit squad' to the July Cabinet.

BV109b – the Head of Planning and Economic Development said they would miss their performance targets mainly because of the Sub-Committee dates – he could see merit in having 3 sub-committees on a 3 weekly cycle to improve the timescale. Councillor Colling asked that all sub-committee chairmen be given some background information on this and they be invited to the next meeting of the Constitutional and Members Service Standing Panel when they may look into this issue.

Agreed to invite the Sub-Committee Chairmen to the next Constitutional and Members Service Standing Panel meeting.

The Panel then considered the 40 KPIs as a whole to see if any could be removed or added to the list.

The Chairman asked the Panel to consider if there were any non-essential KPIs or new ones that should be added.

Councillor Knapman (Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services Portfolio Holder) commented on the need to build around 600 affordable homes per annum and that the targets for H15a should be altered upwards to reflect this. The Chairman said that they should let the Housing Scrutiny Panel complete its work before altering the targets. The Head of Housing Services pointed out that the targets need to have some bearing of what's being constructed. The Housing Scrutiny Panel has recently completed this work and has made its recommendations to the Cabinet, but it is not certain if it will produce any more affordable homes. In this case money is not the issue but the land allocated to housing is. The issues concerns Planning Policy in the Green Belt.

The Head of Human Resources and Performance Management said that the next years' targets should be centred on core business, as the external auditor was likely to ask why they had been chosen. As all national targets are increasing we have to be satisfied that we are able to meet the upgraded targets.

Councillor Morgan wanted to know if Planning Enforcement was monitored. He was told that it was not easy at present, as it is based on a manual system, but it will soon go on to computerised monitoring systems, which will enable planning to provide more information for the BVPIs. A report on this will be presented soon.

Attention was drawn to the Community Safety BVPIs for 2005/06. It was noted that it is not solely within the power of the Council to influence the performance of these indicators. Management Board wished to pursue improvement in this area with Essex Police and through the auspices of the Epping Forest Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. However it was not recommended that these indicators be adopted as KPIs for 2006/07. The Chairman asked that it be established how these targets link with Police targets and that this should be added to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme.

Agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be asked to consider the involvement of the Epping Forest Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership in the monitoring of the Community Safety BVPIs.

Councillor Gadsby asked that Parking Issues be added to the list of Performance Indicators. The Head of Environmental Services replied that they could monitor how many correctly issued/ appealed against tickets have been issued or the number successfully issued, or the recovery rate on tickets issued but not paid. For these figures we are in the hands of others, and it is important that we chose indicators that we can control.

Agreed that a new local performance indicator on Parking be added, looking at how many tickets are issued, how many are appealed and how many were successful in their appeal.

The Joint Chief Executive (for Resources) endorsed the Head of Human Resources' comments concerning the achievement top quartile status. Cabinet had decided that the Council could achieve 40% and we achieved 47%; the government will look for us make further improvements. It is possible to recommend to the Cabinet that we now look to achieve 50% of the KPIs to achieve top quartile status.

Councillor Knapman agreed that this was a realistic figure to meet.

> **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:**
>
> 1. That BV64 (Vacant Dwellings Returned to Occupation or Demolished) be deleted as a Key Performance Indicator and that Local Performance Indicator PR3 (Response to Press Enquiries) be deleted as a measure of local performance.
>
> 2. That the remaining 39 KPIs be endorsed by the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel and readopted as KPIs for 2006/07.
>
> 3. That a new LPI on Parking, looking at how many tickets are issued, how many are appealed and how many were successful in their appeal, be developed by the Head of Environment Services and adopted as an additional KPI for 2006/07.
>
> 4. That a target be set of 50% of the KPIs for 2006/07 to achieve top quartile status.
>
> **RECOMMENDED TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:**
>
> 1. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be asked to invite representatives of the Epping Forest Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to explain the Partnership's performance with regard to Community Safety BVPIs, and consider the Council's role.

8. GERSHON BACKWARD LOOKING STATEMENT FOR 2004/05

The Head of Finance introduced a report giving the background to the Gershon Efficiency Savings. In 2003 Sir Peter Gershon was commissioned by the Prime Minister and Chancellor to consider the scope for efficiency savings across all public expenditure. He was asked to look at specific proposals to deliver efficiencies and more general changes that could be made to the framework within which the public sector operates to improve efficiency. The final report 'Releasing Resources to the Front Line' was published in July 2004. In November 2004, the Government introduced the efficiency agenda to local authorities. Local Government was informed that it would be responsible for delivering over £6.45bn of total efficiency gains by 2007-08. This meant that over the next three years, each local authority is expected to achieve 2.5% p.a. efficiency gains compared to their 2004/05 baseline.

Members noted that a backwards-looking statement was due for 2005/06 and was scheduled for submission by 16 June 2006. However on 17 May 2006 an additional 60-page guide was issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). As authorities are required to take into account this guidance in

constructing their backward-looking statements the DCLG has extended the deadline from 16 June to 6 July.

The current position figures were appended to the report. Members noted that in Gershon you can have cashable efficiency that can be transferred to other areas. Due to this the council had a cashable transfer of £400k to be added to the £500k

> **Noted:**
>
> The Panel noted the contents of the report and the efficiencies proposed for inclusion in the backward-looking Annual Efficiency Statement for 2005/06 to be submitted to the DCLG by 6 July 2006.

9.   REPORT ON LOCAL LAND CHARGES

The Scrutiny Panel had previously asked for an explanation of the ongoing anticipated reduction in the levels of income generated from Local Land Charges search fees.

The Head of Legal Administration and Estates introduced the report on Local Land Charges. She explained that although this service did make a profit it was not set up explicitly to do so.

There are currently two ways to make a search. There is the official search, costing £120 and a personal search, costing £11.

The official standard Local Land Charges search provided a comprehensive response to all standard search enquiries using records/documents held by the authority and Essex County Council, although not all of the information on which search responses are based is publicly available at the present time.

A personal search is a search of the Local Land Charges Register carried out in accordance with the Local Land Charges Act 1975 and the Local Land Charges Rules 1977 as amended. Section 8 of the 1975 Act allows any person to search the Local Land Charges Register on payment of the prescribed fee, which is currently set by the Government at £11.00 per parcel of land. In addition, but quite separate from the Local Land Charges Act requirement, any person is entitled by law to inspect free of charge any records open for public inspection held by a local authority.

The two methods of search do not produce exactly the same results. Furthermore, whilst the Council is entirely responsible for the accuracy of responses that it provides to official Local Land Charge searches, the local authority is not responsible in any way for the accuracy or quality of the work carried out by agents or individuals who carry out a personal search.

Personal searches are being used more and more by various commercial agencies, and are now acceptable to mortgage companies. EFDC charges £11 plus £4 for any photocopying. Commercial Companies provide this for the £15 we charge, and sell it on to solicitors for £100. The people who are selling/buying see no difference in their charges.

An official search, although more thorough, can take much longer, which is another factor in some people choosing the personal search route.

At the request of the Joint Chief Executive (Resources), an investigation was recently conducted by a team from the ICT Department into the reasons for the current level of performance in responding to standard searches, which has concluded that the following points appear to be the major cause of delays in providing search information, which can presently take between eight and ten days:

- Essex County Council Highways Department - There is no Service Level Agreement in place with the County Council for the provision of search responses. Since the withdrawal of the Highways Agency, search enquiries are currently posted on a daily basis to the Area Highways Office in Harlow. Search responses are returned in batches, not on a daily basis, by post from the Area Highways Office; and

- Environmental Services **-** There is similarly no Service Level Agreement in place with the Head of Environmental Services for the provision of search responses. Search turnaround has traditionally been very good (approximately 2 days), although since the introduction of the Council's new waste collection arrangements, staff that usually deal with search enquiries have had to give priority to dealing with waste collection enquires.

The performance of other internal services in responding to search enquiries is acceptable and can be more easily monitored/controlled by the Local Land Charges Section.

It should be noted that the Council pays Essex County Council £22.00 per search (£77,000 per annum) for a service that is both slow and erratic, which is the same cost as other Essex local authorities who are receiving a five-day or better turn round.

Further evidence that the impact of Local Land Charges is a national rather than a local issue has come from the Local Government Association who have alerted all local authorities to complete a questionnaire that they and the Office of Fair Trading have circulated in relation to the property search market. The questionnaire is a response to claims from the commercial personal search organisations that councils are abusing their dominant market position by restricting and denying access to information needed by homebuyers. This Council has replied to the questionnaire. In the same alert, the Local Government Association has advised Councils to brief their members on the following points:

- The current system allows for personal searches of the Local Land Charges Register at a fee of £11.00 whereby individuals can carry out a limited search on their own behalf without paying the authority the full fee to carry out a more comprehensive search for them. This nominal sum contributes towards the cost of maintaining the information and providing the service to the customer;

- Whilst Councils understand the rationale of offering such a fee for genuine personal searches the facility appears to be increasingly used by commercial organisations paying the same £11.00 as private individuals and charging the consumer a much higher price for the information;

- There are important consumer protection issues if consumers are not fully informed about the type of search their conveyancer has commissioned (£11.00 fee only covers a limited statutory search) and the image of local

government can be tarnished by complaints about searches which have, in fact, been carried out by other organisations;

- As the volume of commercial searches increases there can be knock on effects on Council Tax budgets. Calculations in Northamptonshire suggest the activity of commercial search company operators adds between 2% and 10% to the district council tax bills; and

- Councils are investing substantially in computerised systems in order to improve the standard and quality including speed of the service they offer.

Councillor House asked what options were available to the Council as it cannot increase its fees. The Head of Legal Administration and Estates said that they had told the Government that £11 is not enough, as it does not cover our background costs. There are currently 50,000 items on the register (a computer system). By next year it will be merged with the Planning computer system, so it will make it easier for the public to look up. Soon they will be able to look at it from home, but they will still have to pay for it.

Councillor Colling asked if we could get a better service from Highways. The Senior Local Land Charges Officer commented that those Councils receiving a better service had Mouchel Parkman acting as their agents. The Head of Legal Administration and Estates said that Mouchel Parkman could not provide the service for this authority at present, but in the future they may well be responsible for providing the Highways information for all the Essex Authorities.

Councillor Knapman suggested that a follow up report would be necessary to address the issues that have been raised and how the service provided by Local Land Charges could be improved in order to complete with the personal search companies. He also asked whether the fee for a Local Land Charge search could be reduced and if this would affect the number of personal searches carried out. The Senior Local Land Charges Officer said that a reduction of the search fee is an option, this has been done in Castle Point which has led to a reduction in the number of personal searches being undertaken.

The Chairman agreed that a further updating report should be provided at the November meeting, informing the panel what has been achieved and/or implemented in the meantime.

RESOLVED:

That a further report on the status of the Local Land Charges budget and the income generated from standard searches and personal searches, be brought to the November Finance and Performance Management Standing Panel, highlighting:

(a)   progress achieved in improving current performance in relation to the turnaround for standard searches;

(b)   options for improving the search enquiry services provided by Essex County Council and the Head of Environmental Services; and

(c)   the implications for the Local Land Charges budget and the workload of the Land Charges Section of any reduction in the Council's current fees and charges for searches.

10.   **REPORTS TO BE MADE TO THE NEXT MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

None referred.

11.   **FUTURE MEETINGS**

Noted that the next meeting is to be held on 15 August 2006 at 7pm. Other programmed meetings are:

14 November 2006,
15 January 2007 and
12 February 2007.

TERMS OF REFERENCE - STANDING PANEL

Title: Finance and Performance Management
Status: Standing Panel
Terms of Reference:

Performance Management

1. To review Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) and Local Performance Indicator (LPI) outturns for the previous year at the commencement of each municipal year, and to determine the following on an annual basis:

    (a) The criteria for deciding which BVPIs and LPIs should be formally monitored by the Panel throughout the remainder of the year, based upon the 'traffic light' system of performance reporting, Comprehensive Performance Assessment improvements, and existing council and member priorities;

    (b) A 'basket' of priority BVPIs and LPIs, performance against which will be reported to the Panel throughout the year;

    (c) The monitoring frequency of those priority BVPIs and LPIs identified by the Panel;

    (d) Arrangements for the wider member reporting and monitoring of performance against those BVPIs and LPIs that are not contained in the Panel's 'basket' of high priority indicators;

2. To consider proposals and make recommendations for corrective action in relation to poorly performing BVPIs and LPIs;

Best Value Performance Plan

3. To consider and make recommendations as appropriate on the format and content of the Council's annual Best Value Performance Plan;

Council Plan

4. To undertake a full review of the existing Council Plan and to make recommendations to the Cabinet on the overall strategic vision to be adopted, within the context of how the authority intends to prioritise resources and develop services in the medium term;

Public Consultation

5. To develop arrangements to directly engage the community in commenting on and shaping the future direction of services to make them more responsive to local needs, including the development of proposals for effective consultation through an annual community conference;

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6. To annually review the consultation exercises undertaken by the council over the previous year.

Finance

7. To consider the draft budgets for each portfolio and in so doing to evaluate and rank proposals for either enhancing or reducing services. Members will need to ensure consistency between wider policy objectives and financial demands.

8. To consider financial monitoring reports on key areas of income and expenditure for each portfolio.

Work Programme 2006/07 – Draft as at 15 August 2006

Finance and Performance Management Standing Panel

Item	Report Deadline/Priority	Progress/Comments	Programme of Future Meetings
(1) Best Value Performance Data	Quarterly	**Underway:** • Monitoring of BVPP basket was undertaken on 1 June 2006. The Panels recommendations on KPIs went to Cabinet. • Draft Best Value Performance Plan 2006/07 was considered on 25 April 2006. • Ongoing KPI Scrutiny	1 June, 15 August, 14 November 2006, 15 January, 12 February 2007
(2) Performance (Services to be scrutinised in Rotation)		**Underway:** • Land Charges and Legal and Administration Services to be scrutinised at next meeting. • Local Land Charges was considered at the June meeting. A further updating report to come back to the Panel in November.	14 November 2006
(3) Quarterly Financial Monitoring	2006/07	**Underway:** • Date for period up to December 2005 last reviewed by Panel on 7 February 2006. • First quarter to go to 15 August meeting. • Second quarter to go to 14 November meeting. • Third quarter to go to 12 Feb 07 meeting.	

(4) Annual Audit Plan	February 2007	Referred by OSC on 2 March 2006
(5) Review of Local Land charges		**Underway:** Report went to 1st June meeting, another report was requested for 14th November meeting.
(6) Local Area Agreements		**New item** added by OSC on 16 March 2006
(7) Draft Council Plan 2006-2010		**Underway**
(8) Budget Papers		To be reported at the November, January and February meetings. **Nov.** meeting to consider growth/savings; **Jan.** meeting to consider the detailed budget; **Feb.** meeting for last comments prior to formal tax setting.
(9) Value for Money Strategy		15 August 2006
(10) Data Quality Audit. Self Assessment		15 August 2006

Report to Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Standing Panel

Date of meeting: 15 August 2006

SCRUTINY

Epping Forest District Council

Portfolio: Finance and Performance Management

Subject: Key Performance Indicators 2006/07

Officer contact for further information: S. Tautz (Ext 4180)

Committee Secretary: Adrian Hendry, ext.4246

Recommendations:

That the Scrutiny Panel consider the Council's performance for the first three months of 2006/07, in relation to the Key Performance Indicators adopted by the Cabinet.

Report:

1.   (Head of Human Resources and Performance Management) As the Scrutiny Panel will be aware, a range of 52 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2006/07 was adopted by the Cabinet at it's meeting on 10 July 2006.

2.   The KPIs are crucial to the Council's core business and its corporate priorities, and comprise a mixture of both Best Value and Local Performance Indicators. The aim of the indicators is to focus improvement actions on key areas and to move performance against each into the top quartile of performing local authorities and to then maintain or improve further on that level of performance. Details of the KPIs for 2006/07 are set out at Appendix 1 to this report.

3.   Progress in achieving top quartile performance in respect of the KPIs is reported to the Scrutiny Panel and the relevant Portfolio Holder at the conclusion of each quarter, with the exception of the following key indicators for which little change is likely over each three month period, and which members have previously agreed be reported to Portfolio Holders and the Scrutiny Panel at year-end only:

     BVPI 2b (race equality)
     BVPI 11a, 11b, 11c (staff gender, ethnicity and disability)
     BVPI 14 (early retirements)
     BVPI 16a (disabled employees)
     BVPI 17a (ethnic minority employees)
     BVPI 106 (new homes on developed land)
     BVPI 154 (race equality in housing)
     BVPI 156 (disabled access)
     BVPI 199d (fly-tipping)

4.   Performance reports for each of the KPIs for the period from 1 April to 30 June 2006 will be circulated in advance of the meeting. For this first quarter of the year, these reports will be produced using a new performance management software system,

designed to improve performance collation and presentation arrangements. Unfortunately, a number of implementation and training requirements delayed the circulation of reports with this agenda, and it has additionally not been possible to fully develop the structure and format of the performance reports in time for this meeting. Initially, reports will be presented in a similar format to that members have previously received, including the 'traffic light' representation of current performance against targets. Fully developed performance reports will be available from the end of Quarter 2 of 2006/07, and a review of member requirements for the presentation of performance information will be undertaken once the new system is fully established.

5.   The Scrutiny Panel is requested to consider the Council's performance for the first three months of 2006/07 in relation to the Key Performance Indicators. Heads of Service will be in attendance at the meeting to respond to any questions raised in respect of the indicators and performance thereon

6.   Performance reports in respect of all other Best Value and Local Performance Indicators have been placed in the Members' Room.

Reason for decision:

7.   To ensure that the Council monitors progress against its aim of achieving top quartile district council performance of 50% of its key performance indicators for 2006/07, and that proposals for corrective action are considered in respect of areas of current under-performance.

Options considered and rejected:

8.   None. The Council has previously agreed arrangements for monitoring progress against the key performance indicators.

Consultation undertaken:

9.   The performance data and proposals for corrective action compiled in this report have been submitted by each appropriate Head of Service.

Resource implications:

Budget/Personnel/Land: The respective Head of Service will identify the resource requirements for any proposals for corrective action in respect of areas of current under-performance set out in this report.

Community Plan/BVPP reference: None
Relevant statutory powers: None

Background papers: None
Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: None
Key Decision reference: (if required) None

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2006/07

Community Wellbeing

KPI Reference	Definition	Collectorr
BV2(b)	The quality of an authority's Race Equality Scheme and the improvements resulting from its application	T. Tidey
BV156	The percentage of authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for, and accessible to, disabled people	T. Tidey
BV175	Racial incidents resulting in further action	S. Ford
LPI EH6	The percentage of licence applications processed within the statutory period	J. Nolan

Customer Services, Media, Communications and Information Technology

KPI Reference	Definition	Collector
There are no KPIs for this Portfolio for 2006/07		

Housing

KPI Reference	Definition	Collector
BV63	The average SAP rating of local authority owned dwellings	C. Sobey
BV66(a)	Rent collected by the local authority as a proportion of rents owed on housing revenue account (HRA) dwellings	C. Sobey
BV164	Does the authority follow the commission for Racial Equality's code of practice in rented housing and the Good practice Standards for social landlords on tackling harassment included in 'Tackling Racial Harassment' code of practice for social landlords	C. Sobey
BV183(a)	The average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation of households that are unintentionally homeless and in priority need	C. Sobey
BV183(b)	Average length of stay (weeks) in hostel accommodation of households that are unintentionally homeless and in priority need	C. Sobey
BV184a	The proportion of local authority dwellings which were non-decent at the start of the financial year	C. Sobey
BV184(b)	Percentage change in the proportion of non-decent Council dwellings between the start and end of the year	C. Sobey
BV212	Average number of days to re-let Council dwellings	C. Sobey
LPI H15(a)	The number of affordable homes completed and ready for occupation during the year	A. Hall
LPI H15(b)	The amount of affordable housing required as part of Section 106 Agreements signed during the year for all large residential development sites (in excess of 25 properties or 1 hectare),	A. Hall

Finance, Performance Management & Corporate Support Services

KPI Reference	Definition	Collector
BV8	The percentage of invoices for commercial goods and services that were paid by the authority within 30 days of receipt or within the agreed payment terms	P. Maddock

BV9	The percentage of council tax collected by the Authority in the year	R. Pavey
BV10	The percentage of non-domestic rates collected	R. Pavey
BV11(a)	The percentage of the top-paid 5% of the local authority's staff who are women	T. Tidey
BV11(b)	The percentage of the top 5% of the local authority's staff who are from an ethnic minority	T. Tidey
BV11(c)	The percentage of the top 5% of the local authority's staff who have a disability	T. Tidey
BV12	The number of working days/shifts lost to the local authority due to sickness absence	T. Tidey
BV14	The percentage of employees retiring early (excluding ill-health retirements) as a percentage of the local authority's total work force	T. Tidey
BV16(a)	The percentage of local authority employees with a disability	T. Tidey
BV17(a)	The percentage of local authority employees from ethnic minority communities	T. Tidey
BV78(a)	The average time for processing new claims	J. Twinn
BV78(b)	The average time for processing notification of changes of circumstance	J. Twinn
BV79(a)	The percentage of cases for which the calculation of the amount of benefit due was correct on the basis of the information available for the decision for a sample of cases checked post-decision	J. Twinn

Environmental Protection

KPI Reference	Definition	Collector
BV82(a)(i)	The percentage of household waste arisingswhich have been sent by the authority for recycling	D. Marsh
BV82(a)(ii)	The total tonnage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the authority for recycling	D. Marsh
BV82(b)(i)	The percentage of household waste sent by the authority for composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion	D. Marsh
BV82(b)(ii)	The total tonnage of household waste sent by the authority for composting or treatment by anaerobic digestion	D. Marsh
BV84	Kilograms of household waste collected per head	D. Marsh
BV91(a)	Percentage of households served by kerbside collection of recyclables	D. Marsh
BV166	Performance against environmental health service checklist	J. Nolan
BV199(a)	The proportion of relevant land and highways assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus that fall below an acceptable level	J. Gilbert
BV199(b)	The proportion of relevant land and highways at which unacceptable levels of graffiti are visible	J. Gilbert
BV199(c)	The proportion of relevant land and highways at which unacceptable levels of fly-posting are visible.	J. Gilbert
BV199(d)	The year-on-year reduction in total number of incidents and increase in the total number of enforcement actions taken to deal with fly-tipping	J. Gilbert

Planning and Economic Development

KPI Reference	Definition	Collector
BV106	The percentage of new homes built on previously developed land	S. Bacon

BV109(a)	The percentage of major application determined within 13 weeks	B. Land
BV109(b)	The percentage of minor applications determined within 8 weeks	B. Land
BV109(c)	The percentage of 'other' applications determined within 8 weeks	B. Land
BV204	The number of planning appeal decisions allowed against the authority's decision to refuse planning applications, as a percentage of the total number of planning appeals against refusals of planning applications	B. Land

Leisure

KPI Reference	Definition	Collector
BV170(a)	The number of visits to/usages of local authority funded or part funded museums and galleries in the area per 1,000 population	A. Clear
BV170(c)	The number of pupils visiting museums and galleries in organised school groups	A. Clear

Civil Engineering and Maintenance

KPI Reference	Definition	Collector
LPI CEM1(a)	The number of Penalty Charge Notices issued during the year in relation to on-street parking	P. Blamey
LPI CEM1(b)	The number of Penalty Charge Notices issued during the year in relation to off-street parking	P. Blamey
LPI CEM1(c)	The number of Penalty Charge Notices issued during the year that were subject of an informal challenge	P. Blamey
LPI CEM1(d)	The number of Penalty Charge Notices issued during the year that were subject of a formal challenge to the Head of Environmental Services	P. Blamey
LPI CEM1(e)	The number of Penalty Charge Notices issued during the year that were subject of a formal challenge to the National Parking Adjudication Service	P. Blamey
LPI CEM1(f)	The percentage of challenges allowed against the issue of a Penalty Charge Notice during the year.	P. Blamey
LPI CEM1(g)	The percentage of Penalty Charge Notices issued during the year where collection was obtained	P. Blamey

Leader's Portfolio

KPI Reference	Definition	Collector
There are no KPIs for this Portfolio for 2006/07		

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Report to the Finance and Performance Management Standing Panel

SCRUTINY

Epping Forest District Council

Date of meeting: 15 August 2006

Portfolio: Finance

Subject: Staff Vacancies

Officer contact for further information: Peter Maddock – Assistant Head of Finance
(Ext 4602)

Committee Secretary: A. Hendry (Ext 4246)

Recommendations:

That the position regarding staff vacancies be noted.

Report:

Introduction

1.   The revenue outturn for 2005/06 presented to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee on 19 June 2006 showed that both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account were underspent. It was noted that one of the main reasons for this underspend was the level of staff vacancies experienced during the financial year. The salaries underspend in 2005/06 was £530,000 (2.7%) when compared to the original budget. However this was an improvement on the previous year when the figures were £1,143,000 (5.9%). Appendix 1 shows this information broken down on a service by service basis.

2.   Presented with this information the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee requested a report on vacancies be presented to this committee so that any long-term trends could be highlighted. This will be prepared for the next meeting.

The Position Now

3.   The position as at the end of June 2006 when compared to the budget at month three showed a saving of £242,000, ((5.1%)Column 2 & 3 of the appendix), of this around a third relates to the Housing Revenue Account. At that date there were a total of 60 posts vacant. Some of these are being covered by temporary and agency staff, however some are vacant and have been for some time and this is likely to be for a variety of reasons.

4.   As a result of this situation each service area is being asked to review their staff establishment paying particular attention to any posts that have been vacant for over a year. Service areas have been asked which posts are vacant, for how long, and what the future plans for the posts are. The responses from services will be submitted to the next meeting.

5.   It is evident from the appendix 1 that Human Resources, ICT and the Works Unit show the largest variations. All three areas show variances in excess of 10%. In the case of ICT the appendix shows that not all posts in the restructure have yet been filled. With regard to Human Resources, two posts within the performance management unit are currently vacant however recruitment to these positions is currently underway.   The Works Unit is currently taking steps to fill vacancies, using amongst other tools, trainees/apprentices.

6.   Following detailed consideration of the establishment review it should be possible to

identify the areas where long-term vacancies exist and what form of corrective action is necessary.

Conclusion

7.   Members are asked to note the initial position.

SALARY UNDERSPEND ANALYSIS

SERVICE	JUNE 2006/07		2005/06		2004/05	
	VARIATION FROM BUDGET (ORIGINAL) £'000's	VARIATION FROM BUDGET (ORIGINAL) %	VARIATION FROM BUDGET (ORIGINAL) £'000's	VARIATION FROM BUDGET (ORIGINAL) %	VARIATION FROM BUDGET (ORIGINAL) £'000's	VARIATION FROM BUDGET (ORIGINAL) %
CORPORATE MANAGEMENT	-6	-6.9	9	3.1	-37	-9.6
INTERNAL AUDIT	-3	-5.9	6	3.0	-1	-0.5
HR & PMU *	-33	-31.7	-14	-4.0	-7	-2.0
POLICY UNIT	-14	-7.4	-96	-11.8	-21	-3.2
LEGAL,ADMIN & ESTATES *	-3	-0.8	-108	-7.1	-91	-6.5
FINANCE *	16	2.3	17	0.6	-92	-3.6
INFO,COMM & TECH	-39	-17.0	-92	-11.9	-95	-14.1
HOUSING SERVICES *	-24	-3.2	-118	-4.1	-95	-3.5
PUBLIC WORKS UNIT	-56	-11.8	52	3.2	-243	-15.7
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES *	-11	-1.9	-97	-4.4	-93	-3.3
PLANNING *	-32	-5.8	-16	-0.8	-82	-4.6
LEISURE *	-37	-6.1	-73	-1.8	-286	-6.6
TOTAL	**-242**	**-5.1**	**-530**	**-2.7**	**-1,143**	**-5.9**

* Agency costs are included in the salaries expenditure.

Page 25

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Report to: Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Standing Panel

Date of meeting: 15 August 2006

Epping Forest District Council

Portfolio: Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services

Subject: Data Quality Audit and Value For Money Strategy

Officer contact for further information: S. Tautz (Ext 4180)

Committee Secretary: A. Hendry (Ext 4246)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1)   That the Council's self-assessment submission in respect of the 'Data Quality' assessment to be undertaken by the Audit Commission, be endorsed;

(2)   That the Scrutiny Panel consider the Council's draft Data Quality and Value For Money Strategies; and

(3)   That, subject to recommendation (2) above, the Cabinet be recommended that the draft Data Quality and Value For Money Strategies be adopted.

Data Quality

1.   (Head of Human Resources and Performance Management) As the first stage of the audit of Best Value performance Indicators (BVPIs) for 2005/06, the Audit Commission is undertaking an assessment of the overall management arrangements of all local authorities to secure data quality. Although part of this assessment relates to the quality of performance information, the audit relates to corporate data quality arrangements, and is therefore a much wider issue than the BVPI audit.

2.   The audit is to be based on a self-assessment exercise and through on-site validation by the Commission. The audit will result in a scored judgement, as a result of a review of the following five themes and areas for audit focus:

Review theme	Audit focus
Governance and leadership	Is there a corporate framework of management and accountability for data quality, with a commitment to securing a culture of data quality throughout the organisation?
Policies and procedures	Are there appropriate policies and procedures in place to secure the quality of data recorded and reported by the organisation?
Systems and processes	Has the organisation put in place systems and processes that secure the quality of data as part of the normal business

Review theme	Audit focus
	activity of the organisation?
People and skills	Has the organisation put in place arrangements to ensure that all staff have the appropriate knowledge, competencies and capacity for their roles in relation to data quality?
Data use	Has the body put in place arrangements that are focused on ensuring that data supporting performance information is also used to manage and improve the delivery of services?

3. For each theme area, the Commission has specified a number of Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) as a basis for councils to undertake a voluntary self-assessment of their current position with regard to data quality. Although the completion of a self-assessment was not a mandatory requirement for the purposes of the audit, the Commission considered that this exercise would be helpful for both the audit and for the Council to understand its current position. Management Board therefore determined that the Council should complete the voluntary self-assessment in relation to the Data Quality audit, and agree arrangements for undertaking the self-assessment process through a special meeting of all Heads of Service. If the Council had chosen not to participate in the self-assessment exercise, it is likely that the Audit Commission would have assessed the authority's management arrangements for data quality on the basis of previous audit work undertaken and existing perceptions of the authority.

4. The draft self-assessment for the data Quality audit is attached as Appendix 1 to this report, and also sets out the audit KLOEs in detail. The timescale for the submission of the self-assessment element of this work is tight, and the completed self-assessment is required to be submitted to the Audit Commission following the meeting of the Scrutiny Panel. The results of the Data Quality audit will feed into the Council's next Value for Money assessment, and also inform the second round of district council Comprehensive Performance Assessment. The results of the audit will also have a bearing on the BVPI audit, in that the sample of performance indicators to be subject of in-depth review will be determined partly by the risks elicited from the Data Quality audit.

5. As a result of the audit, it is considered important for the Council to formalise its management arrangements in this area. The completion of the self-assessment has provided an opportunity to set out an overall corporate approach to ensuring data quality, through the development of a Data Quality Strategy, a draft version of which is attached as Appendix 2 to this report. As performance information is increasingly being used for the external assessment of the authority's performance, the strategy sets out a commitment to ensuring that arrangements for securing the quality of key data meet the highest standards, as consistent, accurate, timely and comprehensive information is vital to support effective decision-making and enhanced service provision.

Value For Money

6. In preparation for the forthcoming Value for Money assessment referred to in paragraph 4 of this report, a need has been identified to bring together the various elements of the Council's current approach to providing value for money services into a single comprehensive document. This has been achieved through the development of a corporate Value for Money Strategy, a draft version of which is attached as Appendix 3 to this report for consideration by the Scrutiny Panel. The draft Strategy sets out authority's overall approach to achieving value for money and allocates appropriate responsibilities at both member and officer level.

7. The self-assessment element of the Value for Money exercise is required to be submitted to the Audit Commission by 30 September 2006, In view of this timescale, the Panel is asked to note that, once completed, the self-assessment will be presented to the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee for endorsement at its meeting on 25 September 2006, as there is no other scheduled meeting of the Scrutiny Panel before the submission deadline.

8. The Scrutiny Panel is requested to endorse the content of the Council's draft self-assessment submission in respect of the Data Quality assessment, and to recommend to the Cabinet that the draft Data Quality and Value For Money Strategies be adopted. The results of the Data Quality assessment will be reported to a future meeting.

Reason for decision:

9. To ensure that the Council has put in place appropriate management arrangements to secure data quality and value for money.

Options considered and rejected:

10. To decline to complete the self–assessment, as a result of which the Audit Commission would have assessed the authority's management arrangements for data quality on the basis of previous audit work undertaken and existing perceptions of the authority.

Consultation undertaken:

11. Management Board and Senior Management Team.

Resource implications:

Budget/Personnel/Land: None.
Council Plan/Best Value Performance Plan reference: None
Relevant statutory powers: None

Background papers: None
Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: None
Key Decision reference: (if required) None

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EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

DATA QUALITY AUDIT - SELF ASSESSMENT

1. GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Has the body put in place arrangements at a senior level to secure the quality of data used to manage and report on performance?

Commentary	Evidence
1.1 Responsibility for data quality is clearly defined	
At member level, responsibility for data quality rests with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Performance Management and Corporate Support Services, and the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee (DQ01). This body reports into the Executive on matters relating to audit, performance and governance. The Cabinet determines the Key Performance Indicators for the authority on an annual basis and receives an annual report on performance. The Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Standing Panel is responsible for receiving quarterly reports on Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) and Local Performance Indicator (LPI) performance, and for challenging matters of data quality (DQ02), (DQ03).	Council Constitution (DQ01) Cabinet Minutes (10.7.06) (DQ02) Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel Minutes (1.6.06) (DQ03)
At officer level, responsibility for data quality rests with the Joint Chief Executive (Resources). This post has responsibility amongst other things for Internal Audit, the Performance Management Unit, Information and Communications Technology and the Finance function (DQ04).	Job Description for Joint Chief Executive (DQ04)
Management Board has a general responsibility for data quality, receiving reports on matters such as BVPI performance, and plans for the improvement of performance of individual performance indicators. As part of this process, data provided by Heads of Service is scrutinised on matters of BVPI performance and data quality (DQ05).	Management Board Minutes (17.5.06) (DQ05)
Heads of Service are responsible for data quality within their individual services, and for formally agreeing the accuracy of BVPI and LPI returns (DQ06). In addition specific Heads of Service have defined roles as follows:	Data Quality Process for BVPIs and LPIs (DQ06)
(i) The Head of Finance as Chief Financial Officer has responsibility (Council Constitution (Section 12.04(e) Page B32) for data quality with respect to the Council's financial regulations and processes (DQ07);	Articles of the Council's Constitution (DQ07)
(ii) The Head of Information and Communications Technology is responsible for the security of the authority's ICT function, the proper use of email and the internet, and for data protection issues;	
(iii) The Head of Legal, Administration and Estates is the	Articles of the Council's Constitution (DQ08)

Commentary	Evidence
Council's Monitoring Officer and has responsibilities (Council Constitution (Section 12.03(f)) (DQ08) for making available executive decisions and for the provision of advice on matters such as financial propriety, probity and the budget framework; (iv) The Head of Human Resources and Performance Management is responsible for the collection and presentation of BVPI and LPI data in the Best Value Performance Plan and Council Plan; (v) The Chief Internal Auditor is responsible for the delivery of an annual audit plan within which issues of data quality feature as appropriate (DQ09).	Annual Audit Plan (DQ09)
In addition to the responsibilities vested in individual Heads of Service, the Council has introduced a data quality control process for the production of BVPI and LPI data. A designated officer is responsible for the production of data for each indicator, and the process sets out defined responsibilities for cross checking data, and for sign-off by the Head of Service or nominated senior manager. The Internal Audit unit has carries out annual audits on the process with respect to performance indicators (DQ10).	Data Quality Process for BVPIs/LPIs (DQ06) Internal Audit report on performance indicator data quality (DQ10)
The Council Plan for 2006 to 2010 stresses the importance of data quality, and one of the authority's key themes within this document is the commitment to high standards of data quality (DQ11).	Council Plan (Paragraph 15.2) (DQ11)
All staff regularly receive training on data quality issues through a comprehensive ICT training programme. New staff are required to attend an 'Introduction to ICT ' course, which stresses the importance of data quality. In addition, the Council has adopted Essex County Council's competency framework for training and development purposes. Competency No. 7 (Using and Managing Resources) includes the requirement to 'understand and conform to the legislative, ethical and procedural requirements in relation to information security, collection, storage and disposal'. This is supported by Competency No. 4 (Analysis and Judgement), which states 'seeks out relevant information for problem solving and decision making' (DQ12).	Corporate Training Programme (DQ12)
1.2 The body has clear data quality objectives	

Commentary	Evidence
The Council states its commitment to data quality in its new Council Plan for 2006/07 (DQ11), which is the strategic planning document for the authority. The commitment to data quality is key to the authority's ability to respond quickly to changes in performance, taking corrective action in response to accurate and timely data. The annual Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) (DQ13) supports this, where it is stated that the Council seeks to 'continually improve the accuracy, timeliness and cost effectiveness of payments'. The BVPP also notes that in 2005/06 the Council achieved its aim of introducing quarterly financial monitoring reports to the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel, thus providing the scrutiny function with greater opportunities to comment on and challenge financial data (DQ14).	Council Plan (Paragraph 15.2 (DQ11) Best Value Performance Plan (Page 47) (DQ13) Example Quarterly Financial Monitoring Report (DQ14)
The Council has produced a draft Value for Money Strategy, which emphasises the need for clear and accurate data on unit costs and performance in order to assess whether the Council achieves value for money in the services that it provides (DQ15).	Draft Value for Money Strategy (DQ15)
With respect to BVPI data, the Council's data quality objectives are not only that all data should be accurate and independently verifiable, but also that this should be used as a tool to drive up performance and ensure that top quartile district council performance is achieved for 50% of the KPIs (DQ02)	Cabinet Minutes (10.7.06) (DQ02))
At the operational level, the authority has a number of data quality objectives appropriate to the service provided. For example, our leisure management contract requires the contractor to provide accurate and verifiable statistical data in relation to numerous performance measures, as a condition of receiving payment under the contract (DQ16).	Leisure Management Contract (Performance Measures) (DQ16)
A number of front line services have achieved ISO 9001 accreditation, and this process requires the Council to produce clear data quality objectives. Equally, Legal Services has recently achieved LEXCEL accreditation and there is a requirement for clear reporting lines for data quality in this process (DQ17).	Legal Services Quality Manual (DQ17)
As noted at 1.1 above, the Council has a clear member and officer structure with respect to data quality. The Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee is responsible for receiving reports from the Audit Commission and Internal Audit, to consider risk management issues and be responsible for corporate performance management.	
The Council has set quality standards and targets for ensuring that BVPI and LPI data is accurate and produced in a timely fashion. This has been communicated to all staff with responsibility for the production of this information. Our performance in respect of LPIs is subject to annual internal audit. Training on a new performance management system (Ten Performance Manager) has recently been completed.	Data Quality Process for BVPIs and LPIs (DQ06) 'Ten' System User Manual (DQ18)

(DC5)

Commentary	Evidence
1.3 The body has effective arrangements for monitoring and review of data quality	
As noted above, the Council has implemented a quality assurance process for the collection of BVPI and LPI data. The LPI arrangements have been subject to internal audit on an annual basis for the last two years. The findings of the audit have been discussed by Senior Management Team to ensure that the recommendations are fully understood and acted upon. (DQ19) The external audit of BVPIs has been discussed by Management Board.	Senior Management Team Minutes (7.7.06) (DQ19)
The Council has recently introduced a new Performance Management IT system (Ten Performance Manager) in recognition of the fact that its reliance on spreadsheet systems posed a risk, and did not produce the analysis of data required (DQ20). The introduction of this system has been supported by staff training and the production of a comprehensive user manual (DQ18)	Cabinet Report (10.10.05) (DQ20) 'Ten' System User Manual (DQ18)
Data quality has been identified as a risk at service level. For example, the Finance Service has reorganised its arrangements for the issuing of bus passes by centralising activities to ensure improved data quality. Previously bus passes had been issued from a dozen different locations using a mix of temporary staff and local councillors, who would then provide returns and data for central compilation. The quality of the data received was variable and the database of passholders was not regarded as reliable. To address these issues a centralised system has been introduced using postal applications. This has proved a more efficient system and greatly enhanced the quality of the data held (DQ21).	Cabinet Report (19.12.05) (DQ21)
The Scrutiny process is charged at member level with the monitoring and review of data quality. An example is the former Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3, which was responsible for the scrutiny of corporate health BVPIs. Interrogation of sickness data (BV8) led to a review of the way this information was collected and recorded, which in turn provided accurate information on performance, training for managers and better performance. (DQ22)	Overview and Scrutiny Committee (3) Minutes (22.7.04) (DQ22)
BVPI and LPI performance is monitored by the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel each quarter. (DQ03) In addition Heads of Service meet with the respective portfolio holders to discuss performance information on a quarterly basis, and all members have access to performance data through schedules deposited in the Members' Room. The Cabinet is required to review overall performance annually, and to set performance targets for KPIs (DQ02). In addition to the officer process, reference has already been made to the scrutiny role carried out by Heads of Service and Management Board (DQ05).	Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel Minutes (1.6.06) (DQ03) Cabinet Minutes (10.7.06) (DQ02) Management Board Minutes (17.5.06) (DQ05)

2. POLICIES

Has the organisation defined its expectations and requirements in relation to data quality?

Commentary	Evidence
2.1 A policy is in place, supported by a current set of operational procedures and guidance	
As noted above, the Council has an operational Data Quality procedure in place to assure the quality of BVPIs and LPIs. This is designed to support the objective of accurate and timely data production so that performance can be managed in a timely and effective way. The procedures include a requirement for Head of Service scrutiny and authorisation of all performance data, together with cross checking of calculations by a person independent of this process. In signing off PI data Heads of Service are required to satisfy themselves that all relevant data has been considered, and that there is a clear audit trail to support the calculations (DQ23). These processes have continued following the introduction of the 'Ten' performance system, which in itself provides a clear audit trail with respect to the entering of PI data. This is supported at service level by the quality assurance processes required by national standards such as ISO 9001 and LEXCEL, the latter being set out on the Council's intranet for the benefit of legal staff. In addition, the Council introduced a new Committee Management System ('CoMS'), which ensures that data relating to the democratic process is published in a timely and accurate way. An example of this concerns the ability of the system to track member attendance at meetings, and for the accurate publishing of committee minutes. In the Housing Service all of the latest user manuals for Anite Housing (the social housing system used by the Council) are published on line via the Anite website and are available to download at any time. Anite ensure that the documents are always up to date. In addition, the service has instigated a back up and recovery plan to ensure continuity in the event of long-term staff absence. Should this happen the contractor has agreed to provide a complete service to maintain the software and manage day-to-day processing needs.	Data Quality Process for BVPIs and LPIs (DQ6) BVPI/LPI Quarterly Summary Control Form (DQ23(a)) BVPI/LPI Annual Summary Control Form (DQ23(b))
2.2 Policies and procedures are followed by staff and applied consistently throughout the organisation	
All staff that are responsible for the collation of performance data have a copy of the procedures via the intranet. Training has recently been completed on the 'Ten' system and Heads of Service and managers are required to ensure that all relevant staff have training in the quality assurance procedures. At a local level the procedures used within individual services, for example Legal Service's procedures for data quality are	Legal Services Quality Manual (DQ24)

Commentary	Evidence
available to all relevant staff (DQ24). Compliance with corporate procedures is monitored by the Performance Management Unit on a quarterly basis. In addition, Management Board have an overview of compliance with the process and issues of non compliance are considered at this level via the annual internal audit monitoring report as well as exception reporting where necessary (DQ25).	Management Board Minutes (5.7.060 (DQ25)

3. SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

Are there effective systems and processes in place to secure the quality of data?

Commentary	Evidence
3.1 There are appropriate systems in place for the collection, recording, analysis and reporting of the data used to monitor performance, and staff are supported in their use of these systems	
The quality assurance system for the collation of BVPI and LPI data has been described above. The annual internal audit report has identified some areas for improvement and these have been agreed at Senior Management Team (SMT) for implementation throughout the services. The inclusion of these internal audit reports in the Annual Audit Plan and the subsequent discussion of the findings by SMT illustrate the importance placed upon them by the Council. Equally, the quarterly system of scrutiny illustrates the importance placed upon this at Member level. Staff are supported in using the 'Ten' performance management system by the Performance Management Unit (who effectively provide a help desk facility), and by the Head of Human resources and Performance Management. In addition, the recent training on the 'Ten' system covered wider issues of data quality, thus re-emphasising the Council's commitment to support for staff working in this area. Although the internal audit reports have found failings of compliance with the system, these issues for improvement have been welcomed by both Management Board and Heads of Service, who seek to foster a 'right first time' approach to data quality. The arrangements for collecting and reporting data are integrated into the Council's performance management framework, which starts at the strategic level with the Council Plan and works down to individual staff targets, which are monitored via the annual Staff Development Review process. (DQ26)	Performance Management Framework as set out in Staff Development Review Process (DQ26)
Over the last three years the Council has reviewed the format and content of its PI data, consulting both officers and members on the information that should be included in committee reports and other documents. This has led to	Works Unit Local Agreement (DQ27)

Commentary	Evidence
ongoing improvements in data presentation. In the Works Unit a review of data quality related to staff working on out of hours emergency work showed that the recording systems were overly complex and required unnecessary detail, for the proper authorisation of payments. This led to successful negotiations with the trade unions to simplify payment arrangements, with the result that data recording was simplified and became easier to use. (DQ27) The Council has well-established policies for IT security, Data Protection and the acceptable usage of IT systems. All new systems are introduced via the Council's ICT Strategy and implemented using PRINCE2 project methodology. This approach ensures that all stakeholders are included in the process of specification, design and implementation of IT systems (DQ33).	ICT Policies - IT Security (DQ33(a)), Data Protection (DQ33(b)), Acceptable Usage (DQ33(c))

3.2 The body has appropriate controls in place to ensure that information systems secure the quality of data used to report on performance

Commentary	Evidence
The Council has a comprehensive annual audit plan, the outputs of which are reports and management action plans. (DQ9) This work is reviewed by the Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee at member level (DQ34), and by Management Board/Heads of Service at officer level. A Business and Internal Control Assurance Process to support the Statement on Internal Control (QC35) has been drafted and is currently under consideration. There are a range of controls built into systems to minimise the scope for error, for example within Planning Services where a policies are in place to deal with the quality of data, particularly to ensure that changes are tracked and auditable (DQ51). The Chief Internal Auditor prepares an annual Internal Audit Report to the Council, which includes an opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the authority's internal control environment. The annual audit report considers key risks facing the Council, the adequacy of controls in place to address them, and draws attention to any issues particularly relevant to the preparation of the Statement on Internal Control. In addition, the Council is also proactive in strengthening its performance information system controls. The adequacy of these controls is assessed by Members and Management Board, who approve a Statement of Internal Control. Heads of Service also provide statements on adequacy of controls in their service. PI data is quality assured by service level management before being reported to Management Board and members, as noted above	Annual Audit Plan (DQ9) Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee Minutes (19.6.06) (DQ34) Statement on Internal Control 2005/06 (DQ35) Planning Data Change Control Policy (DQ51)

Commentary	Evidence
3.3 Security arrangements for performance information systems are robust, and business continuity plans are in place	
The Council has a Corporate Business Continuity Plan that addresses the recovery of all Corporate ICT facilities in the event of major system outage. The Council is currently constructing a second computer suite to ensure a more timely recovery from major IT system incidents (DQ36) All services have produced business continuity plans which set out identified risks to business continuity and appropriate responses. Additionally, all Service Plans are required to identify risks associated with service delivery, and put appropriate controls in place where possible (DQ37). The Council's IT systems are protected by password log-ins, and key systems are protected by further elements of access control, for example the Human Resources/Payroll database. Servers and other related systems are backed up every night, and backed-up data is secured in fireproof storage locally and taken to a remote (outside of the District) location three times a week. Critical business systems (e.g. financial and security systems) are checked regularly by internal audit, with reports made to the Head of Service and Management Board). Procedure notes and/or appropriate training materials are provided for all key systems (DQ38).	Corporate Business Continuity Plan (DQ36) Example Service Plan (Revenues) (DQ37) Example Procedure Note (DQ38)
3.4 An effective management framework for data sharing is in place	
The Council participated in the National Fraud Initiative in 2004 and complied with agreed protocols for the submission of data. We have analysed the data quality summary feedback from the Audit Commission, and were pleased to note the very high level of compliance (DQ39). The Council is a Member of the Essex Information Group (EIG) that developed and implemented the Essex Trust Charter across public sector bodies within Essex. The Charter sets out a clear protocol for the exchange of data between one or more public sector organisations. It requires both parties to consider and agree the purpose, source, legality, quality and retention of data that is to be exchanged and creates a clear written understanding between all parties before any actual data sharing takes place.	NFI Summary Feedback (DQ39)

4. PEOPLE AND SKILLS

Does the organisation have the resources in place to secure data quality?

Commentary	Evidence
4.1 The body has communicated clearly the responsibilities of staff, where applicable, for achieving data quality	

Commentary	Evidence
All person specifications identify the skills required of the postholder, including education and training requirements and ICT skills, where appropriate (DQ40). The staff development review process (DQ26) considers training needs for individuals annually, including those relating to data quality and management.	Example Person Specification (DQ40) Staff Development Review process (DQ26)
Designated staff in each service are responsible for Data Protection and Freedom of Information issues (FOI), and training has been provided for such staff, along with other staff who have similar responsibilities. A FOI group has met regularly to share best practice and common issues. (DC40) The corporate training programme provides regular courses on Data Protection, and the Head of Research and Democratic Services has responsibility for day-to-day Freedom of Information issues. In addition, the corporate induction course contains aspects relating to FOI and data protection.	Minutes of FOI Group meeting (DQ41)

4.2 The organisation has arrangements in place to ensure that staff with data quality responsibility have the necessary skills

See our comments at Section 4.1 above. In addition, all new staff are expected to attend the 'Introduction to ICT at EFDC' course offered in the corporate training programme (DQ12). As part of their on the job training staff also receive induction training in their place of work, including local arrangements for data quality and management. In the Works Unit staff received basic skills training (reading/writing/maths) to provide them with the necessary skills to ensure they can accurately record their work performance. Data related training in the corporate training programme includes courses on intranet administration, website and business applications, basic computer literacy, business objects, financial reporting, data protection, report writing, Excel, and Word. Every course is evaluated by the Human Resources unit and/or ICT, along with delegates themselves. The Council's staff development review process identifies training needs and these are analysed by the Head of Human Resources on an annual basis to ensure that courses provided meet the Authority's data management and quality needs. In addition the Head of ICT also reviews the ICT training needs identified each year. A training officer is employed in the Benefits Service to ensure that all staff performing benefit work have the necessary skills. Individual tailored programmes are provided for new members of staff, depending on their experience and qualification. In addition to this existing staff receive training on changes in legislation and DWP requirements. As mentioned above, staff with specific responsibilities for the collation of PI data have received written guidance and	Corporate Training Programme (DQ12)

Commentary	Evidence
helpdesk support from the Performance Management Unit. In addition, such staff have recently received training on the new TEN performance system, along with a reminder about the stringent requirements with respect to the collation of PI data. (DC5), (DC18)	
All training courses are evaluated to ensure that they are fit for purpose and meet the Council's data management needs.	
The Council is currently implementing an Electronic Records and Document Management System (ERDMS) across all service areas. This project by definition will apply a single corporate records management policy to ensure a consistent approach to the data quality of all record systems. Staff are receiving specific record management training as part of the ERDMS implementation (DQ42).	ERDMS Project (DQ42)

5. DATA USE

Are there effective arrangements and controls in place for the use of data by the organisation?

Commentary	Evidence
5.1 The body has put in place arrangements that are focused on ensuring that data supporting performance information is also used to manage and improve the delivery of services	
Consideration of Local Land Charges performance data led the Head of Service to review the way the service was provided. In addition, the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Standing Panel scrutinised the work of the Land Charges Section in order to understand the reasons for performance difficulties, and to work with the Head of Service on solutions. (DQ3)	Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel Minutes (1.6.06) (DQ3)
Within Planning Services, performance information that is collected for BVP/109 is used on a bi-weekly basis to discuss ongoing performance with case officers, to ensure they are aware of how their decision performance influences this measure, and to identify applications that are in danger of missing their deadline.	
Furthermore, Planning Services also use the data being collected for BVP/109 to allow senior officers to assess the caseload of officers when allocating work. These reports are also available to officers for use in managing their own workload. In addition, Senior Management in Planning Services meet with staff on a bi-weekly to discuss performance issues highlighted, these discussions utilise information collected for BVP/109 and are used to identify reasons why applications have been decided late.	
The Council has implemented a number of IT systems to capture (at source) various performance metrics regarding the	CSTP report (DQ43)

Commentary	Evidence
use of IT based systems. These include data that relates to the use of Email, Internet and telephones. This has greatly assisted the Council in improving service delivery and developing new service delivery methodologies; for example the current Customer Services Transformation Programme (CSTP) has made strategic use of customer call data in order to assess the Councils current performance and gauge the impact of remodelling the current customer services approach (DQ43).	
In the Housing Service some PIs are collated on a monthly or fortnightly basis (where they are of critical importance, such as rent arrears and void loss). This enables management to identify any issues of concern quickly and act on them (DQ44).	Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (Section 9.3) (DQ44)
Another example of where use of data has led to improvement in services concerns data relating to homelessness approaches. A report considered by the Cabinet in April 2006 uses data on this matter to make a successful case for additional homelessness prevention resource (DQ45).	Cabinet Report (10.1.06) (DQ45)
In the Works Unit, a Building Maintenance Performance Management Policy is in place, which clearly links data quality with tenant satisfaction and the performance of operatives. Data on performance is analysed and corrective action taken where appropriate (DQ46).	Building Maintenance Performance Management Policy (DQ46)
In addition, mention has already been made of the scrutiny of BVPI sickness data, which led to a review of data recording and collection, and has led to an improvement in performance.	
Under the LEXCEL accreditation system, Legal Services are required to meet regularly with clients to discuss the service provided and make improvements. This was identified as an area of good practice by the independent LEXCEL assessor.	
Members receive performance data on a quarterly basis at the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel. This includes PI and financial information, along with scrutiny of the performance of a specific service such as Local Land Charges and Planning Services (DQ48).	Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel Agenda (1.6.06) (DQ48)
The Council regularly submits performance returns to a variety of government departments including the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), such as P1Es in Housing, PS2s in Planning and CIPFA data. As noted above, performance data is submitted quarterly to Management Board and the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel. It is submitted annually to Cabinet.	
Performance management systems also include qualitative data from our compliments and complaints process. This is reported to members via the Members' Bulletin (DQ49). Additionally mechanisms for gathering and assessing customer	Members' Bulletin (DQ49)

Commentary	Evidence
satisfaction include the use of satisfaction cards.	
5.2 The body has effective controls in place for data reporting	
Reference has already been made to the quality assurance process for BVPIs and LPIs, and the annual audit work which tests compliance with this. Examples of data submitted on a timely basis include the annual BVPP and Statement of Accounts. The Council has recently reviewed its controls for the clearance of agendas, including the establishment of agenda planning process for both the Executive and Scrutiny functions. This provides a control mechanism for the publishing of data (DQ50). The Council has definitions for all KPIs and BVPIs, and as noted above all data returns are supported by an audit trail which is verified both internally and by external audit. There is an established timetable for the submission of data each quarter, and this is currently being reviewed with the introduction of the 'Ten' performance management system. Missed deadlines are reported to Management Board. Data is verified by the Head of Service before submission to Management Board and members. Management Board and members scrutinise the data carefully, and as noted above, often request improvement actions or plans.	Cabinet Agenda Planning process (DQ50)

Version 4 - 3 August 2006

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EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

DATA QUALITY STRATEGY

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1.   Introduction

The Council recognises the importance of good quality data. Consistent, accurate, timely and comprehensive information is vital to facilitate the Council's decision-making process and to deliver better quality services to our customers.

The purpose of this strategy is to set out the Council's approach to improving data quality. We recognise the increasing importance placed upon data as a tool for assessing our performance, and achieving our aims and targets. We also recognise the important role that the Audit Commission has in terms of performance monitoring as a way of establishing compliance with external requirements and challenging current practice. This strategy seeks to achieve a co-ordinated approach to ensure consistently high standards are achieved both within and across services with respect to data quality. The outcomes expected from the adoption of this strategy are that Council data will be accurate and verifiable and that all staff will know the part they play in this process.

2.   Our Strategy Statement – Principles of Good Data Quality

The Council will seek to ensure that the following principles are adhered to and that staff understand and act on them:

- understanding and awareness: that all staff recognise the need for high standards of data quality and their individual roles in achieving this;

- understanding data definitions: that all appropriate staff are aware of the precise definition of data collected, be this nationally or locally determined, and that clear definitions support the data used by the Council;

- data input: that only authorised staff have responsibilities for data input, that the input of data takes place on a timely and regular basis, and that there are appropriate controls to achieve this;

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Page 43

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- data verification: that there are corporate verification processes in place which are adhered to by all staff involved in the data collection process, and that these procedures are appropriately located within services close to the point of input;

- systems: these must be suitable for their purpose, staff must have the appropriate training and expertise to use them, and they must be regularly reviewed on a risk assessment basis;

- output of data: the used data by the Council must be extracted in a way that ensures there is a clear data trail, it is regularly extracted and communicated in a timely manner; and

- presentation: that Council data is presented in a way which is easy to understand, is accurate and can lead to the drawing of conclusions, both for internal use, external inspectorates and our customers.

3.   Responsibilities for Data Quality

(a)   Member Level

(i)   The Executive

The Cabinet is responsible for the Council's overall approach to data quality in its role in the setting of policy and strategy.

The Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee is responsible for receiving reports from the Audit Commission and Internal Audit Service with respect to data quality, to consider risk management issues and be responsible for corporate performance management.

Individual Portfolio Holders are responsible for the data quality issues in their services, and ensuring that services have appropriate data quality processes in place.

(ii)   The Scrutiny Process

The Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel is responsible for scrutinising data quality.   It is also responsible for reports and information about data quality issues within services. Through the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel reports to the Cabinet on these matters.

(b)   Officer Level

(i)   Management Board

Management Board has oversight of all data quality issues at officer level in the Council. As part of this process it will receive regular reports on data quality and associated performance issues, and will challenge the accuracy/veracity of this. It is also responsible for agreeing improvement plans for data quality matters which do not require member approval.

(ii)   The Joint Chief Executive (Resources)

This postholder has overall responsibility for data quality issues at officer level.

(iii)   Heads of Service – General Responsibilities

Heads of Service have full responsibility for the quality of data within their individual services, and must appoint appropriate officers to discharge data quality functions, as necessary.

(iv)   Heads of Service – Specific Individual Responsibilities

- the Head of Finance as Chief Financial Officer has responsibility for data quality with respect to the Council's financial regulations, systems and processes;

- the Head of ICT is responsible for the security policy for the authority's ICT function, the proper use of e-mail and internet data, and for data protection issues;

- the Head of Legal, Administration and Estates is the Council's Monitoring Officer and has responsibilities for making available executive decisions and for the provision of advice on matters such as financial proprietary, probity and the budget framework. The Head of Research and Democratic Services is Deputy Monitoring Officer;

- the Head of Research and Democratic Services is responsible for Freedom of Information Act Data Quality issues;

- the Chief Internal Auditor is responsible for the delivery of an annual Audit Plan within which issues of data quality will feature strongly as appropriate.

(v) Data Inputters in Individual Services

These staff are responsible for ensuring that the data they input is accurate, is inputted on a timely basis, and is verifiable in the audit process.

(vi) All Staff

All staff are responsible for ensuring that they understand the Council's data quality strategy and objectives so far as these apply to their role. They are responsible for understanding the importance of accurate and verifiable data and the part that they may play in the Council's data quality processes. Responsibilities should be set out in Job Descriptions and be discussed in SDRs where appropriate.

4. KEY ELEMENTS IN THE DELIVERY OF THE DATA QUALITY STRATEGY

(i) Maintenance and Improvement of Data Quality Systems

Responsibility for maintaining a robust control environment for information systems lies within Services.

Each system should have a named officer responsible for data quality issues. The responsible officer is required to ensure that:

- users are adequately trained, where appropriate by having a formal training programme which is periodically evaluated and adapted to respond to changing needs;

- there is security of access/amendment;

- periodic tests of the integrity of data are undertaken;

- information management and support is available to users;

- system upgrades are made where necessary;

- the system meets managers' information needs;

- feedback from users is acted upon;

- the system can produce adequate audit trails;

- actions recommended by system reviews (e.g. by the external auditors) are implemented;

- a set of written procedures (user guide) exists for the purpose of entering and extracting data; and

- a business continuity plan for the system exists to protect vital records and data.

There should also be a named substitute officer who can deputise in the data quality lead's absence by (at least) maintaining the day-to-day functionality of the system. It is also essential that written procedures are designed so that another officer can carry out the procedures essential to providing data if the officer who normally performs these duties is absent.

There will sometimes be systems where work has to be undertaken to rectify gaps in the control environment. To identify these systems there needs to be an evaluation of information systems used in the Council to produce data. Individual services are responsible for this function, including the undertaking of risk assessments of systems, where required.

There are a number of conditions that might lead to a system being considered high-risk and every system needs to be considered against these factors. 'High risk' conditions will include:

- a high volume of data/transactions;
- technically complex data definition/guidance;
- problems identified in previous years;
- inexperienced staff involved in data processing/production;
- a system being used to produce new data; and
- known gaps in the control environment

The purpose of undertaking a risk assessment is to target limited resources at the areas that require most attention.

Where high-risk systems have been identified for attention, the following steps will need to be taken:

- analysis of the control environment;
- identification of gaps;
- design of additional controls and procedures to address gaps;
- preparation of an action plan; and
- monitoring the implementation of the action plan

(ii) Procedures for verifying data – guidance

Data requirements should be designed along the principle of 'getting it right first time' in order to avoid waste in the form of time and money spent on cleansing data, interfacing between different information systems, matching and consolidating data from multiple databases and maintaining outdated systems.

Nevertheless, in complex systems, even where there are strong controls over input, errors can creep in. Where it is needed, a verification procedure should exist close to the point of data input. The frequency of verification checks will need to be aligned with the frequency of data reporting.

The simplest verification system might be a review of recent data against expectations, or a reconciliation of systems-produced data with manual input records. Depending on the complexity of the system, it might be necessary to undertake more thorough verification tasks, such as:

- data cleansing, e.g. to remove duplicate records or to fill in missing information;

- sample checks to eliminate reoccurrence of a specific error, e.g. checking one key field of data against documentation, for a sample of cases;

- test run of report output, to check the integrity of the query being used to extract data; and

- spot checks, e.g. on external contractor information

Particular attention needs to be paid to data provided by external sources. For example a number of PIs are calculated using information provided by contractors and the Council's intention must be to work alongside contractors to ensure that such data is accurate.

When entering into contracts with service providers it is essential that, wherever relevant, there is a requirement to provide timely and accurate data, and that we are clear with the contractor about their responsibilities for data quality and how we will be checking the information they provide.

It might not always be possible to alter existing contracts so that contractors are fully committed to providing an agreed quantity or quality data. In this case, the data must be treated as high-risk and thought must be given to establishing a system of checks and measures to ensure that we are confident about the accuracy of this data. When carrying out checks on such information it is important that this is documented and signed off by the relevant officer.

Some important data – for example, road safety and crime statistics – is provided directly to the Council by external agencies. The initial priority of this strategy is to address shortcomings in information provided directly by and to us, but where concerns exist about the integrity of externally-provided information, the Council's intention is to work with other agencies constructively wherever possible to provide assurance and rectify any problems identified.

(iii)   Inputting of data

There must be adequate controls over the input of data. Systems-produced figures are only as good as the data input into that system in the first place. The aim should be 100% accuracy 100% of the time. It is important that officers have clear guidelines and procedures for using systems and are adequately trained to ensure that information is being entered consistently and correctly.

A key requirement is that data should be entered on an ongoing basis, not saved up to be entered in a block at the end of a period. This reduces the error rate and the need for complex verification procedures.

Controls should also be in place to avoid double-counting. These should be designed according to the nature of the system, in particular where more than one person inputs data. A likely control will be an absolutely clear division of responsibility setting out who is responsible for what data entry.

The system must also record all relevant information. Individual systems need to be evaluated to determine whether additional controls are necessary. An additional control would be necessary if there is any way, theoretically, that a relevant case could exist without being captured by the current system.

(iv)   Data output

Data must be produced to a timetable, which allows for management action and review. Services must ensure that processes exist to obtain data output to this timetable, without compromising data quality.

It is important that data is subject to scrutiny and to challenge before being passed up the line for management/member action. This can be undertaken at several stages in the process. The most likely instances will be a verification check on output reports as part of a service level review of data.

(v)   Presentation of data

When information is presented for management review, action or audit an officer must carry out an independent review of working papers to confirm that the data definition has been followed, the calculations are correct and the data is supported by a full audit trail.

5.   BVPI/LPI DATA QUALITY

The principles of the data quality strategy set out in Section 4 apply fully to the collection of PI data.

(i)   Responsibilities

- The Cabinet is responsible for the establishment of an annual set of key performance indicators, which reflect the Council's core business.

- Individual Portfolio Holders are responsible for data quality issues with respect to PIs in their services, and ensuring appropriate data quality processes are in place.

- The Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel is responsible for the Scrutiny of PI data, including issues of data quality.

- Management Board receives reports on at least an annual basis on performance indicator information, challenging this, and agreeing improvement plans for individual indicators.

- Heads of Service are responsible for agreeing quarterly PI returns and end of year outturn figures within the PI verification framework.

- Performance Indicator Responsible Officers in services must ensure, under the direction of the relevant Head of Service, that all data relating to performance information is accurate, verifiable and is easily auditable. They are responsible for ensuring the timely completion on a quarterly basis of PI information for the Head of Service.

- Data inputters in services are responsible to the Service PI responsible officer for ensuring data related to PIs is accurate, verifiable and implemented in a timely fashion.

- The Head of Human Resources and Performance Management is responsible for the overall collection and presentation of PI data in the Best Value Performance Plan of Council Plan, and for reporting these to Council Committees.

(ii)   Data Quality Procedures for Collecting and Managing PI Information

Heads of Service and other responsible officers must follow the guidance laid down by the PMU for PI data collection. This stipulates that a PMU proforma , accompanied by a full audit trail, must be compiled for any PI presented on a quarterly basis. This must include:

- A detailed calculation

- System notes, where appropriate; and

- Documentation supporting any estimates, sampling, or any apportionments made.

In addition, the relevant officer must complete the appropriate 'fields' on the TEN system, including a comment on performance, any corrective action to be taken to improve performance, and a quarterly estimate as to whether the target will be met.

(iii)   Improvement Plans for KPIs

Each year, the Cabinet identified PIs which it considers to be key to the business of the Authority. Management Board require Heads of Service to produce Improvement Plans for these KPIs, which are monitored during the year. Heads of Service are responsible for improving performance, for these indicators.

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE DATA QUALITY STRATEGY

Progress with the implementation of the data quality strategy will be monitored by Management Board, in consultation with the PMU and Heads of Service.

7. ACTION PLAN – APPENDIX 1

8. MATRIX OF DATA QUALITY RESPONSIBILITIES – APPENDIX 2

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Data Quality Action Plan

Action	How	Who	When
Ensure that responsibility for data quality if part of job descriptions and the appraisal process.	Should already be the case but services will need to check and rectify any gaps	Services	Ongoing
Ensure that, when making submissions on nationally reported PIs, the definition has been followed.	This will be achieved by a system of thorough review when completing quarterly returns	All PI responsible officers supported by PMU	Quarterly
Ensure that local PIs have specific definitions and counting rules where necessary	Services to review existing definitions	PI team	March 2007
Ensure that all relevant staff have an understanding of PI definitions calculated from data they input/analyse/extract	Training (where this is not already in place)	Heads of Service	Ongoing
Ensure that data provided by external contractors meets requirements for reporting performance	Depending on individual circumstances this might be achieved by making provision in contracts or by direct action such as documented spot checks	Heads of Service	Ongoing
Ensure that data controls are robust	Specific measures will depend on the system and will be the responsibility of the data quality lead for each system to address	Heads of Service	March 2007
Ensure that all systems are identified and that there is a data quality lead for each system	Data gathering exercise	PMU	March 2007 and updated regularly
Ensure that existing compilation/submission controls are implemented for every externally reported PI	Guidance already issued – implemented in 2006, supported by training	All PI compilers/reviewers supported by PMU	March 2007
Ensure that working paper requirements are met for all externally reported PIs	Guidance already issued – implemented in 2006, supported by training	All PI compilers/reviewers supported by PMU	March 2007

NB   The focus of this Action Plan is initially on data quality issues with respect to PIs. Once these actions have been completed the focus of the future Action Plan will be broadened.

Matrix of Data Quality Responsibilities

All with responsibility for inputting/extracting information from systems	Managers with data quality responsibilities (including PI responsible officers)	Heads of Service	PMU	Internal Audit
Knowledge of relevant data definitions and guidance	Maintain a robust control environment	Overall responsibility for the reliability of data	Maintain list of systems and DQ actions for PI data	Support improvement on individual systems
Input accurate information	Identify and rectify gaps in control environment	Ensure that Job Descriptions reflect data quality responsibilities.	Co-ordinate risk assessment of systems, liasing with IA and PI leads	Incorporate DQ issues in routine audit work
Up-to-date record keeping (not entered in a block)	Training/guidance	Oversight of robustness of data systems.	Checking that proposed improvements have been implemented for PI systems	
			Communicating the commitment to DQ	
			Reporting progress on DQ to MB	

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Value for Money Strategy

Background

It is important that the Council has a good understanding of the inter-relationship between its performance and its costs, and uses this information to make sound strategic and policy decisions. This Value for Money Strategy sets out the Council's approach to ensuring that it obtains value for money.

The Audit Commission undertakes an annual Use of Resources assessment to evaluate how well councils manage and use their financial resources. The assessment focuses on the importance of having sound and strategic financial management to ensure that resources are available to support and improve Council services. This assessment is based upon national 'Key Lines of Enquiry' (KLOEs), for which Value For Money is a key component. This national framework provides the basis for the Council's actions to improve its performance in relation to value for money.

Policy Statement

The Council recognises its responsibilities as a custodian of public funds to strive for value for money in the delivery of services.

The Council seeks to achieve and where possible improve value for money by ensuring that:

- Costs compare well with other local authorities, and where appropriate other sectors, allowing for external factors
- Costs are commensurate with service delivery, performance and outcomes achieved
- Costs reflect policy decisions
- Performance in relation to value for money is monitored and reviewed
- Improved value for money and efficiency gains are achieved
- Full long term costs are taken into account when making procurement and other spending decisions
- external funding and partnership opportunities are sought in order to enhance funding by the Council.

This strategy sets out the Council's approach to achieving these aims, including the responsibilities of members and officers for the delivery of value for money.

(a)   Member Level

(i)   Executive Functions

On an annual basis, Cabinet (and where appropriate Portfolio Holders) will

- Consider the outcomes of the annual consultation exercise of partners and stake holders when setting spending levels for the budget.
- allocate resources in line with agreed budget priorities, taking into account performance
- Plan actions and allocate resources in the light of agreed priorities, identified community issues, deprivation indices and customer consultation feedback.
- Set targets for cost reductions and efficiency gains

- Agree the annual efficiency plan
- Review any savings produced through the Procurement strategy

The Cabinet will also review the allocation and use of resources on an on-going basis, especially when making policy decisions, to ensure value for money.

The Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee may also undertake some of these functions as directed by Cabinet.

(ii)   Scrutiny Functions

The role of Scrutiny will be to compare and assess performance and associated costs.

On an annual basis, Overview and Scrutiny Committee will carry out the following tasks:

- Establish and monitor a programme for reviews of service areas via the Task and Finish Panel framework, with one of the aims being to ensure that unit costs and performance are compared, scrutinised and improved where appropriate.
- Receive reports on the reviews and make recommendations to Cabinet

The Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel will carry out the scrutiny of Council performance and costs, consisting of

- Performance Indicator information (this will include the selection of 40 KPIs each year) on a quarterly basis
- Local unit cost information, compared to national/regional/local benchmarks and links to KPI, BVPI and LPI performance where appropriate, on an annual basis
- Progress with key capital and revenue projects in terms of both financial and operational issues.

(b)   Management Board's role

On a quarterly basis Management Board will carry out the following tasks:

- Scrutiny of performance information for the 40 KPIs.
- Consider progress with the identified key capital projects, on both a budgetary and operational basis.

On an annual basis Management Board will:

- Scrutinise performance information for all BVPIs/LPIs.
- Review the Council's Value For Money framework by considering key unit cost and quality indicators, and the Council's performance with reference to benchmark groups, surveys etc.
- Provide a strategic steer for Members and officers on the development of the Council's priorities and associated value for money/performance management considerations, taking into account quality and cost.

On an ongoing basis Management Board will:

- Through the Cabinet Agenda Planning Group, ensure that full and accurate cost information is included in reports to the Cabinet, to ensure the proper alignment of resources with priorities.
- Ensure that appropriate processes are in place to secure high standards of data quality.

(c)   Heads of Service

On a quarterly basis Heads of Service will:

- Provide BVPI/LPI information to Management Board and members, reviewing performance and take corrective action as necessary. This will follow a critical review of all BVPI, LPI and management PI information with service managers in order to agree any required action to be taken as a result.
- Review their budget expenditure, ensuring that resources are prioritised to key areas, and that budgetary performance is understood
- Identify and quantify any efficiency gains that have arisen in the previous quarter and identify any opportunities for future efficiency gains
- Review progress with capital programme projects

On an annual basis Heads of Service will:

- Review and update their benchmarking data to determine whether their service provides value for money in terms of unit costs (against the Council's overall approach to value for money and benchmarking)
- Take any necessary corrective action in the light of this
- Ensure that that all opportunities to review cost data on a local, regional and national basis are identified e.g. by joining relevant benchmarking clubs.
- Critically review the Audit Commission's cost profiles for the council, and their comparisons with all district councils, and investigate further any areas where unit costs appear to be inappropriate or unreasonably high.

(d)   The Performance Management Unit

This Unit will carry out the following functions:

- The maintenance of the Performance Management system
- Co-ordination of the collection and reporting of unit cost data, where appropriate linking this to KPI data.

Actions and documents required to support the strategy

In order for the above actions to be carried out effectively, the following actions will be required to support the value for money strategy:

Data and Actions already in place

1.   The provision of ward-based or more detailed information on the profile of the District's population in terms of age, gender, race and health;

2.   The provision of ward-based or more detailed information on the profile of the District in terms of deprivation, using national indices.

3.   The production of an annual Efficiency Statement informed by this Value For Money Strategy.

Actions required to be put in place

1.   The production of a Procurement Strategy setting out how the Council intends to secure value for money through the purchasing of goods and services.

2.   The development of a methodology to bring together PI and cost data into one linked table, showing clearly the relationship between performance and value for money.

3.   The production of a Data Quality Policy.

4.   A consideration of the level of external support required to carry out the above actions.

g\c\mr tidey human resources\15tidey\outline value for money strategy

Report to the Finance & Performance Management Standing Panel

Date of meeting: 15 August 2006

SCRUTINY

Epping Forest District Council

Portfolio: Finance & Performance Management

Subject: Quarterly Financial Monitoring

Officer contact for further information: Peter Maddock (01992 - 56 4602).

Democratic Services Officer: Adrian Hendry (01992 – 56 4470)

Recommendations:

1. **That the Panel note the financial monitoring report for the First quarter of 2006/07;**

2. **As this is the first panel meeting of the financial year members are invited to re-affirm that monitoring should continue on a quarterly basis and in this format.**

Report:

1. The Panel has within its terms of reference to consider financial monitoring reports on key areas of income and expenditure for each portfolio. This is the first quarterly report for 2006/07 and covers the period from 1 April 2006 to 30 June 2006.

2. Salaries monitoring data is presented as well as it represents a large proportion of the authorities expenditure and is an area in which large under spends have been seen. The salaries data is held by Service rather than by portfolio, although there are clearly some services that are linked closely to particular portfolios.

Main Variances:

3. Comments are provided on the monitoring schedules but a few points are highlighted here as they are of particular significance. The salaries schedule shows an under spend of some £242,000 (5.1% of budget) and reflects the fact that staff vacancies are running at a high level. The report regarding vacancies elsewhere on the agenda has more detail on this particular issue.

4. Income sources such as Local Land Charges and Car Parking show a small overachievement and Building Control and Development Control a small underachievement. Small Variances like this are always likely and therefore give little cause for concern as long as cumulatively they do not become significant.

5. Expenditure relating to the alteration to the Local Plan which falls under Forward Planning shows a marked underspend. This is DDF money, which is expected to be spent later in the year.

6. The Housing Repairs Fund also shows an underspend. Much of this is due to the cyclical maintenance contracts, which did not commence until July.

7. As at 30 June 2006 no payments had been made to Sports and Leisure Management Ltd. The negative entry shown was cleared in July when the payments relating to 2005/06 were made. Since month three April has also been paid and May and June are expected to be paid shortly.

8.   Off Street Car Parking shows an overspend but this is due to maintenance work occurring earlier than originally anticipated. Also Land and Property and Refuse Collection income show an adverse variance but in both cases this is due to income relating to 2005/06 not being received by the end of June 2006.

9.   It is proposed that the tables for each portfolio be reported to the relevant portfolio holder for their comment beginning with the second quarters monitoring schedules.

Capital Monitoring

10.   The Cabinet of 4 September will receive the updated Capital Programme which will revise the spending profile of the existing programme and introduce new items agreed since the last update in June 2006. It is therefore proposed that from the second quarters monitoring onward capital monitoring of specific capital schemes be included within this report. The schemes to be included in the monitoring report will be put forward within the next report and members will then have a chance to comment on those schemes and whether there are others it is felt should be included.

Conclusion

11.   The committee is asked to note the position as at Month 3 and re-affirm that quarterly monitoring is adequate and should continue in this format.

PORTFOLIO FINANCIAL MONITORING - SALARIES

SERVICE	2006/07			2005/06		
	EXPENDITURE TO 30/06/06 £000	BUDGET PROVISION (ORIGINAL) £000	VARIATION FROM BUDGET (ORIGINAL) %	EXPENDITURE TO 30/06/05 £000	BUDGET PROVISION (ORIGINAL) £000	VARIATION FROM BUDGET (ORIGINAL) %
CORPORATE MANAGEMENT	81	87	-6.9	74	73	1.4
INTERNAL AUDIT	48	51	-5.9	40	50	-20.0
HR & PMU *	71	104	-31.7	90	87	3.4
POLICY UNIT	174	188	-7.4	163	201	-18.9
LEGAL,ADMIN & ESTATES *	388	391	-0.8	341	381	-10.5
FINANCE *	713	697	2.3	641	654	-2.0
INFO,COMM & TECH	191	230	-17.0	148	193	-23.3
HOUSING SERVICES *	723	747	-3.2	674	719	-6.3
PUBLIC WORKS UNIT	420	476	-11.8	337	407	-17.2
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES *	572	583	-1.9	511	557	-8.3
PLANNING *	517	549	-5.8	439	491	-10.6
LEISURE *	565	602	-6.1	1,047	1,135	-7.8
TOTAL	4,463	4,705	-5.1	4,505	4,948	-9.0

* Agency costs are included in the salaries expenditure.

Page 65

2006/07 - PORTFOLIO FINANCIAL MONITORING - LEADER'S

	Full Year Budget £'000	First Quarter Budget £'000	First Quarter Actual £'000	05/06 £'000	Variance Budget v Actual £'000	Variance Budget v Actual %	Comments
Major income items:							
Local Land Charges	-384	-96	-112	-95	-16	-16.7	Currently reflects an increased number of searches over the same period last year, and consequently an incease in income over budget.

PORTFOLIO FINANCIAL MONITORING - CIVIL ENGINEERING & MAINTENANCE

Major expenditure items:	Full Year Budget £'000	First Quarter Budget £'000	Actual £'000	05/06 £'000	Variance Budget v Actual £'000	%	Comments
Highways General Fund	295	50	53	35	3	6.0	Expenditure tends to be heavier towards year end.
Off Street Parking	544	177	202	181	25	14.1	£17,000 maintenance expenditure incurred earlier than anticipated.
On Street Parking	362	62	58	60	-4	-6.5	
	1,201	289	313	276	24	8.3	
Major income items:							
Off Street Parking	-1,009	-252	-267	-359	-15	-6.0	
On Street Parking	-447	-112	-125	-88	-13	-11.6	
	-1,456	-364	-392	-447	-28	-7.7	

2006/07- PORTFOLIO FINANCIAL MONITORING - COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Major expenditure items:	Full Year Budget £'000	First Quarter Budget £'000	First Quarter Actual £'000	05/06 £'000	Variance Budget v Actual £'000	Variance %	Comments
Grants to Voluntary Groups	130	32	10	-36	-22	-68.8	£55,000 remains uncommitted at end of June 2006 2005/06 shows grants approved but not paid out.
Voluntary Sector Support	161	74	74	70	0	0.0	
Concessionary Fares	891	223	153	53	-70	-31.4	CSB Growth of £582,000 is included in current year for free travel for over 60's & disabled.
	1,182	329	237	87	-92	-28.0	
Major income items:							
Licensing & Registration	-67	-17	-10	-18	7	41.2	2005/06 included DDF of £50,000 for additional one off income under new licensing regime.
Hackney Carriages	-107	-27	-33	-31	-6	-22.2	
	-174	-44	-43	-49	1	2.3	

Major income items:	Full Year Budget £'000	First Quarter Budget £'000	Actual £'000	05/06 £'000	Variance Budget v Actual £'000	%	Comments
Industrial Estates	-887	-425	-428	-432	-3	-0.7	
Land & Property	-209	-37	30	-50	67	181.1	Commission of £86,000 relating to rent for David Lloyd Centre not yet received for 2005/06.
	-1,096	-462	-398	-482	64	13.9	

Page 69

2006/07-PORTFOLIO FINANCIAL MONITORING - CUSTOMER SERVICES MEDIA, & COMMUNICATIONS & ICT

Major expenditure items:	Full Year Budget £'000	Budget £'000	First Quarter Actual £'000	05/06 £'000	Variance Budget v Actual £'000	%	Comments
Information Technology	585	231	203	206	-28	-12.1	Equipment purchases down on budget, Expenditure in the first quarter is heavier than subsequent periods.
Telephones	229	42	33	41	-9	-21.4	Equipment purchases down on budget The actual/budget for call charges & line rental relate to two months.
	814	273	236	247	-37	-13.6	

	Full Year Budget £'000	First Quarter Budget £'000	First Quarter Actual £'000	First Quarter 05/06 £'000	Variance Budget v Actual £'000	Variance Budget v Actual %	Comments
Major expenditure items:							
Refuse Collection	1,626	298	277	286	-21	-7.0	The budget is profiled on the basis of payments to the waste management contractor in the month following when the work is done. As a result the enhanced costs of the contract with Cory Environmental did not impact until July.
Street Cleansing	1,221	208	190	192	-18	-8.7	
Recycling	1,340	394	405	370	11	2.8	
	4,187	900	872	848	-28	-3.1	
Major income items:							
Refuse Collection	-275	0	69	-68	69	0.0	Tipping away contributions relating to 2005/06 still awaited. 1st quarter 2006/07 due July 2006
Recycling	-344	0	-3	-78	-3	0.0	1st quarter 2006/07 recycling credits due July 2006.
	-619	0	66	-146	66	0.0	

	Full Year Budget £'000	First Quarter Budget £'000	Actual £'000	05/06 £'000	Variance Budget v Actual £'000	%	Comments
Major expenditure items							
Forward Planning	254	64	12	2	-52	-81.3	DDF for Local Plan Amendment underspent
Development Control	121	29	15	36	-14	-48.3	
Building Control Fee Earning	37	6	1	19	-5	-83.3	
	412	99	28	57	-71	-212.86	
Major income items							
Development Control	-564	-141	-133	-138	8	-5.7	
Building Control Fee Earning	-586	-131	-123	-159	8	-6.1	
	-1150	-272	-256	-297	16	-11.78	

PORTFOLIO FINANCIAL MONITORING - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

	Full Year Budget £'000	First Quarter Budget £'000	Actual £'000	05/06 £'000	Variance Budget v Actual £'000	%	Comments
Major expenditure items:							
Managing Tenancies	278	252	262	180	10	4.0	
Housing Repairs	5,562	1,391	1,067	955	-324	-23.3	Cyclical Maintenance contracts started July 2006. Also a few other underspends on all areas special works.
Special Items	1,297	324	295	258	-29	-9.0	
	7,137	1,967	1,624	1,393	-343	-17.4	
Major income items:							
Gross Dwelling Rent	-22,157	-5,539	-5,546	-5,188	-7	-0.1	

	Full Year Budget £'000	First Quarter Budget £'000	First Quarter Actual £'000	05/06 £'000	Variance Budget v Actual £'000	Variance %	Comments
Major expenditure items:							
Museum	112	38	33	31	-5	-13.2	Buildings maintenance & Outreach project are both underspent
Playgrounds & Open Spaces	187	47	46	42	-1	-2.1	
North Weald Centre	329	113	78	63	-35	-31.0	Buildings maintenance, fixed plant, runway maintenance and electrical works underspent.
	628	198	157	136	-41	-46.26	
Major income items:							
North Weald Centre	-1364	-361	-360	-350	1	-0.3	
Contract cost Monitoring							
Leisure Facilities:-							
Loughton Leisure Centre	146	24	-71	N/A	-95	-395.8	The costs relating to 2005/06 have been charged to that year, however these still had not been paid at June 2006. The payments up to and including April were paid in July so the credit shown which relates to the year end adjustments will disappear then.
Epping Sports Centre	140	23	-84	N/A	-107	-465.2	
Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool	487	81	-248	N/A	-329	-406.2	
Ongar Sportscentre	579	96	-301	N/A	-397	-413.5	
	1352	224	-704	0	-928	-1680.77	

PORTFOLIO FINANCIAL MONITORING - HOUSING GENERAL FUND

	Full Year Budget £'000	First Quarter Budget £'000	Actual £'000	05/06 £'000	Variance Budget v Actual £'000	%	Comments
Major expenditure items							
Bed & Breakfast Accom.	279	69	75	60	6	8.70	
	279	69	75	60	6	8.70	
Major income items							
Bed & Breakfast Accom.	-277	-69	-68	-74	1	-1.45	
Leasehold Services Admin	-138	-1	-1	-1	0	0.0	
	-415	-70	-69	-75	1	-1.45	

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