

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 27 July 2010

Subject: Performance Management Portfolio

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Richard Bassett

Item: 6(i)

Recommending:

That the report of the Performance Management Portfolio Holder be noted

Council Plan 2006-2010

Progress and final outturn performance for the Council Plan as at 31 March 2010 was reviewed by the recent Cabinet and the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel meetings without any major issues arising.

The lifespan of this Council Plan has now concluded. Members will be aware that work has commenced on the development of a new Corporate Plan to take the authority forward from 2010/11 to 2013/14, in conjunction with the similar development of a new Community Strategy for the district by the Epping Forest Local Strategic Partnership. A joint Cabinet/Management Board workshop is shortly to be held to facilitate the further development of the new Corporate Plan, which it is currently anticipated to be adopted by the Council in October 2010.

Performance Management

As we are all aware we are facing very tight constraints on our budgets and finances over the next few years. The Service Directors have been doing a lot of work to identify savings in the current year and I shall be working with the Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder to look at these numbers and to review budgets for next year. We are very willing to look at any suggestion to improve performance and to save expenditure and as can be seen from the Cabinet meeting we have invested in several DF items which will save ongoing CSB and can demonstrate a very good return on Investment.

Emergency Planning

As previously mentioned we held a consultation workshop with the parishes to discuss the development of a coordinated emergency response to the consultation document that we received from the Cabinet Office called the "Draft Strategic National Framework on Community Resilience"

We have formatted our response and we felt that insofar as it provides strategic direction for existing responders then the framework does make a contribution. However, the framework doesn't add a great deal to the work that is already going on in our communities. Most of our Parishes and Town

Councils already have emergency plans and as a District Council we liaise with them as appropriate. The framework as proposed appears to raise expectations that any community group (however defined) may legitimately have a role in emergency response. Communities do certainly have a valuable role in preparation for emergencies and in recovering from emergencies but it needs to be made much clearer that their response role is limited. Without such clarity, it may result in community groups doing more harm than good.

As a District Council, our view is that we could only manage to introduce Community Resilience via our existing Parish/Town Council networks. Given the broad definition of 'Community' we are concerned that a multitude of groups could seek to establish themselves which would quickly become unmanageable (and very likely hinder any emergency response). Should our Parish/Town Council partners feel that more localised groups would be useful (with regard to a local risk for example), then we would expect them to manage the relationship.

Some parishes made it quite clear that they expected the District Council to provide physical resources to facilitate Community Resilience (examples include salt bins, generators and boats). However given the financial climate a blanket commitment to provide these sorts of commitments is unrealistic. Support from District Council in the form of information or training is certainly possible (and indeed encouraged) in order to develop stronger links with Community Groups.

If any member would like a full copy of our responses then please contact me and I will provide it.

Staff Absences Numbers

At the recent JCC we looked at progress in managing staff absence. We have seen a considerable improvement over the year with a 25% improvement in fy09/10 and only just missing our target of 8 days per year. We have identified several areas where we can look at how we can assist employees and we have already seen a further reduction to 1.88days in the first quarter of this year. I have also signed off a vacancy for a new part time dedicated resource providing absence information to managers and also to assist them in managing absence. This has resulted in improvements in those years where this has been provided resulting in efficiency savings. However, the new role will have a wider remit in providing a range of management information which will assist the Council in a number of its objectives.

On a very positive note about 40% of the staff had zero days off sick.