

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS FROM 2005/6 SERVICE PLANS

Full Service Plans can be viewed via the following link:-

<http://intranet.york.gov.uk/documents/public/resourcespage/ServiceLevelPlans05-06.htm>

1. PUBLIC SERVICES

Success/achievements

- Benefit processing time for new claims. The average for the year was 40 days, down from 73 days during 2004/05 and the lowest time taken, during the last five years.
- The Benefits Service have been confirmed by the Audit Commission as provided a "Good" service. (CPA score of 3), improved from a poor service (CPA score 1) at the previous inspection.
- Very good performance on Customer First indicators with over 99% of customers seen within 10 minutes.
- Council Tax overall debt position has improved by nearly £600,000, reducing to £5.8 million.
- Managed and monitored over 200 freedom of information requests throughout the Council

Improving/on going

- Council Tax collection rates have improved by 1.0% to 96.1%, but remained below the 1.6% below target.
- Non-Domestic collection rates improved by 0.3% to 97.0%, but remained 0.9% below target.
- Accuracy of processing benefits claims improved by 2.4% to 97.0%, but remained 1.35% below target.
- Action Plan arising from BFI report has been produced and 80% of actions successfully completed.

Problem areas/delays

- Speed of processing benefits change of circumstances claims increased from nearly 19 days to nearly 28 days.
- NNDR Overall debt position worsened by £690,000 to £4.29 million
- Registry office carried out more ceremonies but failed becoming self financing service by £28,000.

2. BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Successes/Achievements

- On Target for achieving saving arising from changes to audit code of practice and fee levels (Audit Commission Business plan 2004-6)
- Responding to Green Agenda, maximising recycling and use of recyclable materials.
- Targets achieved on Comprehensive performance Assessment 2005/6 Accounting Code of practice.
- Health & Safety audit due to completion in June 2006.
- All IT system upgrades successfully managed, and all running with latest releases, including SX3.

Improving/on-going

- Replacement of ISIS – on going.
- Replacement of Asset Management System – now in system implementation stage.
- Replacement of FMS – leading on interface requirement specification and system administration.

3. FINANCIAL SERVICES

Successes/achievements

- CPA - Use of Resources and Value for Money elements both assessed as Good (level 3).
- Management and co-ordination of 2006/7 budget process.
- Ryedale payroll contract commenced.
- Gershon efficiency savings expected to exceed national target for 2005/6.
- The adoption of prudential borrowing as an approved financing mechanism for the I.T. Development Plan.
- Creditors team working with other areas within the Council to improve BVPI 8 - all supplier invoices are paid within 30 days of their receipt. Achieved over 93% corporately at outturn.
- Work within the service has assisted the council in obtaining approximately £750k of external grants. The introduction of the grant finder service will assist with this for future years.
- Further reducing the average level of interest paid on the council's borrowing from 4.83% at the 31st March 2005 to 4.69% at the 31st March 2006.

Improving/on going

- Work is still on-going to embed comparative financial and performance data into the council's budget processes.
- Uptake on tax free childcare vouchers continues to grow by approximately four members of staff per month.
- The 2004/05 accounts were closed by the 31st July 2005. For 2005/06 it is expected that the accounts will be considered by full council on the 29th June.

Problem Areas/delays

- Overall workload pressures led to the implementation of the CIPFA Financial Management Model being deprioritised. It should be noted that this is a voluntary development rather than a regulatory requirement.
- The abolition in the Budget of the Home Computer Initiative removes a successful additional benefit for staff.

FMS Project

Due to recruitment difficulties there has been significant slippage on the Financial Management System replacement project. However the appointment of the Project Manager in January 2006 (and support posts from May and June 2006) has started to address this. Work is now on-going to define the council's requirements for the new system prior to commencing formal procurement later this year.

4. AUDIT & RISK MANAGEMENT

Successes/achievements

- The Internal Audit service achieved 91.3% of the audit plan for 05/06 compared to 90% in 04/05 and only 27% in 03/04. This was a significant achievement for the team, especially given the very limited resources available to support the delivery of the plan. It is crucial that at least 90% of the annual plan is achieved for CPA purposes as this is a key criterion in the Use of Resources Key Lines of Enquiry, as well as allowing us to maintain our status with the Audit Commission as a Managed Audit site (thereby substantially reducing the costs of the external audit to the Council). The Fraud team significantly improved all areas of performance (as reflected in the BVPIs figures discussed above), resulting in a large increase in the number of sanctions and successful prosecutions conducted during the year and additional earned income of £98k over and above their base income budget for the year.
- Over £400k of savings on Insurance were achieved by the Risk and Insurance service during the year. Of this, £280k was achieved through the re-tender of the Insurance contract and a further £140k realised as savings arising from improved risk management and proactive work to manage down claim incidences.
- Successful implementation of new software systems for the Audit & Fraud teams and the Risk Management and Insurance team.
- The Corporate Procurement Team have achieved total cumulative savings to date of £743k on behalf of the Council as a whole to date (although only part of this can be counted against the Corporate Procurement Savings budget in accordance with the savings protocol agreed by CMT in 2003).
- Major contribution to the successful progression and completion of the Review of the Constitution, including the introduction of the Audit & Governance Committee and preparation of new Financial Regulations and Procurement Rules that were very favourably commented on by the District Auditor through the consultation process. The new Committee and

new regulations will count heavily in the Council's favour for CPA purposes in both the 2006 refresh and the full assessment planned for 2007.

Improving/on-going

- Establishment and on-going management of the Officer Governance Group to properly support the development of integrated governance and compliance arrangements at the Council.
- A significant amount of additional work over and above the annual work plans for the Division's teams has also been completed in-year, including the review of Highways Procurement and a number of significant and high profile fraud & corruption investigations and emergency works.

5. I.T.T.

Successes/achievements:

- Ongoing commitment to improving the quality of ITT services provided to customers continues to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction. The customer satisfaction survey of November 2005 revealed 89% of customers were satisfied with the services that they receive from ITT in general, and this increases to 95% for the Customer Support team specifically.
- All major Administrative Accommodation sites have been successfully migrated to a new telephony system called Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP). This has been a major change for the council and has been implemented with little disruption to customers. The benefits of this powerful and flexible technology will be realised during the [easy@york](#) rollout and the forthcoming Administrative Accommodation project. An example currently being trailed is I P telephony being extended to homeworkers. This allows telephone calls to be made to and from home effectively at no charge as the home telephone is an extension of the CYC telephone network.
- A recent audit of IT Physical Security and Environmental Controls undertaken by Internal Audit has found that ITT has systems and controls in place of a high standard with few or no weaknesses. In collaboration with North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) an ITT Consumables contract has been let which will reduce costs. ITT are exploring possible further benefits of this collaborative approach to procurement including an e-auction for cabling services.
- A revised and comprehensive on line ITT User Hand book has been completed and launched for customers.
- The new National Land and Property Gazetteer (NPLG) is now live in the planning business area.
- A contact database for Science City York has been implemented.
- A replacement for the Committee Management System has been installed and tested.
- New Fraud and Asset Management System, and replacement Integrated Transport Systems have both been installed and are being tested.

- Switchboard received 555,708 calls from external customers during the year. 541,885 of these were answered within 20 seconds. This equates to 97.51% far out performing the Customer First target of 95%.

Improving/on-going:

- The ITT security policy review has been completed and a revised Electronic Communications Policy has been agreed by CMT. This is now included as an element of the Constitution Review process.
- ITT disaster recovery tests were undertaken during Oct/Nov 05. The benefits from the testing and lessons learnt have resulted in reduced recovery times and improved service availability.
- Continued progress and improvements have been made in automating processes e.g. the software patch management process which allows ITT to deploy upgrades or new anti virus patterns more quickly and effectively.
- ITT have introduced email and home area storage management processes helping to contain growth and protect service availability.
- Cross team-working initiatives have been developed within ITT including, the establishment of a 2nd tier management forum. This will facilitate the improved linking of departmental operational, service improvement and development work plans.
- Established a departmental career development scheme. This includes implementing a core competency framework. The Core Competence Framework describes the skills, knowledge and behaviours which ITT staff need to be effective in their roles.

Problem areas/delays

- The planned migration of email services to Exchange 2003 has been delayed to ensure that it is implemented in line with the [easy@york](#) roll out timetable.
- ITT are members of the corporate Business Continuity Plan (BCP) action group which is working towards compliancy with the 2004 Civil Act.
- A number of approved development schemes have been delayed during the year. This is due to a variety of reasons including, complexity of requirement, requests from the business and reprioritisation due to development staff resources being necessarily redirected into the [easy@york](#) project.

6. PROPERTY SERVICES

Successes/achievements

- Reviewed and updated the Corporate Asset Management Plan to comply with the revised guidance and good practice issued to local authorities. The new plan will be presented to Executive in June 2006..
- Implemented new procurement methods of five projects to establish project specific partnering in response to the Local Government Task Force Constructing Excellence Agenda

- The development of the business case to provide new administrative accommodation on the Hungate site which was presented and approved at the Executive meeting in November 2005. An early progression of a number of areas of work identified on the critical path for the successful delivery of the project.
- The Asbestos Policy and Guidance for the managing the risk from asbestos in council premises was published in April 2005. Initial asbestos surveys have been completed and an annual regime of inspections is in place. Training of Site Asbestos Liaison Officers is completed with the exception of Schools.
- Implemented the Restructure on 1st April and the philosophy of operating on a trading account.
- Reviewed the fee scales against benchmark authorities and demonstrated competitiveness with current fee below average in some areas.
- Following a request by City Strategy in September 2005 Property Services have managed the council's interest in the £8million strategically important and technically advanced Depot for Commercial Services.

Improving/on-going

- Work is progressing on site to develop a one-stop shop contact centre for customers to meet e-government deadlines. The "York Customer Contact Centre" will be completed in May 2006 and available for occupation in June.
- Site Asbestos Liaison Officers training programme to be agreed with Learning Culture and Children's Services Directorate for Schools.
- Identify an appropriate and long term funding stream to provide a programme of regular and annual condition surveys to comply with CPA.
- To develop further an appropriate performance improvement culture. Further work will concentrate on implementing a range performance indicators and review process.
- To review all Property Services SLAs with out clients and customers.
- To develop and integrate further Staff Development Plans. Substantial improvement has been achieved. 80% of appraisals completed in 2005/06 compared to 27% in 2004/05.
- Purchase a new corporate property database. Data is currently being migrated from existing system. The new system is planned to be launched on 1st October 2006.