

Year End Head of Service Performance Report Assets and Transportation Service (Environment Directorate)

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REPORT DATE: 21 MAY 2014

REPORT PERIOD: APRIL 2013 TO MARCH 2014

Introduction

The Head of Service report is produced on a half yearly basis and provided to Cabinet Members for review and assurance and will be available for Overview and Scrutiny Committees as part of their Forward Work Programmes.

The approach is based on exception reporting to summarise key information that the Head of Service feels Members should be aware of, including both good performance and areas where performance could be improved. Emerging issues / operational risks should also be highlighted. The report is split into three distinct sections: -

1. Improvement Priorities & Service Plan Monitoring – this section is used to discuss the progress being made towards the Improvement Priorities which do not have an in year focus and therefore are not included within the quarterly progress report on the Improvement Plan. It is also used to highlight good news and key issues (including operational risks and the actions necessary to control them) arising from monitoring the progress being made towards delivering the service plan.

2. Internal and External Regulatory Reports – this section summarises regulatory work reported in the half year and its outcomes and intended actions arising from recommendations.

3. Corporate Reporting – this section summarises the performance in relation to corporate issues i.e. Sickness absence, Complaints

Appendix 1- National Statutory Indicator (NSI) & Improvement Target Performance Indicators – summary table of the performance for the NSI and Improvement Targets. Graphs (where appropriate) and commentary are included in section 1 for those indicators shown with a red RAG status.

1. Improvement Priorities & Service Plan Monitoring

Report highlights for the year end are as follows: -

Environment / People being able to access employment, local services and facilities / Sustainable transport

Safe Communities / Improving road safety / Sustainable transport

Property Maintenance and Design Consultancy

Work within this service area has been focussed upon delivering the County Councils programme of maintenance, planned works and major capital programmes to its building assets. Much of the focus has been in delivery of programmes to coincide with school summer holiday; this programme has been delivered successfully.

In addition to the above the service has been heavily involved with the 21st Century school modernisation programme, in particular the development of the Holywell all through school and the Shotton, John Summers High School. This work has involved the on-going development of designs and refining the costs plans for these schemes. In addition the team has also been managing the contract regarding the new all through Primary School at Shotton (Taliesen School), this scheme is at 'shell' stage i.e. roof and floor slab in place, in advance of the winter weather.

Finally the team is also responsible for delivering the Alltami Depot modernisation and service consolidation. The scheme is now complete.

Valuation and Estates

As well as the normal everyday work streams such as leases, licences, disposals and general landlord and tenant issues the team is heavily involved in delivering a workstream of the Councils Change Programme. The Assets workstream is reviewing a number of strategic options around property assets in connection with their utilisation, running costs and overall efficiency. This work supports delivery of the Councils Medium Term Financial Plan.

As noted above the team is also responsible for disposals, these generate capital receipts which support the Councils capital programme and assist delivery of the council's strategic programme of work and objectives. The current economic climate is having a significant negative impact of the level of capital resources that can be generated through the Councils capital receipt programme and this is set to continue for a number of years, however, there are some positive signs that the agricultural estate is starting to move with a number of discussions in progress over potential disposals.

Resource levels within the team remain at a reduced level and the team has not been able to recruit to support what are significant strategic work streams within the Council. Such levels will reduce the team's ability to effectively deliver on these programmes. We are currently exploring a number of options through which we can add capacity and support these programmes

Energy and Water Management

Work to refresh the current Display Energy Certificates is in progress with sites between 500 to 1000 sqm now being surveyed (100+ sites). This work will identify energy saving measures and initiatives that need to be put into place to reduce energy and lead to an improved energy rating.

We have concluded our work with the Carbon Trust to develop an initiative which will hopefully lead to more reasonable guidance being developed along the lines of energy efficiency principles as opposed to ventilation rates for school kitchens. Current guidance requires high ventilation rates often pre heating of air supplies and generally high levels of energy to achieve outcomes, by taking a more incremental approach it is felt that some of the requirements currently in place can be modified and in doing so lead to energy efficiencies. The document flowing from this initiative will be adopted as a best practice guidance nationally.

A pilot carbon reduction programme has concluded with 10 Primary Schools, this will seek to embed energy conservation principles within the schools and support, where necessary, curriculum delivery in this area with the overall intent that messages on energy conservation are not only developed in school but also taken back to the home.

Highways Policy and Strategy

During this period we have implemented Civil Parking Enforcement. There have been noticeable changes in driver behaviour in our town centres in relation to on street parking.

Work in connection with the delivery of workstreams flowing from the Regional Transport Plan continues to be progressed with the following project specific updates:

- Queensferry to Sandycroft cycleway is currently is now complete;
- Deeside synchronisation project phase 1, which deals with the synchronisation of the traffic signals along the Deeside Corridor to Ash Grove is now complete.
- Work to install signals on the slip road from the A494 to the main roundabout at Shotton is complete.
- Broughton to Saltney cycleway scheme being has been designed and tender documentation is to be prepared subject to the scheme receiving funding support in the new financial year from Welsh Government.

In relation to the activities of the Rights of Way function the ROWIP annual report is currently being finalised.

Highway Engineering Consultancy including Traffic Services

The service is responsible for the delivery of designs and contract management and supervision of a number of highway schemes as well as leading on road safety initiatives and promotion and traffic matters, such as speed limits, signing and signals.

Much of the work of the Engineering Consultancy has been preparing tender documentation, undertaking feasibility studies, cost planning and project management of a number of the schemes referred to above. In addition the team deals with the application of the Flood and Water Management Act, drainage issues and more significantly the delivery of the Mold Flood Alleviation scheme.

The traffic team are currently working on schemes to ensure delivery of outputs flowing from the speed limit review. This work has commenced with the preparation and on-going issue of a number of Traffic Regulation Orders, essentially the pre-consultation phase prior to the implementation of any new local speed limit changes.

The road safety team are responsible for the delivery and promotion of road safety initiatives and messages and also work closely with North Wales Police to identify accident cluster sites, gather intelligence and develop schemes which contribute to road safety. The

most visible elements of this programme of work are the traffic calming schemes, introduction of 20mph around schools and the management of school crossing patrols.

Transportation

This team delivers public and school transport services and is currently engaged in a major consultation process relating to a review of the County's subsidised bus services. These contracts have been placed out to tender and are moving into contract award in the new financial year.

2. Internal and External Regulatory Reports

Asset Management – Wales Audit Office

Initial scoping commenced in February 2014 with work to commence in Q1 of the new financial year.

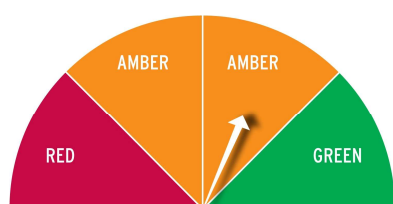
Shotton Schools Amalgamation carried out by Internal Audit

An audit of the Contract for the Shotton School Amalgamation was undertaken as part of the approved internal audit periodic plan for 2013/14.

The contract for the build of a through school to replace the existing Shotton Infants and Shotton Taliesin Junior Schools was awarded to Read Construction Holdings Ltd on 12th March 2012. The contract was procured through Project Partnering using the PPC2000 (amended 2008) ACA Standard Form of Contract for Project Partnering.

The tendering process was a two stage process; stage 1 involved the selection of a preferred bidder and stage 2 involved the negotiation of the construction stage works to achieve an Agreed Maximum Price (AMP). The scheme is 70% funded by Welsh Government and 30% funded through Prudential Borrowing.

Work started on site in March 2013 with the school scheduled to open in September 2014.



Taking account of the issues identified, Management can take **reasonable assurance** that the controls upon which the organisation relies to manage this risk are suitably designed, consistently applied and effective.

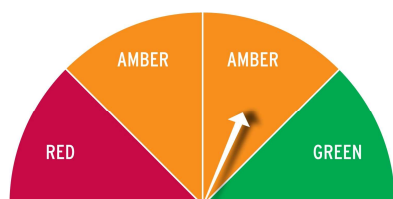
However we have identified issues that, if not addressed, increase the likelihood of the risk materialising.

Transport Contracts, carried out by Internal Audit

For many authorities expenditure on providing local bus services, home to school and college transport, together with transport connected with social care, constitutes one of the largest single blocks of expenditure and the way in which it is made has a significant influence on the financial sustainability of both the commercial bus network and community transport services in their areas. Authorities have a responsibility to provide the best possible outcomes from this expenditure namely in reducing costs and at the same time striving to improve quality and safety. Adopting the most effective procurement strategy is a key component in achieving successful outcomes. The Authority has recently revised its Contract Procedure Rules to ensure a corporate approach to all forms of procurement which is fair and transparent and it is important that transport procurement is in full compliance with these.

In addition the Authority has undertaken a full review of its subsidised bus services and

drafted a Policy for Subsidised Bus Services in Flintshire. This was presented to Cabinet on 17th December for full ratification. The policy sets out the rationale for the support of bus services and a framework for their review. It further details the management of the network to ensure that value for money is achieved and incorporates risk management stating the need for the analysis of the subsidy cost per passenger and the thresholds for monitoring future actions.



Taking account of the issues identified, Management can take reasonable assurance that the controls upon which the organisation relies to manage this area are suitably designed, consistently applied and effective. However we have identified issues that, if not addressed, increase the likelihood of risk materialising in this area. AMBER (+)

3. Corporate Reporting

Complaints / Compliments

The service received 3 compliments and 14 complaints of which 64% were responded to in time.

Sickness Absence (Corporate target 9.8 days per FTE)

For the end of the year the absence rate is 4.76%, however, whilst this is very encouraging and reflects performance of the services overall there is one service area where absence levels have been above this figure. The primary reason for this is that a small number of staff have been seriously ill and off work for an extended period of time. We have been working with the employees in terms of anticipated outcomes and business approaches and the overall performance in this particular service area should improve in Q1 (2014/15).

Employee Turnover

Turnover has been relatively stable with only 8 leavers and a percentage stability level of circa 97% with a turnover rate of approximately 0.77%.

Employee Appraisals

Figures are from I-Trent – of 260 staff 69 appraisals have been input into I-Trent equating to 27%

Data Protection Training

100% of those officers (28) identified as requiring mandatory training have completed the required level of training.

Freedom of Information Requests Performance

The Directorate dealt with 422 Environmental Information requests with a response rate within time of 98.5% and 134 Freedom of Information requests with a response rate within time of 87% .

The Information Commissioner response target is 86%. This represented 64% of all requests dealt with by the Authority.

Appendix 1 - NSI & Improvement Target Performance Indicators

Key

R	Target missed
A	Target missed but within an acceptable level
G	Target achieved or exceeded

The RAG status of the indicators for the full year position are summarised as follows:



Graphs and commentary are included in section 1 for those indicators shown with a red RAG status.

Note 1 – NSI = National Statutory Indicator Imp T = Improvement Target

Note 2 – Change (Improved / Downturned) is based on comparison with the previous quarter. Where it is more appropriate to compare performance with the same period in the previous year this should be stated in the commentary.

Indicator	NSI / Imp T (Note 1)	Previous Year Annual Outturn 2012/13	Annual Target 2013/14	Current Year Annual Outturn 2013/14	RAG	Change e.g. Improved / Downturned (Note 2)	Commentary
CMT/001 The percentage of total length of Rights of Way which are easy to use by members of the public.	Imp T	63.87%	69%	60.86%	A	Downturned	Based upon a small sample which is subject to wide variance.
EEFLM1 Carbon Reduction Commitment.	Imp T	-2.66% (reduction)	5% (reduction)	+1.51% (increase)	A	Downturned	The cumulative total has been amended to take into account the downturn. Overall target of cumulative total of 60% by 2021

Indicator	NSI / Imp T (Note 1)	Previous Year Annual Outturn 2012/13	Annual Target 2013/14	Current Year Annual Outturn 2013/14	RAG	Change e.g. Improved / Downturned (Note 2)	Commentary
IA3.1L1 Increase the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating in Council Housing Stock.	Imp T	70.96 Average SAP Rating	69 Average SAP Rating	74.88%	G	Improved	Target exceeded
THS 007 The percentage of adults aged 60 or over who hold a concessionary travel pass.	Imp T	81.10%	78%	80.94% (31,349)	G	Downturned	Target exceeded

WELSH LANGUAGE

Welsh Language Skills Audit:
Percentage complete

37.65% for the Directorate

Please give narrative updates on the following questions:

What is your capacity to deliver the following bilingual services?

- Electronic Signatures bilingual?
- Out of Office Messages bilingual?
- Letters bilingual or in preferred language (preferred language recorded)

- Electronic Signatures bilingual – Guidance has been issued to officers via Notes message that explains the importance of the use of bilingual signatures. A link was provided to the bilingual tool on Infonet to translate electronic signatures.
- Out of Office Messages bilingual - Guidance has been issued to officers on out of office messages via Notes Message that also included a standard translated message that also allowed for emergency contact details to be translated and added
- Letters bilingual or in preferred language (preferred language recorded) – All letters are logged onto the Corporate Mail Logging system which allows for language preference to be captured. Any letters received in Welsh are sent for translation immediately if required and monitored to ensure replies are in preferred language. Audit of all standard letters to ensure all available bilingually. Control point established within the Directorate to ensure all publications are produced bilingually and all displays are bilingual. Website monitored to ensure both Welsh and English pages are updated.

<p>Update on progress with ensuring that guidance e.g. email, bilingual answering of telephone calls, auto-signatures, disclaimers and out of office replies.</p>	<p>As well as the above guidance has been issued on bilingual answering of telephone calls with a suggested standard bilingual greeting that is used for live as well as voicemail/answering systems. Officers have also been provided with a list of fluent Welsh speakers who are willing to help with pronunciation queries or general advice. Customer facing staff have also received specific training and have access to specific officers to provide advice in Welsh. The guidance also forms part of our useful information to Managers and employee on the Directorate Infopoint pages.</p>
<p>What has been done to identify opportunities to encourage and support others to adopt practices which promote equality between the Welsh and English languages and develop action plans?</p>	<p>Policy requirements are discussed at the outset of any major project or policy change. Adherence to Contract Procedure Rules</p>
<p>How is the Welsh Language Scheme integrated into your service planning?</p>	<p>Welsh Language Scheme requirements are set out in the Directorate Plan that are then cascaded into the Service Plans. Monitoring of requirements is undertaken by the Directorate Link Officer who regularly reports into DMT on compliance. The officer also monitors complaints and makes recommendations to service areas to rectify issues with non-compliance. The officer has also ensured compliance with the Scheme timetable and also provided resource to carry out the Welsh language skills audit and analyse the results of the language skills of officers.</p>

EQUALITY – please give narrative update – short paragraph only

<p>What has been undertaken to meet the Strategic Equalities plan?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diversity and equality training needs are identified as part of the appraisal process. The Customer Service training programme also includes a module on equalities.• The pages on the website have been updated to capture and refresh all service information thereby increasing accessibility to the service.• Complaints are monitored to inform service improvement.• Extended service delivery through Flintshire Connects to allow more locally accessible services• Service continues to provide modifications and adaptations to buildings as necessary• Design processes fully inclusive.
<p>Please list E impact assessments' undertaken and dates completed.</p> <p>Were any actions undertaken to reduce impact as a result of the EIA?</p>	<p>Initial scoping of vfm proposals</p>
<p>Please list the systems in place in your area to monitor the diversity of customers.</p> <p>Please give an example of how monitoring data has been used to improve services or identify and reduce barriers to accessing services within your area of responsibility.</p> <p>Have you put in place any initiatives to capture equal monitoring data so that you are able to better understand the profile of your customers?</p>	<p>Customers visiting reception are encouraged to complete equality monitoring forms.</p> <p>Consultation with user groups and residents</p>

<p>Please give an example of how the Translation and Interpretation facilities for different languages and formats have been promoted to customers within your area of responsibility.</p>	<p>All front facing officers are aware of language line and translation facilities available to them</p>
<p>Do you have any examples of initiative to promote equality, eliminate discrimination and promote good community relations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bus user surgeries• Consultation with local residents• Public footpath accessibility• Highway design schemes incorporating dropped kerbs, visual aids etc