

Mid-Year Chief Officer Report

Report Author: Chief Officer – Streetscene and Transportation

Report Date: November 2014

Report Period: April to September 2014

Introduction

The Chief Officer report is produced on a half yearly basis and provided to Cabinet Members for review and assurance focusing on the 'business as usual'. The reports are provided for Overview and Scrutiny Committees as part of their Forward Work Programmes. Chief Officer reports compliment the Improvement Plan monitoring reports.

Chief Officer reports are exception reports which summarise the key information Members should be aware of, including both good and poor performance. Emerging issues / operational risks are also detailed. The reports are split into three distinct sections: -

1. Performance Overview - this section is used to give an overview of the progress being made towards delivery of key plans for the services which include those Improvement Priorities which do not have an in year focus i.e. these are not reported within the quarterly Improvement Plan monitoring. It is also used to highlight good news and key issues (including operational risks) arising. In addition, summary progress is given for key projects and collaborative areas of work.

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. Equalities and Welsh Language

Plus supporting appendices: -

Appendix 1- Performance Indicators - summary table of the key performance indicators used to manage the services. In addition, any NSI and PAM (statutory PIs) reported by the services are included.

Appendix 2 - High level (red) operational risk detail - completed full risk templates for those risks currently assessed as high (red).

Section 1 - Performance Overview

Areas of Positive Performance

Transport

Taith– The North Wales Regional Transport Consortium (Taith) ceased operations on June 30th 2014. The partnering authorities agreed that the Taith Joint Committee should continue to meet as a Board until at least December 2014 when a Ministerial Task Force is due to report on the future of transport delivery for the region. The Taith Board continues to monitor four key activity areas in respect of the regional co-ordination of transport services on behalf of the partnering authorities:

- Close down of the 2013-2014 Taith Programme (FCC Lead - now complete)
- Public and Community Transport (FCC Lead)
- Developing a Regional Transport Plan (Gwynedd Lead)
- Transforming Transport Project (Anglesey Lead)

The Ministerial Task Force is also Considering the following:

1. Improving Transport Connectivity - setting out the investment priorities for transport interventions in North Wales based around access to the region's three Enterprise Zones and key employment sites.
2. Integrated Transport Planning for North Wales (Governance) - future governance options for Transport, Economic Development and possibly Land Use Planning matters.
3. Rail Modernisation - Greengauge 21 exploring the economic benefits to be derived from different service patterns and levels of investment.

Flintshire Subsidised Bus Service Review – The review of subsidised bus services that commenced in February 2013, in response to funding reductions by WG, has now been completed and followed extensive public consultation. The arrangements were implemented in May and June 2014.

WG Funding for Bus Services – From 1st April 2014, the Regional Transport Services Grant (RTSG), which was formerly managed and administered by Taith, has been replaced by the Bus Services Support Grant (BSSG). Flintshire County Council was nominated as the host Authority for North Wales through which the grant is dispersed to commercial bus operators, community transport providers and the six Local Authorities.

Local Transport Plan - Under the Transport Act 2000 each Local Transport Authority must develop and implement policies for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport facilities and services to/from and within their area. The Taith Board agreed in June 2014 that the best approach would be to refresh the existing Regional Transport Plan with Gwynedd County Council leading on the work. The North Wales strategic transport priorities will be delivered through a National Transport Plan which is

also currently being developed by WG with local transport priorities identified in the RTP following a stakeholder consultation exercise which will take place in December/January 2015.

School Transport

- Wheelchair Passport Scheme – The transportation team have now completed the implementation of the scheme for all existing wheelchair users on school transport (approx. 20 wheel chair users). The scheme aims to make travel for wheelchair users easier and safer.
- Recruitment of relief school transport escorts – Following approval in 2013-2014, 15 new relief school transport escorts have been recruited who will commence work in November/December 2014
- E - Tendering – School transport tenders will be issued to suppliers on 10th November 2014 for contracts commencing from February 2015
- Seat belt legislation – By 1st October 2014, seat belts must be fitted to every seat on dedicated buses used to transport learners to and from school (Safety on Learner Transport (Wales) Measure 2011). – completed

Fleet

The final phase of the Fleet Review Project which will deliver a single contract for the supply of all the Councils fleet requirement has been approved by Cabinet and the process has started to engage a specialist partner to assist with the procurement of the single contract which will commence early in 2015/16.

Driver training (CPC) for all HGV drivers in Streetscene has been completed by the deadline of 19th September 2014. **169 Drivers** from all sections of Streetscene, completed **7,200 hours** of classroom training in six months - provided by an in-house team of specifically trained Flintshire County Council employees. This equates to **845** driver training days completed.

Highways

All roads in the County have been inspected by staff from the service to assess the impact of the previous winter on the network and in order to produce the 2014-15 resurfacing programme, which commenced during June 2014. The programme is funded from the final year of the Welsh Government Prudential Borrowing Initiative (PBI) and the Councils own revenue budget and will be completed in January 2015.

The highway micro asphalt and surface dressing programmes have also been completed during the first six months of the year.

An independent survey of the Councils' classified road network has again revealed that Flintshire's roads are the best maintained in Wales.

All highway footways have also been Inspected in order to develop a footway resurfacing programme which is due to commence in November 2014. Approximately 1020 street light columns have been replaced as identified through structural testing. Both of these projects were funded through the WG PBI scheme.

Winter Maintenance - The Snow Ploughing Contract has been renewed this year until 2016 with the option of another 1 year's extension if required. 38 Snow ploughing routes have been allocated to individual local agricultural contractors. Highway Improvements. FCC was successful in obtaining WG funding for a number of Active Travel and general infrastructure improvements for the current year. All of the schemes are on track for completion before the end of the financial year.

Waste

Reported recycling figures have increased in the first 6 months of this year when compared to 2013/14 with the current rate at 58%. Landfill waste is also down on this time last year by 480 tonnes.

Recycling rates have increased at the Council's HWRC's from 58% to 62% for Quarters 1 and 2. This has been achieved partly through the introduction of a ban on vans using six of the eight sites which allows those sites where vans can be received to engage with the public to facilitate and encourage more recycling of their waste.

The new HWRC in Sandycroft will open in November which in turn will see the closure of both the Saltney and Queensferry sites in January 2015. The site has been constructed at ground level to allow access to all users without the need to use stairs or steps to access skips.

The Recycling Team have attended a number of local events during the summer in order to promote the service and provide containers to residents if they require them. The team have also carried out door knocking campaigns in areas of low participation specifically around the collection of food waste.

We have engaged a waste management company to review and make recommendations on the management of our landfill sites, gas engines and leachate facility. Early recommendations on leachate management have been introduced which has resulted in an improvement in the plants performance and we are now receiving income for third party leachate brought to the plant.

Driver operated weighbridge terminals were introduced in April at all of the Council's weighbridge sites. This allowed the relocation of the existing weighbridge operators to a monitoring suite in Alltami depot. The suite contains CCTV monitoring terminals that show live footage at all weighbridge sites and HWRC's. In addition, live tracking of both the waste collection rounds and the skip waste collection vehicles by officers located in the suite has improved the logistics resulting in greater efficiencies within the service.

Streetscene - The depots at Queensferry and Halkyn have been de-commissioned and discussions on the future of the sites are on-going. Part of Queensferry depot has been rented out to a local company on a short term arrangement.

Training - During the first half of the year 189 operatives undertook nationally approved training courses to help ensure the workforce is fully competent on the various duties they undertake.

Apprenticeships in Sustainable Resource Management - A pilot training programme has commenced and five waste operatives have been enrolled on the Sustainable Resource Management Apprenticeship Scheme. This apprenticeship programme follows an approved National Framework and allows operatives to achieve the qualification whilst undertaking their normal duties.

Areas of Concern

Subsidised Bus Service - WG have indicated that 2014-2015 was a transitional year for bus funding and it is unclear what funding arrangements will be put in place for 2015-2016 and whether there will be any further reductions

Concessionary Fares – Currently WG reimburses local authorities directly for the cost of the concessionary fares scheme but it has been reported that there may be a reduction in the fees for this administration both in the current financial year and beyond, which will have a significant impact on budgets.

Fleet -The OCRS (Operators Compliance Risk Score), which is the risk measure that VOSA applies to the operation of the fleet remained at 'GREEN' throughout the year for Road Worthiness, but has unfortunately dropped to 'AMBER' for overall Traffic scores due to paperwork and signage inconsistencies whilst transporting hazardous goods from HRC sites to a disposal site in Runcorn.

Waste - The Council failed to achieve the allocated Landfill allowance set by WG in 2013/14 and notification of this was received during the current reporting period. There has been no confirmation to date from WG that infraction fines will be applied. The reason for the Council missing the target was heavy snowfall in March 2013 which resulted in the suspension of collection rounds - with the material eventually being collected in 2013/14 reporting year. Income from dry recycling (Glass, plastic, paper/card and tin cans) has increased through improved procurement techniques, although recent downturn in markets for glass and steel continue to pose a risk to year end income targets.

Highways – The current WG PBI initiative is in its final year and there are currently no proposals to continue this funding support into future years. The additional funds have been a key element in improving the condition of the Highway Network and the loss of the funding will have an inevitable impact.

Improvement Plan (none in year priorities)

- Sustainable Transport – reported under the Transport Infrastructure and Services Improvement Plan sub-priority
- Civil parking enforcement – progress reported to Cabinet Oct 2014
- Sub-regional waste projects – reported under the Carbon Control and Reduction Improvement Plan sub-priority
- Streetscene Standards – Compliance with the Streetscene Standards stood at 80% at the mid year point. It is an on-going priority to improve the performance across all of the Standards.
- Managing litter and dog fouling – Number of FPN issued to be reported in

year end report

Key Projects

- Fleet Review – On track for delivery early 2015/16
- Construction of Sandycroft HRC – On programme to open November 2014
- Highway resurfacing scheme - On track for completion in January 2015
- WG funded transport schemes – On track for completion March 2015
- Talacre Shared Coastal Cycle route - Completed and formally opened
- Synchronisation of the traffic signals on the Deeside corridor - Substantially completed in the period

Collaboration / Partnership Working

- Trunk Road maintenance provision with all North and mid Wales Councils. Progress reported through NMWTRA Joint Committee
- NWRWTP & Food Waste Project - reported under the Carbon Control and Reduction Improvement Plan sub-priority

Summary of Operational Risks (from the above sections)

Risk Type	Risk Ref. and Description	Net Risk Score	Risk Trend	Target Risk Score & Date
Operational	Maintaining the Councils vehicle operator's Licence ('O' Licence)	A	↑	G April 15
Operational	Not achievement of Recycling and LAS targets	A	↑	G 2025
Project	NWRWTP (RAG represents overall risk level. A risk log is maintained and is regularly updated by the project board.)	A	↔	G 2018
Strategic	Loss of concessionary fares admin budget	A	↑	G May 2015
Operational	Volatility in the value of recyclable material	A	↑	G TBC

Section 2 - Internal and External Regulatory Reports

Report: QMS – Waste services

Date Finalised: July 2014

Conclusion: No major non- conformities raised

Recommendations: Minor areas for improvement

Summary

Continuing to hold the Quality Management Standard is an essential element of the Environmental Permit conditions

Report: QMS – Highway Functions

Date Finalised: September 2014

Conclusion: No major non- conformities raised

Recommendations: Minor areas for improvement

Summary

Continuing to hold the Quality Management Standard is an essential element to enable the authority to continue working on the Trunk Road network.

Section 3 - Corporate Reporting

Equality and Welsh Language

List the Equalities and Welsh Language Impact Assessments: -

(1) Started/Work in Progress

(2) Completed

during the period (April – September 2014)

Work has commenced to impact assess all of the proposals from the Business Planning process.

List the work areas / functions where diversity of customers are monitored

None

Appendix 1 - Performance Indicators

Key

R	Target significantly missed or likely to be missed by a significant margin
A	Target missed or likely to be missed but within an acceptable level
G	Target achieved / exceeded or on track to be achieved / exceeded

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

R	0	A	3	G	2
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Note 1 – NSI = National Statutory Indicator PAM = Public Accountability Measure

Note 2 – Change (Improved / Downturned) is based on comparison with the previous reporting period. 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 / PAM (Note 1)	Annual Outturn 2013/14	Annual Target 2014/15	Mid-Year Outturn 2014/15	Target RAG	Change e.g. Improved / Downturned (Note 2)	Commentary
WMT/004(b): The percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities sent to landfill	NSI / PAM	41.67%	40%	40.1%	A	Improved	
WMT/009(b): The percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities and prepared for reuse and/or recycled, including sources segregated biowastes that are composted or treated biologically in another way	NSI / PAM	55.13%	59%	58%	G	Improved	Performance improved on previous full year figure. Statutory target for 15/16 is 58%.

Indicator	NSI / PAM (Note 1)	Annual Outturn 2013/14	Annual Target 2014/15	Mid-Year Outturn 2014/15	Target RAG	Change e.g. Improved / Downturned (Note 2)	Commentary
STS/006: The percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days	NSI	95.81%	95%	97.1%	G	Improved	
STS/005(b): The percentage of highways inspected of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness	PAM	92.9%	95%	N/A	N/A	N/A	End of year report
THS/007: The percentage of adults aged 60+ who hold a concessionary bus pass	NSI	75.5%	78%	77.12%	A	Improved	
THS/012: The percentage of principal (A) roads, non-principal (B) roads and non-principal (C) roads that are in overall poor condition	PAM	4.3%	6%	N/A	N/A	N/A	End of year report
Compliance with Streetscene Standards	Local	80%	100%	80%	A	Maintained	On-going priority to improve the performance across all of the Standards

Appendix 2 – High Level (Red) Net Risks

Risk to be managed – None