

PERFORMANCE CONSIDERATIONS

(3rd Quarter 2006/07)

SERVICE: Highways & Transportation *(excluding Road Safety)*

Overview

All but one of the 5 key objectives are on course to be achieved and with the Local Transport Plan and Delivery Reports being assessed as excellent by the DfT, the outlook for the service is good. There are no quarterly figures reported for the majority of performance indicators and therefore, an overall assessment of progress towards achieving the performance targets by the year-end is not available.

Areas of Further Consideration

- The monitoring report comments that very few of the performance indicators can be reported quarterly therefore, it will not be known if the vast majority of performance targets have been achieved until the annual figures have been provided at the end of the year. However, it might be appropriate at the next PPB meeting if there was a preliminary indication given of where there is a higher risk than expected of any performance targets being missed.
- The DfT have delayed their consideration of the Silver Jubilee Bridge Maintenance Major Scheme, which was submitted in March 2006. The target deadline of 31 March 2007 will not be achieved and therefore, any time critical implications for the bridge maintenance works as a result of the delay will need to be highlighted.
- There has been a significant increase in the average number of days to repair street lighting faults due to deterioration in performance of the Council's maintenance contractor through the year. Although it is unlikely that the target will be met it is critical that the assurances given by the contractor are successful in reversing the current trend in performance.

SERVICE: Economic Regeneration *(excluding Enterprise & Employment and Adult Learning)*

Overview

These comments relate to those elements in the Economic Regeneration service plan that fall within the remit of this PPB. 2 of the 4 key objectives and the 2 performance targets in respect of the Urban Renewal priority are on course to achieve their targets. At this stage it is unclear if the remaining key objectives will be met. However, overall the outlook for the service is good although there are some aspects that might be worth further consideration.

Areas of Further Consideration

- Halton is one of three pilot areas in the North West for the launch of a new free environmental business support service available to all companies in Halton. The pilot will operate up to the end of March 2007 but there are no further details in the report about what happens after March 2007 in terms of the service continuing or alternative funding possibilities.
- A series of town centre surgeries to be located in the borough's Direct Links to discuss concerns and suggestions about the town centres have been planned. However, it is not clear in the monitoring reports when the surgeries are expected to be on stream.

- There is a review currently underway to consider the viability of the existing site used for the fireworks display and to highlight alternative sites for the 2007 fireworks display. However, it is not clear in the monitoring reports when the review is expected to reach any conclusions and report back.

SERVICE: Major Projects

Overview

The monitoring reports shows that all 14 objectives and 9 performance targets are on course to be achieved and outlines the progress made across the range of developments and initiatives currently underway. Therefore, the prospects for the service delivering on its commitments appear to be very good.

SERVICE: Environmental & Regulatory Services (*Landscape Services, Planning Services and Building Control ONLY*)

Overview

These comments relate to those functions in the service plan that comes within the remit of this PPB. The monitoring report show that all the key objectives are on course to be achieved and therefore the prospects are good. However, at this stage the picture is less clear with achieving the performance targets and so an overall assessment of progress is not available.

Areas of Further Consideration

- This year's targets of completing up to date character appraisals and producing management plans for 10% of the Borough's conservation areas are unlikely to be achieved (*See Note 1*). The report states (but makes no recommendation) that to speed up the processes and improve the chances of the targets being met particularly with regards to the management plans, will result in financial implications. Therefore, whether or not this is a realistic option worthy of further discussion in the current climate should be considered

Note 1: 10% equates to 1 conservation area per year over a ten-year period.

- The budget summary refers to the lower than expected level of income from Building Control fees due to increased competition from the private sector. Therefore, consideration of what the implications and risks to the service could be in the future if the situation remains unchanged maybe necessary. Furthermore, any options that could improve the service's ability to compete in the market place might be appropriate for the 4th quarter monitoring report.

SERVICE: Health & Partnerships (*Private Sector Housing and Housing Strategy inc Homelessness ONLY*)

Overview

These comments relate to those elements in the Health & Partnership service plan that fall within the remit of the Urban Renewal PPB. The majority of the objectives and all the performance targets look set to be achieved and therefore, the prospects for the year appear to be good. However, there are a number of developments and aspects highlighted in the monitoring report that may benefit from further consideration.

Areas of Further Consideration

- Funding has been secured for the refurbishment of the Gypsy site, which is scheduled to start in March 2007. However, an indication of what the refurbishment work will involve and when it is expected to be completed would be appropriate.
- There is a significant overspend forecast in respect of the Bed and Breakfast accommodation budget due to a steep increase in the demand for the service. However, the reasons for the steep increase in demand or whether it is a temporary or more sustained fluctuation are not clarified in the report.
- The review of the Homelessness and Housing Advice Service by Halton Housing Trust has produced an action plan to deliver improvements to the service. Therefore, an indication of the key implementation dates and the sort of service improvement outcomes that the Council can expect is suggested.

SERVICE: Culture & Leisure (*Parks & Countryside ONLY*)

Overview

There are no key objectives or performance indicators specific to Parks & Countryside highlighted in the monitoring report and therefore, an overview of progress is not available for the 3rd quarter.