

CABINET

06 September 2005

BUDGET & PERFORMANCE PANEL

25 October 2005

STAR CHAMBER

Report of Councillor Ian Barker

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To receive an update on the 'Star Chamber' meeting held since the last report to Cabinet of the 26 July 2005 and to note the next stage of the process.

Key Decision

Non-Key Decision

**Referral from
Cabinet Member**

X

This report is public

1. RECOMMENDATIONS OF CABINET MEMBER

(a) That the report be noted

2. Introduction

2.1 Star Chamber is an informal Member working group of Cabinet Members meeting with Officers to examine the Council's current and future spending plans to assist Cabinet with its responsibilities for making proposals in respect of the Policy & Budget Framework. The purpose and objective include value for money and to identify Gershon efficiencies and savings that can meet the targets set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

2.2 Star Chamber works to its revised Terms of Reference. The group meets regularly and reports for information are made on a regular basis into Cabinet and will also be made into the Budget & Performance Panel.

2.3 Since the last report to Cabinet, one Star Chamber meeting has taken place to consider strategic and operational options in respect of Gershon Efficiencies and the MTFS:

- 21 July 2005 to consider progress to date and Phase II. See **Appendix A** attached. Phase II of the Star Chamber exercise, scheduled to take place on the 13 September 2005, will concentrate on challenging services to demonstrate that existing service delivery gives value for money. Phase III will seek specific service options for meeting the MTFS savings targets.
- Phase III Star Chamber meetings are scheduled to commence in September and these will concentrate on budget issues in respect of Individual Cabinet Member Portfolio areas of specific responsibility, in particular outstanding reports requested in Phase I of Star Chamber and options for meeting a 2.5% reduction in service next expenditure.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

The work of the Star Chamber is critical to providing a challenge and review to both the way that our services are provided or their appropriateness to the targets set out in the Corporate Plan & Policy Framework. In particular this can be seen in:

- Corporate Plan Core Values – Sound Financial Management and Improving Services
- Corporate Plan Priority No 5 “Delivering modern, high-performing services, that are accessible, cost effective and of a quality that reflect what people want and need.”
- Revenue Budget & Capital Programme Monitoring
- Medium Term Financial Strategy target

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability etc)

None arising directly as a result of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None arising directly as a result of this report.

SECTION 151 OFFICER’S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Legal Services have been consulted and have no comments to make on this report.

MONITORING OFFICER’S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Corporate Plan 2005/06

Revenue Budget and Capital Programme

Medium Term Financial Strategy – March
2005**Contact Officer:** Mark Cullinan**Telephone:** 582011**E-mail:** chiefexecutive@lancaster.gov.uk**Ref:** CE/ES/Committees/Cabinet/StarCh