

# **BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE PANEL**

## **WORK PROGRAMME REPORT 13<sup>TH</sup> March 2007**

### **Report of Head of Democratic Services**

#### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide Members with an update of the Work Programme.

**This report is public**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) That Members agree to the Budget and Performance Panel section of the Annual Scrutiny Report.**
- (2) That Members note progress with regard to the monitoring of the Service Level Agreements.**

#### **1.0 Annual Scrutiny Report**

At the Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> March, consideration will be given to the draft Annual Scrutiny report. Members will be asked to agree to the report subject to the Budget and Performance Panel's agreement of the section relating to Budget and Performance. This is attached for Member's consideration. Members are requested to agree to the Budget and Performance Panel section or make revisions.

#### **2.0 Monitoring of Service Level Agreements**

Members were requested to delegate the monitoring of the Service Level Agreements to Democratic Services in consultation with the Chairman. This has now been undertaken.

Councillor Budden met with Suzanne on Thursday 25th January to consider the monitoring information supplied by the following organisations with Service Level Agreements:

Morecambe Citizens Advice Bureau  
Lancaster Citizens Advice Bureau  
One Voice

Preston Community Transport  
Lune Valley Transport Limited  
Preston and West Lancashire Racial Equality Council  
Victim Support  
Relate  
Age Concern Lancashire  
Lancaster and District Twinning Society

Satisfactory monitoring information has been received from all of the above organisations apart from Lancaster and District Twinning Society who have been reminded to submit their monitoring information.

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>	<b>Contact Officer:</b> Liz Bateson <b>Telephone:</b> 01524 582047 <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:ebateson@lancaster.gov.uk">ebateson@lancaster.gov.uk</a> <b>Ref:</b>
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<b>WORK PROGRAMME</b>
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<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>MARCH 13TH</b>	<b>JUNE 12TH</b>
STAR CHAMBER		
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT MONITORING		Leader's 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarterly Corporate Performance Monitoring Report
OVERSPENDS – LUNESIDE & DALTON SQUARE		
PARTNERSHIP MONITORING		
BEST VALUE AND PERFORMANCE PLAN		
VALUE FOR MONEY/EFFICIENCY STRATEGY	Consultation Strategy Review Update  Human Resources Strategy	Forward Annual Efficiency Statement
SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS		
HOUSING SLA's		
AUDIT COMMISSION QUALITY OF LIFE AREA PROFILES		
DATA QUALITY		
EXETER BENCHMARKING		
SCRUTINY OF FUNDING TO OUTSIDE BODIES -		

## Budget and Performance Panel

**Membership: Councillors Keith Budden (Chairman), John Day (Vice Chairman), Jim Blakely, Tina Clifford, Mike Greenall, Tony Johnson, Stuart Langhorn (until December 2006), Roger Mace (from January 2007), Roger Sherlock and John Whitelegg**

The Budget and Performance Panel have responsibility for carrying out Overview and Scrutiny in respect of the Council's Budget and Performance at both the Strategic and Service level. In accordance with the Council's objectives and values, the Panel helps to ensure that the management of financial affairs is efficient, prudent, and works best for the residents of the District and that there is effective monitoring of Council performance that leads to continuous improvement in services. Areas which the Panel has scrutinised this year include Open Source Software and IT Cost Analysis, progress on the Consultation Strategy, Backlog Repairs to Corporate & Municipal Buildings, Decriminalised Parking Enforcement, Housing Level Agreements and Disability Discrimination and Race Equality Compliance as well as receiving a presentation on the Budget and Policy Framework Proposals.



**Councillor Keith Budden  
Chairman of Panel**

### Other major functions of the Budget and Performance Panel include:

- Monitoring and reviewing Services in achieving their Business Plans.
- Scrutinising the Council's performance in budgetary management and targets, treasury management, property and asset acquisition and disposal, capital programme and evaluating the effectiveness of its financial and operational policies and procedures.
- Reviewing the Council's strategic performance and monitoring Performance Indicators and benchmarking.
- To review and monitor external Service Level Agreements and other contracts that the Council has entered into.
- Performing the Overview and Scrutiny function in relation to all of the Council's Corporate Performance and Best Value activity.
- To assist and monitor the Cabinet in the continued development of a medium term budget strategy.

### Performance Management Framework

It was reported in the last Annual report that the Panel's work would be advanced and supported by Cabinet's establishment of Performance Review Teams, particularly with regard to Service Business Plan performance and financial monitoring. The Performance Review Teams provide quarterly monitoring with commentary to the Panel, thereby reducing the amount of paperwork that Panel Members need to wade through and reduce the likelihood of requesting the attendance of Service Heads to Budget and Performance Panel meetings.

The new Performance Management Framework enables standard quarterly traffic light reporting with performance management information produced in a standard format for all users, and this information is available to all Members on the intranet. Presented by the Leader, the quarterly Performance Monitoring Corporate Reports highlight areas that have not achieved their targets and outlined actions to rectify. Following from the

presentation of these reports, the Panel has identified areas for further scrutiny and requested briefing notes in relation to the following areas:

- ❑ A briefing note on Air Quality control
- ❑ A briefing note on the uptake and impact of concessionary travel
- ❑ A briefing note in relation to Off-street parking

Complementing the Performance Management Framework, steady progress has been made with regard to the roll out of the Escendency Performance Management software, which as outlined in last year's Annual Report, will provide real time data and enable advances in the area of performance scrutiny. It is anticipated that the roll out of Escendency to all services will be completed by summer 2007.

Budget and Performance Panel Members together with Cabinet Members attended the 'launch' of Escendency at Infolab, Lancaster University in October. Following on from this, several Members have received training on the use of this performance management software and are now in a position to confidently access this from their laptops, enabling them to identify any potential areas for concern.

**Councillor Tony Johnson  
Escendency:**

**An excellent tool for examining the competence or otherwise of any of the Council services, this will allow resources to be targeted which should improve efficiency.**

In addition to presenting the quarterly monitoring reports, the Leader of the Council has presented regular progress reports in relation to the Council's Star Chamber process (the Cabinet's rolling efficiency programme) and this year a 'special' Budget and Performance Panel meeting was arranged for the Panel to consider the Leader's presentation on the Budget and Policy Framework Proposals. All Non-Executive Members and Economic Stakeholders were invited to attend.

A number of Service Heads and Officers have attended Budget and Performance Panel meetings throughout the year and provided reports or presentations for consideration including Health and Strategic Housing, City Council (Direct) Services, Legal and Human Resources, Primary Services, Planning, Economic Development & Tourism and Financial Services. These discussions have led to further work being undertaken in a number of areas.

More recently, the Panel considered a report in relation to overspends in connection to regeneration projects Dalton Square and Luneside East. Following lengthy discussions and questioning of Officers and the Corporate Director (Regeneration), the Panel suggested several revisions to the recommendations including that Members receive a briefing on LAM (Lancaster and City Council approach to Managing Projects) methodology in the new municipal year.

It was reported in the last Annual Report that the Panel had formally adopted the role of scrutiny for the Council's Value for Money / Efficiency Strategy arrangements and the monitoring of achievements of targets included in the Council's Annual Efficiency Statements. Different components of the strategy have been scrutinised at each meeting as detailed below:

- ❑ Forward Annual Efficiency Statement – Gershon Targets
- ❑ Procurement Strategy
- ❑ Transformational Government Strategy (formerly e-government)
- ❑ Risk Management Strategy
- ❑ Human Resources Strategy Review Consultation
- ❑ Consultation Strategy
- ❑ Corporate Property Strategy Update

Consideration of these reports has led to requests for further information including a report following the development of the Transformational Government Strategy and Vision, an example of how sustainability is built into the procurement strategy, processes and contracts, and an indication of how the corporate Property and Energy Strategy has contributed to the Gershon/MTFS savings targets.



**Luneside East – Overspends relating to this project were considered by the Budget and Performance Panel**