

REPORT TO: POLICY COMMITTEE ON 5 MARCH 2008

**SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN
MONITORING – CENTRAL SERVICES**

BY: CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The reason for the report is to advise the Committee on the progress made against priority areas and targets detailed in the Central Services' Service Improvement Plan from October to December 2007 and to provide Members with a progress report on Performance Indicators and Complaints for the Service for the same period.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section A(40) of the Council's Administrative Scheme relating to the provision, development and monitoring of all Central Support Services.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **The Committee is asked to scrutinise the progress made against the Service Improvement Plan.**
- 2.2 **The Committee is asked to scrutinise the contents of Performance Indicators reported.**
- 2.3 **The Committee is asked to scrutinise the contents of Complaints reported.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Central Services' Service Improvement Plan was approved on 29 August 2007 and details the priority areas and targets for the forthcoming year and forms part of the Councils' Performance Management Framework.
- 3.2 A progress report on the Service Improvement Plan as at 30th September 2007 was submitted to this Committee on 24th October 2007.
- 3.3 Performance indicators provide further assessment of service delivery against set targets and also forms part of the Council's Performance Management Framework.

4. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

- 4.1 The information attached to this report relates to the four sections within Central Services namely Committee Services, Estates Services, Legal Services and Personnel Services

4.2 The table below summarises performance in relation to agreed Performance Indicator targets detailed in **Appendix 1** and are presented within three headings -

- Green – performing well
- Amber – requiring close monitoring
- Red – requiring improvement action

Section	No of Indicators	Green Performing Well	Amber Close Monitoring	Red Action Required
Committee	5	3	2	
Estates	4	2	2	
Legal	4	1	2	1
Personnel	9	8	1	
Total	22	14 (64%)	7 (32%)	1 (4%)

4.3 The table below summarises performance in relation to agreed Service Improvement Plan targets detailed in **Appendix 2**, and are presented within three headings -

- Green – performing well
- Amber – requiring close monitoring
- Red – requiring improvement action

Section	No of Actions	Green Performing Well	Amber Close Monitoring	Red Action Required
Committee / Registrars	2	2		
Estates	7	4	3	
Legal	2	2		
Personnel	8	7	1	
Total	19	15 (79%)	4(21%)	

The majority of Central Services' Service Improvement Plan actions require long-term timescales, therefore areas of good performance will identify completion of milestones within those actions and likewise areas of improvement will identify milestones that have not been completed within expected target timescales.

5. **PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**

5.1 **Areas of good performance**

5.1.1 Committee Services

Committee Services gathers information on performance against target times for issuing Agendas, Action Sheets, and Minutes for Committees. For the period from October 2007 to December 2007 –

- 10 of 10 (100%) Agendas were issued early or on time, above the accepted level of 80%
- 10 of 10 (100%) Action Sheets were issued early or on time, above the accepted level of 80%

100% of Fixed Penalty Fines were processed within 4 working days, above target.

Although the contents of this report primarily relate to quarter three, at the time of writing the review of the Registration Services had been approved at Full Council on 14 February. A report on this review will be submitted to this Committee in due course.

5.1.2 Estates Services

£780k of rental income from the Industrial Portfolio has been generated as at December 2007, over 88% of the annual target of £882k.

96% of the Industrial Portfolio (building and sites) was occupied as at December 2007, above the target level of 80%. Industrial land and buildings occupancy rates have continued to remain high.

The third phase of the implementation of the document management system (Hummingbird) has been successfully completed and the system is now being used for processing all outgoing documentation.

19 Central Energy Efficiency Funding projects have been carried out to date. 34 'Spend to Save' funded projects have also been carried out to date. 27 projects are currently in progress.

A Building Energy Management System has been installed at Kinloss Primary School and a further 13 Building Energy Management System projects are on going at various stages of completion.

The consulting of owners and occupiers of premises in Grampian Road area of Elgin whose premises will be demolished as a consequence of the Elgin Flood Alleviation Scheme (FAS) has been completed and report was submitted to the Policy Committee's meeting on 24 October 2007 with options for mitigating the impact of the scheme on businesses. Further information on individual businesses is to be provided to the Policy Committee meeting on 5 March.

In the provision of professional and valuation advice to the Flood Team on compensation, land ownership and feasibility studies, terms were negotiated for sale of the site at Land Street Rothes to provide an opportunity for 2 house owners, whose homes will be demolished by scheme of works, to build replacement homes.

5.1.3 Legal Services

Building (Scotland) Act 2003, Title Conditions (Scotland) Act 2003 & Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act 2003 – Legislation is now in place for these three acts but impacts arising from the changes still require input from legal.

Adoption and Children (Scotland) Act 2007 - Work continues in supporting the Social Work Service to meet the demands of this legislation.

Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 - Legal advice has been provided at three further meetings of the Shadow Adult Support & Protection Committee for Moray. This involved in particular, work on the role, remit, constitution and standing orders etc both for the Shadow and in preparation for implementation of the Committee proper. Work remains on target for an autumn implementation of this Act.

Criminal Proceedings etc (Reform) (Scotland) Act 2007 - Intensive work continues to prepare for the unification of the District Court with Scottish Court Services. Unification has been put back by the Scottish Government in Grampian, Highlands and Islands Sheriffdom from April to June 2008.

Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 - This remains an area of very high activity with preparation for the transition period beginning on 1 February 2008. The Board developed and consulted upon the Statement of Licensing Policy and met its statutory obligation to have it published by the end of November 2007.

Gambling Act 2005 - The Act went live on 1st September. All applications received have been appropriately and timeously dealt with and no major difficulties are being experienced.

The work to ensure that the council complies with all the legal requirements involving the role of the Monitoring Officer continues including dealing with complaints and the giving of formal advice.

5.1.4 Personnel Services

99% of contracts were issued within 5 working days, above the 85% target.

95 health and safety incidents were reported in the third quarter of 2007/08, below the quarterly average of 132 incidents, calculated using information from the past 2 years. A full breakdown of the statistics shows that the main

causes of incidents during this reporting period were physical assaults and violent and aggressive incidents. National clarification is being sought from the Health and Safety Executive on the definitions of 'accident', 'incident', 'violent aggressive' 'mental assault' and 'physical assault'. The service continues to use this information to report to Departments and the Corporate Management Team on the volume and cause of incidents reported within the Council. Health and Safety compare the incidents reported with sickness absence databases and assume the reason for sickness absence was associated with the incident reported. For the period from October and December 2007, 171 working days were lost due to industrial injury and health and safety incidents, again this is below the previously calculated average working days per quarter of 198.

Take-up rates of 100% were achieved for training courses provided by Employee Development in line with the published training programme, courses where Employee Development are asked to undertake tailored training for Departments and courses designed and delivered in conjunction with the Council's partners, exceeding targets.

As an indication that Personnel Services are successfully resolving employee disputes before reaching the appeals stage no appeals were lodged during the reporting period.

In relation to absence management, workshops on 'Healthy Backs' were held in October/November and following that, issues of stress and Mental Stress Disorders were identified as major causes of absence a Mental Health Policy in place and plans made for training are issues to be included in the February Health Fair.

A new starter pack CD is being issued at corporate inductions and Phase 1 of the training programme 'Manager in Local Government' adapted for Head Teachers has been delivered and nominations for Phase 2 are being sought.

The following policies have now been completed: Re-grading; Early retirement; Disclosure; Work and Families; Thefts and Defalcations.

The final version of the Voluntary Work Policy went to Policy forum in December 2007. The Policy has been put on hold until the Corporate Volunteering Policy is complete.

Focus groups for the next phase of the employee survey have been arranged.

The Workforce Profile Information Report has been submitted to Policy, however If there are significant changes to the budget position this is likely to impact on staffing and should be taken account of in the plan hence waiting for feedback from CMT on both financial and corporate aspects.

Exit interviews commenced in November/December as part of a new policy.

The project to develop the Employee Benefits Scheme has been completed and will become part of the ongoing work. A report on the outcome will be submitted to this Committee.

The Appeals Hearings were concluded in December and work will commence to implement the decisions. A report on this will be submitted to Committee.

Policies on Stress, Driving, Vibration and Lone-working have been presented to Committee.

5.2 Areas for Improvement

5.2.1 1 of 22 performance indicators (4%) were categorised as performing below target requiring improvement actions: -

Legal Services - Council House Sales completed within 26 weeks

The percentage of Council House Sales completed within 26 weeks was 63% against a target of 80%. Issues around plan preparation have caused delays in transactions but a new member of staff now appointed is being trained so the situation should begin to improve.

5.2.2 4 of 19 (21%) of Service Improvement Plan actions were categorised as having exceptions though in each case only parts of the total priority required action:

Estates Services

Negotiate lease terms for Community Care accommodation in new Elgin, Forres and Lossiemouth Health Centres - Terms of occupation cannot be determined until projects are more fully advanced. Full Council on 15 March 2006 approved the principle of co-location of social work staff with NHS Grampian colleagues to new Medical Centres, which are yet to be built. (SIP reference 2.4.03)

Negotiate for acquisition of Spynie Hospital from NHS Grampian - NHS Grampian have indicated need to retain at least part of Spynie Hospital site for NHS projects. Negotiations are in progress to establish whether the needs of both organisations can be accommodated on the site. A report is to go to Policy Committee on 5 March. (SIP reference 2.5.01)

The review of Council property holdings in Cullen – Is on hold due to workload pressures. This is to be taken forward from 1st April. (SIP reference 2.5.05)

Report Review of Office Accommodation and Non-operational Property to Committee - A Review of Office Accommodation has been completed and reported to the Asset Management Working Group. The Group will consider the review in conjunction with the outcome of Shared Services Review. (SIP reference 2.5.07)

Report Industrial Estates Review to Committee and implement actions arising - The report on the Industrial Estates Review is on hold. It is to be submitted to Committee following confirmation of the Capital Plan. (SIP reference 2.6.01)

Personnel Services

Develop Health and Safety Policies listed below - Policies such as Stress, Driving, Vibration and Lone-working have been presented to Committee though national clarification is being sought for the definitions contained in the Violence and Aggression policy. The Senior Health & Safety Adviser will be attending a National Conference in February in the hope of getting clarification. (SIP reference 4.8.01)

Develop a Safety Management System and rolling programme to ensure all services assess and address the Health and Safety position and risks associated with their services - Slippage has been due to a change of priorities following the HSE Audit e.g. asbestos, construction. It is hoped to have the review and the initial audits completed by May '08. (SIP reference 4.8.02)

5.3 **Complaints**

There were 5 complaints received during the period between October and December 2007, one of which was upheld. (Detailed in **Appendix 3**) One complaint was not acknowledged in the required 3 days and one complaint was not responded to within the 20 working day target timescale. In both these the delay was due to a response being required by a section other than, or additional to, the originally allocated section. Thus adding to the time taken to make and draft a multi-department response.

6. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Corporate Development Plan/Community Plan/Service Improvement Plan**

The Service Improvement Plan is linked to the Corporate Development Plan.

(b) **Policy and Legal**

None

(c) **Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)**

None

(d) Consultations

This report has been circulated to Senior Officers in Central Services who are in agreement with the contents.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 That the Committee scrutinises the contents of this report.

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Background Papers:

Ref: