

REPORT TO: CABINET MEMBER (Performance & Governance)

DATE: 4th August 2010

SUBJECT: Integration of Performance Improvement (Intelligence) and Communications Functions

WARDS AFFECTED: All

REPORT OF: Assistant Chief Executive
Samantha Tunney ext 2174

CONTACT OFFICER: Sue Holden, Performance and Partnerships
Dan Grice, Communications

**EXEMPT/
CONFIDENTIAL:** No

PURPOSE/SUMMARY:

To provide an update report for the Cabinet Member on the progress towards the achievement of the integration of the Performance Improvement (Intelligence) and Communications Functions of the Council to achieve a contribution towards the £1M savings target within the Medium Term Financial Plan 2011/2012. Paragraph 1.1 below identifies the other integration work which will contribute to this savings target.

REASON WHY DECISION REQUIRED:

The Cabinet Member has requested to be kept apprised of the implementation of the in-year savings targets identified for 2010/11 and towards the achievement of the savings target within the MTFP within the 2011/12 financial year, associated with work which falls within his portfolio of responsibility.

RECOMMENDATION (S):

The Cabinet Member is recommended to:

1. Note the progress made towards the Integration of Performance Improvement (Intelligence) and Communications Functions in the current financial year; and
2. Discuss the future development of Performance Management as outlined in paragraph 2.4 and discuss the development of a media strategy which will be a sub-set of the overall Communications Strategy for the Council as outlined in paragraph 2.5 of this report.

KEY DECISION: No

FORWARD PLAN: Not appropriate

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: Not appropriate

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS: N/A

IMPLICATIONS:

Budget/Policy Framework:

Financial: There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, as these have all been considered and taken account of in the Council's overall budget.

<u>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</u>	2009/ 2010 £	2010/ 2011 £	2011/ 2012 £	2012/ 2013 £
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton Capital Resources				
Specific Capital Resources				
<u>REVENUE IMPLICATIONS</u>				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton funded Resources				
Funded from External Resources				
Does the External Funding have an expiry date? Y/N	When?			
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

Legal: None

Risk Assessment: None

Asset Management: None

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN/VIEWS:

STRATEGIC AND SERVICE DIRECTORS

CORPORATE OBJECTIVE MONITORING:

<u>Corporate Objective</u>		<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community	√		
2	Creating Safe Communities	√		
3	Jobs and Prosperity	√		
4	Improving Health and Well-Being	√		
5	Environmental Sustainability	√		
6	Creating Inclusive Communities	√		
7	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening local Democracy	√		
8	Children and Young People	√		

Background Papers

1. Background

- 1.1 Members will be aware that as part of the budget setting process for the current financial year, the Council agreed to include a savings target within the Medium Term Financial Plan of £1M to be achieved from the integration of Personnel, Finance, Procurement, Learning and Development, Communications and Performance Improvement (Intelligence) activities across the Council in the 2011/12 financial year. In addition to this, a savings target of £100,000 was set to be achieved in the current financial year from the integration of Equalities and Diversity, and Consultation and Engagement activity which is currently under a Service Level Agreement with the CVS (Cabinet Member for Communities Portfolio), and a further £250,000 in year savings target from communications activity. In the latter two cases, these in year savings have been achieved, and work is underway, to achieve a contribution towards the £1M savings from the integration of the Communications and Performance Improvement functions under the Assistant Chief Executive post. These functions, once integrated will, subject to any refresh of Cabinet Member Portfolios, report to the Cabinet Member for Performance and Governance, with the exception of the functions relating to Equalities and Diversity, which are the responsibility of the Cabinet Member for Communities.
- 1.2 In terms of progressing the work to achieve the contribution to the £1M saving, it is important to note that the current national and as a result, local, context has changed. A change of government and in-year and future grant reductions and other financial measures introduced to cut the national debt will have an impact on the Council, and its partners. In addition, the new context brought about as a result of new policy directions around health, localism, the big society to name but a few will require a flexible and fluid approach to these integrated functions. With this in mind, work is underway to implement changes arising from these Strategic Budget Review Projects in the current financial year, to enable savings to be achieved, but importantly to ensure that the new functions are in place to support changes in central and local policy direction for the Council. This will enable the Council to be better placed to

respond and meet these new policy directives over the coming months and years.

2. Update on Progress - Communications and Performance Improvement (Intelligence) Projects

- 2.1 Communications and Performance Improvement are two projects, which are being developed as part of the transformation programme under the auspices of the Strategic Budget Review. Given that the Projects impact on every service of the Council, the two Project Boards responsible for the delivery of the integration objectives have been headed up by the Assistant Chief Executive, and supported by Project Officers from within the Performance and Partnerships, Communications and Transformation Teams. Officers from around the Council, with current responsibilities for these functions have led workstreams under these projects which have reviewed the current functions and how they are delivered – people, budgets and some processes, and have made recommendations which are due to be reported to the Project Boards, which will influence how the new functions will be integrated, delivered and organisationally structured in the future.
- 2.2 The Project Boards are in the process of meeting to discuss the first stage reports from the workstreams, and an overall report summary is being prepared for discussion with Strategic and Service Directors to ensure that the new functions are capable of meeting the business requirements of the council now and in the future. The key findings of the two projects, together with some ideas of what is required and some quick wins are included in this report for discussion at the Cabinet Member meeting, as it is felt important to ensure that Members are engaged in the development of these functions.
- 2.3 The Cabinet Member and Opposition Spokespersons were given a brief update on 20th July on the process which has led to these outcomes, and the Cabinet Member has requested a discussion at the Cabinet Member meeting in relation to how to develop the function of performance management, given the national changes such as the abolition of the Comprehensive Area Assessment, a lighter touch inspection regime, a reduction in targets which should be reported as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review in the Autumn, and in the light of the new national policy drivers described above. Members will recall that the Council approved the implementation of a new Performance Management Framework for the Council, the Strategic Borough Partnership and partners within the Borough, and the new processes for performance management will need to be set within the context of this overall framework approved by the Council.
- 2.4 A briefing note will be circulated nearer to the meeting, to stimulate this discussion at the meeting, setting out some of the findings of the Performance Management Workstream of the Performance Improvement (Intelligence) Project.
- 2.5 In addition, the Cabinet Member requested the development of a media strategy, which will form part of the overall Communications Strategy which will be developed for consideration by Members, using the outcomes from the Communications Project. Again a briefing note will be circulated in advance of the meeting, to stimulate discussion at the meeting as to what Members would like to see this media strategy contain.

- 2.6 Set out in the following sections of this report are the draft key findings of the two projects, draft proposals for change and a list of potential quick wins, upon which consultation with Strategic and Service Directors has commenced. It is being proposed, subject to that consultation, that these actions will be put in place to implement the integration approved by the Council as part of the budget setting process, but given the change of national and local context, it is proposed that this will be implemented in the current financial year. Consultation with the Trades Unions and affected staff is programmed to commence.

3. Key Findings, Proposals and Quick Wins associated with the Projects

Communications Project Key Findings

1. A lack of resource for the central function with spend/staff being held in departments to the detriment of corporate working.
2. Duplication and inefficiency in terms of activities, job roles and financial spend
3. A disparate approach to communications (particularly with regard to design and print and brand awareness).
4. Lack of controls with regard to the Council's procurement of printed materials and branding.
5. An uncoordinated approach to messaging and placement
6. Poor data quality output in some areas of the business
7. Most communications activity (other than press, media handling and advertising) is carried out at a departmental or team level and is not co-ordinated and lacks corporate control
8. Lack of consistency in embedding branding and single-message within the core business and varied approaches methods and production.
9. Poor website which is difficult to use for both citizens and staff. This is mainly due to a lack of corporate resource for the web.
10. Lack of monitoring for success of campaigns etc. Lack of corporate control.

Communications Project Proposals

1. An integrated function that is linked to the needs of the business and supports directorates.
2. Operate a commissioner/client function across the council with regard to all communications activity.
3. A function that provides strategic analysis and understanding to support Councillors to make transparent and effective decisions, and to support the Strategic Leadership Team to strategically manage the business
4. The development of a clear set of guidelines, standards and controls to support effective and transparent communications through the channels outlined by the workstreams

5. Development of a Communications Strategy to highlight the corporate opportunities from the workstreams and tie together working practices and strategic aims over the next two years.
6. Create a small web team to develop and manage both the council's internet and intranet sites. Map existing external sites related to the council and bring "in-house" where business case allows. (This would be done through rationalisation of staff)
7. Create an internal communications role, the lack of which has been identified as a major gap for current working. (This would be done through rationalisation of staff)
8. Further clarify staff in scope following the mapping exercise in order to develop and populate a new corporate structure.
9. Generate further savings towards the integration and rationalisation targets.
10. Investigate partnership working opportunities e.g. NHS Sefton.
11. Support, challenge and act as a critical friend to departments and services to support and a culture of openness, self awareness and performance improvement

Communications Project Quick Wins

1. Monitor and challenge introduced through the Communications Board with regard to print and design work. Only "must do" activity, as defined by the board will be undertaken.
2. Bring forward the workstream for completion this financial year thereby achieving the savings in year.
3. Ring fence communications budgets within departments for an initial period of three-months to allow for a "business case" culture to be introduced.
4. Agree a shared services approach with a partner or partners to drive out efficiencies
5. Review monitoring and "press cutting" arrangements for the authority.
6. Swift movement on creating the new function and structures to realise integration savings in-year.

Performance Improvement (Intelligence) Project Key Findings

1. Duplication and inefficiency in terms of activities, job roles and financial spend
2. A disparate approach to policy and strategy
3. A lack of controls with regard to the Council's management of policy, strategy and partnerships
4. Numerous data sets and systems being deployed, manipulated and utilised across departments and services that are not joined up

5. The Council holds large historical stocks of data and inefficiency in handling data
6. Poor data quality in some areas of the business
7. The Council overall is data rich and intelligence poor with many different definitions and descriptions of the Sefton area being used across departments / services – there is no single view
8. External purchasing of engagement, consultation and research activity is carried out at a departmental or team level, is not co-ordinated, lacks corporate control and is not strategically used.
9. A lack of consistency in embedding equality and diversity within the core business and varied approaches to impact assessing
10. A culture of silo working (both departmental and operational) has led to the lack of open and transparent communications, the ‘protection’ of data (which may be associated with data quality issues) and missed opportunities to develop a collective understanding of the area and needs of the diverse communities of Sefton

Performance Improvement (Intelligence) Project Proposals

1. An integrated function that is linked to the needs of the business and supports directorates, (and in the new financial climate partners)
2. A function that provides strategic analysis and understanding to support Councillors to make transparent and effective decisions, and to support the Strategic Leadership Team to strategically manage the business
3. The development of a clear set of standards and controls to support effective and transparent decision making underpinned by clear lines of accountability and the delineation of decision making powers.
4. Supporting Members in taking democratic accountability to the people of Sefton through robust support and intelligence
5. Reduction in duplication - COUNT – collect once and used numerous times
6. Mainstreaming of the approach to equality and diversity into day to day work of the council and departments focused around impact assessing, combined with health and community impact of decisions
7. Development of an internal hub – a single point of contact for members, staff and partners
8. A corporate approach in the production of policy and strategy ensuring the ‘joining up’ of strategies and plans to reduce inefficiency and duplication whilst retaining the ‘policy action planners and implementers’ in departments
9. A smart ‘commissioner’ of engagement, research and survey activity to ensure value for money and the sourcing of views from the public to the ‘right’ questions
10. Support, challenge and a critical friend to departments and services to support a culture of openness, self awareness and performance improvement

Performance Improvement (Intelligence) Project Quick Wins

1. Suspend all future commissioning of external consultancy bodies for engagement, consultation, research etc other than those that have to be undertaken as an absolute 'statutory' requirement and only as agreed by Strategic Leadership Team
2. Bring forward the workstream for completion this financial year thereby achieving the savings in year.
3. Stop all internal activity with regard to engagement consultation, research etc other than those that have to be undertaken as an absolute 'statutory' or strategic requirement for the Council and only as agreed by Strategic Leadership Team.
4. Agree a shared services approach with a partner or partners to drive out efficiencies
5. Assess current usage of external storage companies and put in place a single centralised contract for storage at a more cost effective rate
6. Task all departments to identify and securely destroy all data that is no longer needed (in offices, cellars, town halls, external storage) freeing up storage, office space and reducing costs of external storage
7. Complete the data rationalisation process in year and reduce burden of data collection and systems management
8. Maximise the information made available on the website therefore reducing the burden of dealing with freedom of information requests
9. Audit fees – Audit Commission fees for CAA (captured as savings)
10. PWC fees relating to data quality review (captured as savings)

Draft timeline for Next Steps

1. Complete internal consultation with Strategic and Service Directors on findings and proposals for the new functions, consult the Trades Unions and confirm final proposals with the Cabinet Member by end of August 2010.
2. Confirm remit of new functions, resources and complete staff consultation by end September 2010
3. Move to implementation of a new function from 1st October 2010
4. Complete integration 31st March 2010