



COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Committee Report

Public

8 January 2004

Date of Meeting:

Title: BUSINESS PLAN PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

Report of: Head of Economic and Community Development Services

Report reference: ECD.01/04

Summary:

This report provides a summary of the work carried out by the Business Unit to date and monitors performance against the Unit's Business Plan. Key issues and challenges that face the Unit over the next months are also detailed. Given the restricted timetable over the Christmas/New Year period it has not been possible to submit this report to the Corporate Management Team. However, it has been discussed with the Executive Director, with strategic responsibility for this Business Unit and it has also been shared with individual Heads of Business Units. Members will be updated of additional comments made at CMT on 8th January 2004.

Recommendations:

That Members note the report.

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Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

BUSINESS PLAN PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise CMT and the Community O&S Committee on the progress of the Business Plan for Economic and Community Development Services Business Unit. Included in this report is an update of Performance Indicators and, where available, performance monitoring information for these indicators.
- 1.2 The Key Challenges in the Business Plan are at a high strategic level. The Unit comprises many services and these Key Challenges were identified because they were relevant to all the services. The Unit's work is also very fluid, responding as it does to external factors and the work of other agencies. It has a strong outward facing role and it reacts and responds to the work of partners where there is an impact on the Council's own corporate priorities. Therefore it has been difficult to measure performance against the Key Challenges, other than to identify activities that contribute towards their achievement. The monitoring of the more detailed work of the Unit is done through the three team plans.
- 1.3 Where appropriate, the key elements of the team plans have been drawn out in this Business Plan. By the time the plan is next reviewed, towards the end of the financial year, the City Council's priorities will have been further clarified and the budget will be set for 2004/05. A Unit wide Team Improvement Review is planned for February 2004 to review the Plan and to reaffirm how the work of the Unit relates to corporate objectives.
- 1.4 The information used to compile the report has been raised at the regular briefings with the Portfolio Holders for Economic Prosperity, Health and Community Activities, Environment, Infrastructure and Transport and Promoting Carlisle. The report has been sent to these Portfolio Holders and any comments they wish to add will be reported at the meeting.

2. KEY DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE LAST REPORT OF 22 SEPTEMBER 2003

- 2.1 **Key Challenge 1: Maximising the availability of funding and other benefits in an environment of limited resources.**
- 2.2 A financial target here would be inappropriate. Although external funding is awarded on the basis of bid quality and availability of match funding, it is also determined by

eligibility. Grant regimes change regularly and recently there has been a drive by the Government to curtail the number of area based initiatives.

- 2.3 The last Performance Monitoring Report gave details of funds secured for a number of economic development and tourism projects. These projects are now in the process of being implemented. The main new areas of work in economic development have been corporate activities to prepare bids to the North West Development Agency. The first, with Property Services, Carlisle Housing Association and the County Council is a detailed bid to the North West Development Agency on behalf of the Carlisle and Eden Local Strategic Partnership. An outline was submitted in September and the detailed bid is due to be submitted in February 2004. Up to £8 million of NWDA funding could be secured for employment and training initiatives and capital works to increase investment in commercial property. The second bid, with Property Services and Commercial and Technical Services, is to overcome infrastructure constraints in north Carlisle, particularly electricity supply, which are preventing economic development.
- 2.4 As well as seeking direct funding, the Council supports local communities in their search for resources. A funding fair is scheduled for 28 January to enable voluntary and community groups in both urban and rural areas to find out more about funding opportunities. The Community Support Section has collated information on the grant income secured since April 2003 and indicates a total of £232,000 secured, with a further £180,000 pending a decision from funders. This is the first year where it has been a key part of the Community Involvement and Regeneration Officers' jobs to support groups in identifying and applying for grants. This approach is increasing both the capacity of these groups to do this job themselves in future, and the number and variety of high quality projects it enables to happen.
- 2.5 Since the presentation of the last Performance Monitoring Report, Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee was advised on 27 November 2003 of progress on improving systems to monitor external funding. A new database is being developed to track grant bids and claims throughout their life. It will provide a tool to monitor and improve the Council's performance with regard to the submission of claims in particular, improve audit trails and assist officers in increasing efficiency. The system is currently being designed and users are being involved in the process through workshop sessions. The process will enable the system to be amended following dummy runs and trials, working towards full operation early in the new financial year.

2.6 Key Challenge 2: Maximising benefits for Carlisle through joint working

2.7 This work is proactive and responds to opportunities arising with local partners, government initiatives and changing economic circumstances. The extent to which the Unit gets involved depends on resource capacity, an assessment of the likely outcome of involvement and other priorities currently in the work programme. Some opportunities are therefore not followed up. Recent activity by the Unit in this area includes:

- Exploring technical options with Solway Rural Initiative for Broadband connections for Kingstown Industrial Estate and Kingmoor Park. Broadband threshold for enabling Rockcliffe exchange lowered through lobbying.
- From January 2004 a flexible learning option will be offered at Brampton Business and Telecentre for computer training. The various elements of nationally recognised courses can be studied individually, or the full qualification can be obtained.
- Issuing the first edition of a rural newsletter to disseminate the work of the Rural Support Group and to highlight opportunities for rural Carlisle.
- Further edition of the Junction 44 North newsletter issued to local businesses in December.
- Agreeing a revised package of support to enterprise agencies to cover gaps in local provision and add value to the Enterprise for all Cumbria programme.
- Securing the Roger Albert Clark Rally for Carlisle, beating off competition from Gateshead.
- Facilitating the successful annual conference of the Scottish Rotarians in October with the Carlisle Conference Group. Over 850 delegates attended and much positive comment was received.
- A successful Fireshow in November, again attracting much positive comment.
- Agreeing new arrangements to implement the work of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership across Carlisle and Eden districts. There is increased liaison with Eden DC, greater involvement from the Police and the two vacant posts have now been filled.

2.8 Key Challenge 3: Establishing, understanding and communicating the Council's role in a complex network of partnerships and external agencies.

2.9 This is an ongoing task, which, as with the previous challenge is proactive, responding to external factors. The Council's role, as defined by the Economic Development Best Value Review can be seen as one of strategic leader, advocate and coalition builder.

The role is given expression through the work programme of the Business Unit but is also part of the Council's corporate activity, involving actions by other Business Units, Executive Directors and Members. Two key agencies have been the main focus for work in this area – the North West Development Agency and Rural Regeneration Cumbria. The Council needs to influence the work programmes of these agencies as they develop and as funds are allocated, to ensure that benefits are secured for Carlisle. Recent activity by the Unit in this area and with other partners includes:

- The work on the bids to the NWDA as outlined in Key Challenge 2.
- Contributing to the debate on the content and focus of a Sub Regional Economic Strategy for Cumbria. A consultant has been engaged by the Cumbria Strategic Partnership to draw up the Strategy. Officers have briefed the consultant to ensure that Carlisle's position is understood.
- Continuing to facilitate discussions on the future of Carlisle Airport. RDA studies are under way, support is now given in the White Paper, a funding stakeholders group and technical implementation group established.
- With Property Services and Commercial and Technical Services, the Asset Management Group has now formed and is progressing the review of Economic Development Assets.
- Changing the focus of Carlisle as a visitor destination. The area is now designated as a development brand in the NW Regional Strategy, reflected in the financial support given to the City by NWDA for its Christmas celebrations. There has been a significant marketing effort by national and regional agencies in the marketing of Hadrian's Wall with a knock on impact for both the tourism and Economic Development services. Carlisle is also now marketed for the first time through Visit Britain.
- Supporting the Carlisle Post 14 Group in managing growth and change in the higher and further education sectors, promoting the concept of a Learning City and creating the physical, social and cultural conditions to attract and retain students. The proposed new post of Further and Higher Education Development Officer will be based in the Unit and will add value to and benefit from existing networks and the work programme of colleagues.

2.4 Key Challenge 4: Engaging and involving individuals, community groups and businesses to ensure that the service delivered by the Unit is meaningful and relevant.

2.5 The Unit has at the heart of its remit the delivery of the local authority power of economic and social well being. In encouraging economic prosperity, the Unit's work also enables the engagement of residential and business communities in shaping their agenda and in sharing in the benefits. The Unit continues to work proactively with community groups, parish councils and business groups to engender active engagement.

2.6 There are currently three modes of engagement with the business community:

- Via the Carlisle Large Employers Affinity Group of the Chamber of Commerce monthly breakfast meetings.
- Through the periodic business liaison meetings and the 'Junction 44 North' newsletter produced for the Kingstown, Parkhouse and Kingmoor Park areas
- Through the programme of visits [with Business Link] to a sample of businesses on the Rosehill and Durranhill Estates in order to establish the potential support for a business liaison network. This would become the mechanism through which consultation on initiatives planned within the Carlisle Economic Renewal Action Plan would take place.

3.0 PROGRESS ON BEST VALUE REVIEWS AND OTHER REVIEWS

3.1 The Supporting Communities Best Value Review has now been completed and the recommendations will have implications for the work of the Business Unit. The report to Infrastructure O&S on 4 December has highlighted issues to be dealt with in the Improvement Plan. These include arrangements for managing the role as Accountable Body, the development of a Regeneration Strategy and finding appropriate indicators to measure performance.

4.0 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS UPDATE

NB: Performance Indicators BV 126 – BV 128, CV4 and LP 134 are led by the Police and monitored by the Community Safety Leadership Group, of which Carlisle City Council is lead body.

Reference	Performance Indicator	2002-2003 Actual	2002-2003 Target	2003-2004 Actual	2003-2004 Target	Comments
BV126	Domestic burglaries per 1,000 households	11.87		8.55	13.4	
BV127a	Violent offences committed by a stranger per 1,000 pop	3.3		2.11	3.07	

BV127b	Violent offences committed in a public place per 1,000 pop	6.11		4.5	5.69	
BV127c	Violent offences committed in connection with licensed premises per 1,000 pop	1.15		0.83	1.07	
BV127d	Violent offences committed under influence per 1,000 pop	3.09		1.82	2.87	
BV128	Vehicle crimes per 1,000 pop	14.38		4.76	13.92	
CV4	Recorded crimes per 1,000 pop	105.87		52.91	103.95	
LP62	% New Deal Leavers obtaining jobs: 18-24 Vol Sector 18-24 Env Task Force	63%	40%	58%	48% (40% contract target)	
LP 134	Public disorder incidents per 1,000 pop	99.0		24.15	86.32	
LP 140	Number of visitors to Carlisle	2,363,740	N/a	Not av. Until 2004	N/a	

5.0 CORPORATE ISSUES

5.1 Staffing/Human Resources

There have been no new starters at the time of writing since the last report in September. On 5 January 2004, the Community Safety Development Officer and the Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator are due to start. A New Deal client has been placed on a temporary basis within the Unit but this arrangement has now ended with the individual being appointed to a maternity cover post elsewhere in the Council.

5.2 The Executive Director is currently undertaking a management review of the Benefits Advice Centre. This is due to be reported in February. The Executive Director will work closely with the Business Unit Head and the Community Support Manager on the implications of the review and its implementation.

5.3 The development and funding agendas and the activities of external agencies have led to an increased level of demand for involvement of the Unit's staff in project development and partnership working. This has brought into sharp focus the limited capacity for project development and project management within the Council. It has

been particularly relevant regarding the preparation of the bids to the North West Development Agency for the Economic Renewal programme and the electricity supply to north Carlisle. The lack of ready developed projects and the ability to develop ideas to the level required by NWDA has severely hampered progress with bid development. It has led to the NWDA questioning the capacity of the City Council to develop the bid to an acceptable level and to deliver the programme as Accountable Body. The Business Unit Head has herself been involved to a much more detailed level than is appropriate for her post but necessary, given the pressures on capacity within the Business Unit. This has been at the expense of management and corporate activities required within the Business Unit. Arrangements for the management of the Economic Renewal Programme, where these can legitimately be funded by the NWDA, are being incorporated into the bid proposals and this should reduce the pressure in this particular work area.

- 5.4 There is an expectation from customers that the Council will hold basic information on the local property market. However Carlisle is only been able to provide a limited service in this area. The New Deal client referred to above was undertaking some of this work, at no cost to the Council but her services will no longer be available. In order to improve standards across the North West, the RDA is making available to partner organisations new property information and enquiry management systems. However recipient authorities will only be able to take advantage of these systems if they can allocate staff to operate them. Examples of the service that could be delivered include:
- maintenance of a sites and premises database
 - maintenance of business databases
 - information to businesses including management of the business content of the Council's web site
 - management of business enquires, follow through etc
 - maintenance of economic data and information.
- 5.5 Sickness absence rates for the period April to September 2003 are set out below. The Unit is 5th highest out of the 12 Business Units in terms of its overall and long term rates. The significant long term cases are being handled jointly by the Unit and MSES. The long term figures have also been affected by cases of limb breakages and illness requiring hospital treatment.

	Staff nos	Days short term	Short term rate	Days long term	Long term rate	Days overall	Overall rate	Av days per employee
ECDS	54.9	96.5	1.5	216.0	3.4	312.5	4.9	5.7
Council total/av	795.4	1917.0	2.1	2939.0	3.2	4856.5	5.3	6.1

5.6 Accommodation

Accommodation changes in the Civic Centre have now been completed. The New Deal Team is in negotiation on the details for its proposed move off the fifth floor to allow access to a training room. New arrangements for the Benefits Advice Centre are being considered as part of the details of the Customer Contact Centre, to ensure their accommodation problems are resolved ahead of the Disability Discrimination Act requirements in October 2004.

5.7 Links with other Business Units

Much of the Unit's work is corporate. It leads on a number of cross cutting issues and is involved as a partner in several others and these have been mentioned above.

6.0 FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS UPDATE

None at present.

7.0 BUDGET UPDATE (as at 28 November 2003)

Budget Line	Annual Budget	Budget to month end	Actual at month end	Month end Variance	Anticipated Year End Variance +/-	Comments
Management & Admin	21,740	17,856	7,711	(10,145)		7.2.1
Business & Employment Dev	383,380	251,192	208,938	(42,254)		7.2.2
Enterprise Centre	63,710	50,872	28,392	(22,480)		7.2.3
Brampton Bus. Centre	119,850	76,323	40,197	(36,126)		7.2.4
New Deal	0	(6,440)	(56,917)	(50,477)		7.2.5
Tourism & City Centre Management	382,090	258,858	271,692	12,834		7.2.6
Community Support	683,420	484,269	467,197	(17,072)		7.2.7
Sure Start	2,750	1,834	161,042	159,208		7.2.8
Community Centres	630,240	513,840	498,446	(15,394)		7.2.9
Benefits Advice Centre	138,830	92,631	81,662	(10,969)		7.2.10
Community Safety	130,990	103,736	91,434	(12,302)		7.2.11
Town Twinning	63,650	42,570	29,761	(12,809)		7.2.12

7.1 Comments on Budget Position

7.1.1 The Longtown MTI delivery plan needs to be completed before any expenditure takes place.

7.1.2 The majority of this variance relates to funds held for grants and on behalf of partnerships. The funding is due to be committed by the year-end.

- 7.1.3 Income has been overstated at the Enterprise Centre, as invoices from December totalling £10,673 were included in the figures for November. There is a significant underspend on building repairs due to a delay in processing invoices in CTS. It should also be noted that required efficiency savings for the Enterprise Centre and Brampton Business Centre were approved during the 2003/04 budget cycle of £10,000 for this year and £25,000 for subsequent years, which will be very difficult to meet. This will be monitored as part of the budget monitoring process.
- 7.1.4 There are a number of small underspends at the Brampton Business Centre, including staffing costs (vacancies), premises (CTS delay in invoicing) and equipment. However the majority of the variance is due to income in advance for several schemes, which will be committed by the year-end; income in this area tends to be received by academic years and is difficult to profile. See also comment on efficiency savings in 7.1.3.
- 7.1.5 The New Deal balance is accumulated surplus income generated by the contract. The Head of Finance has recommended to the Executive that in future the balance should be held within a reserve to cushion the peaks and troughs in income received. This income does not belong to the Council but is to be used to re-invest in the New Deal Initiative. The rules of the scheme are changing from April 2004 which will impact on this balance and the ability to generate income, but the exact implications are not yet clear.
- 7.1.6 Much of the overspend in Tourism and City Centre Management relates to the profile of the budget for the Christmas City 2003 promotion. The final position will not be clear until after Christmas. It is estimated that the total budget will be spent by the year-end.
- 7.1.7 The underspend on Community Support is made up of numerous small items. A carry forward to 2004/05 is possible for IT grants to Parish Councils.
- 7.1.8 Sure Start is a rolling programme, entirely funded by Central Government. Any balance at the year end will be carried forward.
- 7.1.9 A major proportion of the underspend on Community Centres relates to building repairs where the charges are again delayed by CTS invoice processing. This is reduced by an overspend on rates where a refund for 2002/03 is expected.
- 7.1.10 The underspend on the Benefits Advice Centre is made up of numerous small items.
- 7.1.11 There are several schemes in Community Safety where income has been received in advance (Communities Against Drugs, New Policy initiative and the SHIRPA project).

The two vacant posts have now been filled and from 5 January, work can resume on these initiatives. Any funds to be carried forward will have to be negotiated with the funders and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

7.1.12 Funding for Town Twinning will be carried forward to fund youth camps which are only held in Carlisle every three years.