



BURNLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO THE FULL COUNCIL

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PORTFOLIO: RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE
MANAGEMENT

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: COUNCILLOR MARK TOWNSEND

DATE OF REPORT: 04/04/2013

Progress on Strategic Objectives

PF1 Improved Value for Money	
Action	Progress
PF1a- Rationalise office accommodation to reflect reducing workforce	<p>Work has been undertaken to achieve the closure of the Nicholas Street offices.</p> <p>Nicholas Street offices are now vacated and the property remains for sale. The Revenue Budget saving has now been achieved for 2013/14. Further consideration of office accommodation requirements will be made as part of the ongoing review of the Council's assets and in association with the formulation and implementation of proposals for future efficiencies.</p>
PF1b- Monitor savings or additional income assumed in the annual budget process and ensure that recovery plans are developed where shortfalls are identified	<p>All savings and additional income, assumed when setting the 2012/13 budget, have been monitored during the course of the year. The Council has achieved the efficiencies built into the 2012/13 budget.</p>
PF1c- Apply the Medium Term Financial Strategy to ensure that future reductions in funding levels are anticipated accurately and recovery plans put in place	<p>The Council approved the 2013/14 Revenue Budget on 28th February. Savings of around £2.3 million were required to balance the budget and difficult choices had to be made.</p> <p>The assumption included in the budget was that we will receive around £1.8 million of Efficiency Support Grant. We have submitted a bid for this and at the time of publication await the outcome.</p>

	The Medium-Term Financial Strategy indicates a gap, over the next two years, of £4 million, although this will be subject to review following the Spending Review 2013.
PF1d- Seek savings from approved budgets in order to boost reserves and mitigate the need for service reductions in future years	Members will recall that a previous underspending estimate of £551k has been referred to during the course of developing the 2013/14 Revenue Budget and that this has been used to prudently increase the Council's General Reserve by £300k to £1.4 million and also to fund time-limited growth to sustain key community projects. The latest monitoring position indicates further underspends and this will be used to assist in supplementing the Council's overall £4 million medium term gap.
PF1e- Develop further measures for assessing the relative priority of the various services provided by the Council	Consideration of this issue was necessarily deferred until the position on the significant changes in Government funding has become clearer and will be considered as the Medium-Term Financial Strategy develops, in readiness for the 2014/15 budget.
PF2 Improved Performance	
Action	Progress
PF2a- Undertake a review of the job evaluation assessment for all posts within the Council	Meetings have taken place with all Heads of Service, to discuss the queries identified by the Quality Assurance (QA) Panel. Work has been completed to assess the outcome and whether there are any changes necessary. The desktop review is being considered by Management Team.
PF2b- Develop and implement service plans to ensure that there is continuing improvement in performance across the Council	The Council approved the 2013-14 Strategic Plan at its last meeting. Executive members will be reporting against the new version of the strategy from the August meeting of the Full Council. Heads of Service are in the process of finalising their service plans for the year. Actions and progress will be reported to scrutiny committees as part of the six monthly performance update cycle.
PF2c- Evaluate and update business continuity arrangements	Following the testing of the business continuity and emergency plan in late January, an action plan is being developed to ensure that the plans evolve to meet the changing needs of the organisation.

<p>PF2d- Develop options for homeworking and hot desking</p>	<p>The Agile Working Project is expected to start in this financial year. This project will bring together elements of other Council policies around flexible working, including homeworking, and will also incorporate issues of hot desking and the Accommodation Review. The Project will also need to ensure we have the technology in place to be able to support employees working away from the traditional office set-up, where this would be of benefit to the service and productivity and create a more flexible and responsive workforce.</p>
<p>PF3 Improved Services</p>	
<p>Action</p>	<p>Progress</p>
<p>PF3c- Develop proposals for key changes to Council Tax and Housing Benefit to ensure a continuing good quality service for Burnley residents</p>	<p>The Council has contacted claimants directly, prior to Council Tax Bills and benefit letters for the new year being issued, to notify them about key Welfare Reform changes, so that they can prepare for them. Those claimants directly affected by the changes to Housing Benefit, as a result of the implementation of the social rented sector size criteria and those affected by the new Council Tax Support Scheme, have received letters explaining the changes and have received advice about where further information can be accessed.</p>
<p>PF3d- Implement the Council's Organisational Development Strategy</p>	<p>Work is ongoing in the three theme areas, overseen by the Programme Board. Further to the last update, the Council has attended a Conference to speak to representatives of other organisations and share our Investors in People experience. Internal Reviews are planned and ongoing – the latest being on apprenticeships.</p>
<p>PF3f- Implement the IS Strategy</p>	<p>The Council is rolling out a new document management system called SharePoint. The system will also be the platform for intranet content. It will also help the Council get better value from its information assets, meaning data will be stored more efficiently and documents will be easier to find. The system will also be used to streamline internal business processes, including those that are currently paper based.</p>