

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 27 OCTOBER 2009

REPORT BY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

10. 2009/10 SERVICE PLANS – SUMMARY OF PROGRESS AND EXCEPTIONS REPORT

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

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**Purpose/Summary of Report**

- This report provides a summary of 2009/10 Service Plan actions relevant to Community Scrutiny Committee that have been achieved and details those that require a revised completion date.

<b><u>RECOMMENDATION FOR : COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</u></b>	
<b>(A)</b>	The summary of progress against 2009/10 Service Plan actions be received and Members' comments if any be forwarded to the Executive; and
<b>(B)</b>	Those actions requiring revised completion dates be noted.

1.0 Background

1.1 The 2009/10 Service Plans were scrutinised by Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 24 February 2009 and approved by the Executive at its meeting on 17 March 2009. This report covers the period 1 April to 30 September 2009 for the following services:-

- Community and Cultural Services
- Community Safety and Licensing
- Health and Housing

- Revenues and Benefits.

## 2.0 Report

- 2.1 In total, there are sixty-one 2009/10 Service Plan actions relevant to Community Scrutiny Committee, of which:
- 11% (7) have already been achieved
  - 79% (48) are on target
  - 2% (1) is not on target
  - 2% (1) has been deleted due to a change in priorities and a reduction in resources.
  - 6% (4) have had their completion dates revised.

- 2.2 An overview of the achievements by Corporate Priority can be summarised as follows:-

**Promoting prosperity and well being; providing access and opportunities.** *Enhance the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.*

- five actions have been achieved
- twenty-two actions are on target
- one action has been deleted due to a change in priorities and a reduction in resources (detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'B', pages 10.7 - 10.13)
- four actions have had their completion dates revised (detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'B', pages 10.7 - 10.13).

Some of the key achievements included:-

- New arrangements were implemented for the delivery of Meals on Wheels to provide a better service at less general subsidy than before. This means better value for the East Herts Council tax payer, e.g. no subsidy after the end of the third year of the new service, together with establishing a sustainable long term arrangement for the delivery of a quality service for the vulnerable.
- The Citizens Advice Bureaux were supported in their restructuring and a new Service Level Agreement negotiated to implement new funding arrangements and service. This

will provide better value for the East Herts Council tax payer through a more streamlined service with increased levels of debt counselling.

- Hillcrest hostel was fully refurbished to self contained units and is now occupied. This means that the quality of hostel accommodation has been much improved for homeless residents from its previous “shared facility” arrangement.
- With regard to closer working with other Government agencies / partners to provide a more joined up service between agencies and promote awareness in the general community / co-ordinate access to benefits, the following have been achieved:-
  1. A joint project with all other Local Authorities in the County to provide benefits awareness to 95,000 primary school children was undertaken in July 2009. This will be repeated to senior school children later in the year.
  2. A joint advertisement with all other Local Authorities in a free magazine distributed through all GP and Health Services in the County will be published in October 2009. This will raise awareness of the availability of benefits to a client base we do not usually have access to. The Place Survey indicated that a proportion of the community are not aware of the availability of benefits and this is why we look for new ways to share that information – doing a joint advertisement with the other Local Authorities makes this route affordable for each authority, where we would otherwise not be able to do it.
  3. As 2 above, but in “Retired” magazine, which was published in August 2009. Again, this targets a large section of our population with awareness information, with the same financing savings as above.
  4. A Jobcentre Plus “In and Out of Work” project to co-ordinate access to benefits will go live on 16 November 2009. This is a government initiative to streamline access to benefit and streamline data collection and information flows between Jobcentre Plus and Local Authorities. It requires closer working between the organisations to ensure that data is captured once and passed on, rather than asking the customer twice.

Objectives are to make the process easier for customers and to improve processing times.

- The first cases of further recovery methods for tax collection (process for committal and attachments process) were prepared in September 2009 in order to ensure that the Council is utilising all legitimate recovery methods to maximise tax collection and reduce avoidance.

**Fit for purpose, services fit for you.** *Deliver customer focused services by maintaining and developing a well managed and publicly accountable organisation.*

- 2 actions have been achieved
- 18 actions are on target

The key achievements included:-

- A new programme of subsidised bus routes has been implemented to maximise the efficiency of the services and provide better value for the East Herts Council tax payer through more targeted services.

**Shaping now, shaping the future.** *Safeguard and enhance our unique mix of rural and urban communities, ensuring sustainable, economic and social opportunities including the continuation of effective development control and other measures.*

- Three actions are on target
- One action is not on target (detailed in Essential Reference Paper 'B', pages 10.7 - 10.13).

**Leading the way, working together.** *Deliver responsible community leadership that engages with our partners and the public.*

- Five actions are on target.

2.3 Essential Reference Paper 'B' (Pages 10.7 - 10.13) details those 2009/10 Service Plan actions that have had their completion dates revised, together with one action that is not on target and one action that has been deleted due to a change in priorities and a reduction in resources. For ease of reference, these have been

categorised by Corporate Priority. Full progress comments on all 2009/10 Service Plan actions can be accessed by referring to the Council's performance management system, Covalent ([www.covalentcpm.com/eastherts](http://www.covalentcpm.com/eastherts)).

### 3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within Essential Reference Paper 'A' (Page 10.6).

### Background Papers

2009/10 Service Plans report to Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee  
24 February 2009.

2009/10 Service Plans report to the Executive 17 March 2009.

Contact Member: Councillor A P Jackson, Leader of the Council

Contact Officer: Ceri Pettit, Head of Strategic Direction and  
Performance Manager, Ext. 2240

Report Author: Dave Cooper, Performance Officer, Ext. 2242

## ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):</p>	<p><b>Promoting prosperity and well-being; providing access and opportunities</b>  <i>Enhance the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.</i></p> <p><b>Fit for purpose, services fit for you</b>  <i>Deliver customer focused services by maintaining and developing a well managed and publicly accountable organisation.</i></p> <p><b>Pride in East Herts</b>  <i>Improve standards of the neighbourhood and environmental management in our towns and villages.</i></p> <p><b>Caring about what's built and where</b>  <i>Care for and improve our natural and built environment.</i></p> <p><b>Shaping now, shaping the future</b>  <i>Safeguard and enhance our unique mix of rural and urban communities, ensuring sustainable, economic and social opportunities including the continuation of effective development control and other measures.</i></p> <p><b>Leading the way, working together</b>  <i>Deliver responsible community leadership that engages with our partners and the public.</i></p>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p>There are no specific consultation implications arising directly from this report.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>There are no specific legal implications arising directly from this report.</p>
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>There are no specific human resource implications arising directly from this report.</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>There is a generic risk management implication arising from this report, in terms of not completing the actions from Service Plans would be likely to result in not achieving the Corporate Priorities and Objectives.</p>