

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 16 JUNE 2009

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

8. ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY HEALTHCHECK – FROM JANUARY 2009 TO APRIL 2009

WARD (S) AFFECTED: All

'D' RECOMMENDATION – that performance be scrutinised and Executive be informed of any recommendations.

1.0 Purpose/Summary of Report

1.1 To set out an exception report on the performance of the key indicators that relate to Environment Scrutiny for the period January 2009 to April 2009.

2.0 Contribution to the Council's Corporate Objectives

2.1 For the purpose of this report, performance monitoring relates to the following Council priorities.

Caring about what's built and where

Care for and improve our natural and built environment.

Pride in East Herts

Improve standards of the neighborhood and environmental management in our towns and villages.

Fit for purpose, services fit for you

Deliver customer focused services by maintaining and developing a well managed and publicly accountable organisation.

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.




3.0 Background



- 3.1 This is a performance report relevant to Environment Scrutiny terms of reference covering the period from January 2009 to April 2009.
- 3.2 While members will have already seen some of this information, this is the first opportunity for it to be presented in this format to Environment Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.3 The report contains a breakdown of the following information by each Corporate Priority:
- An overview of performance, in particular where there have been issues and remedial actions taken during the period.
 - The indicators where data is collected monthly, with performance for April 2009 presented in detail (the most up to date available) with previous months summarised in a trend chart.
 - The indicators where data is collected annually with performance for 2008/09 presented in detail (the most up to date data available).
- 3.4 All Councillors have access to Covalent (the Council's performance management system), should they wish to interrogate the full range of performance indicators. The Performance Team is able to provide support and training on using the Covalent system if required.
- 3.5 As from 2008/09 Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI) are no longer required by the government to be monitored and have been replaced with National Indicators (NI). Best Value Performance Indicators and Local Performance Indicators (LPI) which the Council will continue to monitor have been re-titled East Herts Performance Indicators (EHPI).
- 3.6 Appendix 'A' (page 8.9 - 8.38) Shows the full set of performance indicators that are reported on a monthly and quarterly basis to this committee. Appendix A has been sorted by status e.g. All performance in 'red' are listed first etc.
Appendix 'B' (pages 8.39 - 8.41) Shows the full set of Environment Scrutiny performance indicators with the 2008/09 outturn and future targets
Appendix 'C' (page 8.42 - 8.45) Shows the complete set of performance indicators which are reported to members ordered by Corporate Priority.

Appendix 'D' (page 8.46 - 8.47) is a set of guidance notes for the performance indicators detailed in Appendix 'A' (pages 8.9 - 8.38) and a table with all key definitions and abbreviations. (Appendix 'D' is available for reference at the meeting.)

Appendix 'E' (pages 8.48 - 8.93) is a list of definitions and guidance notes for national indicators and local indicators that used to be best value performance indicators. This appendix is available for reference at the meeting.

The codes used in relation to performance indicator monitoring are as follows:

Status	
	This PI is 6% or more off target.
	This PI is 1-5% off target.
	This PI is on target.

Short Term Trends	
	The value of this PI has changed in the short term.
	The value of this PI has not changed in the short term.

4.0 Report – Indicators grouped by Corporate Priority

- 4.1 Between January 2009 to April 2009 members were presented with a separate 2008/09 Outturn report which detailed the 2008/09 outturn position and proposed targets for the next three years. This report was scrutinised at a joint scrutiny meeting on the 19 May 2009 at Corporate Business Scrutiny and then Executive on 26 May 2009.
- 4.2 In respect to the indicators relating to Environment Scrutiny the outturns and targets agreed by Executive on 26 May 2009 are detailed for information in Appendix 'B' (pages 8.39 - 8.41). Where outturns could not be reported due to report timing or data coming from outside agencies, it was agreed that these will be presented to Members through the Corporate Healthcheck report and collectively as part of the Council's Annual Plan. In addition to this it was agreed that when the Annual Plan is presented, Members will have an additional opportunity to consider any revisions to targets.

Caring about what's built and where

Performance analysis

- 4.3 **EHPI 204 – Planning appeals allowed**, was 'Amber' for April 2009. Performance was slightly below target as 3 out of 10 appeal decisions were allowed. Appeals allowed included two householder proposals and the change of use of a retail unit in Hertford from retail to a mixed use. Performance was off target for February 2009 having achieved 47% with 9 out of 19 appeals allowed; which were mostly related to householder developments.
- 4.4 **NI 157a - Processing of planning applications: Major applications**, was 'Green' for the month of April 2009. However, performance was off target for January 2009. 5 major application decisions were made in that period, two beyond the target timescales due to one being referred to the Secretary of State (Whitehall College, Bishop's Stortford) and the other because it was unusual and complex and required significant consultation (Wind turbine proposals, Benington). Performance was off target for February 2009, 2 major applications determined. However one of those was subject to a section 106 legal agreement which meant a decision could not be issued on time. Performance from March 2009 has been performing on target.
- 4.5 **NI 157b - Processing of planning applications: Minor applications**, was 'Green' for April 2009. Since the last report which covered the period up to December 2008 only January 2009 was slightly below the target of 79% having 14 out of a total of 18 decisions which were within timescale equating to 78%. Performance following January 2009 has been exceeding target.
- 4.6 **NI 157c - Processing of planning applications: Other applications**, was 'Green' for April 2009. Since the last report which covered the period up to December 2008 only February 2009 was just below the target of 92% (target was only increased to 93% from 2009/10), and as a result close monitoring was set up within the Development Control service area to improve performance. Performance following February 2009 has been exceeding target.
- 4.7 **EHPI 2.23(188) – Planning decisions delegated to officers**, was 'Green' for April 2009. Since the last report; January 2009 performance was slightly below the target of 92% with 13 decisions made by the committee out of a total of 141 decisions equating to a

performance of 91%. February 2009 saw a slight decline in performance as out of 76 applications decided, 67 were under delegated powers and 9 by Committee, equating to a performance of 88%. The decision making route is established by the Council's Constitution.

4.8 Performance in the following indicators were 'Green', which means that targets are either being met or exceeded between January 2009 to April 2009. They are;

- EHPI 2.10(3) – Building sites: 3 month re-inspections
- EHPI 2.1b - Enforcement actions: planning b) formal actions
- EHPI 2.1c - Enforcement actions: planning
- EHPI 2.2(45) – Waste: missed collections per 100,000 collections of household waste
- EHPI 64 - No of private sector vacant dwellings that are returned into occupation or demolished

4.9 The following indicators do not currently have performance data available for reporting:

- **EHPI 90b – Satisfaction with waste recycling.** No data available as data was collected on a 3 yearly basis through the BVPI (Best Value Performance Indicator) Survey. There is an option to incorporate this into the 2009/10 Residents Survey.
- **EHPI 86 – Cost of household waste collection,** No data currently available for the period of 2008/09; however the data will be available when accounts have been closed in July 2009.

Please refer to Appendix 'A' (pages 8.9 - 8.39) for full details.

Pride in East Herts

Performance analysis

4.10 **NI 196 - Improved Street and environmental cleanliness – fly tipping,** was 'Red' for 2008/09. The statutory formula for this PI balances the number of fly-tips against the level of enforcement action. Performance is measured on a scale of 1 – 4 (1 = very effective, 2 = Effective, 3 = good and 4 = poor) Performance was "good" or 3, which is below target of "Effective" or 2. However, the trend is positive and the number of fly-tips has fallen and the number of enforcements increased in the last 12 months (more details can be found in the report on 'contract performance – Environment contract

on this agenda).

4.11 Performance in the following indicators were 'Green', which means that targets are either being met or exceeded between January 2009 to April 2009. They are;

- NI 191 – Residual household waste per household.
- NI 195a - Improved Street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting): Litter.
- NI 195b - Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting): Detritus.
- NI 195c - Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting): Graffiti.
- EHPI 218a – Abandoned vehicles - % investigated within 24 hours.
- EHPI 218b - Abandoned Vehicles - % removed within 24 hours of required time

4.12 The following National Indicators were introduced for the first time in 2008/09. Therefore a red, amber or green status can not be assigned to them. There is no historic data available so no targets could be set for 2008/09:

- NI 192 - Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting.
- NI 193 - Percentage of municipal waste land filled

Please refer to Appendix 'A' (pages 8.9 - 8.38) for full details.

Fit for purpose

4.13 **EHPI 6.8 – Turnaround of Pre NTO PCN challenges**, was 'Red' for April 2009. The backlog was greatly reduced in April but staff absence affected response times. Performance was slightly off in January 2009 achieving an average of 11 days turnaround compared to December 2008 10 days was achieved. The service is now fully staffed and so improvement is expected in May 2009.

4.14 **EHPI 7.0 - % pre NTO PCN challenges responded to within 10 days**. Performance was 'Red' for April 2009 due to staff leave, public holidays and absences. Further improvement is predicted from May 2009 as staff vacancy has been filled.

4.15 Performance in the following indicators were 'Green', which means

that targets are either being met or exceeded between January 2009 to April 2009. They are;

- EHPI 6.9 - Turnaround of PCN Representations.
- EHPI 7.1 - % PCN Representations responded to within 28 days.

Please refer to Appendix 'A' (pages 8.9 - 8.38) for full details.

Shaping now, shaping the future

4.16 The following indicators do not currently have performance data available for the period 2008/09:

- **NI 172 - Percentage of small businesses in an area showing employment growth**, Data is collected through Inter Departmental Business Register available from ONS at local authority level. This data will be entered onto the Data Interchange HUB by ONS and will be available at 23 December 2009.
- **NI 170 - Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years**, Performance data is obtained from the National Land Use Database (NLUD) this data will be available from their systems from 24 June 2009, however as data obtained from the database looks at historic data, it will be subject to East Herts assessment in June 2009 so it can be validated.
- **NI 159 - Supply of ready to develop housing sites**, Performance data will not be available until December 2009 as it is provided in Local Plan Annual monitoring report.

Please refer to Appendix 'A' (pages 8.9 - 8.38) for full details.

5.0 Consultation

5.1 Performance monitoring discussions have taken place between, Chief Executive, Directors and Heads of Service.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 There are no legal implications.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications.

8.0 Human Resource Implications

8.1 There are no Human Resource implications.

9.0 Risk Management Implications

9.1 There are no risk implications.

Background Papers

None

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Appendices

Appendix A – Performance Indicator set relating to Environment Scrutiny Committee.

Appendix B – List of Environment Scrutiny indicator outturns and targets.

Appendix C – Complete list of Performance Indicator by Corporate Priority.

Appendix D – Guidance notes

Appendix E – List of Performance Indicator definitions.

} Available at the meeting for reference