

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 26 JUNE 2012

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

2011/12 END OF YEAR SERVICE PLANNING REPORT

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- This report provides a summary of 2011/12 Service Plan actions that have been achieved and details those that require a revised completion date.

RECOMMENDATION FOR ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:

That:

(A)	The revised completion dates against 2011/12 Service Plan actions be received; and
(B)	The Executive be advised of any recommendations.

1.0 Background

1.1 The 2011/12 Service Plans were scrutinised by the joint meeting of Scrutiny Committees held on 15 February 2011 and approved by the Executive at its meeting on 8 March 2011. Environment Scrutiny received a report detailing progress as at the end of September 2011 at its meeting on 15 November 2011. This report details progress as at the end of March 2012 for the following services:

- Customer Services and Parking (in relation to Parking only)
- Environmental Services
- Planning and Building Control

1.2 The Corporate Management Team is pleased to commend the progress against service plans to Members. While there are some actions in the service plans which have required changes to their

timetable, CMT congratulates Heads of Service and staff for delivering well, particularly in the context of the difficult times of 2011/12. C3W, shared services, staffing restructure, delivering efficiencies and severe recruitment constraints have made the operating environment extremely challenging for Heads of Service, managers and staff across the organisation.

- 1.3 Going forward this is the last time the monitoring of service plan actions will be presented in this format. For 2012/13 a different approach to reporting on service plan achievements will be adopted. However the report will always highlight revised completion dates and actions that have been deferred.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 In total, there are 32 actions in the 2011/12 Service Plans relevant to Environment Scrutiny Committee, of which:

84% (27) actions have been achieved

6% (2) actions are on target

3% (1) action has had their completion date revised (detailed in **Essential Reference Paper “B”**)

3% (1) action has not been started (detailed in **Essential Reference Paper “B”**)

3% (1) action has been suspended (detailed in **Essential Reference Paper “B”**)

- 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.*

2 actions have been achieved

1 action has had their completion date revised (detailed in **Essential Reference Paper “B”**)

1 action has not been started (detailed in **Essential Reference Paper “B”**)

Some of the key achievements were:

- A detailed report on the Parks and Open Spaces Development Plan progress over the last five years was submitted to Environment Scrutiny Committee on 6 September 2011. In addition to the many improvements to open spaces over the period of the plan, it noted that the Service had attracted £627,000 in external funding bids and Section 106 contributions of approximately £250,000 in capital funding and £73,000 toward future revenue maintenance costs. *(Reported to Environment Scrutiny on 15 November 2011)*
- A range of activities including Love Parks week, encouraging awareness and use of open spaces at Southern Country Park and 'Meet the Animals' events at Pishiobury Park and Red White and Blue Open Space were well attended. A public consultation event at Vantorts (Sawbridgeworth) was used to inform the redesign of the open space. The Council hosted this year's Sele Farm Community Action Day at The Ridgeway Open Space (Hertford). *(Reported to Environment Scrutiny on 15 November 2011)*

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

13 actions have been achieved

Some of the key achievements were:

- The frequency of Play Area Inspections was reviewed and reduced on less well used sites, largely achieving the savings detailed in the Medium Term Financial Plan. *(Reported to Environment Scrutiny on 15 November 2011)*
- Plastic, can and glass banks were withdrawn from May 2011 in order to achieve Medium Term Financial Plan targets. *(Reported to Environment Scrutiny on 15 November 2011)*
- New textile banks services were implemented from May 2011 – it is currently predicted that this will generate additional

income of £24,000 in the current financial year, contributing to Medium Term Financial Plan targets. (*Reported to Environment Scrutiny on 15 November 2011*)

- Building Control maintained the British Standards Institute Quality Assurance following an inspection, thereby ensuring provision of the service to recognised service levels in terms of timescales, satisfaction etc. (*Reported to Environment Scrutiny on 15 November 2011*)
- The Parking Management and Enforcement Contract was tendered and awarded to a new contractor (NSL Ltd.) with a “go live” date of 17 January 2012.
- Implemented the waste contractors "in-cab" IT reporting systems which has improved management information and speeded up complaints handling.
- Reviewed the Environmental Co-ordinator functions and a new cross-departmental post is place to manage the Council's Environmental Sustainability and Home Energy Efficiency Functions. This has delivered efficiency savings while maintaining a resource to deliver key projects and priorities.

Pride in East Herts. *Improve standards of the neighbourhood and environmental management in our towns and villages.*

8 actions have been achieved

2 actions are on target

1 action has been suspended (detailed in Essential Reference Paper “B”)

Some of the key achievements were:

- Mixed plastics collections were implemented from 9 May 2011 – recycling of cans and plastics is up despite a national falling trend in the amount of waste residents produce due to the economic climate. (*Reported to Environment Scrutiny on 15 November 2011*)
- A feasibility study was conducted on the roll out of an organic waste collection scheme for communal properties,

which identified that this option is not currently financially viable. Alternative proposals are being developed for the collection of organic waste from difficult access properties.

- Developed and implemented a project, to identify and raise residents awareness of recycling in areas of low performance.
- All East Herts Council owned woodland has been identified, mapped and categorised. A single management plan has been developed covering the smaller / simpler sites and individual management plans will be developed for the larger / more complex sites in 2012 in consultation with the Countryside Management Service.
- The Chantry Resident Permit Parking Scheme was implemented to help address persistent parking problems with commuters, shoppers and others who do not live or have businesses on these residential streets.

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 actions have been achieved

Some of the key achievements were:

- Effectively managed large scale development proposals that remain under consideration. Awareness raising has also commenced in relation to the potential for development at Bishop's Stortford North with a Member Briefing. This action will continue into 2012/13.
- Consultation has been undertaken in relation to one conservation area appraisal and commenced in relation to two others. This action will continue into 2012/13.

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

1 action has been achieved

The key achievement was:

- East Herts Council published a short guidance note to help town and parish councillors, local residents and businesses to make the most of their new housing and planning rights. In particular the guide shows how to produce a neighbourhood plan following the enactment of the Localism Act.

2.3 **Essential Reference Paper “B”** details those 2011/12 Service Plan actions that have had their completion dates revised, have been deferred/suspended or have not provided an update. For ease of reference, these have been categorised by Corporate Priority. Full progress comments on all 2011/12 Service Plan actions can be accessed by referring to the Council’s performance management system, Covalent (www.covalentcpm.com/eastherts).

2.3 Environment Scrutiny committee are requested to note the achievements against the 2011/12 service plan actions and agree the recommendation at the front of this report.

2.4 2011/12 actions that are still active will be reported as part of the 2012/13 service plan monitoring reports.

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’**.

Background Papers

2011/12 Service Plans report to Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee on 15 February 2011.

2011/12 Service Plans summary of progress and exceptions report to Environment Scrutiny on 15 November 2011.

Contact Member: Cllr A P Jackson – Leader of the Council.

Contact Officer: Simon Chancellor – Head of Finance and Performance
Contact Tel Ext No 2050
Simon.chancellor@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author:

Ceri Pettit – Corporate Planning and Performance
Manager

Contact Tel Ext No 2240

ceri.pettit@eastherts.gov.uk