

**STATEMENT BY COUNCILLOR MRS P MARSDEN  
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PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND ICT**

**HUMAN RESOURCES**

**Sickness Absence Management – update**

The average working days lost due to sickness absence for 2009/10 was 7.66 days per employee, a significant improvement on the previous year's figure of 9.12 days. The target for 2010/11 is 7.20 days per employee. Performance data for the third quarter of 2010/11, up to 31 December 2011, shows sickness levels of 5.43 days per employee with a predicted outturn of 6.95 days for the full year.

Sickness Management skills based training, including a clear definition of responsibilities for managing the sickness process, commenced in October 2010. This was highlighted as a priority in the Council's Action Plan to manage sickness absence. Two different types of training have been provided: a full day session where managers have the opportunity to practice the skills required and gain confidence in dealing with individual cases of sickness absence; and shorter half-day sessions which are aimed at providing a refresher to those managers who generally are more experienced in managing sickness absence cases, but appreciate some refresher training and the opportunity to learn about any changes to the Sickness Absence Policy and the implications for them on a day-to-day basis. Further training is being provided during 2011.

**Budget Review 2011/12 – update**

It can be reported that statutory redundancy notifications have been sent to 23 employees as part of the first phase of redundancies which will take effect from 31 March 2011 or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter allowing for statutory notice. In accordance with Section 188 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, the Council is consulting with the Trade Unions on up to 60 potential redundancies and although every effort is being made to minimise the impact of the budget saving proposals on the workforce, it is likely that further redundancies will follow in the coming months.

The Council is also introducing a range of budget saving proposals affecting different employee groups within the Council relating to the freezing of salary increments for 1 April 2011 and other changes affecting allowances being paid to officers. With regard to the freezing of increments, the Council has, to date, been unable to achieve a collective agreement with the Trade Union Side and, having consulted with individual members of the workforce, has taken the decision to implement the change unilaterally by the giving of statutory notice. The Council has taken this course of action as a last resort in order to achieve additional budget savings of £195,000. Dialogue is continuing with the Trade Union Side and it is hoped that a collective agreement can be reached with regard to the payment of increments in future years, together with protection for employees who may face redundancy and/or retirement in the near future and be disadvantaged by the freezing of the increment. A further report will be presented to Members at the next Council meeting.

### **Highways Agency Agreement - TUPE Transfer – update**

It can be reported that all but one of the employees currently engaged within the Highways Agency have now received written notification confirming that provided they remain in the service of the Council immediately up to the date of transfer, ie 31 March 2011, their employment will transfer under the TUPE Regulations to the North Yorkshire County Council Highways Authority with effect from 1 April 2011.

Separate discussions have been held with the North Yorkshire County Council, with a view to the Council entering into a separate contract agreement in respect of street lighting etc, which will allow for the remaining employee to transfer to the County Council under the TUPE Regulations with effect from 1 April 2011. It is envisaged that these discussions will be concluded shortly. The employee and the relevant Trade Unions have been consulted accordingly.

The Council's HR Service is working closely with the North Yorkshire County Council HR function to arrange for the appropriate transfer of employee records, policies and procedures, etc in order to ensure a seamless transition.

### **Member/Officer Training**

Cabinet Members and Chief Officers attended a 2 x ½ day workshop on Thursday and Friday, 10 and 11 February 2011 relating to Programme Management Strengthening Leadership. The training was facilitated through Local Government Improvement and Development and designed to assist Officers and Members develop skills on the effective management of projects.

## **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

### **Corporate Plan**

The draft Corporate Plan was approved by Cabinet on 14 December 2010 and has been subject to consultation with partners, residents and Members. The feedback has been positive and a final version of the Corporate Plan incorporating the views received from the consultation process will be presented to the March meeting of Cabinet.

### **Equalities and Diversity**

The report on the Diversity Peer Challenge by the Local Government Improvement and Development has now been received and recognises the work by the Council with all sections of the Community. The report which confirms the award to the Council of the Achieving level of the Equality Framework will be presented to the March Cabinet Meeting.

### **Corporate Efficiency Programme**

The market testing of Services is well underway with the relevant procurement documentation being prepared and issued for the Spa services (incorporating Scarborough Spa, Whitby Pavilion, and Cliff lift and all associated functions), Vehicle Maintenance and provision of plants. In all cases details of the bidders, costs and tender evaluations will be presented to Members for approval prior to progressing to the final tender stages.

Members of the Council have received presentations by Northgate Information Solutions on the work they are undertaking on Customer First, Revenues and Benefits and progress to date.

### **Complaints System**

Policy and Performance have developed a computerised real time complaint system which allows Head of Service and Managers access to the Complaint, Comments and Compliments received and allows them to manage response to the public in a more effectively and timely manner

### **Community Information System**

The information held on the Community information system has been updated to include the latest consultation data from the Local Area and Budget survey carried out towards the end of 2010 and this has been analysed by ward and circulated to Members.

## **ICT SERVICES**

- Work is ongoing by the Business Support team to redesign of the look and feel of the discoveryyorkshirecoast tourism website and the increase in functionality. The launch of this website is due mid April this year.
- Azzurri communications have been selected to deliver new telephone systems into Scarborough Spa including telephones at Whitby Pavilion and Filey Evron Centre. This project is due for completion end of March/early April.
- Over the last weekend of January members of the technical team carried out a major upgrade to the Councils ICT infrastructure and upgrade to the Active Directory system which controls all access to the Council's network and file storage. The team efforts in planning and testing this significant upgrade showed its worth as there were no service desk calls received from users with access issues on the Monday morning. This piece of work has been carried out as one of the pre-requisites for the move to Outlook as the Councils email client later in the year.
- Development of integration between the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and the back office Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) is being developed to enable calls logged in the CRM regarding ASB to be automatically transferred and populate the back office system, ready to be actioned by the appropriate officer.
- In January the ICT Service with assistance from Cash Operations Manager upgraded the Councils Income Management System and moved the taking of card payments to a hosted solution. This has assisted the Council in ensuring that we comply with the Payments Card Industries legislation. It also provides reliable 24 hour access for payment via telephone and the internet.
- Members of the ICT Service have over the last 6 months been improving the data held within the Local Land and Property Gazetteer and have successfully met the criteria of the National Bronze award for data quality. It is hoped the Silver award can be achieved by the end of March 2011.