

ANGUS COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND CENTRAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

3 FEBRUARY 2005

SUBJECT: FINANCE DEPARTMENT SERVICE PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

Abstract: This paper reports on the progress of the Finance Department Service Plan (2004/05 Update). It is not intended as a full progress report, but an exception report which will bring to Members' attention those targets which will not be fully completed by the year end and gives reasons for this slippage.

1 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is recommended that the Committee –

- i. note that most major targets in the Service Plan have been fully achieved by the department;
- ii. note the targets which have slipped and the reasons for this slippage; and
- iii. note that the Director of Finance will submit the Finance Department Service Plan (2005/06 Update) to the May meeting of the Resources & Central Services Committee.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 As Members will be aware, since 2003 the council has adopted a system of four-year service planning to link departmental service plans to the council's corporate plan and coincide with the lifetime of the current administration. The 2003-2007 Service Plan was approved by the Resources & Central Services Committee on 4 December 2003. An update to that plan was approved in September 2004.

2.2 To keep elected members aware of the extent to which departments are implementing the agreed plans, it was decided that from January 2005, all departments would be required to present to committee an interim report showing progress on the targets in their service plan. As the last Service Plan report was only approved in September 2004, this report focuses purely on those areas of significant deviation from original plans. Where no mention is made of a specific action, it can be assumed that progress is as planned.

2.3 Corporate service planning guidelines place a requirement on departments to develop service standards for the services they deliver and systems in place to monitor performance against them. This is an ongoing process which will be assisted by the introduction of the corporate performance management system which, it is planned, will be fully rolled out across the organisation by March 2006.

3 FINANCE DEPARTMENT SIGNIFICANT POINTS OF PROGRESS

3.1 In addition to the Finance Department's core business delivery the Department has also achieved:

- The Finance department achieved the Investors in People standard in December 2004. This is a recognised national award which shows the Council's commitment to development of its staff.
- A full-scale review of Financial Regulations was approved by the Resources & Central Services Committee on 4 December 2004. These provide the framework within which the financial administration of the Council is to be conducted and ensure sound financial control is operated.
- All targets for the Revenues and Benefits Section have been achieved, a major target being payment of council tax/rent by credit/debit cards through the ACCESS line. This is available to Angus Council staff at present before being rolled out to the general public.
- The Payroll Section has implemented a complete new Payroll system, reviewed payroll reports and is carrying out a post implementation review.

4 TARGETS WHICH HAVE SLIPPED

- Balanced Scorecard measures will not be reviewed until the new Corporate Performance Management System is in place.
- SLAs between Finance and arms length organisations (ACCCT, ADMC, AET) are progressing but haven't been completed within the original timescale set. These SLA's simply formalise current practice so this slippage in putting them in place has not affected service delivery.
- It was intended that the outcomes of the Corporate and Departmental risk register process would inform the 2005/06 audit universe, overall slippage in the risk register process may impact on this.
- The e-claims system for Fleet Services vehicles is to be considered as part of a wider e-claim process with a pilot exercise to be conducted internally within the section prior to roll-out decision being taken.
- To enable the review of time recording arrangements across the authority the response from Departments for information on methodology needs to be clarified.
- The slippage on the completion of the Payments Best Value Service Review is due to the change of Team Leader and general work pressures. However this gives the opportunity to reflect on the possible impact of recent e-procurement and other initiatives.
- The establishment of a 'facilities machine' within St James House is now being reviewed in light of proposed implementation of Document/Workflow etc.
- The potential replacement of a system for Miscellaneous Income has been identified but Section Head absence has and will significantly impact on this as will reprioritisation of other issues.

- Work is ongoing on the revisitation of the RSS module to promote appropriate application and exploit e-procurement etc, but is now needing to dovetail into other e-procurement initiatives (ABC etc). Consultancy is being arranged to implement electronic issue of orders etc.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Targets for the 2003 – 2007 Service Plan have been contained within existing resources. Targets for actions in future years will be noted and, if need be, addressed through the budget preparation process at the appropriate time.

6 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Chief Executive and Director of Law & Administration have been consulted during the preparation of this report.

8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The targets identified by the Finance department are, in main, progressing well. Where plans have slipped from original targets, action has been planned to ensure these objectives are achieved.

NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

DSS/EB
20/01/05

David S. Sawers
Director of Finance