

Improvement Plan Current Strategic Areas For improvement			
Service and Responsible Officer	Area	Why a highlighted area	Actions/ Deadlines/ Outcomes
Environment Rob Smith	Highways	Public opinion; relatively poor performance on footways – only average performance on unclassified/non-principal roads; need for long term investment heavy road use	Separate action plan produced
Children, School's and Families Ann Domeneay	Children's social care	Rated only adequate in inspection, weak performance on Key PIs	Separate Action plan Reported in the scorecard this month. There is however a marked improvement in core assessments that are now showing an actual of 54.30% in quarter three compared to a target of 60% for the year. (CSF)
Children, School's and Families Ann Domeneay	Adoption	Declining Results of Inspection	Separate action plan produced
Children, School's and Families Ann Domeneay	Care Leavers	Performance concern	Separate action plan produced
Adult Care Services Denise Radley	Adult Care Services – Response to CSCI star ratings	Reduction from excellent to promising prospects	Key actions identified in report to Cabinet Panel

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Adult Care Services Denise Radley	Supporting People	Audit Commission findings	Separate action plan produced
Children, School's and Families Glenda Wood	Libraries	Standards missed – Opening hours, workstations available, active borrowers also- Strategic Action to address outdated library provision	Investment has been made in 2006/7 to address the strategic improvement identified in the L421C strategy. Opening hours increased this week and building refurbishments have taken place at a number of libraries. These actions by themselves will meet or improve performance against some Public Library Standards (no 2 & 4) and improve CPA Culture Block assessment for 2006/7. The critical test for next year is whether these actions result in improved usage (issues and visits) which will in turn improve the cost effectiveness of the service (cost per visit). We will monitor this over the next year to assess the success of the strategy.
Corporate Services David Robinson	The Way We Work	Annual Efficiency Statement 2005/06 We made a statement that Property is a valuable asset of the county council and is needed for all of our activities. We will, by targeting our investment, improve all of our service property so that it enhances service delivery	Key Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A rationalisation of council offices – it is planned to rationalise the Council's current office portfolio to provide a more cost effective and efficient working environment.. Programme on target – move to the first base at Apsley completed for approx 1,000 staff and now fully operational. Acquisition of second base achieved (Stevenage) and fit-out starting on 30 March, occupation by next 1500 staff on target for Summer 2008.

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Corporate Services Andrew Nightingale	Use of unit cost data and comparison for performance indicators.	Use of Resources Assessment 2005 and Direction of Travel Assessment 2005 recommendation that we should improve corporate and department monitoring with the use of unit cost data and comparison for performance indicators.	<p>Work continuing, but with strong progress eg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced Strategic compass exercise. This tool is ensuring the use of cost unit data and performance data reviewed for major services. <p>Other developments include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership at Cabinet Panel PWC benchmarking ACS commissioning research on demography, benchmarking and trends. Although Older people's services are low cost, high performing – the work commissioned drills down further on this and looks at staff and purchasing costs and aspects of performance along the care pathway. CSF "star chamber" process which involves detailed consideration of budget bids against strategic objectives. This led to reviews which incorporate both VFM and service improvement aspects - Access, Participation and Learner and Adolescent Services is an example

Checklist of other recommendations/actions			
These are important improvement issues but not strategic level aspects of the improvement plan			
Service and Responsible Officer	Area for improvement	Reasons for inclusion eg Inspection finding / Declining, relatively poor performance etc	Progress made, actions planned, , targets or project deliverables, comments
Corporate Services Guy Pratt	Trading Standards Checklist	Worst quartile but improving performance	The areas of relatively low performance are around monitoring & reviewing and lower level priorities To tackle this and improve we are restructuring the department and introducing a Principal Officer level. Principal Officers will be responsible for monitoring of Officer workloads and allowing Managers more time to review and implement improvements. Work is not done on for example Consumer Education. As the County Trading Standards service with the smallest budget, there is a strong focus on priority work
Corporate Services Guy Pratt	Trading Standards Consumer Satisfaction	Worst quartile and declining performance	Scoring has slipped after the introduction of Consumer Direct. Consumers who contact Consumer Direct were our more easily satisfied customers, we now report on only those consumers who either contact us directly or who passed on to us by Consumer Direct. After analysing the results of surveys, dissatisfaction stemmed from a failure to contact or keep in touch with consumers. As a result we changed our policy on first contacts. Previously we would attempt to ring consumers back three times and then not contact them any further). Now we send a letter asking them to contact us (if they have not already resolved their complaint). Further, anyone who contacts us by letter gets a response in writing. We have also impressed upon all officers, at team meetings, the need to keep consumers up to date with the progress of their complaint.

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Environment Rob Smith (highways) Richard Brown (waste)	Environment – work with our strategic highways and waste partners to identify more efficient ways of working	In the Annual Efficiency Statement 2005/06 we stated an objective: To continue to work with our strategic highways and waste partners to identify more efficient ways of working.	The waste strategy review included a piece of work on options for such a strengthening and partners are currently considering a new Memorandum of Understanding. Further impetus has been given to working together better by inclusion of a commitment to this in the Pathfinder bid. The new national Waste Strategy (June 2007) underlines the need for joint working in two-tier areas.
Environment Jan Hayes- Griffin	Planning applications	Declining performance	Separate action plan produced
Environment Rob Smith	Pedestrian Crossings	Worst quartile but improving performance	Investments/actions in place
Corporate Services Louise Harrington	Racial incidents leading to further investigation	Declining performance Worst quartile PIs	Further investigation is needed here. The main area of concern is reporting of schools data.
Corporate Services Andrew Nightingale	Finance Improve the quality of the working papers	Use of Resources Assessment 2005 recommendation that we should Improve the quality of the working papers	The External auditor acknowledges improvements in working papers following audit of the 05/06 accounts, but work is still on going with District Audit to ensure an established system for cross referencing and monitoring of all working papers