

DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Scrutiny Committee - December 12

REPORT ON: Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) Assessments

REPORT BY: Chief Executive

REPORT NO: 397 -2012

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report to committee a summary of the strengths, areas for improvement and high level performance indicators for the services that have completed a PSIF assessment between April and September 2012: Architectural Services and Revenues Division.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:-

- 2.1 The Committee notes the findings of the PSIF assessments for Architectural Services and Revenues Division.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 PSIF (Public Service Improvement Framework) is an evidence based self assessment model that allows services to identify strengths, backed up by fact based evidence and highlight areas for improvement in a structured way. This then enables departments/services to review performance and plan how to take things forward.
- 4.2 Dundee City Council is committed to continuous improvement. By assessing ourselves we can determine how well we are performing against a nationally recognised model. Where areas for improvement are identified, there is a commitment to make those improvements and review performance on a regular basis so that continuous improvement becomes embedded in our culture. This is done through the online plan database and all assessments completed are added and are being monitored.
- 4.3 Due to the Council restructure, it was possible to reduce the number of services needing to be assessed from 38 to 30. Since the last report, 2 services have been assisted by the PSIF Team to carry out a self assessment. The following is a summary of the main findings and conclusions generated by each of those 2 services' PSIF assessment.

5. MAIN TEXT

5.1 City Development - Architectural Services, March 2012

The Architectural Services division carried out a self assessment during March 2012. Architectural Services' team was made up of staff from across all 3 sections: Architects, Quantity Surveyors and Building Services. The information contained in this report is based on the areas for improvement identified during the assessment.

Results

A major part of the assessment is reviewing the performance over the past three to five years for evidence of continuous improvement. The table below highlights a sample of the most key performance measures for the Council as a corporate body and shows the trends over this period.

Architectural Services Key Results from SOA/Council Plan/Service Plan/Other plan for the service

Long term status: ▲ = >5% improvement, ► = maintained, ▼ = >-5% deterioration							
Definition	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	Current Target	Benchmark	Long term Improvement Status
% commercial EPCs completed				85%	95%	N/A	►
% Property Reviews completed			10	0	25	N/A	▼
Statutory maintenance (H&S) contracts completed within set annual budget				79	100	N/A	►
% of properties included in H&S contracts with full DCC compliance certificates (or equivalent report) as at 30/3/11			85%	89%	95%	N/A	►
Number of health and safety accidents on sites (statutory maintenance contracts)			0	0	0	N/A	►
% by which ASD fees for statutory maintenance contracts are below mean cost benchmarked with other LAs using data from RICS/SCALA				0	2	N/A	►

The main **strengths** resulting from the self-assessment were as follows:

Theme	Approach that is delivering results
Service Planning	The Service Plan clearly states the department's objectives and is a strong operational driver. Dundee is the Lead Authority on Masterbill.
People Resources	The division appoints Continuous Professional Development (CPD) champions who ensure that professional development is maintained across S1 and S2. Knowledge is shared between staff through an internal process called workshop bites.

	<p>There are several methods of involving and empowering people across the department, e.g. CPD, technical meetings and this is supported by improving staff survey results.</p> <p>We apply the corporate approaches to reward, recognition and welfare consistently.</p>
Partners & Other Resources	<p>We work closely with many relevant consultants, contractors and regulatory bodies e.g. City Engineers, EHTS to deliver more efficient and effective services.</p> <p>We have good processes for financial management in place including a Quantity Surveyor section.</p>
Service Processes	We have regular close communication with our clients and survey them every 2 years.
People Results	Many of the employee results have improved since 2007.
Performance Results	The service has some indicators that measure its efficiency.

The main **areas for improvement** identified by the self assessment were:

Theme	Area for Improvement	Action
Client/Customer Communication	The Service Level Agreements (SLAs) are not being discussed or updated at senior client meetings. Not all clients are being included in these meetings.	Update the Service Level Agreement (SLAs), set time scales for client meetings to review SLAs and ensure all clients are included.
Employee Satisfaction/Matters	No evidence of an action plan from 2010 Employee Survey and some poor results.	Consolidate Department structure under City Development so that 2013 Employee Survey will identify any new areas for action.
Performance Improvement	<p>The amalgamation of the QA and Workflow systems has become too complex and is not flexible enough for all the different types of work carried out, e.g. there are too many forms, forms are difficult to find, the processes are not being followed consistently.</p> <p>The previous process, set up to look at procedures with a remit to eliminate any redundant processes, stalled at re-organisation.</p>	<p>Identify a responsible officer to pro-actively review our processes, e.g. fee monitoring.</p> <p>Reinstate Lean Service reviews.</p> <p>Set up clear 'minimum' procedures to be followed for all projects.</p> <p>Identify a responsible individual to carry out an audit of the electronic filing system and ensure that it is reviewed regularly.</p> <p>Ensure that all relevant staff</p>

Theme	Area for Improvement	Action
		<p>are trained in the new procedures and apply them consistently.</p> <p>Review that the procedures are being applied consistently.</p>
Performance Improvement	Client surveys have been prepared but no person allocated to manage and monitor results and adjust as required, to ensure relevance.	<p>Allocate relevant person to manage client surveys.</p> <p>Review of surveys to be carried out to establish relevance of questions and any targets or comparisons to be set.</p> <p>New customer survey to be done annually with results then analysed and action plan to be prepared.</p> <p>Clients and employees to be informed of results and actions to be taken.</p> <p>Post results on intranet.</p>
Performance Improvement	There is not always a developed Client Brief with the Client that links to the SLA and this can result in inaccuracies and fee issues arising in project delivery.	<p>Team Leader to issue the relevant SLA to the project administrator at the start of the project.</p> <p>Develop a set of standards for Client Briefs to show essential information that must always be included whilst still allowing enough flexibility for Clients to identify their requirements.</p> <p>Monitor the standards.</p>

5.2 Corporate Services - Finance Revenues, May 2012

The Finance Revenues Division carried out their assessment during May and June 2012. The Finance Revenues Division is a customer facing part of the Corporate Services Department providing important services to thousands of people and families in the Dundee City area as follows:

- It decides based on rules set down by the UK and Scottish Parliaments who has to pay Council Tax and/or Non Domestic rates and how much people have to pay.
- It pays Housing and Council Tax benefits based on a person's or family's circumstances
- It collects and recovers any unpaid sums in respect of bills issued for Council Tax, Non Domestic rates, Housing Benefit overpayments and Community Charge (Poll Tax).

Results

A major part of the assessment is reviewing the service's performance over the past three to five years for evidence of continuous improvement. The table below highlights a sample of the most key performance measures for the services and shows their trends over this period.

Finance Revenues

Key Results from SOA/Council Plan/Service Plan/Other plan for the service

Long term status: ▲ = >5% improvement, ► = maintained, ▼ = >-5% deterioration						
Definition	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	Current Target	Long term Improvement Status
% of Local Housing Allowance claims paid direct to landlords			28.55	32.32	25	▼
% of Local Housing Allowance claims paid directly to claimant by BACS			93.67	98.54	95	▲
% of claims calculated accurately	98	97.8	82.3	84.9	98	▼
% of claims processed within 14 days	83.6	85.3	93.1	94	99	►
% of enquiries received from those targeted by take-up campaigns			0	0	0	►
Average time taken to process change of circumstances in days	11	11	12.4	6.9	9	▲
Average time taken to process new benefit claims in days	30	37	31.7	20	25	▲
Right time indicator - average time to process change events in days	13	15	15.4	8.5	16	▲
% of Council Tax collected for any year within 4 years of the year finishing			94.4	94.3	94	►
% of Council Tax collected in current year for current year	91.3	91.4	92.93	93.3	92	►
% of Non Domestic Rates collected for any year within 2 years of the year finishing			97.3	97.4	99	►
% of Non Domestic Rates collected in current year for current year	95.4	95.2	95.65	95.76	96	►
% of Council Tax payers paying by Direct Debit	41.6	42.4	44.28	46.29	40	▲
% of reduction in number of cash payers			12	23.32	7	▲
Cost of benefits administration per claim (£)	71.18	71.52	71.85	65.66	N/A	▲

Cost of collecting Council Tax per property (£)	21.32	21.67	22.26	19.96	N/a	▲
Cost of collecting Non Domestic Rates per property (£)	39.51	35.81	43.69	40.52	N/a	▲

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION KEY FACTORS ON SERVICE QUALITY

Long term status: ▲ = >5% improvement, ► = maintained, ▼ = >-5% deterioration						
Definition	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	Current Target	Long term Improvement Status
% of calls abandoned			18.66	19.08	10	►
Average call waiting time in seconds (cumulative average for year to date)			41	42	5	►
Customer satisfaction with accuracy of response			79.5	83.7	100	▲
Customer satisfaction with explanation of query			98.4	99.1	100	►
Customer satisfaction with fullness of response			91.7	93.1	100	►
Customer satisfaction with length of wait to be seen			92.4	88	100	►
Customer satisfaction with manner in which dealt			98.4	99.1	100	►

The main **strengths** resulting from the self-assessment were as follows:

Theme	Approach that is delivering results
Leadership	<p>There are clear and defined plans to deliver outcomes and meet the Council's objectives. Robust performance measures are in place to monitor service delivery effectively. Managers review this information and take appropriate action to continue to meet the goals and objectives of the service.</p> <p>The department has a training service to ensure that all staff are trained and developed according to departmental needs. Home working staff have the same access to training as office based staff.</p> <p>Procedures are in place to meet the needs of different customer groups. Customer feedback is evaluated on a regular basis to identify any areas for service improvement.</p> <p>The division encourages charitable endeavours which benefits the community and promotes a sense of achievement with the staff.</p>
Service Planning	<p>The service has policies, strategies and plans that support the core values and long-term outcomes of the</p>

<p>People Resources</p>	<p>organisation. The service has integrated business and financial planning. The policies, strategies and plans set out clear actions and appropriate targets that will support the service in the delivery of outcomes. For example, to maximise the collection and recovery of taxes and debts there are measures to improve Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates collection levels,</p> <p>The service has challenging standards for its main services, which take account of its responsibility for delivering national and statutory standards and targets. To prevent financial hardship and reduce poverty we have set challenging targets in order to reduce the time taken to process benefits and changes in circumstances within set periods of time. The service sets comprehensive and measurable standards for aspects of the quality of customer service to be expected in all dealings with the organisation. The service monitors performance against standards and key performance targets.</p> <p>There is a robust performance management framework in place that sets out a wide number of key performance targets within all of Revenues service areas. For example, the Benefit Counter Fraud Unit will have targets linked to the number of successful Prosecutions.</p> <p>Policies and plans that support people are in place to support the core values and long term outcome of the organisation.</p> <p>The dedicated Training Team provides support to develop staffs knowledge, skills and capabilities.</p> <p>The service provides opportunities for staff to become involved in the decision making process. For example staff were involved in the enquiry team and liaison section lean service reviews .</p> <p>The service promotes and encourages work-life balance as far as possible and promotes socially responsible behaviour by allowing flexible/mobile working for staff where the service requirements allows us to.</p>
<p>Partners and Other Resources</p>	<p>The service manages information and knowledge resources. The service has IT systems to support the management of information and knowledge. The service protects customers' privacy both in face-to-face discussions at booths at Dundee House and in the transfer and storage of customer information.</p> <p>The service ensures the security of resources and makes the most of technology to improve services</p>

Service Processes	and/or deliver efficiencies. The service has a comprehensive process in place to collate customer feedback to enable improved customer service. Govmetric data gathered from the Revenues enquiry team measures customer service delivery. Information from other sources, such as customer surveys are used to enhance the service.
Key Performance Results	The division has various indicators that measure the efficiency of its service.

The main **areas for improvement** identified by the self assessment were as follows:

Theme	Area for Improvement	Improvement Action
Staff Consultation	There is not an adequate method for management to assess staff's opinion of things like reward and recognition, leadership, communication, etc	Establish an annual departmental staff survey.
Communication	There is no effective communication or consultation (staff & Customers) strategy in Revenues There is an inconsistent approach to delivering Customer Service Standards	Establish a Revenues Communication/consultation Strategy. Establish a new customer service training programme. Undertake a review of customer service performance.
Reward and Recognition	There is no system in place for managers to reward staff or recognise and motivate staff leading to inconsistencies in the way staff are being treated.	Create a quarterly Newsletter.
Leadership	Inconsistent methods of leadership applied through varying application of rules in the workplace and the way these policies are being communicated to staff can lead to staff dissatisfaction as shown in the last employee survey results.	Implement a leadership training plan

6. **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty and Risk Management. There are no issues in this regard to report on.

7. **CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services.

8 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The PSIF Assessment reports referred to in this report are prepared individually including an improvement plan and this is a summary document.

David Dorward
Chief Executive

Date 19/11/2012