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CABINET OFFICE
EXT. 3550



CABINET

14 JULY 2004

AGENDA
ITEM:

6

CORPORATE ASSESSMENT REPORT – CPA IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Ward(s): ALL

Forward Plan: No

Portfolio: Cllr J O'Hare – Deputy Leader of the Council (Finance and Performance)

Service: Corporate report, covering all services

Summary of report:

This report presents the action plan (**appendix 1**) arising from the recently published Corporate Assessment report written by the Audit Commission following their first-ever inspection of the council's corporate ability within the CPA regime in February 2004. The process requires Cabinet approval and implementation of a formal improvement plan to address any issues within the report.

Background Papers:

Audit Commission report, Self Assessment, other related documents, working papers and briefing notes – WMBC, Cabinet report June 2004

Recommendations

1. To note and endorse the improvement plan attached at **Appendix 1**.

Signed:

Executive Director: Carole Evans

Date: 21.07.04

Signed:

Cllr J O'Hare – Deputy Leader of the Council

Date: 21.07.04

Resource and Legal Considerations

The cost of the Audit Commission's inspection regime is included within their core annual audit fee. The total budget for this in 2004/5 is £649,589 (£601,308 in 2003/4). The local Audit Commission manager states that approximately 20% of this relates to inspections.

Monitoring of progress against the corporate assessment improvement plan will be undertaken by the Corporate Performance Management service, although individual accountable officers are responsible for the actions outlined within the plan, and through their respective management hierarchies. Periodic updates will be brought to members.

Citizen Impact

The corporate assessment report demonstrates that the council's corporate governance arrangements and corporate ability overall are now strong. This shows radical transformational change in our corporate arrangements over those reported in 2001. The council's implementation of the improvement plan will enable citizens to remain confident that our governance will help to support service excellence.

Environment Impact

Sound corporate governance and ability provide a firm foundation on which excellence can be rapidly achieved and sustained in both service delivery and external CPA accreditation.

Performance Management and Risk Management Issues

Co-ordination of the CPA inspection and an overarching role regarding other inspections falls within the remit of the Corporate Performance Management service. The CPA lies at the heart of council activity and will support the organisation's aim of becoming an excellent council in both CPA and customer satisfaction terms by 2008.

Equality Implications

None directly related to this report.

Consultation

The corporate assessment report was prepared by the Audit Commission following their period of inspection during February 2003 comprising an extensive series of meetings, workshops, interviews and appraisal of substantial written evidence and documentation. The council used the opportunity presented of commenting on the draft report issued by the Commission and most requested changes are reflected in the final report. Colleagues from all directorates have been involved in compiling the improvement plan. A copy of the plan has been presented to the Council's Interim Board and specifically the District Auditor/ Relationship Manager.

Vision 2008

The overarching vision for the council is to achieve excellent CPA status by 2008. The action plan, when implemented, is anticipated to substantially contribute to delivering this outcome.

Contact Officers:

Carole Evans – Executive Director (2910)
evansc@walsall.gov.uk

1. CONTEXT – THE CPA REPORT

- 1.1 The corporate assessment report confirms that “*Walsall MBC has travelled a long way from where it was described as the worst council in England*” and that our “*current rate of improvement is rapid*”. The report outlines that the council is ambitious and has “*a visible drive and hunger to improve.*” It provides a consistent picture of improvement, innovation and corporate strength. The key positive messages can be summarised as follows:

- Strong leadership – both political and managerial.
- Ambitious with a visible drive and hunger to improve.
- Focussed with clear priorities.
- Self aware, open and honest.
- Challenging and open to change for the better.
- Achieved a dramatic culture change.
- Financially stable with strong financial management.
- Particularly effective in implementing core systems across the board.

- 1.2 The key adjectives used to describe the council throughout the report are:

ambitious	strong	flexible	imaginative	focused	honest
effective	open	robust	systematic	transparent	mature

- 1.3 In common with all councils, the report outlines scope for improvement. This will be managed through the use of a comprehensive action plan using the corporate continuous improvement approach.

2. CPA REPORT FINDINGS

- 2.1 The report judges the council's ability under four headings:

- What is the council trying to achieve?
- How has the council set about delivering its priorities?
- What has the council achieved/not achieved to date?
- In the light of what the council has learned to date, what does it plan to do next?

- 2.2 Beneath these overarching questions are 9 sub categories (Key Lines of Enquiry – KLOEs) each being scored between 1 and 4, with 4 being the highest score:

①	Many weaknesses and few strengths	②	Overall weaknesses outweigh strengths
③	Strengths outweigh weaknesses	④	Many strengths and few weaknesses

Weightings are applied to each raw score to give an overall total score. Of the 9 categories we have achieved scores of 3 or 4 in seven of them. In the two categories with scores of 2, this acknowledges where systems and processes are new, and in the process of being embedded.

- 2.3 These scores are weighted according to their relative importance, as follows:







KEY QUESTION	THEME (Key Line of Enquiry)	SCORE	WEIGHT	W'TED SCORE
TRYING TO ACHIEVE	Ambition	3	1	3
	Prioritisation	3	1	3
	Focus	3	1	3
DELIVERING PRIORITIES	Capacity	3	1	3
	Performance Management	2	1	2
ACHIEVED TO DATE	Achievement	2	3	6
	Investment	4	2	8
LEARNING & WHAT NEXT	Learning	3	1	3
	Future Plans	3	1	3
TOTAL THEME SCORES				34

- 2.4 When councils had their first corporate assessments in 2002, a total theme score of 34 points was enough to give a corporate ability score of 3, which when combined with a service score of 2, would categorise a council as "fair". Walsall council did not have a corporate assessment in 2002, but had a Corporate Governance Inspection (CGI) in that year, which only covers some of the same ground as a full corporate assessment inspection. The Audit Commission deemed that the Council was, at that time, "poor".
- 2.5 In 2003 the Audit Commission introduced revised rules for corporate re-assessments which require councils to achieve a total theme score of 36 points to achieve a corporate ability score of 3 on second or subsequent corporate assessments. The Audit Commission have deemed that these revised rules apply to Walsall council, even though this is, as they acknowledge, our first corporate assessment. They have therefore given us a corporate ability score of 2, which when combined with our service score of 2, is deemed to classify us as weak. The essence of our dispute with the Audit Commission (along with a range of allied matters) is about which of these two sets of rules should be applied.

3. IMPROVEMENT (ACTION) PLAN

- 3.1 The improvement plan (**Appendix 1**) sets out the actions required to respond to each of the issues arising in the Audit Commission's report. The actions in the plan are grouped into logical themes that link directly to the inspection report. Each theme has a nominated leader responsible and accountable for ensuring all actions within their theme are implemented to the required standard and within the required timescales. There is one overarching generic theme applicable to all improvement plans entitled "Corporate Performance Management." This is intended to ensure all performance management and improvement activity takes place within the wider corporate agenda, enables consistency and further promote sound corporate governance.
- 3.2 Each recommendation/issue raised within the report is shown in this plan with relevant actions linked directly to it. Improvement actions are prioritised as either ①②③ with ① being the highest priority. Blue priority ①s are of particular/critical importance. Each action has a named individual; responsible for implementation. The relevant Cabinet portfolio holder is also shown.
- 3.3 Many issues are cross-cutting and/or covered in other plans. Where appropriate, these connections to other plans and/or sections of this plan are signposted. The

final column shows the current status of each action against target. This enables the original version of the plan to be updated for monitoring and reporting purposes. The traffic light system in common use throughout the performance management framework also applies here. The final column also indicates when the action is entirely complete.

	means on target		Performance improving since previous report
	means slightly off target and/or not on target but entirely recoverable		Performance stable since last report
	means off target and at risk		Performance declining since last status report

- 3.4 The plan also picks up and includes actions arising from last summer's CGI report. Almost all those actions were completed as part of the Re-inventing Walsall project, which was successfully concluded last year; its outcomes having been mainstreamed.

4. PATH TO EXCELLENCE

- 4.1 The overall aim is to secure excellence in CPA terms by 2008. This requires a combination of scores/outcomes (both inspections and PIs) for services and corporate ability. There are restrictions on flexibility purely due to the timing of inspections and whether they count towards a particular annual assessment and because annual PIs are those as achieved on 31 March each year. This means that many of the component parts need to be in place before 2008 in order to achieve "excellent" in the December 2008 CPA categories announcement. A diagram showing the various routes to excellence appears in the improvement plan.

5. SUMMARY

- 5.1 The corporate assessment report demonstrates that the council's corporate arrangements are strong overall, representing a transformational change since the previous position in 2001. The action plan building on the previous continuous improvement and modernisation plan will deliver the necessary improvements.

COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

CPA Improvement Plan

IMPLEMENTATION MANAGER:

Carole Evans

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PERIOD OF PLAN

1 May 2004 TO 31 March 2008

CONTEXT

This improvement plan is in respect of the corporate Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) inspection undertaken in March 2004 and the final report published on 14 May 2004. The overall outcome of that inspection was a points score of 34, which was expected to equate to a corporate capacity score of “3” which, when combined with an overall service score of “2” would result in a CPA categorisation of “fair”. However, the Audit Commission determined that the council’s category was “weak”. Nonetheless, their corporate assessment report shows the council has “travelled a long way from where it was described as the worst council in England”, and identifies major progress, fundamental improvement and many strengths. However, the council recognises there is further to go to achieve our ambition of excellence by 2008.

This plan addresses all the issues for improvement identified within that report as either specific recommendations or comments made indicating where improvement is required or is possible. The mainstream performance improvement agenda for the services covered by this plan are contained within the relevant service plans, team plans, and individual performance targets as part of the IPM scheme. There are also cross cutting issues, which are already being dealt with as part of other improvement plans (for example the annual audit letter). This plan does not seek to replicate those actions, and certain issues are therefore signposted to other plans to ensure the relevant connections are made. This plan also includes some issues continuing from the CGI report of August 2003.

This plan focuses on the improvement agenda, so does not cover the many strengths and good practice identified within the report.

The actions for improvement have been devised using SMART principles to ensure clear focus and the best outcomes, as follows:

S	Specific	What exactly are we going to do/change? Absolute clarity is vital.
M	Measurable	How much observable and quantifiable change is planned? What will be different and what will it look like?
A	Action-oriented	What action are we going to take that will ensure the change? How will we know when you’ve succeeded?
R	Realistic	Our timescales and targets should be stretching and realistic. Identify the critical path to ensure foundation targets are achieved first.
T	Time-based	By when are we going to do it/complete it?

The actions in this improvement plan are grouped into logical themes. Each theme has a nominated “theme leader” who is responsible and accountable for ensuring all actions within their theme are implemented to the required standard and within the required timescales. There is one overarching generic theme applicable to all improvement plans entitled “Corporate Performance Management”. This is intended to ensure all performance management and improvement activity takes place within the wider improvement agenda, embeds our corporate approach, enables consistency, and promotes sound corporate governance. The theme leader for this is always the relevant Executive Director, with every senior manager ensuring compliance in their service.




Each recommendation/issue raised in the report is shown in this plan; relevant actions are directly linked to it. Improvement actions are prioritised as either: ①, ② or ③, with ① being the highest priority. **BLUE** priority ①s are of particular/critical importance. Each action has a named individual, responsible for implementation. The relevant Cabinet portfolio holder is also shown.




Many issues are crosscutting and/or covered in other plans. Where appropriate, these connections to other plans and/or sections of this plan are signposted. Each theme leader should liaise with the Implementation Manager of the other plans to ensure actions are neither duplicated nor missed.

The key for other plans is as follows:

- AAL – annual audit letter (formerly known as annual management letter) issued by the Audit Commission
- ACAR – Audit Commission audit report action plan
- BMCM – budget management and control manual
- C.Exec – WBSP Commissioning Executive
- CS – communication strategy
- EAP - equality action plan (in directorate)
- EP – environment improvement plan
- HP – housing improvement plan
- IAAR – internal audit report action plan
- IIP – investors in people action plan (in service/directorate)
- BIP – benefits improvement plan
- MTFP/S – medium term financial plan/strategy
- NRF – neighbourhood renewal fund plan
- OP – OFSTED improvement plan
- RMP – risk management policy
- RR – risk register
- SP – service plan (stating which one)
- SSP – social services improvement plan

The final column shows the current status of each action against target. This enables the original version of the plan to be updated for monitoring and reporting purposes. The traffic light and arrows system in common use throughout the performance management framework, also applies here:

	means on target
	means slightly off target and/or not on target but entirely recoverable
	means off target and at risk

	Performance improving since previous report
	Performance stable since last report
	Performance declining since last status report

The final column should indicate when the action is entirely **COMPLETE**.

The themes within this improvement plan are as follows:

THEME			
No	SHORT TITLE	LEADER	TEL
A	CPM	Carole Evans	2910
1	Ambition	Jamie Morris	3203
2	Prioritisation	Jamie Morris	3203
3	Focus	Carole Evans	2910
4	Capacity	Jamie Morris	3203
5	Performance Mgt	Carole Evans	2910
6	Achievement	Annie Shepperd	2000
7	Investment	Sonia Davidson-Grant	3204
8	Learning	Carol Brown	2863
9	Future Plans	Jamie Morris	3203
10	CGI continuum	Jamie Morris	3203

Key responsibilities/frequencies are as follows:





OVERALL PLAN	
Implementation Manager	Carole Evans
Cabinet Member	Cllr John O'Hare
Scrutiny Panel	Finance & Performance
Reporting to Cabinet	Quarterly
Reporting to EMT	Alternate months

A. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT Working within the wider performance improvement agenda	THEME LEADER: Carole Evans
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REF	CORPORATE ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?	SIGNPOST PLANS	CURRENT STATUS
A	Service planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% coverage Compliance with template Reviewed quarterly Signed off by 30.04.04 	1	All EDs, ADs and GMS	SPs	●
B	Team Plans & IPM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% coverage Reviewed quarterly 6 monthly IPMs for all staff 	1	All ADs and GMs	Link to SPs	●
C	Team Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% coverage Taking place at least monthly Minutes/action notes taken 	1	All EDs, ADs, and GMs		●
D	Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directorate risk register in place and reviewed quarterly Risk assessment in place for every post Risk assessment for every project 	1	All EDs All ADs/GMs All ADs/GMs	RR/RMP	●
E	Investors in People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current recognition 	1	All EDs	IIP	●
F	Equality standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 achieved Level 3 actions being implemented 	1	All EDs	EAP	●
G	Sickness (overall corporate target – each service will have its own)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sickness policy being followed Reduce 12 month absences by 10 % Reduce 6 month absences by 10 % Reduce total absence by 10 % 	1	All EDs, ADs and GMs	SPs	●
H	Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget reported alternate months Savings fully implemented in-year Investment fully implemented in-year Delivered svce targets within budget 	1	All EDs All EDs All EDs All ADs/GMs	MTFP BMCM	●



1. AMBITION Maintaining high ambition, achieving our vision	THEME LEADER: Jamie Morris
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REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
1								
1a	Not all themes in the vision have clarity of outcome	Identify measurable improvement outcomes by 31.10.04	③	Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	30.10.04	2A	●
1b	Council is addressing its leadership of the LSP	Consolidate the new arrangements seek to embed them and undertake a review @ 31.03.05	②	Sonia Davidson-Grant	Adrian Andrew	31.03.05		●
1c	The council needs to do more to develop consistent leadership within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop community leadership strategy by 31.12.04 • Review strategy effectiveness by 30.06.05 and develop as necessary. 	①	Sonia Davidson-Grant	Adrian Andrew	31.12.04 30.06.05		● ●

1d	Some in the community still perceive the council as distant and poor at communication	Implement the consultation strategy, neighbourhood partnerships and new communication tools by 31.10.04.	①	Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	31.10.04	2B	
1e	Vision 2008 is new and untested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the pledges within the vision by 31.03.05 • Include pledges within the Beacon Index report to cabinet • Review and use outcomes to refocus the vision for 2005/6 by 31.03.05 	②	Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	31.03.05 31.07.04 31.03.05		  

2. PRIORITISATION Understanding what matters most, and dealing with that first.	THEME LEADER: Jamie Morris
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REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
2								
2a	Some priorities in the vision lack clear milestones or outcomes	Set measurable improvement outcomes.	①	Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	31.10.04	1A	●
2b	Council is less successful in communicating with some stakeholders. The council is yet to develop systematic communication with local people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement consultation strategy • Introduce further consultations with citizens • Introduce further consultations with partners • Introduce a civic newspaper 	②	Robert Blower	Gary Clarke	All by 31.10.04	1D 2C	●







2c	There is a mixed understanding of the council's priorities amongst local people, business community and voluntary sector. Some feel bypassed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement consultation strategy • Introduce further consultations with citizens • Introduce consultations with partners • Introduce a stakeholder newsletter • Pilot service standards for environmental services which link council priorities to specific service standards 	③	Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke		1D 2B 4H	
				Sonia Davidson Grant	Marco Longhi	31.10.04 31.08.04	SP	



3. FOCUS Keeping focussed on improvement, not getting sidetracked by irrelevance.	THEME LEADER: Carole Evans
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REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
3								
3a	The council's focus has been less visible and effective in delivering improvements within services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cascade corporate focus into service plans, with SMART targets. • Maintain focus throughout the year, reviewing at service, directorate and corporate levels. 	1	John Outhwaite	John O'Hare	30.04.04	Various SPs	● COMPLETE
				John Outhwaite	John O'Hare	each quarter		●
3b	Service improvement as measured by PIs has yet to show a consistent pattern and some areas it is harder to identify a direct connection between priorities, action and outcome.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce and evaluate 2003/4 outturn to establish latest position • Brainstorm these areas to unpack and map the connections. • Produce action plan to address issues identified. 	1	John Outhwaite	John O'Hare	30.06.04	Various SPs Path to excellence	● COMPLETE
						31.08.04		●
						30.09.04		●

4. CAPACITY Ensuring the council is fit for purpose, and has the people and tools to deliver	THEME LEADER: Annie Shepperd
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REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
4								
4a	A few councillors are not yet in tune with the modernisation agenda.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce the continuing need for member development • Continue with member development programme. • Implement member development strategy 	①	Annie Shepperd	Tom Ansell	31.07.04	3E	●
				Carole Brown	Gary Clarke	Ongoing 2004/5		●
				Carol Brown	Gary Clarke	Ongoing 2004/5		●
4b	New HR arrangements are not yet embedded.	Review effectiveness of new HR arrangements and action plan accordingly	②	Paul Smith	Gary Clarke	31.03.05	HR SP	●
4c	New IT systems are not yet embedded.	Review effectiveness of new IT systems and action plan accordingly.	③	David Johnson	Gary Clarke	6 mnths after go live date for each system.	ICT SP	●
4d	There continue to be some gaps in staffing capacity	Implement action plan to tackle hard to fill vacancies	②	Dave Martin	Eddie Hughes	Ongoing 2004/5	SSP	●

4e	Overview and scrutiny are less effective and councillors complain of lack of support inhibiting their potential to provide change and support improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree and implement additional support from budget provision. • Facilitate a peer relationship with an authority where scrutiny is working better. • Adopt good practice, e.g. from the Centre for Public Scrutiny. 	①	Carole Evans	John O'Hare	30.06.04 31.08.04 30.10.04	PM SP 3D 3E	 COMPLETE  
4f	Some scrutiny councillors have yet to fully embrace the modernisation agenda and still regret the loss of their old roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops and briefings for new scrutiny members. • Ongoing feedback to political leaders on arising issues and examples. 	②	Carole Evans	John O'Hare	31.07.04 Ongoing 2004/5	PM SP 3D 3E 4A	 
4g	Isolated high pockets of sickness	Use overall sickness policy to target specific pockets to reduce sickness by 10% by 31.03.05	②	Paul Smith	Gary Clarke	31.03.05	HR SP	





4h	Some parts of the community perceive they are excluded from the debate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce Local Neighbourhood Partnerships by 30.09.04 and work with the CEN to engage with excluded groups. • Provide continued officer support to the multi faith forum to support BME groups - officers to attend forum meetings and include forum in all diversity events. 	①	Karen Adderley	Gary Clarke	30.09.04	CS 2C	
			②	Karen Adderley	Gary Clarke	30.06.04		 COMPLETE

5. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT Making our framework robust, to deliver excellence by 2008	THEME LEADER: Carole Evans
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REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
5								
5a	The performance management framework has yet to be fully embedded across the council	Identify PM champions in each service area and formerly task them and all ADs/heads of service through the objective setting approach – using IPM as the driver.	①	Carole Evans	John O'Hare	30.09.04	PM SP	●
5b	Councillor input to performance management is not yet consistent in overview and scrutiny.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map the (in) consistency and feed into workshops to address the issues. • Include PM approach in scrutiny plans for year. 	②	Carole Evans	John O'Hare	31.07.04 31.08.04	PM SP	● ●

5c	Benchmarking and the routine evaluation of value for money are underdeveloped.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map current benchmarking. • Identify gaps and develop policy. • Increase resource in Internal audit for routine VFM approach as part of audit plan • Develop a VFM toolkit for use within services. 	③	David Blacker “	John O’Hare “	31.08.04	IA SP 5M	
			②	Andy Burns		31.08.04		
						30.09.04		
						31.03.05		
5d	The IPM system is not fully rolled out.	In hand – implement training strategy for IPM. undertake 1/4ly audits to determine penetration and action plan accordingly	①	John Outhwaite	John O’Hare	30.06.04 30.09.04 31.12.04 31.03.05	SPs AB	





5e	Achievement of targets on performance indicators is inconsistent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure target setting is appropriate and robust and evidenced in the council's performance plan • Brainstorm a recovery plan in these areas to map connections, revise targets & redirect resources if targets are unattainable. 	①	Carole Evans	John O'Hare	30.06.04	3A 3B	●
				John Outhwaite	John O'Hare			●
5f	More than 50% of 2002/3 targets missed in waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reshape team structures to improve capacity • Realign funds to meet priorities around waste management. • Establish 2004/5 baseline • Achieve 77% targets by 31.3.5 • Achieve 88% of targets by 31.03.06 	①	Keith Stone	Marco Longhi	31.09.04		●
						31.03.04		●
						31.05.04		●
						31.05.05		●
						31.05.06		●




5g	More than 50% of 2002/3 targets missed in planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish 2003/4 baseline • Achieve 75% targets by 31.03.05 • 95% of targets by 31.03.06 	①	Keith Stone	Marco Longhi	31.05.04 31.05.05 31.05.06	6T and 6U	
5h	More than 50% of 2002/3 targets missed in housing benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish 2003/4 baseline • Achieve 75% targets by 31.03.05 • 95% of targets by 31.03.06 	①	Elizabeth Kennedy	John O'Hare	31.05.04 31.05.05 31.05.06		
5i	More than 50% of targets missed in social care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish 2003/4 baseline • Achieve 75% targets by 31.03.05 • 95% of targets by 31.03.06 	①	Dave Martin	Alan Paul	31.05.04 31.05.05 31.05.06		
5j	More than 50% of targets missed in libraries and leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish 2003/4 baseline • Achieve 75% targets by 31.03.05 • 95% of targets by 31.03.06 	①	Tim Challans	Gary Perry	31.05.04 31.05.05 31.05.06		





5k	The council's target setting is neither robust nor realistic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review performance v target for 3 yr period ending 31.03.04 & use learning to inform PP target setting • Analyse results & produce corporate target setting guidance • Review performance v target during 2004/5 & use to inform process, bringing in external support as appropriate 	①	John Outhwaite	John O'Hare	30.06.04		● COMPLETE
						31.08.04		●
						ongoing		●
5l	A comprehensive understanding of risk management is underdeveloped.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to implement risk mgt strategy • Ensure all new mgrs are trained in risk mgt & continue to implement risk training strategy • Ensure all directorates review risk registers 1/4ly. 	②	Ann Johnson	John O'Hare	Ongoing	PM SP	●
						30.09.04		●
						30.06.04 30.09.04 31.12.04 31.03.05		●


5m	Front line services do not sufficiently use benchmarking.	Map current benchmarking and identify gaps. Develop policy and action plan roll out of benchmarking activity with guidance.	②	David Blacker	John O'Hare	31.08.04 30.09.04	See 5C IAP	
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6. ACHIEVEMENT OF IMPROVEMENT Improving services, making a difference to users	THEME LEADER: Annie Shepperd
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REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
6								
6a	Improvement shown by BVPIs is not systematic or consistent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake analysis of 2002/3 & 2001/2 relative position by 30.06.04. • Undertake estimated 2003/4 relative position by 31.07.04 • Undertake robust statistical analysis of 2003/4 position by 30.11.04 (when data is published) • Use learning to inform ongoing performance mgt action plan and embed understanding within the council. 	1	John Outhwaite	John O'Hare	31.05.04 30.06.04 30.11.04 ongoing	Path to excellence	 COMPLETE   





6b	10% of 2002/3 BVPIs have stayed the same since 2001/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5% of lower 2 quartiles 2004/5 BVPIs staying the same since 2001/2 • No lower 2 1/4le 2005/6 BVPIs staying the same since 2001/2 	①	John Outhwaite	John O'Hare	31.03.05 31.03.06	Path to excellence	
6c	35% of 2002/3 BVPIs have deteriorated since 2001/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10% of BVPIs deteriorating @ 31.03.05 • 2.5% BVPIs deteriorating @ 31.03.06 	①	John Outhwaite + relevant managers	John O'Hare	31.03.05 31.03.06	Path to excellence	
6d	Only 16% of PIs are in the top quartile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 33% of PIs in top quartile for 2004/5 • 50% of PIs in top quartile for 2005/6 • 66% of PIs in top quartile for 2006/7 	①	John Outhwaite	John O'Hare	31.03.05 31.03.06 31.03.07	Path to excellence	




6e	10 of 11 housing PIs are in the bottom quartile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only 2 of the original BVPIs now apply as the council no longer provide social landlord services. There are now two new ones BV202 and 203 relating to homelessness None to be in bottom quartile by 31.03.05 	①	Jason McGilp	Melvyn Pitt	31.3.05	BVPI 62 and 64 HP Path to excellence	
6f	66% of BVPIs are in the bottom 2 quartiles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45% of BVPIs in bottom quartile @ 31.3.05 10% of BVPIs in bottom quartile @ 31.03.06 	①	John Outhwaite	John O'Hare	31.05.05 31.03.06	Path to excellence	
6g	Crime in the Borough remains high.	Reduce violent offences by a stranger per 1000 population to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11.82 by 31.03.05 11.92 by 31.03.06 	②	David Parrish	Melvyn Pitt	 31.03.05 31.03.06	SP	
6h	Domestic burglary and theft is in the worst quartile.	Decrease rate per 1000 h'holds to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16.38 by 31.03.05 15.07 by 	②	David Parrish	Melvyn Pitt	31.03.05	SP	




		31.03.06				31.03.06		
6i	Lack of overarching strategic approach to community involvement.	Implement community involvement strategy and neighbourhood partnerships by 30.12.04	1	Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	30.12.04		


6j	The council has yet to fully exploit the potential for working with communities to enhance the area and its services.	Implement community involvement strategy and neighbourhood partnerships by 30.12.04	①	Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	30.12.04		
6k	Education – more than half of BVPIs are in the bottom 2 quartiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% of BVPIs in the top 2 quartiles @ 31.03.05* • 90% of BVPIs in the top 2 quartiles @ 31.03.06 • No BVPIs in bottom quartile by 31.03.07* 	①	David McNulty	Eddie Hughes	31.03.05 31.03.06 31.03.07	OP Path to excellence	
6l	School attendance is weak.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve school attendance in primary sector to 93.5% and secondary to 91.4% by 31.03.05 and • Primary to 94.2% and secondary to 91.7% by 31.03.06 	①	David McNulty	Eddie Hughes	31.03.05 31.03.06 31.03.07 31.03.08	School imp'ment plan	

6m	Increases in the volume of waste collected.	Within overall context of waste strategy targets to 2016/17 and 2023/24 - increase recycling and composting to 24% by 31.03.06	②	Keith Stone	Marco Longhi	31.03.06	Waste Strategy	
6n	Condition of non-principal roads shows a mixed picture and some are poor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve 40km of non principle roads by 31.03.05 • 50km by 31.03.06 • 40km by 31.03.07 	①	Keith Stone	Marco Longhi	31.03.05 31.03.06 31.03.07		
6o	Strategic housing service is poor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure an assessment of fair by 30.09.05 • Secure an assessment of good by 31.03.08 	①	Jason McGilp	Melvyn Pitt	31.09.05 31.03.08	HP	

6p	Housing – poor customer feedback and consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement range of customer feedback and consultation actions in Housing Improvement Plan from June 2004 • All within context of corporate communication strategy. 	①	Kathy McAteer Karen Adderley	Eddie Hughes Gary Clarke	various	HSP	
6q	Housing – slow assessment of homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine 80% of homelessness investigations with 33 days and 100% within 60 days by 31.03.05 • Determine 90% of homelessness investigations within 33 days and 100% within 50 days by 31.03.06 	①	Kathy McAteer	Eddie Hughes	31.03.05 31.03.06	HSP	 
6r	Housing – poor case management and quality assurance of homelessness decisions	Introduce 1to1 case management and performance monitoring arrangements from April 04	①	Andrea Little	Alan Paul	ongoing	HP	

6s	Serious weaknesses in respect of assessment and provision of disabled facilities grant work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DFG – 12% improvement in lead time btwn assessment and start of building work (22 mths) by 31.03.05 • 18% (18 mnths) by 31.03.06 	①	Kathy McAteer	Alan Paul	31.03.05 31.03.06	HP	
6t	Need to increase percentage of planning applications delegated to officers	Increase delegations to officers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% by 31.03.05 • 83% by 31.03.06 • 85% by 31.03.07 	①	Keith Stone	Marco Longhi	31.03.05 31.03.06 31.03.07	6U and 5G	
6u	Need to increase speed of processing planning applications	Increase speed of major planning applications to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45% by 31.03.05 • 55% by 31.03.06 • 60% by 31.03.07 • 62% by 31.03.08 Increase speed of minor app's to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 55% by 31.03.05 • 62% by 31.03.06 • 65% by 31.03.07 • 68% by 31.03.08 Increase speed of other app's to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% by 31.03.05 • 80% by 31.03.06 • 82% by 31.03.07 • 85% by 31.03.08 	①	Keith Stone	Marco Longhi	31.03.05 31.03.06 31.03.07 31.03.08 31.03.05 31.03.06 31.03.07 31.03.08 31.03.05 31.03.06 31.03.07 31.03.08	6T and 5G BVPI 109a BVPI 109b BVPI 109c	


6v	Benefits – need to improve speed of processing of claims.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase speed of processing of benefit claims to 43 days by 31.03.05 • 40 days by 31.03.06 • 36 days by 31.03.07 • 33 days by 31.03.08 	①	Elizabeth Kennedy	John O'Hare	31.03.05 31.03.06 31.03.07 31.03.08	R&B SP	
6w	Benefits – need to reduce overpayments and increase their speed of recovery	Overpayments are identified due to proactive work like checking data mismatches, and because claimants may be late telling us things. Target is to increase the % of recoverable repayments recovered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 57% by 31.03.05 • 58% by 31.03.06 • 59% by 31.03.07 • 60% by 31.03.08 	①	Elizabeth Kennedy	John O'Hare	31.03.05 31.03.06 31.03.07 31.03.08	R&B SP	
6x	Benefits – need to strengthen strategic management arrangements for fraud	Review of risk assessment and other processes to improve targeting and action	①	Elizabeth Kennedy	John O'Hare	30.09.04	R&B SP	

6y	Benefits – only 25% have improved since 2001/2 and only 30% are in the top 2 quartiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish 03/04 position • 25% to have improved by 31.03.05* • 50% to have improved by 31.03.06 * • 25% to be in top 2 quartiles by 31.03.05* and • 75% by 31.03.06 and • 100% by 31.03.07* 	①	Elizabeth Kennedy	John O'Hare	30.04.04 31.03.05 31.03.06 31.03.05 31.03.06 31.03.07	R&B SP	
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* metropolitan quartiles

7. INVESTMENT Building and maintaining a sound foundation to deliver improvement	THEME LEADER: Sonia Davidson-Grant
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REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
7								
7a	The council needs to invest more to engage the voluntary and community sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce Community Plan by 31.01.05 Implement local n'hood partnerships. Implement action plan from recently concluded review of voluntary sector support and funding engaging with the voluntary sector via WBSP and other forums Introduce new arrangements for grant funding by 30.11.04 	①	Jamie Morris/Roberta Smith	Gary Clarke	31.01.05	Community Plan	●
				Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	30.09.04		●
				Carole Evans/Roberta Smith	John O'Hare	30.11.04	Vol sector review action plan	●
				Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	30.11.04		●

7b	Some aspects of the council's partnership working is less well developed, the framework of the WBSP is not yet making a significant contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of WBSP to be fully embedded between council and partners. • Review of all theme groups completed by 30.09.04 • Reviewed @ 31.03.05 • Performance management framework aligned with council arrangements by 31.03.05. 	①	Roberta Smith	Adrian Andrew	30.09.04 30.09.04 31.03.05 31.03.05		
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8. LEARNING Ensuring the council is receptive to learning, and systematically uses its learning.	THEME LEADER: Carol Brown
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REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
8								
8a	A minority of councillors and officers do not recognise the need for change.	Undertake staff survey, reinforce positive messages through communications	①	Annie Shepperd	Tom Ansell	30.06.04 post election		●
8b	Learning from outside has been slower to develop in the regeneration service	Establish appropriate peer relationships and networks.	②	Sonia Davidson Grant	Adrian Andrew	ongoing		●
8c	The sharing of learning across the organisation is not yet systematic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce service awards • Develop knowledge management action plan. • Implement member development strategy by 31.12.04 	①	Carol Brown	Gary Clarke	30.06.04		●
						31.10.04		●
						31.12.04		●
8d	Routine benchmarking is underdeveloped.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map current benchmarking. • Identify gaps and develop policy. • Roll out of benchmarking 	③	David Blacker Andy Burns	John O'Hare	See 5C 31.08.04	5C 5M IAP	●

		activity with guidance.				30.09.04		
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9. FUTURE PLANS Planning to achieve excellence by 2008.	THEME LEADER: Jamie Morris
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REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
9								
9a	The council needs to do more to systematically involve local people and the voluntary and community sectors in developing its plans.	Implement consultation strategy and local neighbourhood partnerships by 31.12.04	①	Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	31.12.04		●
9b	The council needs to develop an improvement plan following the CPA by the summer and incorporated into the council's new BVPP (NB now called PP at WMBC).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce improvement plan and signpost to it in the PP published in June 04. Post improvement plan on the council's website. 	①	Carole Evans	John O'Hare	30.06.04 31.07.04	This is the plan BVPP (now known as PP)	● COMPLETE ●
9c	It is not clear how the council intends to deliver its long term plans – the pledges for 2005 onwards.	Pledges for 2005/6 PLUS will be developed as an integral part of the 2005/6 budget process.	①	Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	31.12.04	Vision	●





9d	No critical path to excellence.	The critical path document is attached as an appendix to this improvement plan	①	Carole Evans	John O'Hare	30.06.04	This is the plan	● COMPLETE
9e	The housing strategy is not yet fit for purpose	Produce a fit for purpose housing strategy by 31.10.04	①	Jason McGilp	Melvyn Pitt	31.10.04	H (CPA)	●
9f	The council does not yet have a clear or robust framework to inform local development	Finalise the strategic framework plan for the Walsall regeneration Company by 28.02.05	①	Sonia Davidson-Grant	Adrian Andrew	28.02.02	W URC strategic framework plan	●
9g	The council's image is not yet fully turned around.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement consultation strategy. • Review & revise council's corporate identity & brand • Implement newly commissioned project on economic infrastructure including improving the image of Walsall. 	①	Robert Blower	Gary Clarke	Ongoing	CSP	●
				Robert Blower		31.12.04	CSP	●
				Robert Blower/ Roberta Smith	Adrian Andrew	31.03.06	NRF C/Exec	●






9h	There is a credibility gap between the council and the community, due to a residue of partners who do not feel they are engaged in future planning.	Implement consultation strategy and local neighbourhood partnerships by 31.12.04	①	Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	31.12.04	Engagement action plan	
9i	No all embracing strategy for HR	Bring component parts together in an overarching all embracing strategy by 31.12.04	①	Paul Smith	Gary Clarke	31.12.04	HR SP	
9j	No all embracing strategy for IT	Produce, consult and publish and all embracing ICT strategy by 31.10.04	①	David Johnson	Gary Clarke	31.10.04	ICT SP	





10. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE Consolidating the findings of the previous CGI report <i>(for these items the relevant Cabinet Member (CM) for the action is shown – some responsibilities have changed in 2004/5)</i>	THEME LEADER: Jamie Morris
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REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
10a	Develop a realistic shared vision for the borough which identifies what are and what are not the Council's priorities for improvement, and then align decision making with this and the medium term financial plan	Detailed consultation undertaken autumn 2003 and agreed Vision approved, published and disseminated January 2004. Used as basis for service plans and resource allocation.	①	Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	DONE	Budget Service plans	● COMPLETE
10b	Ensure that a strategy is in place to deliver the vision	Action plan produced. Vision embedded in service plans and targets for the year.	①	Jamie Morris	Adrian Andrew (former CM)	DONE	Service plan Pledges Plan	● COMPLETE
10c	Ensure it is playing a stronger, clearer, appropriate role, particularly strategically in the development of the WBSP	Restructuring of the LSP agreed by all partners and new structure now in place. Leader of council chairs LSP. New commissioning arrangements now in place for executive level chaired by council executive director	①	Sonia Davidson-Grant	Tom Ansell	DONE		● COMPLETE

10d	Evaluates district and local committees and determines the most appropriate future vehicle for taking efficient and clear development control decisions and community engagement	Decision made to discontinue District Committees from March 2004. New network of LNPs consulted on autumn 2003 and approved by council January and April. LNPs currently being established with inaugural meetings timetabled for July. New Planning Committee operating from April.	①	Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	DONE		● COMPLETE
				Sonia Davidson-Grant	Marco Longhi (former CM)			● COMPLETE
10e	Ensure that political groups and their leaders continue to promote the positive culture that is developing, that is, improved behaviour, clearer roles, responsibilities and accountabilities; and that this becomes thoroughly embedded in the organisation to prevent any reversion to past practices, whatever results the elections may bring	Successful member development programme delivered in 2003 and 2004. Programme of political mentors extended and member participation in external development (e.g. IDeA Academy) Following the first phase of the work in 2003/4 the final phase of the revision of the constitution is in hand including clarification of member roles, and responsibilities.	① ②	Jamie Morris	Tom Ansell	DONE	Member dev'mnt programme	● COMPLETE
				Carole Evans	John O'Hare	30.09.04	Con-stitution Legal SP	●

10f	Build upon recent progress to engender a climate and enthusiasm for change leading to continuous improvement	Internal communications strengthened. New service awards scheme launched with awards events in July. Numerous local examples of continuous improvement	②	Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	DONE		 COMPLETE
10g	Support the new management team as individuals and as a team to develop their capacity to lead and maintain change in Walsall	Team building activity undertaken and team targets for improvement in the year achieved.	②	Annie Shepperd	Tom Ansell	DONE		 COMPLETE
10h	Consider and implement improved ways to engage councillors and citizens in its budget decision making processes and in shaping service delivery	Extensive external involvement in the budget preparation for 2004/5.	②	Carole Evans	John O'Hare	DONE		 COMPLETE
		Major survey of customer satisfaction was key input to the development of the council Vision.	②	Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	DONE		 COMPLETE

10i	Build upon improvements in financial control and risk management by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extending accountability in budget monitoring • ensuring that the outcomes from the resource mapping exercise are used to align all aspects of budgeting and service delivery • Set up risk register for operational and strategic risks and ensure these risks are incorporated into business planning processes. • Continuing to embed risk awareness and engagement of officers and councillors through targeted training. 	Accountability memos used for 3rd year, including in the IPM scheme and in service planning. Strategic choices used in compiling the 2004/5 – 2008/9 budget	①	Carole Evans	John O'Hare	DONE	Budget	 COMPLETE
						DONE	Budget	 COMPLETE
		Strategic risk register in place, directorate risk registers in place, service risk registers are integral part of service plans.				DONE	Perf Mgt SP	 COMPLETE
		Risk mgt is now responsibility of Audit Cttee, training has taken place & officers are accountable for managing risk through service plans and directorate risk registers.				DONE	Perf Mgt SP	 COMPLETE
	Evaluate its strategic approach to procurement to ensure that the Council achieves value for money	BV review of procurement complete, improvement plan & new procurement strategy approved by Cabinet. New team in place driving forward change	②	Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	DONE	Procurement SP	 COMPLETE

	Continue to embed performance management through the organisation	Performance mgt service set up and recruited to, all key activities and building blocks in place and being used.	①	Carole Evans	Melvyn Pitt (former CM)	DONE	Perf Mgt SP	 COMPLETE
	Evaluate the changes to its scrutiny processes to ensure performance is properly scrutinised and challenge is integral to decision making	The arrangements for Scrutiny have been reviewed and amended and responsibility for performance issues clearly identified. Each of the newly branded scrutiny and performance panels has now delivered a programme of work for the year focused on improvement priorities.	②	Carole Evans	Melvyn Pitt (former CM)	DONE	Con-stitution	 COMPLETE
	Continue to assess management capability throughout the organisation and address any areas of weakness to ensure the Council is best placed to deliver change and improvement	A mgt development strategy has been agreed which includes a common core set of competencies we would expect of managers in Walsall. All managers tier 1-3 now attended centres and all new senior recruits. Approach used in recruiting staff. Mgt development programme to address needs currently being procured.	②	Carole Evans Jamie Morris	Adrian Andrew (former CM) Adrian Andrew (former CM)	DONE DONE	Mgt dev strategy	 COMPLETE  COMPLETE

	Ensure the Council effectively implements its legal obligations to improve services and supports this with improved ICT provision	Major investment in new main frame systems for finance, benefits, social services. E govt targets complete and procurement of major strategic partnership on track. Customer service strategy agreed and first stop shop being installed in Civic Centre	②	Jamie Morris	Gary Clarke	DONE	Customer service strategy "Putting the Citizen First"	 COMPLETE
	Implement its equality strategy to ensure the Council has a clear focus on the services it provides and the diverse community it provides them to	Achieved level 2 of Equality Standard last year. Major conference in April to consult on promoting diversity ion Walsall. Innovative "STAR" programme launched with faith communities to tackle racism.	②	Jamie Morris	Adrian Andrew (former CM)	DONE	Equality Standard	 COMPLETE