

ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2004/5 – FOLLOW UP PROGRESS REPORT

Page No	Action Identified in Audit Letter	EMT & Lead Officer	Progress against agreed objectives/targets (as at 10 November 2006)	Traffic Light
6	<p>1. Ensure appropriate action plans are firmed up for those services which were to be part of the strategic partnership</p>	<p>Carole Evans Sarah Homer</p>	<p>The Strategic Transformation Programme was formally ratified by Cabinet in March 2006 and officers were instructed to achieve the following within the first 12 months of transformation:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish clear governance arrangements for the transformation programme • Create the strategic transformation team and programme office structures • Develop the initial transformation programme • Develop the necessary supporting documentation and transformation standards • Deliver the required levels of service transformation necessary to deliver the savings target of £1.243 M • Define the parameters of the transformation ‘wrapper’ and identify all initiatives that fall within the boundaries of the programme <p>Achievements second quarter :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance around the Programme is in place and all documentation, including risk 	<p style="text-align: center;"></p>

ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2004/5 – FOLLOW UP PROGRESS REPORT

Page No	Action Identified in Audit Letter	EMT & Lead Officer	Progress against agreed objectives/targets (as at 10 November 2006)	Traffic Light
	Ensure appropriate action plans are firmed up for those services which were to be part of the strategic partnership (continued)	Carole Evans Sarah Homer	<p>assessments, are up to date</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Support is a key area in the transformation of support services. All budgets and headcount have been centralised. A Head of Business Support has been appointed to lead the change management. Significant progress has been made in developing new structures for Business Finance Support; the 3 teams have been brought together under one manager and consultation has started with staff and Trade Unions on the new structure. • Review of major financial administrative processes is complete and recommendations for improvements have been made. These depend largely on the performance improvement of the Oracle system which is to be addressed as part of the ICT transformation. • Development of a new structure for the remainder of Business Support has commenced • A centralised Post Room has been 	

ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2004/5 – FOLLOW UP PROGRESS REPORT

Page No	Action Identified in Audit Letter	EMT & Lead Officer	Progress against agreed objectives/targets (as at 10 November 2006)	Traffic Light
	Ensure appropriate action plans are firmed up for those services which were to be part of the strategic partnership (continued)	Carole Evans Sarah Homer	<p>implemented with a new team structure. This has improved service and will enable the reduction of 1 post.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the decision to re-integrate the HR/OD functions, the project is progressing well. The head of the combined service has been appointed. With this post confirmed, he can now take the lead in implemented the full integration. This will involve agreement of a new structure and service model that will improve performance and better enable the team to meet the challenges ahead. Process improvement has commenced and plans for an HR Help Desk are being developed. • The physical integration of the HR/OD teams has implications for a new 'model office' pilot. The property and asset management team is leading on this so that the HR/OD space utilisation model can become an exemplar for the rest of the Council. The move should deliver occupancy of around 120%. This aspect of the project is targeted for the New Year. • An interim Procurement specialist has been 	

ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2004/5 – FOLLOW UP PROGRESS REPORT

Page No	Action Identified in Audit Letter	EMT & Lead Officer	Progress against agreed objectives/targets (as at 10 November 2006)	Traffic Light
	Ensure appropriate action plans are firmed up for those services which were to be part of the strategic partnership (continued)	Carole Evans Sarah Homer	<p>appointed to deliver specialist expertise to the corporate procurement team. This is on a self funded basis and the team is on target to deliver its 2006/7 savings of £100K.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New mobile telephone contract has been negotiated – effective from November with a full year savings effect of c £100K. • Refurbishment of the Contact Centre accommodation has commenced – due to complete by Christmas. This will enable the first phase of the project of combining the switchboard and street care contact teams to be achieved. Phase 2 of the Contact Centre development will see further services migrate into the Contact Centre from April 2007 onwards. • The ICT Transformation Strategic direction has now been set following the report by Deloitte. The next phase of ‘Quick Wins’ is now underway and external support to realise these in the next 6 months has been procured and is funded from existing budgets. This will result in a new ICT team structure, improved Governance 	

ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2004/5 – FOLLOW UP PROGRESS REPORT

Page No	Action Identified in Audit Letter	EMT & Lead Officer	Progress against agreed objectives/targets (as at 10 November 2006)	Traffic Light
	Ensure appropriate action plans are firmed up for those services which were to be part of the strategic partnership (continued)	Carole Evans Sarah Homer	<p>arrangements and re-procurement of key contracts complete. This will provide the foundation for further service improvements that will stabilise and improve solutions for all directorates and frontline services. More detail in the ICT briefing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A workshop on the Modern Empowered Elected Member was delivered on 1st November to promote the effective use of a range of ICT facilities to assist members in carrying out their role. • £833k of the targeted savings of £1.243m has already been realised and robust foundations for future challenges have been laid. 	
6	2. Ensure action is quickly taken to improve the performance of the benefits service	Carole Evans James T Walsh	As previously reported all backlog cases have been cleared. As predicted headline BVPI's deteriorated, for the second quarter. But as predicted 1 st month of quarter 3 has shown a significant improvement with underlying performance showing processing times for new applications since 1 April to be 48 days.	

ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2004/5 – FOLLOW UP PROGRESS REPORT

Page No	Action Identified in Audit Letter	EMT & Lead Officer	Progress against agreed objectives/targets (as at 10 November 2006)	Traffic Light
	<p>2. Ensure action is quickly taken to improve the performance of the benefits service (continued)</p>	<p>Carole Evans James T Walsh</p>	<p>If current performance continues the target of 40 days will be met.</p> <p>Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) inspection Report was published on 19/7/06 and is available on the BFI website. An action plan was agreed and 86% of the actions are complete, 95% will be completed by 31/12/06.</p> <p>BFI Performance Development team (PDT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the BFI inspection we asked the PDT to work with us to help address one of the key improvement areas “educating the customer to bring information in first time” which will help us to process claims more quickly. • An action plan was agreed and 94% of the actions are complete. We aim to complete the remaining actions in the final quarter of 2006/2007. Actions include maximising RSL’s in the verification and completion of Benefit claim forms. <p>Senior Management met with the DWP who recognised the sustained improvement in the</p>	

ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2004/5 – FOLLOW UP PROGRESS REPORT

Page No	Action Identified in Audit Letter	EMT & Lead Officer	Progress against agreed objectives/targets (as at 10 November 2006)	Traffic Light
	2. Ensure action is quickly taken to improve the performance of the benefits service (continued)		<p>benefits service and acknowledge that the headline figures were distorted by the clearance of the backlog. They were keen to see the underlying performance of the unit and were pleased to see the new local indicator that showed the average number of days to process new claims since the 1 April 2006 had been reported on.</p> <p>The service has retained a score of 2 by the BFI.</p>	
6	3. Ensure action is taken in response to the annual assessment of adults' services and in particular to increase the pace of change in services for older people;	David Martin Kathy Mcateer	<p>As a result of management action taken performance in 2005/6 subsequently improved dramatically and out of 14 key indicators 7 exceed the target set.</p> <p>9 targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • b11 intensive home care unit cost; • c26 residential admissions; • c51 direct payments; • c62 carers assessments; • d39 statement of needs; • d54 % of equipment delivered within 7 days; • d56 waiting times for care packages; 	

ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2004/5 – FOLLOW UP PROGRESS REPORT

Page No	Action Identified in Audit Letter	EMT & Lead Officer	Progress against agreed objectives/targets (as at 10 November 2006)	Traffic Light
	3. Ensure action is taken in response to the annual assessment of adults' services and in particular to increase the pace of change in services for older people (continued)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e48 ethnicity services increased their band ratings. 4 targets : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • c28 intensive home care numbers; • c32 Older people helped to live at home; • d37 single rooms and • d40 number of reviews improved their rating within their band 	
6	4. Ensure there is adequate control over the two major areas of grant funded expenditure where we encountered problems this year benefits and sure start.	Carole Evans James T Walsh	In March 2006 The audit commission issued its report on the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Subsidy. It made 20 recommendations. All 20 recommendations have been actioned. Highlights of those key actions are; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experts in HB, CT subsidy have been recruited to. New handover arrangements and supervision of agency staff arrangements have been put in place • Senior officers now review and sign off the grant claim prior to submission • Ongoing review of operating procedures are in place including the tracking of files 	

ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2004/5 – FOLLOW UP PROGRESS REPORT

Page No	Action Identified in Audit Letter	EMT & Lead Officer	Progress against agreed objectives/targets (as at 10 November 2006)	Traffic Light
		Carole Evans James T Walsh	accountable body responsibilities. Clearly defined controls expected of Serco who administer the scheme on behalf of the council. Regular reporting has been improved however delays in the submission of the grant claims remain at an unsatisfactory level. The executive Director of Corporate Services has written to the managing director of Education Walsall, seeking assurances that improvement in performance will happen.	