

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** 14th February 2012

CONTACT OFFICER: Julie Evans, Strategic Director of Resources (01753 875300)
(For all enquiries)

WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR COMMENT AND CONSIDERATION**

PROJECT, PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL REPORTING FOR 2011/12

1. Purpose of Report

This report highlights the Council's overall performance from delivery of service to financial management covering the period up to and including December 2011 against the following key areas:

- i. Council's Gold Projects covering the period to 31st December 2011.
- ii. Performance Scorecard covering the period to 31st December 2011 (Appendix A).
- iii. Revenue and capital monitoring position to 31st December 2011 (Appendix B).

2. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Action

The Cabinet is requested to:

- (a) Project management
 - Note the current reported status of each Gold Project.
- (b) Performance Scorecard
 - Note the performance issues identified and highlighted.
- (c) Financial performance – revenue and capital
 1. Note the current projected outturn position on the General Fund of an under spend of £2.578m.
 2. Note that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) reported a forecast under spend of £317k.
 3. Note the identified areas of risk and emerging issues.

3. Key Priorities – Taking Pride in Slough and Making a Difference to Communities

The budget is the financial plan of the authority and as such underpins the delivery of the Council's key priorities through the financial year.

Budget monitoring throughout the financial year reflects on whether those priorities are being met and, if not, the reasons why, so Members can make informed decisions to ensure the Council remains within its available resources.

4. Community Strategy Priorities

This report indirectly supports all of the community strategy priorities. The maintenance of excellent governance within the council to ensure it is efficient, effective and economic in everything it does is achieved through the improvement of corporate governance and democracy and by ensuring good people and management practices are in place.

5. Other Implications

(a) Financial

These are contained within the body of the report.

(b) Risk Management

Supporting Information

6. **Gold Project Update**

The summary below provides an update on the Council's Gold Projects as at 31st December 2011. Individual project progress reports have been made by Project leads, with endorsement from the Project Sponsor, and are provided on pages 3 to 25 of this report.

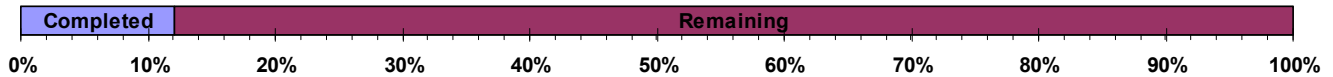
Please note that the highlight reports are submitted using a standardised format.

Monthly Period Summary

- This report covers ten Gold Projects in total, of which highlight reports have been received for all as at 31st December 2011.
- All of the Gold Project update reports have been agreed and authorised by the Project Sponsors.
- Of the ten active gold projects, seven have been assessed to have an overall 'Green' status and three as 'Amber'; five projects have been evaluated at 'Amber' status for '*Issues and Risks*', three at Amber' status for '*Timeline*'.
- No component of any project has been assessed as being of 'Red' status.

| Gold Project Name | Overall status | Page |
|--|-----------------------|-------------|
| Britwell Regeneration | GREEN | 3 |
| Business Continuity | GREEN | 4 |
| Customer Focus Programme | GREEN | 5 |
| Delivering Personalised Services Programme | AMBER | 6-10 |
| Family Placement Service ('FPS') | GREEN | 10-14 |
| Public Health Transition Programme | GREEN | 15 |
| Safeguarding Improvement Plan | AMBER | 16-19 |
| School Places in Slough | AMBER | 20-21 |
| Slough Local Asset Backed Vehicle ('LABV') | GREEN | 22-24 |
| Thames Valley Transactional Services Project | GREEN | 24-25 |

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Britwell Regeneration | | | Project SPONSOR | John Rice | |
| Wards affected: Britwell & Haymill | | | Project MANAGER | Jeff Owen | |
| | Timeline | Budget | Issues & Risks | OVERALL STATUS | Date of update report |
| Current period | AMBER | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN | 06/01/2012 |
| <i>Previous month</i> | AMBER | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN | <i>01/12/2011</i> |
| Project start date: | 01/03/2011 | | Anticipated Project end date: | 31/03/2018 | |



Has this highlight report been agreed and authorised by the Project Sponsor? Yes No (draft)

Key activities completed / milestones achieved in **this** period:

1. Regeneration Tender – major further work on evaluation has completed; this resulted in the issue of an appendix clarification on Planning and housing standards. Financial model prepared by Finance and issued.
2. Tender for the Britwell Hub – Contractor appointed 10/01/12. Start on site 6 weeks from contract, completion 50 weeks from start.
3. Planning permission secured for Britwell Hub & 3 satellite housing sites.
4. Scout & Guides Accommodation has been re-scoped. Confirmation from Building Control that proposed car park slab on Kennedy Park is acceptable for loading of new building. Grant funding bids made to Landfill Tax Credit Scheme, and to National Lottery by Scout & Guides.
5. "Boys Club" Trustees expressed an interest in relinquishing lease – valuation is being sought.

Key activities / milestones scheduled for **next** period:

1. Conduct final evaluation of regeneration tenders. Select preferred developer (Feb) and conduct compliance interview. Appoint for progression to planning permission (March).
2. Jolly Londoner/Car sales & Library sites award.
3. Newbeech House - Tender receipt and award mid Feb 2012.
4. Tender building for Scouts & Guides.

Key issues of **risk / obstacles to progress**:

1. Unable to reach agreement with Regeneration Tenderer preferred bidder – risk can be attenuated by robust evaluation process.

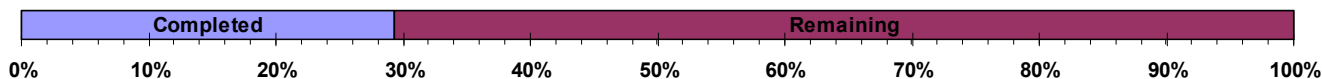
Recommendations for CMT:

1. To note the continuing progress with the project.

| | | | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Business Continuity | | | Project SPONSOR | Roger Parkin | |
| Wards affected: All | | | Project MANAGER | Dean Trussler | |
| | Timeline | Budget | Issues & Risks | OVERALL STATUS | Date of update report |
| Current period | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN | 06/01/2012 |
| <i>Previous month</i> | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN | 12/11/2011 |
| Project start date: | July 2011 | | Anticipated Project end date: | Feb 2012 | |
| <p>A horizontal progress bar from 0% to 100%. The bar is divided into two sections: a blue section labeled 'Completed' which extends to the 90% mark, and a red section labeled 'Remaining' which covers the final 10%.</p> | | | | | |
| Has this highlight report been agreed and authorised by the Project Sponsor? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No (draft) <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | |
| Key activities completed / milestones achieved in this period: | | | | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. KPMG Presentation made to working group. 2. KPMG Presentation made to Senior Leadership Team ('SLT') on 16th December. 3. Shared information with KPMG. 4. 1-1's have taken place with KPMG/CMT to understand Directorate requirements. | | | | | |
| Key activities / milestones scheduled for next period: | | | | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1-1's with KPMG/heads of service being organised for January. 2. Plan Templates updated. 3. Completion of Business Impact Assessments. 4. Draft Business Continuity Plan. | | | | | |
| Key issues of risk / obstacles to progress : | | | | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resource availability to support project. | | | | | |
| Recommendations for CMT: | | | | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure Directorate support of planned Heads of Service 1-1 Interviews. | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Customer Focus Programme | | | Project SPONSOR | Roger Parkin | |
| Wards affected: All | | | Project MANAGER | Judith Davids/ Mohammed Hassan | |
| | Timeline | Budget | Issues & Risks | OVERALL STATUS | Date of update report |
| Current period | GREEN | GREEN | AMBER | GREEN | 01/01/2012 |
| <i>Previous month</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | <i>AMBER</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | <i>01/12/2011</i> |
| Project start date: | 17/2/2011 | | Anticipated Project end date: | 31/3/2013 | |
| | | | | | |
| Has this highlight report been agreed and authorised by the Project Sponsor? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No (draft) <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | |
| Key activities completed / milestones achieved in this period: | | | | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed numbering strategy agreed at project board level, 12 Golden numbers agreed. These will be surveyed with customers for feedback before being formally submitted to CMT to sign off. Detailed meetings held with Schools to agree transfer of calls and levels of hand off's; work has begun to agreed implementation activities and time frames. Follow up meetings held with Planning, Highways and Transport to understand possible transfer of work streams, from the back office through to My Council. First draft of the functional specification has been completed and is being amended for the procurement of the Telephony system by SBC IT service. 'Click Tools' - the decision making application - has been successfully tested, we are awaiting sign off to procure this. User Acceptance Testing ('UAT') scripts have been written & tested for LLPG (Local Land Property Gazette), and are ready for sign off. UAT scripts for Analytics scripts are written and are ready for testing. 80% of Siebel users have completed formal training on the new Oracle CRM system. Interim email process written up ready to be trained out to a number of named Customer Service Advisors ('CSAs'). Service Review meetings held with Adult Social Care, Housing Benefits, Council tax and Housing Services. Resource Planning role has been submitted for formal job evaluation; now awaiting details ahead of advertisement. | | | | | |
| Key activities / milestones scheduled for next period: | | | | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule 'expressions of interest' interviews for Schools, Planning and Transport to enable CSAs to be trained in their respective hubs ahead of go live. Implementation of Schools Services to include calls & additional face-to-face coverage. Test UAT scripts for Analytics ahead of go live for 'Oracle On Demand'. Go Live with 'Oracle On Demand' CRM system at My Council with all CSA and relevant back offices trained. Named CSAs to be trained on the interim Email process by the 16th of January 2012. Remaining staff to be trained on the Oracle CRM system to include back office teams, w/c 3rd Jan. Proposed Golden numbers to be tested with customers, results will be available in February's project board meeting. Benefits realisation/evaluation for the 'Tell Us Once' process to be compiled working with registrars and customers. Finalise and agree procurement/payment terms for the CRMIT Email module. Advertise for the Resource Planner role, with interviews planned for end of January/early February. | | | | | |
| Key issues of risk / obstacles to progress : | | | | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Further delays with CRMIT Statement of Works/Contract, the delays will impact implementation date which is expected to be around March 2012. | | | | | |
| Recommendations for CMT: | | | | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To note level of progress achieved and risks identified. | | | | | |
| Delivering Personalised Services Programme | | | Project SPONSOR | Jane Wood | |
| Wards affected: All | | | Project | Mike Bibby & Mary McGorry | |

| | | | MANAGER | | |
|---------------------|------------|--------|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| | Timeline | Budget | Issues & Risks | OVERALL STATUS | Date of update report |
| Current period | AMBER | GREEN | AMBER | AMBER | 04/01/2012 |
| Previous month | AMBER | GREEN | AMBER | AMBER | 06/12/2011 |
| Project start date: | 01/07/2011 | | Anticipated Project end date: | 31/03/2013 | |



Has this highlight report been agreed and authorised by the Project Sponsor? Yes No (draft)

Key activities completed / milestones achieved in **this** period:

1. Nothing About Me, Without me (Learning Disabilities ('LD') Change Programme)

1.1 LDP1 – Value for Money Reviews

(use of Respond respite service and review of costs of LD residential placements)

- Value for Money review completed.
- Carers Respite policy and protocols drafted. Identifying a group of most impacted carers to consult with via Respond.

1.2 LDP2 – Employment support for People with Disabilities

- Cabinet approval for new policy and service model to provide employment support to people with disabilities.
- 30 day consultation with staff ended on 6th December. Redundancy notices issued to affected staff by 12th December. Voluntary redundancy request outcomes also notified to staff.
- HR process to find alternative employment opportunities within Slough for affected staff.
- Meetings arranged with Shaw Trust, Job Centre Plus and other providers to put in place arrangements to support workshop operatives with alternative employment opportunities.

1.3 LDP3 – Day Centres and Day Services

- Service users identified according to cost of residential placements for contracts to be reviewed.
- Work to unpick *Supporting People* funding element of placements which may be used to provide alternatives to day care services.
- 20 people have reduced their day centre attendance by 1 day per week to do alternative activities at a cost of just circa £450 per week to Adult Social Care ('ASC') – a recognised significant achievement. Need to understand impact on reducing cost pressures for agency staff at Elliman.
- **Safeguarding & Personalisation** – Positive risk taking tools and protocols are being tested and implemented to ensure we balance safeguarding with personalisation.

1.4 LDP4 – Supported Living Service

- Phase two moves require provision of suitable housing options for five service users, four of which need to live in close proximity to maximise value for money for support requirements – for Housing Panel.
- Cabinet approval of floating support tender.
- Formal consultation exercise commenced with Supported Living Team, service users and their carers and families (informal discussions and briefings undertaken before going to Cabinet with proposals).

1.5 LDP5 – Repatriation of Residential Placements to Slough

- Discussions taken place with *Keyring* and other providers regarding opportunities they can offer for people with higher needs to repatriate to Slough.
- Three service users identified with accommodation package and support to return imminently.
- Successfully relocated service user closer to Slough after existing provider refused to negotiate costs.
- One service user has been placed in supported living accommodation.
- Two service users identified for *Choice* contract - £1,777 per week saving aimed for from 2012/13 on these two people.

1.6 LDP6 – Transition from Children's Services

- Project group established with terms of reference and base line information gathered.

- Transitions Protocol reviewed, tightened and re-issued to senior management team as a reminder.
- Meetings established with specialist providers, including preparation for 13 young people with complex needs being transitioned in the next two years.
- Plan being drawn up to inform commissioning intentions.

2. Commissioning Services

- 2.1 ***Domiciliary Care Services / Personal Assistants (Home Support)*** – tenders reviewed and site visits completed for potential providers of new service. Approach agreed at the ASC Commissioning Board that brings 15 providers onto the framework whilst continuing to work with existing local providers and recommendation for full implementation of framework. Approval to award contract as delegated by cabinet due for sign off by Director and Lead Commissioner 6th January.
- 2.2 ***Information, Advice & Advocacy Service*** – contract formalities completed. New “Gateway” services in operation, involving 16 partners, following soft launch completed in November. Implementation plan and review meetings taking place.
- 2.3 ***Floating Support*** – new service model agreed by Supporting People Commissioning Body. Redesigned service specification developed for tendering process. Business case and specification developed. Formal service users consultation underway and due for completion end of January. Tender due out February 2012.
- 2.4 ***Berkshire Equipment Service*** – Tender evaluation completed December, providers notified, ACATEL period ceased 30th December. Tender debrief meeting arranged for January 10th, initial implementation meeting with new provider arranged January 11th. New service to become operational 1st April.
- 2.5 ***Carers Respite & Support Services*** – quality evaluation visits to potential new providers completed. Tender evaluation form due for sign off 5th January.
- 2.6 ***Substance Misuse (Accommodation)*** – evaluation undertaken and recommended provider identified. Tender evaluation form signed off 19th December.
- 2.7 ***Older Peoples Services*** – site visits and surveys completed. Further report prepared on future options, which has been considered by DMT and recommendations made for future service options. Further work needed to develop detailed strategy and commissioning intentions for community based services for Older People.
- 2.8 ***Mental Health Day Services*** – specification finalised and PQQ / tender process undertaken. Provider presentations to be held 6th January. Evaluation due to be completed week commencing 9th January.
- 2.9 ***Learning Disabilities Supported Living*** – completed PQQ stage, short listed and issued ITT. Following re-evaluation of PQQ Submissions, ITT process has been opened up again with tender submissions being received at end of January. Evaluation to take place during February.
- 2.10 ***Domestic Abuse*** – bringing together reviews of existing separate services and commencement of specification drafting, on the basis of a pooled budget. Consultation held with provider agencies and other stakeholders to inform development of new service model. New service model to be commissioned during 2012.

3. Contracts

In the process of reviewing all current contracts and updating these where necessary.

4. Safeguarding

Care Governance Policy and procedures reviewed and updated. Care Governance Board now meeting monthly. Safeguarding annual report reviewed at Health Scrutiny Panel in December.

5. Slough Services Guide

A ‘soft-launch’ of the services guide took place in November; a more comprehensive launch is to be implemented in January 2012.

6. Performance Highlights

| | Target | Apr-11 | May-11 | Jun-11 | Jul-11 | Aug-11 | Sep-11 | Oct-11 | Nov-11 | Variance against Target |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------------|-------------------------|
| Finance Measures | | | | | | | | | | |
| Savings Performance: Savings Achieved or Projected to be Achieved as a percentage of Total Savings Agreed (year to date) | 100% | 72% | 72% | 74% | 85% | 85% | 85% | 85% | 85% | -15% |
| Quality Measures | | | | | | | | | | |
| % of ASC assessments completed within 4 weeks of first contact: monthly snapshot | 90<95% | 83.60% | 79.70% | 80.30% | 75.40% | 79.70% | 80.30% | 88.30% | Not Available | -1.70% |
| % ASC services in place within 4 weeks of completed assessment: monthly snapshot | 75>90% | 97.60% | 67.70% | 71.90% | 63.40% | 83.00% | 83.30% | 69.60% | Not Available | -5.40% |
| Volume Measures | | | | | | | | | | |
| Number of assessments made per month by Adult Social Care Services | n/a | 196 | 220 | 223 | 202 | 208 | 236 | 178 | 67 | |
| Number of community based clients and carers in receipt of self directed support (Personal budget/direct payment) - cumulative total | | 648 | 689 | 715 | 743 | 814 | 834 | 874 | Not Available | |
| Number of reviews completed per month by Adult Social Care Services | n/a | 231 | 141 | 356 | 305 | 271 | 229 | 222 | 277 | |
| Number of safeguarding referrals leading to a strategy meeting per month | n/a | 11 | 16 | 22 | 23 | 16 | 19 | 14 | 16 | |
| Outcome Measure | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2B: Proportion of older people (65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/rehabilitation services | 90% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 95% | 100% | tbc | tbc | +10% |

Key activities / milestones scheduled for **next** period:

1. Nothing About Me, Without Me

- Carers respite policy and procedures require consultation with carers and families who may be affected and these are being identified for a meeting in January.
- Profile of transitions to ASC services continue to be raised strategically at Assistant Director level.
- Ongoing meetings with providers for complex needs to consider opportunities on an individual, needs-led basis.
- CCF work brief drawn up on negotiations to take place with residential providers on those cases where the resident is not going to move out.
- Ongoing work to identify suitable accommodation in Slough with Housing Services and providers.
- Ongoing review of contracts and negotiations with providers for service users in day care centres, some of which will be post-election.
- Sure Trust and Job Centre Plus event in January with local employers to promote employment of people with disabilities.

- Clarification on PQQ / ITT for floating support to run simultaneously to consultation with staff and key stakeholders. Consultation workshops arranged for January.

2. Commissioning Services

- **Residential Services** – further consideration of future options for provision and commissioning of residential and nursing care provision.
- **Home Support (Domiciliary Care and Personal Assistants)** – new contractual arrangements to be proposed for sign off, framework implemented.
- **Information Advice and Advocacy Service ('IAAS')** – implementation continuing with performance framework and formal controls to be introduced. Formal public launch of new services in January.
- **Floating Support** – ITT single stage tender process to be advertised first week of February.
- **Berkshire Equipment Service** – Implementation plan to be refined and agreed. Practitioner processes to be developed in line with implementation plan.
- **Carers Respite & Support** – new contracting arrangements to implement framework to be agreed with operations. Work with local providers.
- **Substance Misuse (Accommodation)** – Implementation plan to be refined and agreed. Implementation meetings arranged.
- **Mental Health Day Services** – ITTs to be evaluated and completed by week commencing 9th January.
- **Learning Disabilities Supported Living** – ITTs to be evaluated and framework of providers to be proposed for sign-off February.
- **Domestic Abuse** – further progress on Specification, prior to commencing the commissioning cycle.
- **Voluntary Sector Commissioning** – Advice and information service and Capacity building service out for tender. Evaluations due for completion first week in February. Prevention service development of bidding processes underway due for advert 18th January.

3. Safeguarding

Two key pieces of work to be progressed:

- The overarching safeguarding strategy with vision and objectives against the seven strategic priorities.
- A specific section on the ways we will deliver risk, choice and control.

A meeting has been arranged with the Director to progress this work in January 2012.

4. LINK Personal Budget Survey

Link to set up focus group and feedback outcomes to Executive Board.

Key issues of risk / obstacles to progress:

1. Nothing About Me, Without Me

- Identification of suitable housing options and agreement to provide this housing for people with learning disabilities.
- Any negative reaction to the LD Change Programme.
- Public reaction to disability employment support changes.
- Family anxiety about changes in Supported Living Team to Floating Support.
- Service users not wanting to leave day care services – financial risk (double run on costs) to encourage them to find alternatives while maintaining day service provision.
- Continuing Health Care criteria applied differently for adults and children and health pathway not assessed early enough.
- Unknown transitions from Looked after children and Education Services.
- Risk of challenge and negative reaction to changes to revised policy for carers respite services.

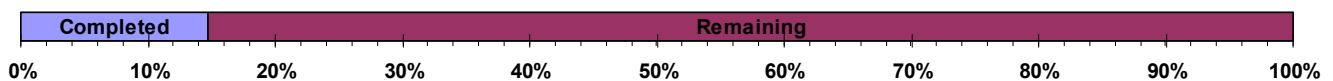
2. Commissioning

- Impact on voluntary sector providers arising from award of tendered contracts.

Recommendations for CMT:

1. Continue to support and monitor the work through leadership / early consideration of local housing options for people with LD, essential to delivering PPRG savings.
2. Recognising need for double-run costs and potential growth bids to deliver longer-term savings.

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Family Placement Service (FSP) | | | Project SPONSOR | Clair Pyper | |
| Wards affected: All | | | Project MANAGER | Jill Forrest | |
| | Timeline | Budget | Issues & Risks | OVERALL STATUS | Date of update report |
| Current period | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN | 05/01/2012 |
| <i>Previous month</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | 02/12/2011 |
| Project start date: | 19/10/2011 | | Anticipated Project end date: | 31/03/2013 | |



Has this highlight report been agreed and authorised by the Project Sponsor? Yes No (draft)

Key activities completed / milestones achieved in **this** period:

Project Management - Jill Forrest

- Project Initiation Document ('PID') completed and signed off by Project Sponsor (Clair Pyper). Action from 02/12/11 - Project plan and timeline to be drafted by Project Manager.
- To be completed.

1) Recruitment of Staff Strand - Lead JP

Action from 02/12/11 - 1 supported lodgings social worker still to be recruited.

- Temporary social worker started (fixed term contract not yet awarded).

Action from 02/12/11 - 4.5 staff recruited above will start in December 2011.

- Completed.

Action from 02/12/11 - Fixed term contracts to be appointed to.

- Staff member from FPS Team appointed to act up as Assistant Team Manager.
- Staff member transferred internally to Special Recruitment Project on 12/12/11.
- Two Fostering Social workers and one Placement Social worker, FPS Gold Project temporary workers recruited to fixed term contracts.
- Two external appointments to fixed term contracts (Placement Social worker and Special Recruitment Project Social worker).

2) and 3) In-house Fostering and SGO Strands - Lead RK

- 13 Special Guardianship Orders ('SGOs') have been granted since September 2011.
- 4 children matched to long term foster carers since September 2011.
- One foster carer approved by Fostering Panel November 2011.
- 6 Private SGO Assessments completed and approved by Fostering Panel; awaiting Court dates (not Looked After Children).
- Assessments in progress :-
 - 7 in-house unconnected foster carers being assessed.
 - 6 in-house connected foster carers being assessed (Friends and Family).
 - 2 Regulation 24 in-house connected foster carers are being assessed (Friends and Family).
 - 3 Special Recruitment Project SGO Assessments of long term foster carers (6 children).
 - One Private SGO Assessment.
- 17 new potential foster care applicants from marketing campaign.

4) Tracking of LAC data, Care Planning, Placement and Costs Strand - Lead FB

Action from 02/12/11 - Benchmark Looked After Children profile to be completed by Project Manager.

- Completed, presented to SMT 22/12/11, amended and signed off by Clair Pyper 28/12/11.

Action from 02/12/11 - Care Planning and Placement Tracking cycle of updating to commence.

- This has commenced and Strand meeting being arranged to agree processes and reporting.

5) Finance Strand - Lead BO (now IB)

- Finance are monitoring closely the FPS Gold Project budget and related spend to date.

6) Commissioning Strand - Lead DB

- Recruitment of two placement Social Workers (one in post – one to start).
- Induction for new social worker.
- Chase up and resolution of outstanding placement approvals.
- Draft care monitoring procedure and form.
- Preparation for issue of new individual placement agreements during January 2012.
- Independent Fostering Agency ('IFA') tender (contract to be implemented from April 2012).

7) Adoption In-house/purchased Strand - Lead CC

- 3 adopters approved since October.
- 2 adoption matches for Slough children since October.
- 1 adoption order since October.
- 3 Slough adopters matched with non Slough children since October where no Slough children were suitable.
- 8 adopter enquiries since October.
- 3 applicants on November Information session.
- 2 applicants on November preparation course.
- 5 initial visits carried out since October.
- 13 adopter assessments being undertaken - 2 sets are the foster carers of Slough children who they wish to adopt.
- 7 Slough children in adoptive placements awaiting adoption order.

8) Special Recruitment Strand - Lead CC

Action from 02/12/11 - Information day for special recruitment project arranged for the 10th December.

- Leaflets and posters designed, printed and distributed as above.
- Advertising campaign on schedule as above.
- Booklets printed and sent to enquirers.
- 21 enquiries made since October.
- Information session held on 10/12/11.
- 4 home visits carried out to prospective applicants and CRB disclosures applied for.

9) Supported Lodgings Strand - Lead JN

- Appointment of temporary social worker to begin work on supported lodgings scheme.
- Met with Recruitment and Retention Officer SM to look at how to target recruitment for this scheme.
- Temp social worker has begun to research local schemes available – internal and external providers.

10) Care Planning Strand - Lead KD

- New role of Group Manager for Looked After Children and Care Leavers commenced 05/12/11.
- Care Planning strand added to the FPS Gold project.

11) Marketing Strand - Lead SM

Action from 02/12/11 - Advertising campaign on local over ground trains and buses to run throughout December 2011.

- 50 Bus Rears across Uxbridge and Aldershot from 05/12/11 to 01/01/12.
- 300 train interior panels across First Great Western from 05/12/11 to 01/01/12.
- Guardian Magazine – there was a small ad' placed in the magazine on Saturday 3rd December.
- Big Issue – Big Issue ran a feature about children in care and we advertised (1/4 page) in the Christmas edition and the Review of 2011 edition.
- Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce and Segro have included a copy of the advert in their monthly newsletters.

- Westfield (Shopping Centre) and Slough Train Station, staff handed out leaflets, promotional bags and talked about the project to the public.
- Local Venues/Businesses, Most of the businesses along the Bath Road - Orange, Fiat, LG Electronics, Regus, Black and Decker, GSK, Blackberry RIM, Leaseplan – took leaflets/posters to display. Leaflets were also distributed to the following: Globe Business Park, Marlow - TNT post, Lexmark, Lex Vehicle Leasing Ltd. Asda and Tesco in Slough; Waitrose in Maidenhead, Hillingdon Leisure Centre and Montem Leisure Centre, Slough cinema.
- Schools, flyers were distributed in nine Maidenhead schools.
- Special Recruitment Project part time Marketing Officer's contract came to an end.
- FPS Gold Project Marketing Officer started.
- Use of media opportunities :-
Fostering and adoption featured prominently in the news in December: BBC Panorama's - The Truth about Adoption <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b019307z>.
The Fostering Network's announcement on the foster care crisis <http://www.fostering.net/media/2011/crisis-looms-foster-care-in-2012>.
Government announcement on adoption.
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2011/dec/22/adoption-system-changes>
FPS used these events to start our social media activity (Twitter) through our dedicated Communications Officer. The Family Placement Service team also provided a foster carer as a spokesperson for the Today programme (BBC Radio 4).

Key activities / milestones scheduled for **next** period:

Key messages/target audiences

We have started to separate out the different key messages and audiences for the different services so that appropriate materials can be produced in 2012.

Strand 1 Recruitment of Staff - Lead JP

- JP to follow up on references once received.
- Decision to be made about fixed term supported lodgings post.
- Decision to be made about fixed term recruitment and retention post.
- Start dates to be agreed for fixed term posts and induction plans to be in place.
- Business case regarding pay scales for new employees to be agreed through requests for more experienced workers to be paid above the bottom level of pay scale to reflect their level of expertise SMT requesting further information.

Strand 2 and 3 In-house Fostering and SGO (both connected and unconnected) - Lead RK

- February Foster panel - 2 fostering assessments to be presented for approval.
- Fostering Preparation Group - Scheduled for 4th, 11th and 18th February.
- Suitability for prep group 17 units - 10 couples - 7 single prospective foster carers.
- If further enquiries mean more applicants then a second Fostering Preparation Group will be run.

Strand 4 Tracking of LAC data, Care Planning, Placement and costs - Lead FB

- Now that the benchmarking data has been completed and analysed, Strand 4 will meet to design and implement the monthly cycle of data gathering, updating and reporting.
- Two staff to meet on a weekly basis to confirm all placement movements/changes and review cost predictions for data update. Commissioning and Contracts Manager will also attend on a monthly basis to look at any commissioning issues.

Strand 5 Finance - Lead BO (now IB)

- Strand Lead changed to IB.
- IB will continue to monitor actual spend and commitments against the FPS Gold Project and FPS core service budgets.
- Strand 5 will meet after the Strand 4 meeting to design and implement the monthly cycle for tracking financial outcomes relating to individual children.

Strand 6 Commissioning - Lead DB

- The new capacity in the Placement Commissioning Team will enable an audit of placement approvals and contracts for all existing LAC and Care Leavers placements.

- Issue of new individual placement agreements to providers for individual children ahead of new IFA tender starting 1 April 2012.
- Preparation of provider database using *ContrOCC* (financial database) and collation of vacancies information.
- Integration, training and induction of Placement Commissioning Team.

Strand 7 Adoption In-house/purchased - Lead CC

- Adoption matches for 3 children being presented at January 2012 adoption panel (1 within Berkshire consortium and 2 with Voluntary Adoption Agency).
- 5 prospective adopters put forward for January 2012 information session being run by Windsor and Maidenhead.
- 3 prospective adopters put forward for February preparation course being run by Windsor and Maidenhead.
- 7 prospective adopters due to be presented for approval in the next 4 months.

Strand 8 Special Recruitment Project 5 years and over - Lead CC

- 10 initial home visits to new Special Recruitment Project (SRP) applicants scheduled in January 2012.
- Family finders allocated to children within the FPS Service will meet on 18th January to discuss the identified children for the SRP and agreeing any issues and actions.
- DVD and profiles of children 5 and over and sibling groups to be produced.
- 3 day preparation course to be organised beginning of February 2012.
- 1 assessment of a potential SRP carer to commence in January 2012.
- Childcare experience to be organised for some of the other applicants using experienced Slough foster carers to support them.

Strand 9 Supported Lodgings - Lead JN

- Research to be completed on local supported lodgings schemes in Slough and other areas including voluntary and private sector:-
 - Local hostel accommodation with support.
 - Semi-supported accommodation.
 - Supported lodgings.
- Project team to establish the level of need for supported lodgings.
- Arrange to meet Reading Fostering Manager to discuss their supported lodgings scheme.
- Project team to gather information regarding the external placements currently purchased for 16 + young people.
- Project team members to attend 16+ Team meeting.
- To update Slough supported lodgings policy.
- To update enquiry form for Family Placement service to reflect the needs for supported lodgings carers.
- To review the Slough supported lodgings information booklet.

Strand 10 Care Planning - Lead KD

- Draft LAC and 16+ Team Action Plan to be circulated for comments. Key themes :-
 - Management oversight including supervision and recording improvements.
 - Case transfers to LAC Service from Duty now immediately following Initial Assessment since restructure of SW teams 05/12/11.
 - Progressing Care Plans.
 - Reviewing all children with Section 20 Legal Status.
 - Reviewing all children in Care Proceedings mapping timelines.
 - Ensure Parallel Planning for all children from second Statutory Childcare Review.
 - Life story work and adoption files to commence from Statutory Looked After Review.
 - Increase children and young people's involvement in their own care planning.
 - Improvement of quality of Pathway Plans for all LAC and care leavers.
 - Use the information gathered to inform the work on sufficiency.

Strand 11 Marketing - Lead SM

- Run training session with Family Placement Service and Placement Commissioning Team focusing on agreeing key messages and shared approach to initial enquiries.

- Develop a system for recording and analysing response to marketing initiatives and conversion rates from enquiries to successful approval.
- Family Placement Service Enquiry Form to be redesigned.
- Write design brief for new adverts/materials for use in 2012 to focus on specific (and different) target audiences/services. Includes agreeing key messages.
- Organise communications meeting between Children's Social Care operational staff and, Marketing and Communications Manager and Communications Officer responsible for family placement services to ensure that we can maximise potential marketing opportunities.
- Identify potential 'champions' i.e. carers and staff who are willing to talk about their experiences for media use.
- Design case study template for use in the media.
- Work closely with the Slough Family Information Service to promote the FPS Gold campaign.
- Press release articles Slough Observer and the Slough Express 06/1/12.

Key issues of risk / obstacles to progress:

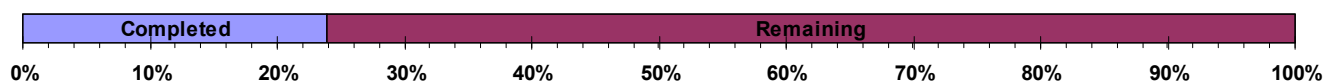
Project Management

- Succession planning for project management from April 2012.
- Success of advertising campaign yet to be assessed.
- Recruitment to all fixed term project posts not yet complete.
- There is strong possibility that not every one attending Fostering Preparation Group will progress onto next stage of assessment, based on Slough and national experience.
- Possible difficulties in gathering data from social work staff due to time constraints/caseload commitments in line with reporting deadlines.
- Capacity issues in performance team.
- If the recruitment campaign is very successful, capacity of existing workers to take on more assessments.
- Changes of the child's allocated social worker hinders progressing the permanency plans.
- Applicants-may not be suitable.
- Delayed CRB checks returns.
- Limited capacity in the Communications Team may prevent full use of marketing opportunities such as Twitter.

Recommendations for CMT:

1. None

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Public Health Transition Programme | | | Project SPONSOR | Jane Wood | |
| Wards affected: All | | | Project MANAGER | Tracy Luck | |
| | Timeline | Budget | Issues & Risks | OVERALL STATUS | Date of update report |
| Current period | GREEN | GREEN | AMBER | GREEN | 06/01/2012 |
| <i>Previous month</i> | GREEN | GREEN | AMBER | GREEN | 02/12/2011 |
| Project start date: | 08/08/2011 | | Anticipated Project end date: | 30/04/2013 | |



Has this highlight report been agreed and authorised by the Project Sponsor? Yes No (draft)

Key activities completed / milestones achieved in this period:

1. Transition from LINKs to *HealthWatch* policy paper drafted.
2. Update report on public health transition for Health Scrutiny Panel (1 February) drafted.
3. Resourcing of project support agreed.
4. Local Strategic Partnership wound up and Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board ('HWB') meeting.

Key activities / milestones scheduled for next period:

1. Agree support from Help and Care re: development of *HealthWatch* (start date postponed to April 2013).
2. Development of Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
3. Outline Public Health Transition Plan to be prepared by DPH by 27 January.
4. Shadow HWB to meet 23 January including to agree sub structure.
5. Project Manager's recruitment to commence.
6. Community engagement role to be developed and recruitment to commence.

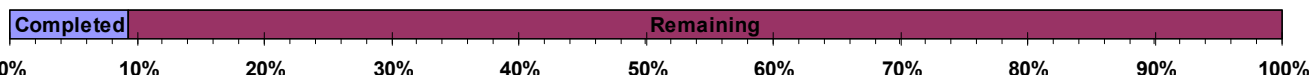
Key issues of risk / obstacles to progress:

1. Resource to take forward the project.
2. Inability of stakeholders to commit time and resource to progress the project.
3. Possibility of lack of consensus on models of working and planning structures.
4. Lack of awareness of issues and proposals by wider stakeholder group.
5. Lack of detailed information from existing provision to inform decisions re: transition arrangements and planning.
6. Public Health budget transfer disadvantages Slough.

Recommendations for CMT:

1. Early identification/consideration of resources required to provide delivery capacity/capability to the shadow HWB.

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Safeguarding Improvement Board | | Project SPONSOR | Clair Pyper | | |
| Wards affected: All | | Project MANAGER | Keren Bailey | | |
| | Timeline | Budget | Issues & Risks | OVERALL STATUS | Date of update report |
| Current period | AMBER | GREEN | AMBER | AMBER | 10/01/2012 |
| <i>Previous month</i> | AMBER | GREEN | AMBER | AMBER | 07/12/2011 |
| Project start date: | June 2011 | | Anticipated Project end date: | 2013 | |



Has this highlight report been agreed and authorised by the Project Sponsor? Yes No (draft)

Key activities completed / milestones achieved in this period:

- Cabinet Report 23/01/12 to update Members on progress with the Improvement Plan.
- Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Report 24/01/12 to update Scrutiny Panel on progress with the Improvement Plan.
- Improvement Plan and summary are available on SBC intranet under Education and Children's Services.

Theme 1 - Social Care Practice

- The new Quality Assurance Framework is being implemented on a phased basis, and there are early indications of change in practice and performance standards. Senior Managers are monitoring the implementation of required standards including the Risk Assessment Framework and Supervision policy.
- 'Initial Assessments completed and authorised within the timescales' continues to show a strong upward trend from October through to December.
- Work on 'Core Assessments completed within timescale' will be much slower to show sustained improvement as it is monitored as a rolling average over the period of a year and only improvement over a sustained period will cause the overall figures to change significantly. Weekly monitoring shows an upward trend from October as a result of changed processes and practice guidance.
- The programme of internal audits is continuing each month with results being used for remedial action

where necessary. The external and internal audits programmes have shown signs of improvement in reviewing cases, recording cases, child visits, including child focus, the quality of new assessments and the quality of planning.

- This has fed into the immediate needs training programme for Assistant Team Managers ('ATMs') which will focus on management oversight, supervision and performance management and improvement.
- Short term changes to team structures are now in place and these arrangements are being monitored and evaluated to ensure that team structures and workloads reflect demand patterns and required improvements. This has been designed to ensure that we use practitioner and managers skills and expertise and build on the good practice that exists in some parts of the service.
- A new web based procedure manual is being developed.
- Application for further sector support funding for coaching and mentoring social workers and managers to improve social work practice was submitted on 9th January.

Theme 2 - Capability and Capacity

- Recruitment to posts in the interim structure has been completed.
- Recent work to recruit permanent social workers drew a large number of applications from inexperienced or newly qualified social workers which could have unbalanced the team skills and experience mix. Senior managers therefore decided to continue with experienced agency workers for the remaining period of the short term structure.
- The longer term structure has been agreed and work will start in January to put this into place from April 2012.
- Professional standards and competencies for social workers have been brought together in the Professional Capability Framework (PCF) which has now been agreed. This will be used to inform recruitment processes, appraisal and performance systems, talent identification and management, and learning and development. Job descriptions will be written to incorporate the requirements of the Social Work Reform Board before further recruitment takes place.
- Education and Children's Services (ECS) Senior Management Team (SMT) have agreed a Leadership Development Plan to be developed for ECS linked to a culture change programme starting with leaders and managers and expanding to all staff across the directorate.
- A summary of Improvement Plan has been written and published on the intranet to help staff engage with improvement activity and progress updates are being published.

Theme 3 - Quality Assurance and Performance Management

- The Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LSCB) has agreed the multi-agency audit programme.
- The Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) development day was held on 6th January 2012 where a new structure for the LSCB and operating arrangements was discussed
- Work on the implementation of recommendations for the LSCB review has started.
- The interim report from the Sector Support project on Performance Management has been discussed with the ECS Senior Leadership Group who have considered how they can increase their focus on improving outcomes for children, young people and their families and carers.
- Initial workshops have been run by the sector support project on Performance Management, further workshops will run for all managers and practitioners in the w/c 9.1.12 and the outcomes fed into final recommendations from the Sector Support Project.
- Performance reports have been reformatted and tailored to reflect new team structures.
- Short term improvement work has been agreed with the Safeguarding Service Manager to focus on the production and use of reports for Child Protection Conferences and Reviews whilst the sector support review on the IRO function is pending.

Theme 4 - Early Intervention and Prevention

- Partners in the Early Intervention and Prevention Sub-Group agreed to spend some time with the Early Response Hub to increase their understanding of how it operates and increase their engagement with the process.
- Initial preparation for the half day strategic event (planned for 18th January 2012) has started with the help of Sector Support.
- The use of additional sector support days has been agreed and it is possible that some supplementary time may be agreed.

- Stage 1 of the consultation on Early Response Hub has been completed. A Hub flow chart has been updated and simplified on the advice of partners.
- New guidance on the functioning of the Early Response Hub has been produced with advice from Social Care and is about to be re-circulated.
- Early Response work has been communicated in the Directorate newsletter and a more detailed communication is about to be sent to Directorate staff and partners following the consultation with partners.

Theme 5 - Leadership, Governance and Finance

- The Improvement Plan has now been made available to all Elected Members and staff following agreement for its release from the Improvement Board. The Plan and summary are on SBC Insite.
- A weekly newsletter is now being issued to ECS staff and there has been positive feedback from staff and input to the newsletter.
- The Senior Management Team in Education and Children Services (ECS) is focusing on performance in key areas every fortnight. Senior Managers continue to receive fortnightly reports and triangulate this with other information with a clear request for action plans where performance indicators are causing concern.
- The Children and Young Peoples Plan has been formally agreed at the Children's Partnership Board (CPB).
- Clear remits for the IB, LSCB and the CPB are being agreed as the LSCB review is near completion and the review of roles and functions of CPB started.
- Planning for the future structure and its implementation continues.
- Regular analysis of project risks and identification of mitigating actions is in place.

Key activities / milestones scheduled for **next period:**

Clear milestones for specific aspects of the work are contained in the Improvement Plan and will be included in this GOLD project update as soon as detailed delivery plans are finally agreed.

Theme 1 - Social Care Practice

- Work will start to review job descriptions and to recruit staff to revised job descriptions, carry out succession planning and handover, and create an induction and training programme ready for the new structure.
- Further work to phase in the implementation of the Quality Assurance Framework, improve practice on reflective and analytical case work and supervision, work between child protection conferences to prevent planning drift for children on Child Protection Plans, and reinforcement of the use of the risk assessment framework.
- Introduction of team plans to incorporate actions from the Improvement Plan, accompanied by staff appraisals and personal development plans reflecting the Improvement Plan for each member of staff.
- Testing to ensure the changes that have been made are embedded.
- Further development of the web based procedure manual.

Theme 2 - Capability and Capacity

- The first draft of the Corporate Workforce Strategy will be discussed by the Corporate Management Team in January 2012.
- Leadership Development Plan to be developed for ECS linked to a culture change programme starting with leadership roles and explained to all staff across the directorate.
- Develop forward plan for communications including workshops, performance review days and a staff forum.
- Scope and plan the steps required to introduce the professional capacity framework (PCF) initially for recruitment and subsequently for appraisal and development purposes.
- Ensure the immediate needs training plan is aligned to the PCF and other local and national frameworks. Begin work towards commissioning the highest priority elements and reviewing existing elements of the immediate learning and development plan.
- Continuing discussions with the lead officer for ECS to agree priority, learning objectives, required

outcomes and evaluation measures for each subject. Continue planning for the selection of target audience, ensuring attendance and embedding the learning.

Theme 3 - Quality Assurance and Performance Management

- The sector support work on the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) service has been scoped, but the start date has been delayed until January because the sector support lead was involved in the Ofsted announced inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children in his own borough.
- Findings from the January workshops with practitioners and managers will be used to further inform the sector support input on the Performance Management Framework.
- Reinforcement of messages about the use of the supervision template and audit by end February to check use.

Theme 4 - Early Intervention and Prevention

- Half day strategic event to engage partners in the implementation plan for the Early Intervention Strategy planned for 18th January 2012.
- Focus on engagement of partners and their contribution to the Early Response Hub.
- Review of thresholds for eligibility to include early intervention services.

Theme 5 - Leadership, Governance and Finance

- The Children's Partnership Board review continues.
- Work to plan and implement the new structure including consultation with staff (planned for February 2012).
- The Children and Young Peoples Plan will be considered by the ECS scrutiny panel on 24th January 2012.
- Further work on communications with staff and development of an engagement plan for key stakeholders.
- Medium Term Financial Strategy Paper completed for discussion with the Improvement Board on 10/01/12 showing previous, current and future years spend on safeguarding and looked after children, and SBC commitment to future expenditure.

Key issues of risk / obstacles to progress:

The Improvement Board (IB) has now agreed the project risks. The Project Board monitor those risks and report the outcomes of this to the IB together with any mitigating action. There is a risk that staff sickness is delaying some areas of implementation and this is being closely monitored.

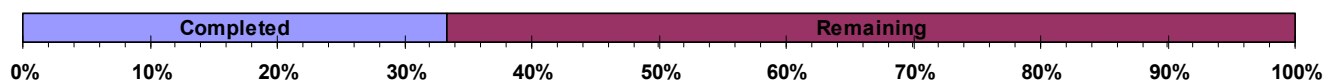
The key obstacles to progress have been identified as shown below. These have been discussed by the Project Board and are being resolved:

- Clarity over the timeline for future restructure and what the new structure will look like. This is critical for work under Theme 1 to improve social care practice, and Theme 2 that will facilitate making this operational.
- Capacity remains a concern and we have put in a proposal to secure additional support for improving front line practice through coaching and mentoring using additional funding from sector support.
- The requirements to test and check that changes are embedded means that the Improvement Plan may have to be amended to reflect that initial changes have been made (for example, a new framework setting out the required practice standards) but that it will take time for the changes in practice to become embedded.
- There has been a lack of suitably experienced and sufficiently skilled social workers available for permanent recruitment. Therefore highly skilled and experienced agency staff have been employed to ensure that the interim structure has the right mix and level of skills to function properly.
- The level of partner contacts continues to be high, in particular from the police. More referrals are now being diverted to the Early Response Hub and away from children's social care. However, partner input is needed in resource allocation and agreement of thresholds for early intervention to ensure that the local authority shares the responsibility for early intervention through the Early Response Hub and that families receive the right level of intervention at the right time.

Recommendations for CMT:

- N/A

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| School Places In Slough | | | Project SPONSOR | Clair Pyper | |
| Wards affected: All | | | Project MANAGER | Robin Crofts | |
| | Timeline | Budget | Issues & Risks | OVERALL STATUS | Date of update report |
| Current period | GREEN | GREEN | AMBER | AMBER | 01/01/2012 |
| <i>Previous month</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | <i>AMBER</i> | <i>AMBER</i> | <i>01/12/2011</i> |
| Project start date: | 2008 | | Anticipated Project end date: | 2020 | |



Has this highlight report been agreed and authorised by the Project Sponsor? Yes No (draft)

Key activities completed / milestones achieved in **this** period:

1. Marish Primary has opened an additional reception class after installing a relocated modular classroom block that was no longer required at Parlaunt Park Primary.
2. Montem Primary has admitted an additional reception class and early planning has started on adding an infant annex at the school.
3. Works continuing on site at Littledown School to create new primary special school places for 2012.
4. Planning has started on phase 2 (junior annex) for the expansion of Priory School.
5. Capital budget allocations for school buildings for 2012-13 confirmed.
6. DfE has confirmed Slough's capital underspend for 2010-11 will not be clawed back as it is fully committed to the Parlaunt Park Primary project.
7. Meeting held with the Governing Body and agreement in principle received from the first secondary school planning to expand for 2013-14.

Primary Expansion Summary

| | Demand for Reception | Availability of Permanent Reception Classes | Bulge classes | Total permanent new Reception places created |
|---------------|--|---|---------------|--|
| | Number of classes (headcount) | | | Number of classes (reception places) |
| May-07 | 52 (1545) | 55 (1647) | | |
| May-08 | 55 (1656) | 56 (1677) | | + 1 (+ 30) |
| May-09 | 56 (1669) | 56 (1677) | | + 1 (+ 30) |
| May-10 | 61 (1833) | 59 (1767) | 2 (60) | + 4 (+ 120) |
| May-11 | 65 (1953) | 65 (1947) | 2 (60) | + 10 (+ 300) |
| Sep-11 | 73 (2170) Further demand expected due to late applications | 74 (2207) | | + 19 (+ 560) |

Key activities / milestones scheduled for **next** period:

1. Meetings of the School Organisation Group and Slough Association of Secondary Heads (SASH) are arranged to further develop the expansion programme.
2. Seek approval from the Capital Strategy Board for phase 2 (junior annex) of the Lynch Hill Primary expansion and the new secondary school expansion.

Key issues of **risk / obstacles to progress**:

1. All pupils continue to be offered a school place although there are emerging pressures in a number of year groups, including primary, secondary and special school places. Places are available out-of-

borough in secondary schools and applicants may be eligible for transport. This is not an option for primary places so new expansion projects can be required at short notice.

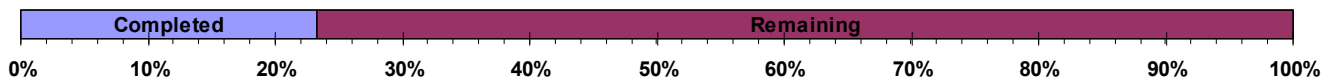
2. In order to ensure every secondary pupil secures a school place in future, the first new secondary school places should be in place for 2013-14. This will require early agreement on the proposed project allowing it to move forward without delay.

The demand for school places and the supply of school places is extremely fluid and depends on a number of factors. These include the number of applications received, which varies on a weekly basis, and the number of places vacated as families move their children. It is complicated by movements of pupils in and out of Slough and changes in parental preference for specific schools. There are also underlying trends linked to birth rates and inward migration. The process of placing children is ongoing and the objective is to maintain a small surplus of places so that supply just exceeds demand. Close monitoring of all these factors should allow this.

Recommendations for CMT:

None

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Slough Local Asset Backed Vehicle ('LABV') | | | Project SPONSOR | Julie Evans | |
| Wards affected: All | | | Project MANAGER | John Rice | |
| | Timeline | Budget | Issues & Risks | OVERALL status | Date of update report |
| Current period | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN | 06/01/2012 |
| <i>Previous month</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | 01/12/2011 |
| Project start date: | 19/09/2011 | | Anticipated Project end date: | 31/12/2012 | |



Has this highlight report been agreed and authorised by the Project Sponsor? Yes No (draft)

Key activities completed / milestones achieved in **this** period:

- 1 Soft market development completed.
- 2 New Web Portal installed and live – used to issue all OJEU documents.
- 3 HCA to Prepare Gateway 0 report for HCA Board to scope their involvement in the project.
- 4 OJEU Notice, PQQ and MoI issued 01/12/11 at 12.00.
- 5 Bidders Day delivered – 43 attendees from 33 organisations with all main companies involved in LABVs represented.
- 6 79 separate companies expressed an interest in the Notice via Web Portal.
- 7 Return of PQQ – 09/01/12.
- 8 ITPD and evaluation matrix scoped. ITPD Volumes 1-3 drafted. Volume 4 discussed and draws from 1-3.
- 9 Critical issues meeting for ITPD arranged 09/01/12 with Project Director, BB and PM.
- 10 Project Board arranged for 23/01/12. Future monthly meetings – dates being organised or agreement on 23/01/12.
- 11 Updated Project plan enhanced (attached).



LABV Project Plan 06
01 12.mpp

Key activities / milestones scheduled for **next** period:

Please refer to Project Plan.

1. Selection of long-listed bidders (6) by 31/01/12.
2. Issue Invitation to Participate in Competitive Dialogue (“ITPD”) 01/02/12.
3. Issue decline letters to other tenderers.
4. Commence dialogue.

Key issues of **risk / obstacles to progress**:

1. EU procurement implications: *The Council’s specialist legal advisors will advise on all EU procurement/compliance issues and how the risks of a potential procurement challenge can be mitigated.*
2. Setting up a LABV will require dedicated resource throughout the procurement and over the life of the LABV: *Throughout the procurement process the Council will have the opportunity to consider the level of resources required.*
3. Not securing the agreement of Council to proceed and high start-up costs that will be abortive if the Council decides not to proceed at any stage: *The Council will have the opportunity to consider at each stage of the procurement whether to proceed with a LABV or not. If progress is made but the Council subsequently decides not to proceed there will be abortive costs to the Council incurred up to that point. There may also be some reputational risk.*
4. Identifying sites for development at the commencement of the LABV process through Council reports and the procurement process can raise community expectations for delivery; but also potential objections to the

developments before the business case, timing and details of the development project have been created:

The Council will adopt a transparent approach to the inclusion of projects in the LABV. A robust information strategy will be used to provide full information on the time taken to establish the LABV; the need for projects to be time phased to reflect the commercial relevance and also the Council's priority for regeneration projects; and that the normal planning processes and consultation will be used as projects develop.

5. Potential for conflict between the Council as a partner in a LABV, the statutory objectives of the local planning authority, and any future changes in political priority: *Sites selected for initial development by the LABV have been informed by planning policies and guidelines. Whilst this situation does not presume planning permission, neither do the projects suggest development would be unrealistic. Maintaining political priority will be assisted by a transparent process and following the establishment of the LABV ensuring the delivery of key commercial and community projects.*

6. Short term increase in the cost of the Capital Programme due to the delay associated with creating a LABV: *Planning significant regeneration projects for medium term delivery. Robust management of the Capital Programme by Members and Officers to ensure major capital investment is delivered within the LABV.*

7. Potential market saturation with demand outstripping supply of suitable joint venture partners: *Soft market testing to be undertaken in preparation for the procurement process.*

8. Not being able to secure the right joint venture partner following procurement: *It is envisaged that a competitive dialogue procurement procedure will be used. This process will allow the Council to set the selection and award criteria in order to secure the right joint venture partner. It will also provide the opportunity for the Council to define the proposed working relationship for the LABV.*

9. Joint venture partner "cherry picking" commercial sites for development rather than community sites: *This will be tested fully during the procurement process. The partnership business plan will define the objectives of the Council/LABV and the priorities for development. The partnership business plan (that will be updated over the life of the LABV) will require approval by the LABV Board, of which Council will be a 50% partner.*

10. Duplication of work / counter-productive work between Council staff and LABV staff: *The appropriateness of transferring some or all of the Asset Management Team will require further consideration. The Council will need to retain access to high level skills for supporting it in its decision making process as a 50% partner in the LABV, including the approval of Site Development Plans. Proposals will be developed and informed by the procurement process.*

11. Council capacity to match the capacity of the joint venture partner to serve on the LABV Board and make day to day operational decisions: *The Council will need to carefully consider the skills and availability of Members and/or Officers to represent the Council on the LABV Board. The Council's specialist legal advisors will provide training for representatives on the LABV Board in corporate governance matters including how to deal with potential conflicts of interest. Strategic decisions will be reserved to the Council (not the LABV Board), as a 50% partner in the LABV (e.g. approval of all business plans and material contracts that either govern or affect the LABV, expenditure over certain thresholds and appointment of key personnel to the LABV).*

12. Conflict of interest between elected Members / Officers and their role on the LABV Board: *The LABV will be a separate body, distinct from the Council. The prime responsibility for those appointed to the LABV Board will be to further the interests of the LABV (and this could sometimes be different to the interest of the Council). Those appointed to the LABV Board will need to deal with their interest as a partnership Board member when issues relating to the LABV come up at formal Council meetings, where the individual Board member(s) will need to consider if there is any conflict of interest. Elected Members currently have to consider the Code of Conduct requirements to declare personal and prejudicial interests. This may include leaving meetings and potentially the consideration of strategic decisions relating to the LABV. Specialist legal advice will be obtained to address the issue of conflicts of interest and responsibilities on the LABV Board.*

13. Requires defined development pipeline to maximise success and investment opportunities: *At the outset of the procurement the Council will identify the development opportunities for the LABV in the short, medium and long term. The partnership business plan (approved by the LABV Board) will set out priorities for development on a rolling 3 or 5 year basis to maximize success and investment opportunities, balanced against the objectives of the Council and LABV.*

14. May not achieve best value due to the property market and funding market: *The long term nature of the arrangement and opportunity for the private sector to phase developments including "batching" will seek to mitigate against this risk.*

15. Higher rewards need to be balanced against sharing in re-development costs: *It is expected that the Council will take a share in development risk in order to maximise the opportunities for development profit/reward. This will be further tested during the procurement.*

16. Significant deadlock and breakdown of the LABV: *It is expected that the parties act reasonably in their decision making and in doing so, approve the relevant business plans and development proposals, provided the parties are satisfied and objectives are met to avoid unnecessary deadlock. If deadlock arises at the LABV Board level, the Board members themselves will try to resolve the deadlock within a reasonable time frame. If they cannot do so, the deadlocked matter will then be referred to senior representatives of the LABV Partners. If the LABV Partners cannot resolve the deadlocked matter, then a project would not proceed. Where there is deadlock that would prevent the LABV continuing, the legal arrangements will contain the power for one LABV Partner to either buy out the other LABV Partner at an agreed valuation or to call for the winding up of the LABV.*

Recommendations for CMT:

1. To note the progress.

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Thames Valley Transactional Services Project | | | Project SPONSOR | Roger Parkin | |
| Wards affected : All | | | Project MANAGER | Phil Hamberger | |
| | Timeline | Budget | Issues & Risks | OVERALL STATUS | Date of update report |
| Current period | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN | 05/01/2012 |
| <i>Previous month</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | <i>GREEN</i> | <i>08/12/2011</i> |
| Project start date: | 01/02/2011 | | Anticipated Project end date: | 01/04/2012 | |
| <p>0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%</p> | | | | | |
| Has this highlight report been agreed and authorised by the Project Sponsor? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No (draft) <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | |
| Key activities completed / milestones achieved in this period: | | | | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All project documentation was collated and held in a central location for audit purposes. 2. Briefings were given to unsuccessful suppliers and no challenge was received. 3. Commenced staff briefings with the preferred supply. 4. Detailed implementation planning has commenced. 5. Ongoing staff briefings introducing them to the preferred supplier and providing updates on progress to date. 6. Ongoing engagement with Unions - through DCF reporting on project progress. 7. Commenced engagement between the preferred supplier and the retained organisation via a briefing at Senior Leadership Team. | | | | | |
| Key activities / milestones scheduled for next period: | | | | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finalise all contract details and get the contract signed on 18/01/12. 2. Finalise asset register. 3. Finalise implementation plan. 4. Commence implementation. 5. Finalise TUPE list. 6. Agree joint communications strategy. 7. Agree joint risk register. 8. Continue staff briefings and 1-2-1's. 9. Continue Trade Union briefings. | | | | | |
| Key issues of risk / obstacles to progress: | | | | | |

1. Staff disruption and concern about TUPE transfer process. This risk continues to be a high priority for the project team as we move towards contract award. As such, this risk is regularly reviewed as part of the communications action plan for this project.

To mitigate this risk the project team continue to ensure that there is ongoing dialogue with staff informing them of progress and this will increase following award of the contract. The SBC Implementation Plan includes as a priority a joint communication plan in partnership with the successful supplier to enable early staff engagement to take place. Activities will include:

- Ongoing staff Briefings on the TUPE process and the impact on staff.
- Surgeries with the Berkshire Pensions office to advise individual staff.
- Questions and Answer sessions with both the final supplier and Transactional Services Management Team.
- Additional site visits if deemed necessary.
- HR Surgeries if required.

The first of these briefings took place with all staff on 13th December 2011 and Team Briefings commenced on 14th December. 1-2-1 meetings with staff who requested them took place during December and early January and further meetings are being arranged.

2. Desired levels of service are not achieved. Clear specification and service credits have been discussed and agreed by the project team. These have been included as part of the ISFT Specification which was released 21st October. This has also been further embedded within the evaluation criteria for the ISFT and direct conversations with the suppliers at Competitive Dialogue have further informed the desired standards of service required. The KPIs are forming part of the contract.

3. Engaging with a private sector partner for the provision of customer services inherent with risk. Legal Services continue to be fully engaged with the procurement process to protect the council's interests and have been involved to ensure that there is a robust contract in place with either supplier.

4. Project fails to meet the timescales. Rigorous project management methodology is adhered to; service experts are fully engaged which allows various milestones to be achieved to target. The project has in place a high level project plan which continues to be monitored and reported to CMT monthly. The Project team ensure that the timetable continues to offer leverage and flexibility without compromising the project to ensure that each stage is completed with full engagement with all key stakeholders and provides the necessary processes to make an informed choice which will benefit the council. The timetable remains on target and it is anticipated that the contract will start on time on 2nd April 2012.

5. Unsuccessful procurement of a partner. The Project team adopted a flexible and creative approach to secure a suitable partner whilst ensuring that the overall objectives of this procurement were not compromised. The preferred supplier has indicated that they are very keen to undertake this work.

6. The risk of challenge. The project team have conducted a robust process which should mitigate the risk of successful challenge. All potential suppliers were offered feedback during the ALCATEL period and detailed feedback was given to those who requested it. As a result no challenge was received.

Recommendations for CMT:

1. CMT note the progress made to date on the project.
2. Support and fully endorse the importance of engagement with the retained organisation.

7. Performance scorecard update

This report describes the Council's latest performance for the period to 31st December 2011 as measured by the basket of indicators used in the Corporate Balanced Scorecard.

The summary below provides an update on the Council's key Performance indicators as at 31st December 2011, and should be read in conjunction with the Scorecard attached as Appendix A to this report.

7.1. Key People Measures

All People Measures are provided by Human Resources department, and this is reported on a quarterly basis. As such, the data referenced in this section of the scorecard remains the same as presented previously, relating to the period up to and including 30th September 2011. Data for the final quarter of 2011 is currently being collated and verified, and will be reported at a future date.

7.2. Key Volume Measures

SBC's reputation and that of the area as a whole can be enhanced by positive news stories in the local media. In 2011-12 to date there have been a total of 174 press releases issued, and CMT are encouraged to facilitate the release of positive news stories. The same period has seen 526 press enquiries and at least 1,196 press articles. Of the press coverage assessed by SBC Communications team in December, the majority (57.1%) was deemed to be either 'positive' or 'very positive'. Across the entire 2011-12 year to date (April-December 2011), the majority of press coverage has been positive or very positive (58.8%) and only 11% of coverage has been negative in tone.

SBC continues to receive a steady stream of Freedom of Information requests and press enquiries. Between April and December 2011, a total of 644 logged Fol applications have been made – an average of 72 every month; this represents an increase of some 14% on the same period for 2010-11, and has obvious impacts on staff time. A very large proportion (286 or 44.4%) of these 644 logged Fol requests have been made to the Resources and Regeneration directorate. A further 132 (20.5%) relate to the work of the Community and Wellbeing directorate, and 107 (16.6%) to that of Education and Children's Services. Directorates are encouraged to regularly review the subject matter of Fol requests being made of them, and to consider if a more proactive management of the public release of information (for example through targeted press releases or publication on the borough's website) could result in a more time-efficient process for employees and public alike.

SBC's website continues to receive a large number of visits (a peak of 95,269 in October, which reduced to 67,306 in December) and this underscores the value of the current redevelopment work on our website. The 67,306 visitors to our website in December made 205,232 visits and viewed 573,408 pages between them. December saw a total of 1,851 online payments; this results in a significant cost-reduction for processing these transactions, and represents excellent access for the public.

The number of Housing Benefit ('HB') and Council Tax benefit ('CTB') claimants continues to rise at a rate in excess of the national increase. This has implications for both the resource required to process and pay claims and adverse implications for the future projections of council tax income levels. Comparative data released by the Department for Work and Pensions indicates an increase compared to one year ago of c. 310 HB claimants and c.60

CTB claimants. Improving employment and income opportunities for local residents remains a core priority for Slough Borough Council and its partners.

Children's social care services continue to face an increased demand, and this is being tackled through a variety of initiatives including the 'Safeguarding Improvement' and 'Looked After children's placements' gold projects. During April to December 2011 children's social care has dealt with a total of 6,472 contacts (an increase of 25% on the same period in 2010) and 1,406 referrals (an increase of 3% compared to the same period one year previously). The number of looked after children in the care of the local authority remains higher than historic figures (at 189) as does the number of children subject to child protection plans (at 200, this has increased by 74% - 85 additional children – compared to December 2010). Note however that the number of looked after children when expressed as a rate per 10,000 resident child population remains below the England average.

Adult social care faces a similar pressure of increased demand – between April and December 2011 there have been 148 adult safeguarding referrals made which required a strategy meeting to be convened. This represents an increase of 33 (or 29%) on the numbers received in the same period of 2010.

The period April to December has seen 303 homeless cases determined, with 94% of decisions issued with 33 days. This represents a significant increase in volume of presenting cases over the corresponding period for the previous year (236 cases) *and* an improvement in speediness of decisions (from 91.3%).

7.3. Key Quality Measures

The period of April to December 2011 saw a total of 527 logged complaints across the council – a fall of almost 25% from the total (701) in the corresponding period one year previously. Provided that all complaints are being adequately recorded, then this represents considerable improvement in the quality of services delivered and in the public perception and satisfaction with the council. SBC is reiterating the importance of handling complaints according to established borough procedures. Complaints in the final quarter of 2011 were distributed across council directorates as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Resources and Regeneration | 74, | 54% |
| Customer and Transactional Services | 38, | 28% |
| Community and Wellbeing | 13, | 9% |
| Education and Children's Services | 9, | 7% |
| Chief Executive's division | 2, | 1% |

This distribution appropriately reflects the volumes of service contacts and types of service provided by each directorate. All directorates have experienced a reduction in complaint numbers compared to the previous quarter. Alongside this, the number of complaints which escalate to the final stage has reduced, indicating effective and early resolution of the issues

Within Children's social care, there is evidence of improvement. By the end of December, the proportion of Initial assessments completed within timescales had increased to 69.6% for the whole of the previous 12 months – this increase is due to particularly improved performance in the most recent period. (48.1% of such initial assessments had also been approved by a manager within timescales – a further assurance of improving quality as well as speed). Whilst this level remains slightly lower than one year ago, current improvement activity is achieving the desired results, with 86% of the initial assessments completed *during* December meeting

timescales. Similarly, with Core assessments, a greater proportion are being authorised by managers within timescales, and in-month performance is significantly better than the rolling year value yet shows – for those completed *during* December, 58% achieved timescales (significantly better than the 30.3% achieved in December 2010). There are therefore early signs of sustained remedial action, and early indications of a curve being turned.

Alongside this activity significant improvement can be evidenced since April 2011 on the proportion of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for the second or subsequent time. We are now within the nationally agreed zone of 'best practice' on this measure (at 12.4%).

An internal programme of regularised case auditing has commenced, with 16 individual children's files having been audited in October, 18 in November and 38 in December. This exercise will now be repeated every month, and a quarterly report on audit findings prepared in early 2012. Initial findings are being communicated to staff to ensure appropriate remedial activity is undertaken, as part of the overarching Safeguarding Improvement Plan and associated strands of work. This auditing activity sits alongside supervision and management review of case recording and practice in efforts to improve social work practice and the audit results are being fed into the training plan. Audits are showing signs of improvement in case recording, response to referrals, the quality of new assessments and outcome-focused child protection plans. Further work is continuing to drive up the management oversight, preventing drift in care planning and enabling progress with child protection plans.

All statements of special educational need prepared in 2011-12 have been issued within statutory timescales. Council support continues to be delivered to local schools in measures to improve performance and compliance with expected standards. There are now only 3 primary schools in special measures or with notice to improve.

Whilst numbers of missed bin collections remain very low as a proportion of the average monthly total of collections (193,517), the average number missed shows a marginal increase on the corresponding period one year ago: for domestic refuse, a monthly average between April and December of 48 missed bins compared to 44 for the same period in 2010, and for recycling bins an average between April and December of 39 missed bins compared to 37 for the same period in 2010.

7.4. Key Inspection Results

2011 has seen a number of published inspection reports of council services. Both inspections of Slough's Children's Centres have assessed provision as good; adult social care provision has been verified to meet all essential standards; looked after services were validated as adequate; safeguarding was assessed as inadequate. The Youth Offending team was found to require moderate improvement in safeguarding and substantial improvement for managing risk of harm. The Food Standards Agency audit of SBC produced no simple overall judgement, but identified multiple strengths and some recommendations for further action, which are being progressed.

All service areas subjected to external scrutiny react to the inspection findings, and work to address any identified service improvements, incorporating this activity in normal business improvement planning and generally within existing resources.

The council's response to the 2011 Ofsted inspection of safeguarding and looked after children's services and the Improvement Notice issued by the Secretary of State is well

documented, with all inspection recommendations being addressed and monitored by the Improvement Board. The service area has received additional funding and increased internal and external support to enable sufficient improvements to service delivery.

The Youth Offending Team has similarly implemented service improvement activity to address the issues of concern raised in its inspection of 2011, and progress is reviewed and scrutinised on a regular basis by the Youth Offending and Youth Justice Boards.

The Housing Benefits service inspection in 2009 was one of a short-lived and disputed inspection cycle conducted by the Audit Commission which assessed only 61 local authorities before being abandoned. One-third of councils were assessed as 'poor zero star' performers. Due to the quality of service improvement planning already underway at the time of the inspection, and to the responsiveness of the council to inspectors' findings, Slough was judged to have 'promising prospects for improvement', and has indeed addressed the inspection recommendations and improved the service provided.

The Housing Benefits service is amongst those transactional services which are shortly to be out-sourced to an external provider. This is accompanied with a series of contractual obligations to the new supplier that it is performance managed to meet agreed performance standards.

7.5. Key Outcome Measures

The Slough vision for the overall population outcomes we and our partners seek to achieve is now enshrined in the refreshed Sustainable Community Strategy, and the underlying performance indicator framework and action planning is in progress.

Crime rates (cumulative values from 1st April 2011) continue to be lower than the corresponding period one year ago:

- All crime: a rate of 83.87 recorded offences per 1,000 population (below the 97.51 of one year ago, i.e. a 14% decrease).
- Violence against the person: a rate of 5.97 recorded offences per 1,000 population (below the 7.44 of one year ago, i.e. a 20% decrease).
- Serious sexual offences: a rate of 0.83 recorded offences per 1,000 population (below the 1.05 of one year ago, i.e. a 21% decrease).
- Serious acquisitive crime: a rate of 18.94 recorded offences per 1,000 population (below the 23.34 of one year ago, i.e. a 19% decrease).

Unemployment rates in December (as measured by the JSA claimant rate) remain at 3.8% - a value just lower than the national average (3.9%) but remaining above the average for the South East (2.6%).

This year continues to see fewer households in temporary accommodation (81 in December 2011 compared to 94 in December 2010), and most annual school achievement results show improvement.

Slough continues to secure long-term permanent futures for looked after children: In the year to December 2011, 20 looked after children have been secured permanent alternative families through adoption or special guardianship orders; this equates to a value of 15.6% for indicator PAF C23, which represents significant improvement on the position one year ago of 6.8%.

The Full Performance Scorecard is provided as Appendix A.

8. Financial Reporting

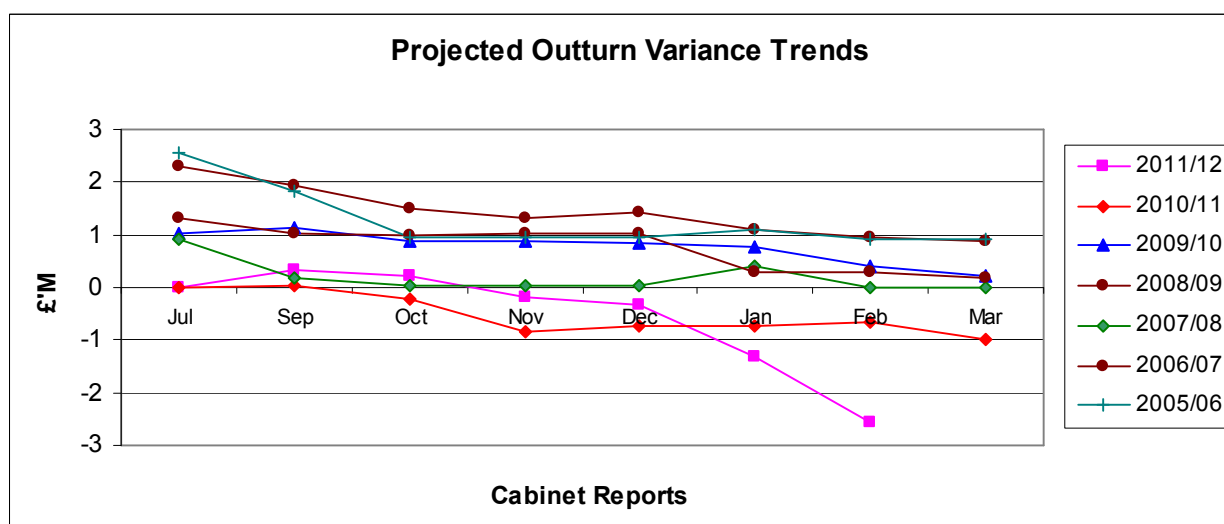
- 8.1. The Council's net revenue budget for 2011/12 is £105.1m.
- 8.2. The Housing Services agreed net operating budget for 2011/12 is a surplus of £87K.

9. Projected Outturn Position as at 31st December 2011

- 9.1. There is currently a forecast under spend for the 2011/12 General Fund at the end of period nine of £2.578m. This is a reduction in net expenditure of £1,255K since the previous month.
- 9.2. For the Housing revenue account there is currently forecast under spend against budget of £116K.
- 9.3. The position is summarised in Table 1, on the following page, and detailed in Appendix B.

Table 1 - Projected as at 31st December 2011

| Directorate | Base Budget | Current Net Budget | Actual YTD | Projected Outturn | Variance Over / (Under) Spend C = B - A |
|---|----------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|--|
| | £'M | £'M | £'M | £'M | £'M |
| Community and Wellbeing | 39.139 | 41.411 | 24.207 | 40.391 | (1.020) |
| Education and Childrens Services | 27.789 | 31.576 | 22.856 | 30.485 | (1.091) |
| Customer and Transactional Services | 5.206 | 5.925 | 60.173 | 5.996 | 0.071 |
| Resources and Regeneration | 33.257 | 34.656 | 25.985 | 34.152 | (0.504) |
| Chief Executive | 0.657 | 1.094 | 1.153 | 1.049 | (0.045) |
| Corporate | 0.266 | 0.266 | 0.299 | 0.277 | 0.011 |
| Total Cost of Services | 106.314 | 114.928 | 134.673 | 112.350 | (2.578) |
| % of revenue budget over/(under) spent by Services | | | | | -2.24% |
| Treasury Management | 3.017 | 3.017 | 0.000 | 3.017 | 0.000 |
| Contingencies, Earmarked Reserves and Trading Accounts | 4.233 | (3.329) | (4.295) | (3.329) | 0.000 |
| Early Intervention Grant | (7.140) | (7.246) | (5.435) | (7.246) | 0.000 |
| Council Tax Freeze Grant | (1.187) | (1.197) | (1.077) | (1.197) | 0.000 |
| New Homes Bonus Grant | (0.130) | (0.454) | (0.454) | (0.454) | 0.000 |
| Local Services Support Grant | 0.000 | (0.612) | (0.459) | (0.612) | 0.000 |
| Sub Total | (1.207) | (9.822) | (11.720) | (9.822) | 0.000 |
| Total General Fund | 105.107 | 105.107 | 122.954 | 102.529 | (2.578) |
| % of revenue budget over/(under) spent in total | | | | | -2.45% |



10. Month on Month Movement in Variances

- 10.1. Community and Wellbeing** net controllable Revenue budget for 2011/12 is now £41.411m. This has reduced by £3k after the final virement of budgets related to the transfer of the Caretakers function to the Resources Directorate.

The projected total net expenditure after taking into account all known commitments and the latest projected savings is £40.392m.

However earmarked reserve requests of £302k in favour of the Drugs & Community Safety and £487k for the Transformation Grant will be made at the end of the year. The Drug & Community Safety request is result of a plan to ensure that this grant which can only be used for Drug Treatment is available next year to assist with the expected reduction in grant resources in 2012/13. This will ensure that essential front line services can be maintained whilst commissioning plans are adjusted to cope with the reduced funds. The Transformation Grant was unexpectedly received late in the budget making process this year. These funds will now be spent over the next 2 years to accelerate the progress of the significant change programme within the social care division, which will deliver significant savings whilst restructuring services in line with the personalisation agenda. If approved, this will make the final variance for the Department £231k (0.6% of the budget).

This is a movement of +£39k since last month and is due to increased pressure on the Adult Social Care and PC&P divisions and offset by savings on Culture & Skills and Public Protection.

- 10.2. Education and Children's Services** net controllable budget for 2011/12 is £31.576m, and the projected total net expenditure is currently £30.310m. Members will recall that there are significant net pressures within the Directorate. The forecast pressure on looked after children placement budgets has been addressed through the use of corporate contingency (£600k) and initiatives within departmental budgets. In addition, the Safeguarding Improvement Plan (£167k) has been funded from additional corporate contingency. This month, there are additional significant savings Early Years (£161k) and from Youth (£313k) of which a request is made to carry forward £175k.

10.3. Commercial and Transactional services is currently forecasting an over spend position of £71k. This represents a positive movement of £106k from that reported last month.

10.4. Resources and Regeneration's Annual budget has decreased by £102,000 to £34.756m following allocation of funding in respect of Finance staff moving to Customer & Transactional services.

Forecast for the year is now £34.152m which is £504,000 under the revised budget after assigning £300,000 to Member priority projects in Transport & Planning. All programmed works are under discussion with contractors to identify potential available capacity to carry out these priority works in 2011/12.

The Directorate is examining budgets and contingencies on a continuous basis to identify all opportunities for savings and/or mitigation of known pressures. All service changes being considered for next year are also being examined with potential in year savings being identified.

Discussions with contractors continued on proposed inflationary increases and levels of service within.

10.5. The Chief Executive's directorates' net controllable budget for 2011/12 is £1,094k and the current projected under spend position is £45k.

10.6. The Corporate service area is forecasting an £11k over spend at this point in time in relation to prior years' pensions costs.

10.7. Treasury Management reports a breakeven position.

10.8. The Housing Revenue Account balances are forecast to be £9.936m at year end which is £688,000 higher than budget and includes an improvement of £201,000 in net operating income since last period.

Transformation activities have been evaluated and £127,000 of contingency has been released accordingly. Further slippage in Planned maintenance activity has been identified and £74,000 has been assigned to the 2012/13 programme.

Self- Financing continues to be high on the agenda with the 30 year business plan in progress. Borrowing costs / timescales are being examined to inform a revised treasury management policy.

11. Emerging Issues / Risks

Introduction

It should be noted at this point that the 2011-12 PPRG process is in progress and therefore savings will be identified to be delivered in the current financial year. These savings are not reflected in this report.

Directorate Specific

11.1. Community and Wellbeing

The department has to implement savings to the value of £3.3m in 11/12. The budget management performance of the Department is entirely dependent on the successful delivery of vast majority of these savings. These savings are monitored very closely and where possible the financial impact included in this monitor. The successful implementation of these savings remains the department's biggest risk.

11.2. Education and Children's Services

As Members will be aware, legal and regulatory requirements in relation to Safeguarding vulnerable children and young people in Slough have consistently impacted adversely and resulted in budget pressures in Children and Families. The increasing numbers of children looked after, high cost of residential placements and high usage of independent external fostering together define a significant and continuing financial risk.

Considerable emphasis has been placed on financial prudence this year as was the case last year. Steps have been taken to under spend on some budgets to offset the major pressure within Social Care, particularly related to high cost placements. Some of these under spends have not been realised until the third quarter of this financial year.

A long term strategy, based on recruitment and increasing use of internal foster carers and adoptive families alongside an "Early Intervention" strategy, should lead to a reduction in pressure on the social care front line by increasing services for vulnerable families in Slough. However experience elsewhere suggests that, assuming demographic social trends in Slough do not continue as at present, a full scale strategic shift may take up to 3 years to mature and realise significant savings.

By adopting a robust and focussed project management approach, this timescale may be reduced. Cabinet on 17 October approved investment of £826k in a number one-off projects to address the budget pressure.

The Early Intervention strategy is being reviewed as part of the sector led support offer related to the delivery of the Improvement Plan.

In the interim, the directorate is continuing to review all budgets in order to identify any further budget optimisation opportunities so that services are delivered within the available funding envelope in 2011-12.

There are some significant areas of development still in transition across the directorate including the implementation of the Integrated Youth Support Service (IYSS), possible staffing structure changes in Children and Families and the review of education services. Detailed work on these is in progress but until finalised an accurate assessment of their financial position cannot be completed.

In addition to this, a draft Improvement Plan of work required in response to the Ofsted Inspection has now been approved by the Minister. The financial impact of the additional work has been reflected in this report as described above.

The Directorate is also currently working alongside schools in the review of the centrally retained elements of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) which is expected to result in some significant changes in the way some services are shaped and delivered. It is unclear at this stage what impact this may have on services funded by the Local Authority.

Like all councils, Slough is managing the challenge of delivering services within reducing funding envelopes over the next 3 years. The PPRG process is now in progress and proposals have been agreed through PPRG to deliver savings against previously reported targets. Further work is in progress to deliver additional corporate and directorate savings in 2012-13 and beyond.

11.3. Customer and Transactional Services

The main risk for Customer and Transactional Services is to deliver the implementation of recent outsourcing decision contract awarded to Arvato Bertelsmann. Future savings are predicated on the successful integration and handover.

In addition to the above it is imperative that the Council tightly monitors its Benefits subsidy position with regard to the minimisation of overpayment errors made by the authority.

£278k of redundancy costs within Directorate. Should be met from central contingency budget but yet to be confirmed.

£384k of ALMO income. Currently no recharge mechanism in place to recover costs of service provision by the Directorate to the Housing team.

Subsidy and benefit payments reconciliation process was reviewed. Outturn is closely monitored but remains a high risk area.

11.4. Resources and Regeneration

The economy remains a key risk for the Directorate particularly the current rate of inflation.

A number of highways properties that had been leased to Co-op Homes were handed back in December 2009. Redevelopment plans and timescales are being examined by Housing services to determine if short term lets are feasible to offset the current loss of rent to the Authority. All miscellaneous properties owned by the authority are also being examined with a view to transferring these to Housing services prior to Self Financing being implemented in respect of social housing.

Timing of savings in Property Services is being evaluated as closure of the Town Hall was delayed from the end of March until the end of May for the Town Hall Annexe and from the end of September to the end of December for the Old Town Hall. This is particularly relevant in respect of business rates as the regulations for dispensation have been tightened in recent years.

Levels of waste collected are currently higher than anticipated and this may lead to additional costs over budget.

Transformation activities continue across the directorate.

Asset valuations and timing of planned disposals is being examined to determine the timing effect of creating a LABV in 2012/13. Additional professional fees may be incurred in advance of the set up of this fund.

All of these risks will be closely monitored and the impact clearly identified and reported as and when it is necessary.

11.5. Chief Executive

No specific risks noted.

11.6. Housing Revenue Account

The settlement payment for self financing has been re-estimated in the “shadow” determination at £137m which is a £10 – 12 million increase from the previous calculations. This is mainly due to the inflation estimate increasing from 2.5% to 3.5% (See rent increase in emerging opportunities for mitigation) and the discount rate being reduced from 7% to 6.5% (As per the announcement in September borrowing rates from the PWLB have been reduced specifically for this event) in the financial model. Overall effects are being examined as part of the revised 30 year business plan.

Recent Government announcements include possible changes to the right to buy scheme designed to increase sales. This will have ramifications for the business plan going forward and rent income projections are being reworked accordingly

Should the Britwell regeneration scheme fail to agree a realistic partnership with private contractors potentially around 100 properties would be added back to the housing stock and subsequently be included in the final figures to central government thus increasing the burden on borrowing costs. Demolition in these circumstances may proceed and a separate rebuild of dwellings examined. Use of additional right to buy receipts is also being examined as part of this scenario.

These properties would remain uninhabitable with a further pressure on revenue with loss of rental income and costs for demolition and clearing, and security.

12. Emerging Opportunities

Directorate Specific

12.1. Community & Wellbeing

The Department of Health has announced the release of funds from PCT to Local Authorities designed to improve relieve pressure on hospital beds. This department will receive about £350k in revenue support and further sum for Disabled Facilities Grant. This will provide a challenge for the department to design and implement a programme that will deliver the benefits prescribed by the PCT. But it may also present an opportunity to improve services to local residents and help to relieve pressure on stretched budgets.

12.2. Education & Children’s Services

SMT are continuing to consider additional one-off and recurring budget optimisation opportunities in order to manage the budget.

12.3. Customer and Transactional Services

The department will look to exploit additional opportunities through the implementation of the partnership arrangement with Arvato Bertelsmann.

12.4. Resources and Regeneration

Discussions with neighbouring councils and our contractor Enterprise ltd are taking place to develop cost reduction initiatives.

Value added tax treatment for Trade waste sales has been challenged and the national position taken by local authorities has been accepted by Her Majesties Revenue & Customs. A tax refund including interest of £350k - £400k is now expected. Accounting Treatment for this refund is being examined with our advisors to determine the way forward in respect of potential refunds to clients.

Contractual discussions with Enterprise Limited include initiatives to maximise the profit share in the contract whilst maintaining or improving unit costs in all operations.

All miscellaneous dwellings in the Authority are being examined with a view to let them as temporary accommodation and offset existing risks of rent loss wherever possible.

Recruitment to replace agency staff is high on the agenda for the directorate and recent appointments particularly in Transportation have been encouraging and savings in employee costs have been forecast accordingly. All service areas are working with HR to achieve recruitment to established posts.

Transformation activities continue across the Directorate including the establishment of Transactional services and the contract for an external partner.

12.5. Housing Revenue Account

Rent restructuring is based on RPI indexation as at 30 September each year. This was approx 5.6% in 2011 and the rent increase is therefore likely to be approximately 7% for 2012/13.

The borrowing limit for Housing is proposed at £178m and the business plan currently indicates that £160m will be utilised to implement Self-financing. Additional borrowing to support affordable homes development may therefore be available.

Improvements have been implemented to streamline the processing of rents into the financial system on a more timely and efficient basis. Entries are now being made weekly and with this information now easily available a more accurate profiling will be available for future Business plans. Additionally provision has been included to smooth the fluctuations precipitated by collection of the monthly / Quarterly invoices.

The Housing Management restructure is proving to be successful and has been fully implemented. Further efficiency savings may be made which will be reinvested in the community strategy priorities in areas where concerns have been raised by tenants and members when available.

13. Staffing Budgets

CMT will be aware that as part of the exercise to implement Job Evaluation and Harmonisation all staffing budgets were re-calculated from a zero base. This approach eliminated the existing staff turnover targets and provided directorate budgets with 99% of the total cost requirement under their control. This comprised 98% which was allocated directly to service budgets and 1% held by each director to manage any staffing pressures and changes as they arose. The remaining 1% is held centrally within contingency balances.

14. Capital Monitoring

The Capital Monitoring Report was presented to the Capital Strategy Board on 16th January 2012 showing the 2011-12 Capital Budget as £58,328k and spend to the end of December 2011 as £28,911k. Total projected spend for 2011-12 at the end of March 2012 is £45,275k. The analysis can be found in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Consolidated Capital Expenditure as at 31st December 2011

| Directorate | Expenditure | | Balance | 2011-12 | Slippage |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | Budget | Actual | | Projection | |
| Heart of Slough | 16,122 | 8,736 | 7,386 | 14,456 | 1,666 |
| Resources (excluding Heart of Slough) | 9,607 | 3,761 | 5,846 | 6,951 | 2,656 |
| Education & Children's Services | 21,314 | 13,699 | 7,430 | 18,374 | 2,940 |
| Community & Wellbeing | 1,086 | 107 | 979 | 323 | 763 |
| Customer & Transactional Services | 500 | 428 | 72 | 495 | 5 |
| Housing Revenue Account | 9,699 | 2,180 | 7,519 | 4,676 | 5,023 |
| Total | 58,328 | 28,911 | 29,232 | 45,275 | 13,053 |

15. Inter- directorate Budget Virements

In accordance with Financial Regulations we report the following inter-directorate budget virements processed during December 2011.

| Service Area | | Amount | Reason |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|---|
| From | To | £ | |
| Resources and Regeneration | Customer and Transactional Services | 103,370 | Transfer of staffing budgets for the Accounting Technician Team |

16. Conclusion

The position as at the end of December 2011 leaves an overall headline under spend position of £2.578m against the General Fund revenue account.