
REPORT TO:	Housing and Community Services	AGENDA ITEM: 7
DATE OF MEETING:	15 March 2007	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	Director of Community Services	OPEN PARAGRAPH NO:
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	Stuart Batchelor Ext 5820	DOC:
SUBJECT:	'Towards An Excellent Service' Performance Assessment and External Validation	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	All	TERMS OF REFERENCE: HCS07

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 Members accept the results of the 'Towards An Excellent Service' Self Assessment and External Validation and approve the development of an Improvement Plan.
- 1.2 The 'Towards An Excellent Service' Self Assessment is repeated in March 2008 and progress reported to Committee.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The report informs Members of the results of the self assessment and external validation of the 'Towards An Excellent Service' Model undertaken in February and seeks the approval for developing and delivering an Improvement Plan over the coming two years.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The desire to improve performance is now having a major impact on all public services. Local Government is being challenged to raise its game through Best Value, performance indicators, inspection and Comprehensive Performance Assessments (CPA).
- 3.2 The Towards An Excellence Service Framework for Sport and Recreation Services allows a similar approach to be adopted for leisure and cultural services and is now recognised by the public leisure sector, Sport England and the Audit Commission as the principle model for measuring performance. This is particularly the case now as the Idea have established a process of external validation to provide a quality assurance measure to the process.
- 3.3 There are eight key factors that influence the quality of Sport and Recreation services delivered to users. Through effective management in all these areas it is possible to

improve the services delivered on a continuous basis. These eight factors form the basis of the assessment.

- Leadership
- Policy and Strategy
- Community Engagement
- Partnership Working
- Use of Resource
- People Management
- Standards of Service
- Performance Measurement and Learning

- 3.4 In July 2005 the Division undertook the first 'Towards An Excellent Service' self assessment. The Model assessment scored the Division as 'fair' and an Improvement Plan was approved by Committee.
- 3.5 In February 2007 the Division undertook the self assessment process again. This involved seven self assessment sessions involving a total of more than 20 staff, partners and stakeholders who scored the service as 'good'.
- 3.6 On this occasion the self assessment has been subject to External Validation which involved an Assessor, appointed by the Idea visiting the District and spending two days interviewing staff, partners, councillors and customers/stakeholders and reviewing all the supporting documentation. The provisional report from the Assessor confirms the 'Good' rating.
- 3.7 The Council is the first authority in Derbyshire and one of only several in the East Midlands to have completed the self assessment process and been externally validated.
- 3.8 The changes in the self assessment score are shown below:-

Overall rating 2005

	Leadership	Policy & strategy	Community engagement	Partnership working	Use of resources	People management	Standards of service	Performance Management & learning
Excellent								
Good		★		★	★			
Fair	★		★			★		★
Poor							★	

Overall rating 2007

	Leadership	Policy & strategy	Community engagement	Partnership working	Use of resources	People management	Standards of service	Performance Management & learning
Excellent								
Good	★	★	★	★	★	★		★
Fair							★	
Poor								

3.8 Clearly there has been significant improvement in the Service over the last two years with only one area not reaching a 'good' standard.

3.9 The next stage of the process is to produce an Improvement Plan.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 The Division has shown progress in becoming more effective and efficient and providing high quality service

6.0 Community Implications

6.1 The Leisure and Community Development Division is providing an innovative and effective service which is increasingly meeting the needs of the local community.

7.0 Conclusions

7.1 The progress of the Division from being graded as 'Fair' to 'Good' is testimony to the hard work and dedication of a small team of officers and partners and stakeholders.

7.2 The external validation provides independent verification of the teams own self assessment and confirms the significant progress over the last two years.