

# Scrutiny Overview Report (2009/10 YTD)

Corporate, Adult Services and Social Inclusion Select Committee (CASSI)

## *Policy, Performance and Communications (PPC) Service Overview*

The PPC service grouping is split into four teams. Set out below is a summary of the key activities that each team carries out.

### **Intelligence and Improvement**

- Leading and developing performance management across the Council.
- Reporting corporate performance quarterly to CMT, Cabinet and Executive Scrutiny.
- Producing the Council Plan and Summary and co-ordinating service planning across the Council.
- Carrying out consultation activity including co-ordinating the statutory Place Survey, producing the Council's employee survey, running the Council's Viewpoint Residents' Panel and undertaking bespoke survey work on specific service areas.
- Developing, monitoring and reporting on the Local Area Agreement with our partners in the voluntary and public sectors.
- Leading on key national initiatives such as Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA).

### **Policy and Development**

- Driving the Council's approach to equality, diversity and community cohesion, developing strategies and statutory schemes including consulting with key stakeholders.
- Ensuring that the Council and partners work within a coherent and consistent policy framework through interpretation and implementation of national policy and guidance and the development and delivery of the borough's Sustainable Community Strategy and associated plans.
- Providing advice, guidance and information as well as bespoke training on equality and diversity and community cohesion.
- Leading key organisational development projects such as Members' Policy Seminars.
- Supporting the development and delivery of Setting the Standards and Extended Management Team (EMT).

### **Partnerships and Engagement**

- Responsible for the development of Stockton Renaissance, the local strategic partnership for the borough.
- Responsible for the development of and support for the four Area Partnerships.
- Co-ordination role for the thematic partnerships.
- Delivery and implementation of the Neighbourhood Element government initiative, covering the deprived areas of Portrack & Tilery and Mount Pleasant, working with the community driven St Ann's Development Board
- Responsible for the implementation of the Communities Fund allocation for the Area Partnerships.
- To support the community engagement function across the Borough.

### **Communications**

- Writing press releases, answering media enquiries and devising and managing media strategies.

- Arranging media photo opportunities.
- Devising and delivering promotional marketing campaigns.
- Writing and producing Stockton News, Keeping You in Touch, A-Z Guide to Services, and various other publications.
- Helping to develop the Council's website.
- Providing communications assistance to elected members and officers.
- Maintaining a corporate photo library.
- Maintaining the Council's corporate identity.

*What has been achieved?*

### **Intelligence and Improvement**

- Employee Survey results at Service Group Level been shared and discussed with Heads of Service at Service Grouping Management Teams (SGMTs) and reported back through KYIT, SGMTs and Team Meetings to employees. Corporate and Service Group action plans are being developed and coordinated through Human Resources (HR).
- The final Place Survey results have been published and shared with Members and partners.
- Viewpoint Survey number 26 was undertaken. Headline results are currently being evaluated.
- Stats@Stockton development work has been satisfactorily completed. Data within Stats@Stockton has been updated and new data added. Training materials are now being developed for use by colleagues across the Council.
- Progress was made on Records Management. The documentation of all physical records held by the Intelligence & Improvement Team was completed during quarter 1 and a similar exercise was completed to identify the folders held electronically on the 'I' drive used by the team.
- A questionnaire was prepared, distributed, analysed and reported on for the Advice and Information EIT Review on behalf of the review lead officer.
- The 2009 refresh of the LAA was successfully achieved with the process of refreshing for 2010 currently underway.
- A successful outcome has been achieved for the first year of CAA, with no red flags within the Area Assessment, an overall rating of 3 for the Organisational Assessment and the Use of Resources rating of 4 was one of only three of its kind in the country.

### **Policy and Development**

- A successful Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) event was held with national speakers. The PVE action plan was approved.
- The Community Cohesion Strategy was re-launched.
- Diversity Officer Training has been held with HR Senior officers.
- The team delivered a number of Members' policy seminars, which have all been well attended. Topics included: alcohol misuse and promoting the work of the Drugs and Alcohol Action Team, the Medium Term Financial Plan and the future of care for older people.
- Regular policy briefing summaries are produced on key policy releases from central government. Topics covered include Building Britain's Future, setting out how the Government intends to work with people in Britain on the key tasks facing the country and the Equality Bill, which is needed to strengthen the law and bring forward new measures to fight discrimination. The Bill intends to streamline the law, helping people to understand their rights and helping businesses to comply with the law.
- A "Celebration Generation" event was held on Stockton High Street during SIRF, which promoted the work of an intergenerational group and gathered views on the borough from residents. Over 100 surveys were completed. Feedback was very positive. The results will be used by the group to develop projects in partnership with Stockton Heritage.

- A Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) recruitment event was held at ARC in Stockton. Representatives from the police, prison service and Council attended and offered advice and support to delegates.
- Secured £52k for government funding to support a Connecting Communities Initiative
- Secured £198,863K of government funding to deliver a project around the impact of migration.

### Partnerships and Engagement

- Successful allocation of the Communities Funding through the Area Partnerships on key community projects linked to priority areas around jobs and skills, financial inclusion and piloting a volunteering access project.
- The faith Network has been developed and Cleveland Police have requested to be part of it, with plans underway to pilot a health project.
- Financial Inclusion: The Partnerships and Engagement team led, on behalf of Infinity (the multi agency financial inclusion group), a number of “Credit Crunch events”. These events were drop-in sessions held in local communities for residents to access advice and support from a number of agencies who specialise in financial inclusion. Over 170 residents took part.
- Some key achievements from the Neighbourhood Element team who are working with the St Ann’s Development Board to benefit Portrack & Tilery with Mount Pleasant areas include:
  - Graffiti and Fly tipping action week: - 18 tonnes of bulky household waste collected. 114 interventions carried out by enforcement including issuing fixed penalty notices, untaxed vehicles, confiscations of alcohol and tobacco and household refuse.
  - Beat the Boredom events ran monthly with TFM since June 2009 in partnership with Youth Crime Action planning receiving an average of 300 young people a month attending.

### Communications

- Communications have provided support on key projects and issues, for example Stockton International Riverside Festival, Infinity Spring Festival, Infinity Bridge and Thornaby Town Centre openings and the TS Kellington.
- A development event was held for managers, which increased awareness of media requirements. The event received very positive feedback.
- Three issues of “Stockton News” and six issues of staff newsletter “Keeping You in Touch” completed.
- Created the “Ease the Squeeze” website to provide advice during the financial crisis.
- Created a Twitter and Facebook site for the Council.
- Completion of the EIT review into Communications, Consultation and Engagement and creation of a new communications service on 1 December 2009.

### *What has proved more difficult / not been achieved?*

- Development of the Performance Management Framework, which, due to changes within the Council and partner organisations, will be developed in a different way, building on Stats@Stockton.
- The implementation of the new national performance framework, Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) has provided some challenges in relation to both the overall process and being able to provide robust evidence of impact, particularly in relation to securing ‘green flags’ - to be picked up through LSP thematic groups and Policy Officers’ Group.
- There has been some slippage against the LAA, primarily due to the impact of the economic climate on the relevant indicators. However, these are to be included in the negotiations for the 2010 LAA refresh.

