

Report to: Corporate Issues Scrutiny Committee

Date: 18th August 2008

Report of: Chief Executive
Director of Corporate Resources
Director of Legal and Democratic
Services

Report No:

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Report Title: **Joint Central Departments' performance dashboard end of year 2007/8**

Non Confidential: This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public

Purpose: This report provides the Corporate Issues Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the performance data and financial outturn for the Central Departments for 2007/2008.

Recommendations: The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to comment upon and scrutinise:-

- i) the Central Departments' service and financial performance, as detailed in this report;
- ii) the improvement actions contained in the report
- iii) the transfers to and from reserves made in 2007/2008, and the balances on reserve accounts as at 31st March 2008;
- iv) the revenue outturn for the Legal Services Trading Account
- v) the capital spend for 2007/2008 and approve the roll forward of the capital programme for 2008/2009 onwards.

Decision:

Background Doc(s):
- all enclosed

Appendix A	BVPI Exception Report 2007/08
Appendix B	Corporate Strategy & Finance Revenue Outturn 2007/2008
Appendix C	Contributions made to Reserves
Appendix D	Reserve Balances as at 31 st March 2008
Appendix E	Legal Services Trading Account Outturn 2007/2008
Appendix F	Gershon Efficiencies
Appendix G	Budget Growth 2007/2008
Appendix H	2007/2008 Capital Expenditure, Actual compared to Projected
Appendix I	Corporate Strategy & Finance 2008/2009 to 2009/2011 Capital Programme

Signed:

Leader / Executive Member

Monitoring Officer

Date: _____ Page 1 of 15

Summary:

This report presents the key service performance data and financial outturn for 2007/2008 for the Central Departments: Corporate Resources, Chief Executive's and Legal & Democratic Services.

The report asks the Scrutiny Committee to comment upon and scrutinise:

- i) the Central Departments' service and financial performance, as detailed in this report;
- ii) the improvement actions contained in the report;
- iii) the transfers to and from reserves made in 2007/2008, and note the balances on reserve accounts as at 31st March 2008;
- iv) the revenue outturn for the Legal Services Trading Account;
- v) the capital spend for 2007/2008 and the roll forward of the capital programme for 2008/2009 onwards.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to inform the Corporate Issues Scrutiny Committee of:-

- i) how the services of the 3 Central Departments have performed, as measured by a range of performance and management information;
- ii) the 2007/2008 revenue outturn compared to the original estimate and the contributions made to reserves in 2007/2008 and the balances on reserves at 31st March 2008;
- iii) the revenue outturn of the Legal Services Trading Account
- iv) the contributions made by Corporate Strategy & Finance towards the Authority's overall Gershon efficiency targets;
- v) budget growth in 2007/2008 and what has been achieved by it;
- vi) risks that were identified and that Risk Management Action Plans were in place to manage these risks; and
- vii) actual capital expenditure in 2007/2008 compared to the Capital Programme and to give details of the capital programme rolled forward to 2008/2009 onwards.

1. STRATEGIC COMMENTARY ON ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES IN 2007/8

The Central Departments' 3 Year Strategic Plan 2007-10 sets out what the central Departments will do to deliver on the Council's three main aims and six priority themes. In 2007/10, the central Departments have set themselves a number of challenging objectives to achieve this, including:

- Support the delivery of an effective Local Area Agreement
- Improve community cohesion
- Knowledge and information management - Improve the way the council handles information and data
- Modernising the Registration Service: To deliver government target for modernisation services for Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages
- Regional Governance
- Supporting the delivery of our change programme
- Effective Land & Property Management
- Remuneration Strategy: Development of a corporate approach to pay and remuneration in the context of EO/ODPM Pay and Workforce Strategy for Local Government
- Deliver effective workforce planning to the organisation
- Build skills and capacity in the organisation
- To develop the Corporate Complaints System further
- Reduce potential for, and support employees experiencing, psychological ill-health
- Review operational health, safety and wellbeing services and provision

At the end of 2007/08, strong progress has been made against these key objectives. Highlights include:

- The Institute of Community Cohesion (iCoCo) report into Bolton concluded that our arrangements for managing cohesion are as good as anywhere they had seen. Work is now ongoing to develop a Community Cohesion Strategy for Bolton, building on the iCOCO work, the Government's response to the Commission on Integration & Cohesion's 'Our Shared Futures' report and the Prevent agenda.

- An improved Corporate Complaints System has led to more complaints being responded to within standard and sharply increase customer satisfaction with complaints handling – from 21% two years ago to 41% today
- A corporate asset management plan is in place and being delivered, to enable to council to make best use of its land a property assets
- Work is ongoing to transfer the Registrations service from the Registrar General to the Council – a new governance plan is under development
- Bolton has played a full part in shaping the emerging regional governance framework
- We supported the organisation to gain its first ever corporate Investors in People (IiP) award
- Half of all council buildings are now accessible to people with disabilities – this number is set to grow to 70% over the next year
- The central departments are leading work to strengthen the organisation's approach to delivering better value for money (VFM) – raising standards, improving satisfaction and increasing efficiency
- Over 1600 appeals are currently being managed by our Pay and Grading Team. We are on track to implement a new pay structure in April 2009.

2. PERFORMANCE

2.1 Best Value Performance Indicators

2007-08 was the final year that BVPIs were collected as a new set of national indicators was launched in April 2008. Members will be aware that the Executive has recently endorsed a new performance framework with the Council, which includes the implementation and roll-out of the new national PI set.

Analysis of the central Departments' 2007/8 performance against the 31 statutory Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) within their remit (18 in Chief Exec's, 13 in Corporate Resources, none in Legal and Democratic) shows an improved picture for 2007-08 compared to the previous year:

- 59% of Bolton's BVPIs reached their year end target, this is slightly below the rate for the Council overall (60%).
- 67% of Central Departments' BVPIs improved performance compared with 2006-07 (again slightly below the Council overall). 19% declined in performance (18% for the Council overall), while 15% stayed the same.
- 3 indicators (BVPI 9, 10 and 14, please see appendix A for an update on improvement actions) fall within the bottom 2006-07 performance quartile (and are therefore amongst the worst 25% performers nationally. Improvement actions for BVPIs identified as bottom quartile at the end of 2007-08 are being implemented (see appendix A).

Year	No. of PIs	On target?	DoT?	Quartile (2006-07)			
2007/8	31	59%	67%	35%	35%	15%	15%
2006/7	31	52%	76%	42%	21%	21%	16%

Council	150	60%	69%	33%	30%	27%	10%
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Key messages:

Overall performance within the three Central Departments is very positive and in line with Council performance overall. Performance against more than two-thirds of statutory BVPIs has improved on last year from a position of strength with 70% in the top two performance brackets nationally. We have hit our target for three out of five hitting their targets.

Action:

The Executive Member is requested to work with Directors to improve performance of services whose BVPIs are off target, as well as those within the bottom performance quartile (see appendix A).

2.2 Priority Best Value Performance Indicators

Sixty-one of Bolton's BVPIs were identified as priority indicators at the start of 2007-08. 16 of those (9 in Chief Exec's, 7 in Corporate Resources) fall within the remit of the central departments. At the end of the financial year, analysis shows:

- 69% have improved and 56% are on target (compared to 65% and 54% Council-wide)
- More than two thirds fall in the top two quartiles
- 2 priority PIs (BVPI 9 and 10, see actions below) fell within the bottom quartile (improvement actions for those detailed at appendix A)

Year	No. of PIs	On target?	DoT?	Quartile (2006-07)			
2007/8	16	56%	69%	36%	29%	21%	14%
2006/7	16	50%	81%	40%	20%	20%	20%
Council	61	54%	65%	23%	27%	34%	16%

Key messages:

Performance of priority PIs in 2007/8 in the Central Departments remains strong, with more than two thirds improving from a position of strength and more than two thirds in the top two performance brackets nationally.

Action:

Executive Members are requested to continue to work with Directors to improve performance of priority indicators.

2.3. Sickness absence

For the organisation overall, sickness absence has fallen for the second successive year, down to 10.37 days per employee in 2007-08.

There is significant variance between central Departments, with sickness in Chief Executive's the lowest of any department, and improving on last year. Sickness levels in Corporate Resources are also down on last year but remain higher than the Council average. In Legal and Democratic Services, sickness levels are significantly lower than the Council average but have risen from last year.

It is also worth noting for the three central Departments that, because of the relatively small numbers of employees in the Central Departments, the average sickness absence levels are comparatively volatile, as the absence of 1 or 2 employees (or their return to work) can have a disproportionate effect (positive or negative).

Department	Total average days sickness per person	
	2007-08	2006-07
Chief Executives	7.01	8.89
Corporate Resources	11.74	13.59
Legal and Democratic	7.90	6.32
Organisation Overall	10.37	10.98

Action:

The Executive Member to work with Directors to manage sickness absence – with particular focus on departments where sickness has risen – to ensure that the revised managing sickness absence framework is implemented fully.

2.4. Customer care

The corporate customer care system monitors progress against the Council's customer care standards (excluding social care complaints). Analysis from the end of year 2007-08 shows:

- For the Council as a whole, by the end of the year, 1333 complaints had been received, of which 87% had been responded to within standard (14 days for a full response).
- A new corporate system for logging and responding to corporate complaints has been in place for two years. As this becomes more and more embedded and utilised by customers, the rise in the number of complaints recorded was to be expected.
- For the three Central Departments, response within standard shows a mixed picture but is, with the exception of Legal and Democratic, in line with the Council average. The small numbers involved in Chief Executive's and Legal and Democratic, who provide very few customer-facing services, however need to be borne in mind when looking at comparisons over the years.
- Encouragingly, the percentage of cases where learning from complaints has been added to inform further service improvement is consistently very high.

Department	Response within standard		Number of complaints		Learning added	
	2007-08	2006-07	2007-08	2006-07	2007/8	2006/7
Chief Executives	88%	100%	8	4	100%	100%
Corporate Resources	90%	80%	206	153	97%	96%
Legal and Democratic	79%	84%	29	25	98%	87%
Organisation Overall	87%	74%	1333	822	98%	52%

Actions:

The Executive Member is asked to work with Directors to ensure

- mechanisms to ensure the learning is being extracted from complaints, acted upon and evidenced
- the overall rate and quality of responses to complaints is further strengthened

2.5. Service Improvement Action Plan milestones

Service Improvement Action Plans (SIAPs) are a key part of our business planning process, enabling managers to plan their work programme throughout the year and track progress in delivering their service's goals. SIAPs are also critical to the delivery of the Council's priority themes and main aims.

Analysis of achievement of SIAP key tasks at year end shows a strong picture for the three central Departments. With more than four fifths (Chief Exec's) and up to 80% (Corporate Resources, Legal and Democratic) of tasks achieved, all Departments were broadly in line with the Council overall.

Where tasks were not achieved, this was mainly for one of the following reasons: capacity issues, changed priorities or external factors (e.g. delays caused by late government guidance)

SIAP year end review

Department	Number of Key Tasks	Achieved	Not Achieved	Not Updated
Chief Executives	71	60 (85%)	11 (15%)	0
Corporate Resources	157	125 (80%)	32 (20%)	0
Legal & Democratic Services	85	68 (80%)	17 (20%)	0
All Council	867	729 (84%)	129 (15%)	9 (1%)

Action:

The Executive Member is asked to work with Directors to review and address areas where SIAP tasks in 2007-08 were not delivered or have not been reported on yet.

2.6. Value for money

The Council's Executive Management have recently agreed an outline overall value for money strategy for the Council for the next three years. As a minimum, we are aiming to achieve 3% efficiency savings per annum over the next 3 years (as required by CSR 07).

All Departments, including the three central Departments have recently held a Star Chamber session with the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive to look at how each Department intends to deliver its target as part of a wider strategy of improvement work. The central Departments' vfm strategies will be presented to the Deputy Leader in August.

2.7. Portfolio challenges 2007/08 – implementing the recommendations

During the municipal year 2007/08, the Executive Member for HR, Performance and Diversity was responsible for to

- Championing and approving the overall corporate performance management framework
- Ensuring individual portfolios comply with all corporate minimum standards
- Driving data quality throughout the organisation
- Ensuring all departments are best placed to deliver continuous improvements in services with regard to efficiency, effectiveness and the needs and expectations of users..

All departments presented their approach to the Executive Member - a summary of these challenges and actions taken to date in the three Central Departments is detailed below.

CORPORATE RESOURCES

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report to the Executive Member for HR, Diversity and Performance on the 18th December 2007. This report provided the Executive Member with an outline of the approach that Corporate Resources had taken in relation to performance management, including areas for future development and also gave an overview of reported performance at Quarter 2 2007/08.

Approach to Performance management

Corporate Resources have robust processes in place that reinforce the council's culture in relation to performance management and continuous improvement. Each quarter Departmental Management Team (DMT) receives information on the following: performance indicators (BVPIs, BFI, Local indicators), budget performance (reported monthly), sickness absence (reported monthly), departmental key tasks, departmental risks, Service Improvement Action Plans (SIAPs), customer care standards/complaints and the valuing diversity action plan.

At each meeting performance in all the above is reviewed and actions put to in place to ensure that improvements are sustained and that any identified gaps are managed. This information is fed back to individual divisions and reported on the Executive Member and Scrutiny Committee.

Future developments

DMT and officers within the department continue to work to further develop performance management across the department. Work is currently on-going in the following areas to ensure that managers have the relevant information so that key areas of performance are performance managed and services continue to improve:

- Review of performance indicators to ensure all critical business areas are covered.
- Improved processes to ensure that all levels of management are included in the process.
- Revision to reporting arrangements to link all elements of performance and therefore present a fuller picture of departmental activity.
- Ensure all managers are fully aware of performance management and that they are putting actions in place to ensure performance continues to improve.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S

The Assistant Chief Executive submitted a report on the 12th March 2008 which provided the Executive Member with an outline of the approach that the Chief Executive's department takes in relation to performance management. This included areas for future development. In addition, the report also included an overview of the reported performance at quarter 3, 2007/2008.

Approach to Performance management

The Chief Executive's Department has robust processes in place that reinforced the council's culture in relation to performance management and continuous improvement. The Departmental Management Team, lead officers and the Executive Member are an integral part of this process.

The department also has the lead responsibility for driving the corporate approach to business planning, performance management and data quality throughout the organisation.

On a quarterly basis three separate performance dashboards are pulled together (corporate, Central Departments and the Chief Executives dashboard). These reports are discussed at the relevant DMT and Elected Member meetings. All dashboards provide both a pictorial summary and detailed commentary on the following areas: Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI), LAA indicators, Corporate Business Planning Process, human resources, risk, corporate customer care Standards; budget position, capital and revenue expenditure.

Future developments

Although there is a comprehensive approach to performance management in the Chief Executives Department itself, further improvements are planned during 2008. Work is currently ongoing to strengthen the following areas for the first quarter dashboard 2008/9:

- Diversity data- more data on staff turnover, vacant posts and ethnicity of staff should be Value for Money- costed improvement actions
- Strong and confident LAA theme data
- Performance of the Bolton Plan
- Customer care standards- telephone data, compliments and responding to white mail
- 3-Year Strategic Plan Monitoring
- BVPI Forecasting

LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report on the 12th March 2008 which provided the Executive Member with contextual knowledge on the Legal and Democratic Services Department's approach to performance management. This included areas for future development. In addition, the report also included an overview of the reported performance at quarter 3, 2007/2008.

Approach to Performance management

Under the leadership of a new Director, the department had developed robust performance management and business planning processes. The Executive Member was informed that currently the department does not formally present a performance dashboard to the Departmental Management Team (DMT) on a quarterly basis. Performance was instead managed via performance management updates at DMT on a fortnightly basis.

Future developments

Work is underway to strengthen the departmental approach to performance management and business planning. These include:

- Identification of Departmental Big Issues through PESTEL analysis
- Development of Team Leaders meeting to provide critical friend role to support review and development of effective performance measures and SIAPs
- Development of appropriate local Performance Indicators to enhance performance management regime
- Improvement of 'Golden Thread' within key plans. Work is underway to identify linkages with key objectives of the Council and with performance measures of other Departments.
- SIAPs to be more rigorously quality controlled to ensure development of more effective local performance indicators, rigorous implementation of the Golden Thread and also to ensure that more staff at all levels engage in the development of them and their ongoing monitoring.
- Greater recognition of individual and team successes leading to greater pride and responsibility in the work that they do.
- Produce a formal dashboard that is reported quarterly to DMT and Executive Member for Corporate Strategy and Finance (as part of the central departments' dashboard). As a

minimum, this will include progress against customer care standards, SIAPs, HR data, 3 Year Strategic Plans, revenue and capital expenditure, Gershon efficiencies, risk, valuing diversity action plan.

3. FINANCIAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Authority's revenue expenditure can be analysed in two ways. Firstly the costs of each activity or service are calculated including all recharges, both expenditure and income recharges to and from other activities. This analysis gives the true cost of running that activity or service; it is the way expenditure and income is recorded in the Authority's accounts and it forms the budget that the Council approves in February each year. It is known informally as the "bottom line" budget, but it is the proper means of identifying the costs of each service. This analysis can be seen in column A of **Appendix B**.
- 3.2 The second way of analysing revenue expenditure is to exclude expenditure and income recharges from the calculation of an activity or service's costs. This gives the expenditure which can actually be controlled by that activity or service. This means of analysis is used during the Corporate Business Planning Process (CBPP) and is used so that Departments are only held responsible for those areas of expenditure they can control. This analysis is the sum of columns A and B of **Appendix B** and totals £24.810M.
- 3.3 Whichever analysis is used, the Authority's overall figures add up to the same grand total, as the difference between the two methods is only that of allocating costs between activities/services.
- 3.4 There are some activities which are deemed to be corporate in nature and any under or overspend in the year are met or enjoyed centrally. These areas are usually ones where the Authority has little control over the level of spend or the budgets do not belong to a Department but to the Authority as a whole. These activities are shown in the bottom half of **Appendix B**.

4. 2007/2008 REVENUE EXPENDITURE

- 4.1 In **Appendix B**, an analysis is made of the original 2007/2008 base budget, adjustments made to that budget and the outturn for the year.
- 4.2 At Quarter 3 there had been some adjustments made to the base budget, specifically:-
- Virements from departments into Legal and Democratic Services, relating to staff transferring into the Communications and Marketing Agency, and the Licensing function transferring to the department.
 - £52,900 has been transferred from Adult Services into the Chief Executive's department, relating to the Bolton Volunteer Centre.
 - There has been virement of £50,000 from financial arrangements to Information Technology to reflect the fact that inflation on the Fujitsu contract is subject to indexation of the Retail Price Index rather than the Authority's inflation norm of 3%.
 - £142,000 has been transferred back to Adults' and Children's' Services in respect of Payroll virements that were too high in previous years.
 - There have been transfers into Corporate Resources, relating to the Smartcard development, and to Customer Services taking on Blue Badge responsibilities from

Adult Services.

- There have been transfers from the Corporate Benefits budget to Taxation and Benefits to enhance the work of the HB overpayments team and cover additional costs relating to Local Housing Allowance changes.
- There has been a transfers of an accommodation budget from Environmental Services into Administrative buildings
- There has been transfers from Development and Regeneration, and Environment to cover the costs of the Local Authority Modernisation Programme for Land Charges (£148,000)
- Transfers were made to Children's Services in respect of staffing virements into the Human Resources shared service centre, which were too high (£37,000).
- There was also a virement of the Market Place income target to Land and Property to reflect the new management arrangements (£384,000)

These base adjustments totalled -£114,000 (Column C). The last three adjustments took place after the Quarter 3 monitor.

- 4.3 At Quarter 3 it was forecasted that Members' allowances would overspend by £31,000 due to increased rates paid, to bring the Authority in line with other Greater Manchester authorities. The actual overspend was £53,000. This increase has now been provided for in the 2008/2009 base budget.
- 4.4 The predicted outturn at Quarter 3 was therefore £25.0M, this being the base budget adjusted, plus the £31,000 predicted overspend on Members' allowances.
- 4.5 The final outturn for the year was £24.920M, a decrease of £80,000 forecasted at Quarter 3, due to additional base budget adjustments of £273,000 reductions, (the last three items mentioned in 4.2 above) and additional spend of £193,000.
- 4.6 The major areas of additional spend were as follows:-
- £85,000 to cover Scene income losses, now provided for in the 2008/2009 base budget.
 - £20,000 relates to the overlap of the previous and current Chief Executives.
 - £37,000 Agma payments, which relate to one-off initiatives approved at a Greater Manchester level.
 - The Coroners' Service, has overspent by a net £46,000. This is due to a number of uncontrollable factors, such as an increase in deaths reported, the numbers of inquests needing to be held have increased, and the requirement to have the Coroner on permanent call.

5. TRANSFERS TO EARMARKED BALANCES – CALCULATED BY EXCLUDING RECHARGES

- 5.1 For General Fund activities, financial regulations allow the carrying forward of any controllable under or overspends from one financial year to the next, and the outturn figures include the transfer of such under or overspends to the balance sheet as an earmarked reserve. The sums allowed to be carried forward are calculated by excluding recharges and represent the true under or overspends of the activity. These amounts can be seen in **Appendix C** and total an increase of £7M in reserve balances.

- 5.2 For Legal & Democratic Services, there has been a net increase in reserves of £680,000, which has been largely due to the repayment of the Marcomms Invest to Save business case, and the removal of the Bolton Scene accumulated deficit, plus the provision for funding for the Web Team for 2008/2009. These credits were offset by the need to fund IT and office refurbishments for the Legal trading account, and also to fund a net deficit, (also explained in paragraph 7).
- 5.2 For Chief Executive's there have been a variety of under or overspends, with a net transfer from reserves into revenue of £20,000. The main theme is again the transfers required to or from business cases where efficiencies are repaying previous years' planned deficits, or using funding previously set aside for specific initiatives.
- 5.3 For Corporate Resources there have been net movements into reserves of over £2M. These represent the net effect of expenditure on Invest to Save schemes, previously approved by the Executive Member, repayments back into Invest to Save schemes, plus the setting aside of monies to pay for specific developments around IT, Revenue and Benefits initiatives and Community Finance.
- 5.4 For the Corporate Activities, transfers from reserves have amounted to £153,000, mainly being planned funding from reserves for regeneration schemes, and contributions into Sinking funds.

6. RESERVES BALANCES AS AT 31ST MARCH 2008

- 6.1 Details of reserves belonging to Corporate Strategy & Finance can be seen in **Appendix D**. These amount to £8.2M. Most reserves have been created to meet future commitments.
- 6.2 The reserves with deficit balances represent initiatives where there have been initial set up costs and repayments of these costs are planned with the funding coming from future efficiencies.

7. 2007/2008 REVENUE OUTTURN FOR THE LEGAL SERVICES TRADING ACCOUNT

- 7.1 **Appendix E** shows the results for Legal Services trading account for 2007/2008. The outturn shows a deficit in the year of £100,000, £58,000 of which was planned expenditure on computers and office moves and refurbishments, which were funded from surpluses from previous years. The remaining deficit was due to reduced external income, has been taken to a reserve, to be repaid back in the coming year. The causes for reduced external income are being investigated, and measures will be taken to mitigate this.

8. EFFICIENCY TARGETS

- 8.1 Included in **Appendix F** are the measures identified as Corporate Strategy & Finance's contribution to the overall Gershon Efficiency Targets in 2007/2008. All these measures were achieved.

9. BUDGET GROWTH

- 9.1 Included in the budget for 2007/2008 was £140,600 growth, as detailed in **Appendix G**.

10. RISK

- 10.1 Risks were identified at the beginning of the financial year and a risk management action plan was produced which detailed actions to mitigate risk. The action plans were reviewed quarterly at Departmental Management Teams, and required actions achieved.

11. CAPITAL

- 11.1 Expenditure on Capital Schemes was £2.712M in 2007/2008, compared to planned expenditure of £7.818M, being reduced expenditure of £5.106M. A comparison of actual expenditure with planned expenditure is given at **Appendix H**.
- 11.2 The decreased spend was on the Asset Management Plan, Area Property Reviews and Health & Safety Surveys, where there has been a deliberate delay in projects because of awaiting outcomes of the Council's Change Programme. There was also slippage on IT developments and data network projects.
- 11.4 The Quarter 3 Central Departments monitoring report forecast capital expenditure of £3.4M which was £ 688,000 higher than the actual outturn.
- 11.5 The Executive on 11th February 2008 approved capital expenditure for Corporate Strategy & Finance in 2008/2009 of £7.688M. Current projections are £9.672M. This increase of £2.004M is primarily due to slippage on large schemes, as detailed above, but an approval has also been given to spend £500,000 on Farnworth Market, so this has been included in the programme.
- 11.6 The latest capital projection has been included in **Appendix I** for information and approval.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Scrutiny Committee is recommended to comment upon and scrutinise:-

- i) the Central Departments' service and financial performance, as detailed in this report;
- ii) the improvement actions contained in the report
- iii) the transfers to and from reserves made in 2007/2008, and the balances on reserve accounts as at 31st March 2008;
- iv) the revenue outturn for the Legal Services Trading Account

v) the capital spend for 2007/2008 and the roll forward of the capital programme for 2008/2009 onwards. **Appendix A: BVPI exception report 2007/8**

As part of Bolton Council's commitment to continuous improvement of its key services, analysis was done at the end 2007/08 to determine the BVPIs that fall within the bottom performing quartile when compared with the most up-to-date national quartile data (2006/07). Three BVPIs from within the Central Departments are classed as bottom performing indicators.

You will find commentary and improvement actions for each of these indicators within this appendix- all of which will be managed and monitored on a quarterly basis to Members.

BVPI	Description	2006-07 actual	2007-08 target	2007-08 actual	Bottom quartile threshold	Comment
9	Percentage of council tax collected	96.4	96.6	96.4	96.49	We have the following improvements planned: Take up campaign for increasing the number paying by direct debit. Higher target for the processing of work so that new and amended bills are issued quicker. Quality checks to be carried out on amendments made to accounts. Improvements to processes and staff training. Improvements to information and online services on the website. More automation of recovery notices to ensure arrears are chased up more quickly. Review of inspection processes around new and empty properties to speed up the identification of new occupiers.
10	Percentage of non-domestic rates collected	97.5	98.1	97.7	98.43	We have the following improvements planned: Take up campaign for increasing the number paying by direct debit. Improvements to information and online services on the website. Review of inspection processes around new and empty properties to speed up the identification of new occupiers.
14	Level of early retirements	0.75	1.04	1.18	0.97	As the organisation continues to go through restructures and changes, levels of early retirements remain high. The largest number emerged via the options offered to staff as part of the bonus removal from staff in Environmental Services. Bolton's level of early retirements continues to be within the financial limits of the GM local government pension scheme arrangements. The level of early retirement requests is now falling.

