



Purpose of the department

The fundamental purpose of the Chief Executive's Department is to assist Council departments to deliver services which comply with the Council's strategic objectives, meet the needs of service users, are of good quality, give value for money and achieve continuous improvement. This involves assisting Council departments to work within structures and systems designed to make sure that good quality services are provided to the people who need them at the right time and in the right place. The Chief Executive's Department has six main functions:

Chief Executive's office: Policy advice to the Council, monitoring the actions of the Council, overall management of Council departments, leadership of the Council's staff, and the management of external and internal relationships.

Administration: General administration, emergency planning, local and general elections, community council liaison, registration of births, marriages, deaths and still births, services to the Council and its committees, external communications and public relations, services to the Children's Panel and burial grounds administration.

Legal: Legal advice to the Council and specific legal services in relation to property, licensing, litigation, housing grants, superiors' consents and support services to the Children's Panel.

Policy: Corporate and community planning, corporate policy advice and development, the Best Value Regime, performance monitoring, management and reporting, and Dialogue Youth.

Personnel: Personnel and health and safety at work services to the Council and its employees.

Information: Information services within the Council and externally through the Council's website.

Performance of the department

The performance of the Chief Executive's Department over the three year period 1st April 2002 – 31st March 2005 has been measured by Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs), Best Value reviews, the Progress Update on the 2002/03 Performance Management and Planning Audit, and a number of projects and other developments. Progress has also been measured against targets identified in the 2003/04 Annual Performance Report. The results are summarised below.

Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs)

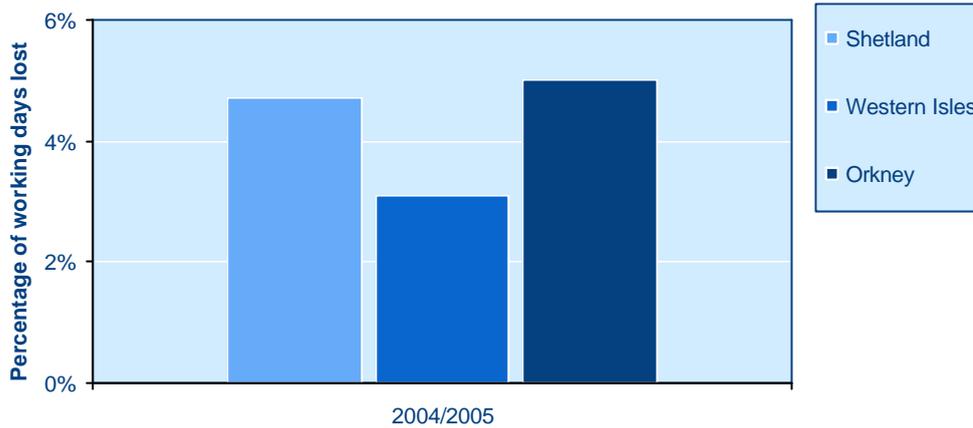
The council-wide SPIs described below relate to the Council as a whole, and are evaluated here within the Chief Executive's Department due to its corporate overview of the Council. Where possible the Council's performance is measured against that of previous years, the Shetland and Western Isles Councils, and the Scottish average.



Sickness absence: For the sickness absence SPI, Audit Scotland specifies three categories i.e. chief officers and local government employees, craft employees, and teachers. As the Council does not employ craft employees, this category is not included.

The chart below shows how the Council performed with regard to the percentage of working days lost for chief officers and local government employees in 2004/05. As this SPI changed in 2004/05, comparisons with previous years' information is not possible

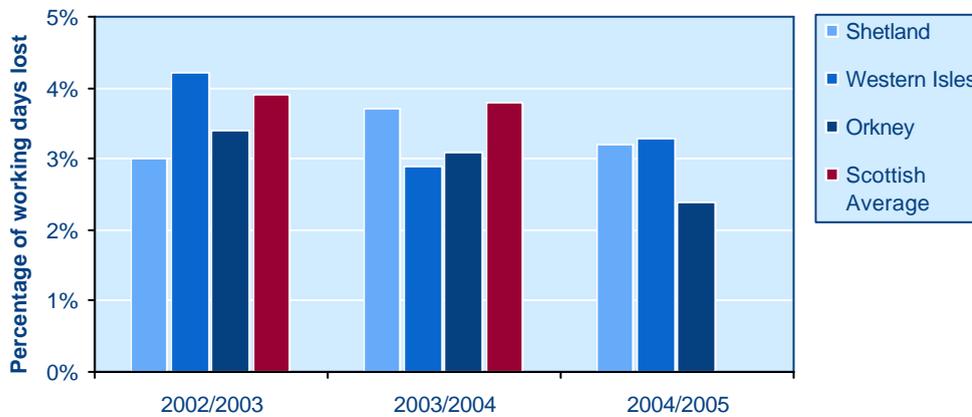
Sickness absence - chief officers and local government employees



In 2004/05 OIC chief officers and local government employees had a higher level of absence than their Shetland and Western Isles counterparts. Although there are controls in place for managing sickness absence which have contributed to the reduction in absence, with a small workforce distortion in the figures can occur due to a relatively small fluctuation in staff absence and to the incidence of long term absences.

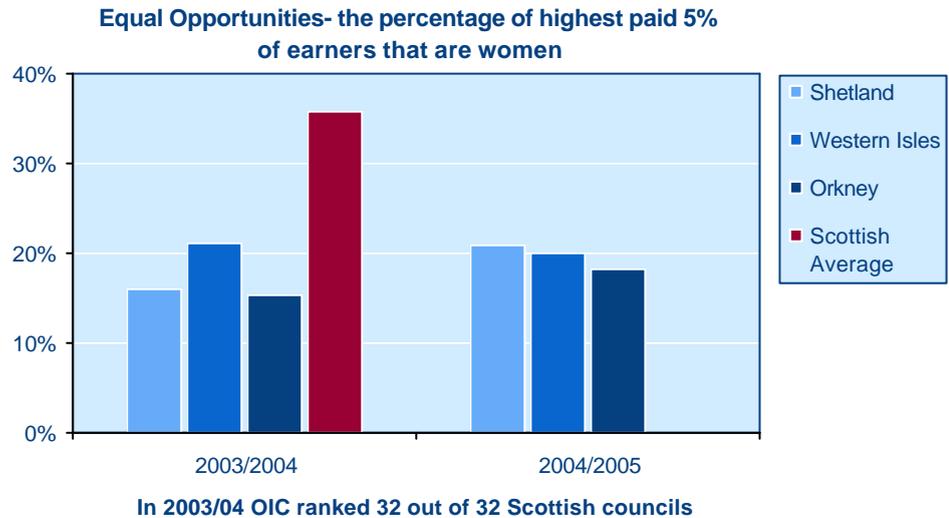
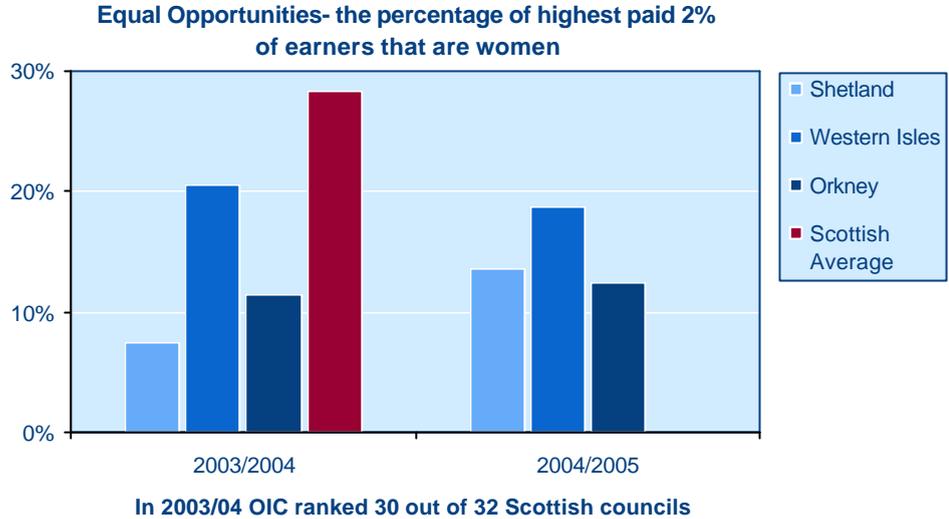
The chart below shows how the Council performed with regard to the percentage of working days lost for teachers in 2002/03, 2003/04 and 2004/05.

Sickness absence- teachers



The absence levels for teachers employed by the Council has shown continued improvement over the period 2002/05. This can be attributed, at least in part, to the controls in place for managing sickness absence.

Equal opportunities: The charts below shows the percentage of the highest earning 2% of Council staff who were women in 2003/04 and 2004/05; and the percentage of the highest earning 5% of Council staff who were women in 2003/04 and 2004/05.

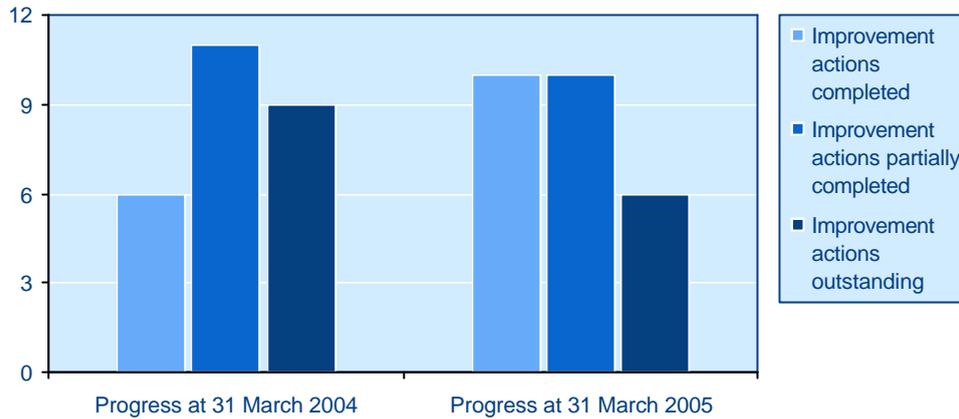


Equal opportunities in relation to female employees in the higher earning brackets is considered to be an area of concern within Orkney Islands Council. However, although the Council's performance is poor when compared to the Scottish average, it is encouraging that there has been an improvement in 2004/05. It must also be recognised that in small councils this SPI will not vary considerably from year to year, since staff turn over at senior level tends to be low. Despite this, there is an ongoing commitment within the Council to improve its performance on this SPI in the longer term. In previous years, the inclusion of the total pay, including the duty allowances for 24/7 working, for the Pilots employed by the Harbours Department had distorted the figures from the Council. They are now shown on the basis of their grade.

Best Value reviews

In 2001/02 a Best Value review of all of the services and activities within the Chief Executive’s Department was carried out. The outcome of this Best Value review was a recommendation by the Best Value Working Group in March 2003 that the department should prepare a costed service development plan incorporating the 26 improvements actions identified as necessary in the review. Progress at 31st March 2004 and 31st March 2005 was as follows:

2001/02 Best Value Review of the Chief Executive's Department

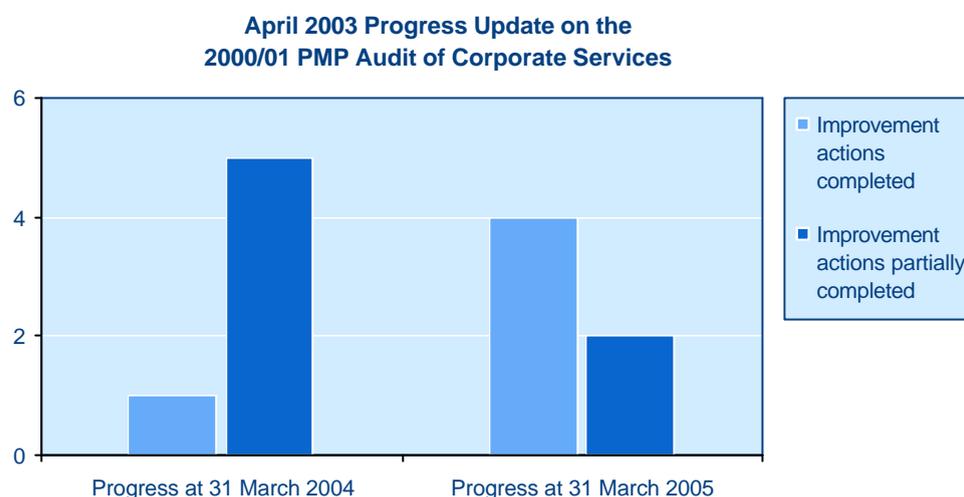


In 2003/04 a Best Value review of the Council’s advertising was carried out. Although the review related to the Council as a whole, it was conducted within the Chief Executive’s Department due to its corporate overview of the Council. In March 2004, the Best Value Working Group recommended implementation of 11 improvement actions identified as necessary in the review. Progress on the 11 improvement actions at 31st March 2005 was a follows:

- Improvement actions complete = 5
- Improvement actions partially complete = 6
- Improvement actions outstanding = 0

2000/01 Performance Management and Planning audit of corporate services: progress update

In 2000/01, Audit Scotland carried out a PMP2 audit which included corporate services. In April 2003 Audit Scotland published its progress update on this PMP audit which identified six outstanding improvement actions. Progress at 31st March 2005 was as follows:



Projects and other developments

In addition to what has been described above, a number of projects and other developments have been progressed in the period 1st April 2002 – 31st March 2005. The corporate projects/developments relate to the Council as a whole and are evaluated within the Chief Executive's Department due to its corporate overview of the Council.

Community planning: Following extensive public consultation, Orkney's community plan *Orkney 2020* was published in April 2003.

Council committee restructuring: The Council restructured its committees in May 2002 and the schemes of administration and delegation were subsequently revised.

Information technology: The Council undertook to improve the use and development of information technology and to make available pilot electronic services by the end of 2002; this has resulted in the availability of a limited number of electronic services. However the completion of targets to implement electronic delivery of all services by summer 2005 will not be met.

One-Stop-Shop: At the end of March 2004, the Council established its customer services facility at the newly refurbished premises at the former East Kirk.

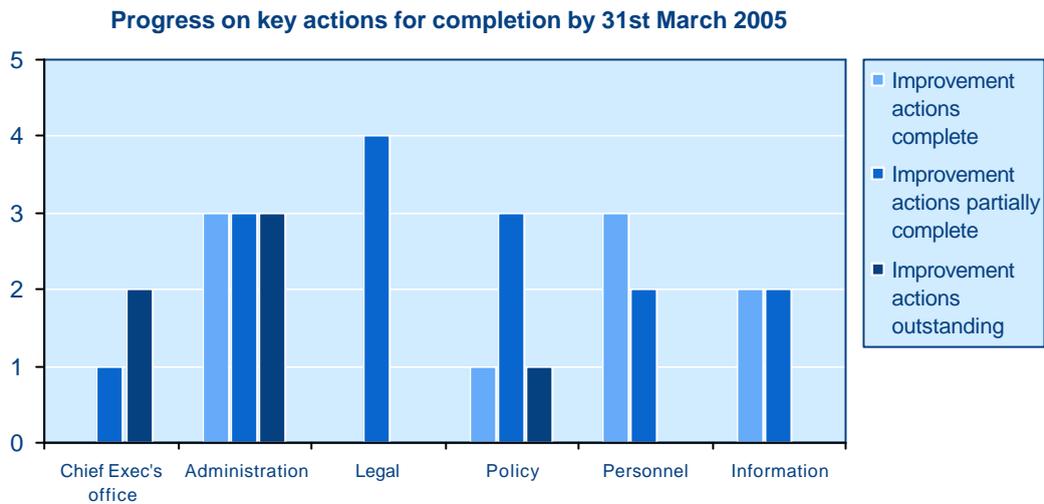
Efficient Government: In January 2005, a Stage 1 Bid was made to the Efficient Government Fund to carry out a series of reviews aimed at improving the efficiency of a number of support services across the Council, NHS Orkney and other partners, by means of closer joint working. The Stage 1 Bid was successful and will lead to a Stage 2 Bid aimed at securing funding to implement the recommendations resulting from the reviews.

Performance management: In March 2005 the Council’s management team agreed to recommend a pilot of the Balanced Scorecard performance management system.

Annual Performance Report: In January 2005, the Council’s first comprehensive Annual Performance Report was published.

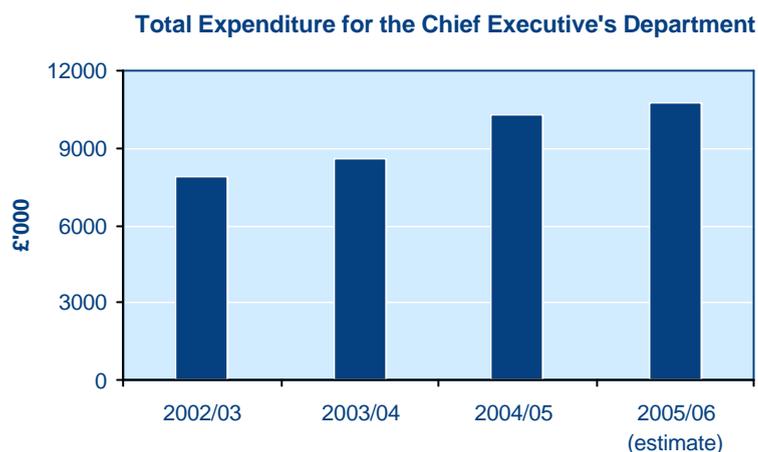
Progress on key actions for completion by 31st March 2005 as identified in the 2003/04 APR

The Council’s first Annual Performance Report, published in January 2005, identified a total of 30 key actions for completion by 31st March 2005. Progress at 31st March 2005 was as follows:



Departmental finance

The increase in the department’s budget reflects Council policy decisions to centralise a number of support services within the Chief Executive’s Department, and in particular the One-Stop-Shop has seen staff resources transfer to the department from other Council departments. The department has also taken the lead role in certain areas identified as corporate priorities where the Council has budgeted to receive additional ring fenced funding such as the Efficient Government Initiative, the Community Planning Partnership and the move to Single Status where internal provision has been made for the anticipated costs.



Key actions identified in the Corporate Strategic Plan 2005-2008

The Council's **Corporate Strategic Plan 2005-2008** identified a total of 7 key actions for which the Chief Executive's Department will be responsible for completing over the life of the plan:

| Project / Target | Total Cost (£) | Timescale |
|---|---------------------------|-----------|
| Ensure that the Council meets the new requirements of both implementing, and demonstrating compliance with, equalities legislation | Within existing resources | 2005/09 |
| Develop and implement a Council-wide performance management system | £3,000 staff training | 2005/07 |
| Review support services jointly with NHS Orkney to identify possible savings in line with Efficient Government targets | 67,500 | 2006 |
| Lead the OCPP on revising Orkney 2020, and preparing a Youth Strategy and Cultural Strategy for Orkney | Within existing resources | 2006 |
| Revise the current employee review procedure to create a competence linked performance review and development planning structure for all members of staff | Within existing resources | 2005/06 |
| Implement best practice framework represented by ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) and PRINCE 2 (Projects in Controlled Environments) | Within existing resources | 2006 |
| Stromness Pierhead Regeneration | 701,000 | 2007/08 |

Progress on these key actions will be reported in future Annual Performance Reports.