
CORPORATE AND BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2005 - 2006

Responsible Cabinet Member: - Councillor John Williams and All Cabinet Collectively
Responsible Director: - Paul Wildsmith, Acting Chief Executive

Purpose of Report

1. To present a draft Corporate and Best Value Performance Plan for 2005/2006 for approval and adoption.

Summary

2. Under the Local Government Act 1999 the Council is required to publish an annual Best Value Performance Plan. Following the introduction of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) regime in 2002, growing importance is being placed on improvement planning for which the BVPP is the most important source of evidence.

Information and Analysis

3. Best Value was introduced on the 1st April 2000 as a key element of the Government's programme to modernise local government. It places local authorities under a duty to seek continuous improvement in the way in which they exercise their functions. The Local Government Act 1999, supplemented by government circulars and guidance, sets out the legislative framework for local authorities and places them under a duty to publish an annual Best Value Performance Plan. The Plan has to be prepared and available by the 30th June each year.
4. Starting in 2003 we combined our Corporate and Best Value Performance Plan around a look back, reporting on performance as well as including details of our future key areas of activity, targets and actions for performance improvement. This is now government guidance.
5. Following the introduction of Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) in 2002 the importance of improvement planning has increased considerably. Accordingly we have further developed the Corporate Plan element which will:
 - a) give a rolling three year look forward;
 - b) set out our priorities in the framework of the Community Strategy;
 - c) set out our actions against the Council's corporate objectives.
6. By combining both elements within one document we will go further than our statutory obligations and produce a single reference point to:
 - a) assess the Council's performance;
 - b) set out its future direction.

7. The attached draft document has been produced to ensure compliance with audit criteria and technical accuracy on year end data. All performance indicators have been collected and are reported. Finalising the document requires that graphs, logos and images are added. Following approval the plan will undergo a design stage, further quality testing and a proofing exercise. A copy of the finalised plan will be posted on the Council's website and made available in public buildings on the 30th June. A printed copy will be issued to all Members, staff teams across the authority and key external partners.

Outcome of Consultation

8. Discussions with a range of stakeholders in recent months have informed revisions in the development of this year's plan. These have covered relevant officer groups, external auditors and elected Members through Cabinet, Scrutiny Committees and Monitoring and Co-ordination Group.
9. Based on feedback the following recommendations have been adopted this year:
 - a) maintain reporting by Community Strategy theme rather than department so that all linked performance indicators are presented together;
 - b) use consistently throughout the symbols from *PerformancePlus* software, reflecting the adoption and roll out of this system during 2004/2005;
 - c) retention of full colour printing to differentiate between themes and to better signpost members/ officers to relevant sections;
 - d) use of a plain English test at proofing stage and updating of a glossary of key terms and acronyms.

Legal Implications

10. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

11. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is considered that the attached plan has been drafted in recognition of those requirements and is complementary to meeting the general duty.

Council Policy Framework

12. The issues contained within this report represent a change in the Authority's policy framework with the adoption of a new combined Corporate and Best Value Performance Plan.

Conclusion

13. In accordance with all appropriate government guidance, and in consultation with the Council's external auditors and other relevant parties, a draft combined Corporate and Best Value Performance Plan has been produced and is presented here for approval.

Recommendations

14. It is recommended that:
 - (a) Members approve the Corporate and Best Value Performance Plan for adoption.
 - (b) A delegated authority is granted to the Acting Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to oversee any minor amendments in the final print production.

Reasons

15. These recommendations are supported by the following reasons:
 - (a) To meet statutory obligations to produce a Best Value Performance Plan.
 - (b) To ensure content is as accurate and up to date as possible.

Paul Wildsmith
Acting Chief Executive

Background Papers:

- (i) Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) – Guidance on Best Value Performance Plans: Addendum to ODPM Circular 03/2003, [February 2004]

John Bosson: Extension 2016
JB/jb