

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Council's Annual Report 2006/07 28th June 2007

Report of Corporate Director (Finance and Performance)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To approve the Corporate Performance Plan (Best Value Performance Plan) and to re-designate the document as the Annual Report for this and future years.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the Corporate Performance Plan (Best Value Performance Plan) (to be circulated prior to the meeting) be approved for publication on 30th June 2007**
- (2) That the Corporate Performance Plan be re-designated as the Annual Report - 2006/07**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan and Corporate Performance Plan together form the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) and are part of the Council's Policy Framework. The Corporate Plan for 2007/8 was agreed by Council at its meeting of 18 April 2007 (Minute Number 129) and sets out the Council's medium term aspirations.
- 1.2 The content of the Corporate Performance Plan is prescribed by Government and looks back at the Council's performance in the last full financial year will be subject to external scrutiny for compliance with statutory requirements by the Audit Commission.
- 1.3 Although the document is available to the public, in recent years, the Audit Commission, elected Members and council officers have been the only audience for this document. There has been no request from a member of the public for a printed copy for two years and information from I&CS tells us that its web-page has not been regularly accessed.

2.0 Proposal Details

Approving the Plan

- 2.1 The Council is obliged by the terms of the Local Government Act 1999 to publish its Corporate Performance Plan by 30th June every year. The document must be approved by Members prior to publication.
- 2.2 However the process of collecting and verifying the accuracy of large amounts of complex performance data is time consuming. In practice, this means that we are still actively engaged in the production of the Plan after deadline for submission of the report.
- 2.3 Members will remember that in previous years the process of Member approval of the Corporate Performance Plan has been unwieldy and somewhat fragmented. In the past, Council has been asked to approve a substantially incomplete version of the document and delegate final approval of various sections of the Plan to the Leader of the Council, Chief Executive and the now defunct Performance Review Committee of Cabinet.
- 2.4 In 2006, the introduction of Council Business Committee offered Members the opportunity to approve the fully completed BVPP in a timely and efficient manner, thus enabling the Council to meet its statutory requirements in a straightforward manner. Council at their meeting on 7th February 2007 reaffirmed this delegation.

Changes to the Corporate Performance Plan

- 2.5 In order to improve the presentation of the information that must be set out in the Plan, it is proposed to :-
- change the title of the Corporate Performance Plan to the Annual Report
 - include in it, not only details of performance against BV and local PIs, but also a review of last year's achievements in respect of the Corporate Plan targets.

Statutory guidance is clear that the audience for the report should be:-

- the general public,
- the Audit Commission and
- Council officers and members.

We know that in previous years the public have not read the Corporate Performance Plan even though it is the council's main vehicle for reporting performance externally.

A change in title and content would present an opportunity to re-launch the document and make it's overall purpose very clear to a public audience.

3.0 Details of Consultation

- 3.1 The Annual Report will be available on the Council's website and will be available for public comment after 30th June 2007.

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

Option 1

- 4.1 To maintain the Corporate Performance Plan in its existing format and retain its name.

Option 2

- 4.2 To re-designate the Corporate Performance Plan as the Annual Report and to include additional performance information regarding achievements against the Corporate Plan objectives

- 4.3 Option 2 is the preferred officer choice. This would make the document clearer and more meaningful to its intended audience and be more accessible. An Annual Report, which takes stock of performance in the previous year, is a concept familiar to most people and something that will improve the Council's accountability.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 The proposal will meet the council's statutory obligations and produce a document that is more user friendly and accessible to local residents.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

None directly arising from this report

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Adequate budgetary provision has been made within the Corporate Management budget from which the cost of producing the Corporate Plan and the Corporate Performance Plan will be funded. The 2005/06 Statement of Accounts will be considered by Audit Committee at its meeting on 27 June 2007 and the detailed financial outturn will be considered by Cabinet on 24 July 2007. There are no further financial implications as a result of this report.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has a statutory duty in relation to Best Value within the terms of S6 of the Local Government Act 1999 to produce the information that it is suggested to include in the Annual Report

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments to add.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None
Minute 121 of Council meeting 18 April 2007

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