

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 28 June 2007

Portfolio Holder: Councillor C Whitbread

Item: 11 (b)

1. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2007/08

Recommending:

That the draft Best Value Performance Plan for 2007/08 be adopted.

- 1.1 The Local Government Act 1999 and the Best Value regime require all local authorities to publish an Annual Performance Plan by no later than the end of June each year.
- 1.2 Adoption of the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) is a matter reserved to the Council by its Constitution.
- 1.3 The requirement to prepare an Annual Performance Plan provides an opportunity for authorities to articulate proposals for improvement in the coming year, including how weaknesses will be addressed, opportunities exploited and better outcomes delivered for local people. BVPPs are required to:
 - (a) summarise the Council's successes in meeting its key priorities, objectives and targets for the last year (2006/07);
 - (b) show where these priorities, objectives and targets were not met; and
 - (c) detail key priorities, objectives and targets for the forthcoming year (2007/08).
- ... 1.4 The BVPP is produced in two versions each year. The attached detailed version is primarily prepared for the Council itself, the Government, the Audit Commission, and other bodies involved in the evaluation and assessment of performance. It is intended that the audience for Performance Plans should be primarily the authority itself, as members and officers with responsibility for delivering local services need to be aware of priorities in order to influence improvement measures. However, the detailed BVPP is also available to those who require a comprehensive explanation of how well the Council is performing and its future plans. In addition and in accordance with a recommendation of the Audit Commission, a summary of the BVPP was distributed to all households in the District within the explanatory leaflet issued with the annual Council Tax demands in March each year. The summary version of the BVPP was agreed by the Cabinet on 19 February 2007.
- 1.5 Both the detailed and summary versions reflect the Portfolio Holder structure that was in operation prior to the Annual Council meeting in May 2007.

- 1.6 The Department for Communities and Local Government issues guidance to local authorities on the content of BVPPs, stipulating what matters should be included. In recent years the Government has focused on improvement and performance as its main priorities, and has given authorities classified by the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) process as either "excellent" or "good", freedom from BVPP reporting in as much detail as originally necessary. In accordance with the Government's approach to deregulation, it is no longer necessary to publish information in performance plans that can be obtained from other sources.
- 1.7 To reduce the overall length of the BVPP, the majority of the detail not now statutorily required has been transferred to the Council Plan 2006 to 2010. However, areas such as the Council's CPA score and improvement proposals, and local performance indicator data have continued to be detailed in the BVPP. Although not required to be included, it is considered appropriate to continue to incorporate these matters and historical, quartile and other comparative data on Best Value Performance Indicators within the BVPP, as these details are an essential part of the Council's performance and monitoring arrangements.
- 1.8 We recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.