

Brighton & Hove City Council

For general release

Meeting: Council

Date: 12 June 2003

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive &
Director Corporate Services

Subject: Performance Plan 2003-2004

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1 To seek approval for the Performance Plan 2003-2004.
- 1.2 To seek approval for some amendments to the Best Value Review programme.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 That Council agree:
 - the Performance Plan 2003-2004
 - the revised Best Value Review Programme for 2003-2005 in the plan
 - that the Director of Strategy & Governance, in consultation with the Lead Member for Finance and Performance, will be responsible for signing-off the plan (following Full Council) for publication on 30 June.

3. Information Background

- 3.1 The Performance Plan (formerly known as the Best Value Performance Plan) occupies a central place in the Government's performance management framework for local government. This has been recently reaffirmed in the statutory guidance issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Circular 03/2003). The guidance says that Performance Plans, 'will be the principal means by which authorities report their priorities for improvement and their achievements following the previous CPA. By enabling progress in delivering improvements to be tracked, Performance Plans will become a cornerstone for the way in which CPA scores are revisited, and provide an opportunity for authorities to share their experience.' For authorities categorised as 'Excellent' the plan will, in due course, be the sole annual plan they must publish.
- 3.2 The annual Best Value Performance Plan has, since 2000, been the council's corporate plan. However, partly in response to a recommendation from the CPA Corporate Assessment inspection, a medium term Corporate Plan and Financial

Strategy will be produced later in the year. The Performance Plan provides the annual progress report and future improvement targets for the council's improvement priorities, arising from local and national priorities as well as recommendations from internal and external reviews, audits and inspections. In focusing on these improvement priorities it shows how the Best Value tools of reviews and targets against performance indicators are assisting the council to improve. The Corporate Plan, on the other hand, will have a broader and longer term focus, setting out the council's priorities and goals across its service areas and demonstrating how these are linked to local and national priorities. The accompanying medium term financial strategy will make the links between the priorities of the council and resource allocation. Together the Performance Plan, the Corporate Plan and the Financial Strategy will make up the Council's Delivery Plan for the next 4 / 5 years.

4. Content of the Plan

4.1 Legislation prescribes (through statutory guidance) that we have to include in the Performance Plan:

- A brief summary of the authority's strategic objectives and priorities for improvement
- Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) scores
- Progress in, and future plans for, delivering local and national priorities including, progress over the past three years in implementing improvement measures which have arisen from Best Value Reviews and audit and inspection recommendations
- Past, current and planned performance against local and national performance indicators, including targets for the current year and subsequent two years, for all BVPIs and local indicators set against priority areas
- A brief summary of financial information
- A brief statement on contracts.

4.2 The requirements for the content of the Plan were altered very recently as a result of new guidance being issued. Most significantly the Plan now covers a longer time span. It has to report on progress over the previous three years and it has to look forward three years. This means we have to publish three year targets against our Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) and local performance indicators.

4.3 Chapter 14 of the Plan presents the performance indicator tables. Every attempt has been made to make this as presentable, understandable and complete as possible. However, there are a small number of indicators which are marked with an asterisk in one or more of the columns, which signifies that information has not been provided in time for inclusion in the Plan. It is anticipated that by the time the Plan is published on 30 June these figures will be included. Where possible they will be reported to the Council meeting on 12 June.

5. Best Value Reviews

5.1 Licensing

The Performance Plan has to include the council's Best Value Review (BVR) programme. The Policy & Resources Committee agreed a BVR programme for 2003-2005 on 17 December 2002. This included a Licensing Review which was due to begin in April 2003. The preparations for the review made it clear that the Best Value Review methodology was not the most effective way of ensuring that the council achieved its aim of developing a medium term strategy for licensing in the city. This was mainly because new legislation means that new ways of working are necessary to meet the legal requirements anyway. Consequently officers have begun work on developing a licensing strategy (outside of the Best Value Review framework) which takes account of the new legislation and the need to take a corporate approach to this piece of work which is of such importance to the city. Approval for this amendment to the BVR programme is therefore requested.

5.2 Housing Supply

A BVR of Housing Supply to begin in June was included in the programme agreed by the Policy & Resources Committee in December. Preparations for this review have highlighted the pressing need to have a review of Housing Allocations; the policy and processes. The BVR methodology will assist us to carry out this review which should have a significant effect on our progress towards meeting our targets for the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless people. It will also address the issue of the effect of allocations policies on building sustainable communities. At the same time the council does need to address issues of housing supply at a strategic level ensuring that housing options for people in the city are maximised through effective partnership working. This piece of work however will not benefit from the application of the BVR methodology although challenge and consultation will be employed in developing the strategy. Approval is therefore sought for amending the BVR programme to include a review of Housing Allocations, to begin in June, rather than one of Housing Supply. These two pieces of work are closely linked and it is anticipated that they will overlap, with the review of allocations completing by December 2003 and the Housing Supply Strategy being completed by March 2004.

6. Publication of the Plan

6.1 The legal requirement is for the Plan to be published by 30 June. As in previous years the Plan will be available on the council's website on 30 June. Hard copies will be placed in local libraries and be provided for councillors and managers. These will look very similar to last year's plan although we are placing them in ring binders this year in order that we can provide the council's Corporate Plan and Financial Strategy for insertion into the folders at a later date.

7 Financial Implications

7.1 Finance for the improvement priorities and targets for 2003/2004 published in the Performance Plan has been taken account of in current budget planning.

7.2 The funding of targets for future years will be dependent on budgetary decisions taken for those years. The targets in the plan will be used to inform future budget decision making.

7.3 The LPSA (Local Public Service Agreement) targets included in the plan will, if achieved, lead to the council receiving a Performance Reward Grant of approximately £6million.

Finance officer consulted: Mark Pearson 2 June 2003.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 The Performance Plan has been produced in accordance with the statutory requirements under the Local Government Act 1999 and Circular 03/2003.

8.2 Under the Local Authorities (Alternative Arrangements) Regulations 2001 the Performance Plan is required to be adopted by Full Council.

8.3 There are no adverse Human Rights Act implications arising from the proposals in this report.

Lawyer consulted: Abraham Ghebre-Ghiorghis 2 June 2003.

9 Corporate / Citywide Implications

9.1 The Performance Plan sets out the council's improvement priorities across all of its functions for the benefit of people citywide.

10 Sustainability implications

10.1 The Plan includes a specific improvement priority and target relating to the council's sustainability strategy. The themes of sustainability are present throughout the plan. For example, the plan includes targets on recycling and transport that reflect the sustainability strategy.

11 Equalities Implications

11.1 The plan includes a specific improvement priority and target relating to the council's equalities strategy. Equalities considerations are included throughout the plan reflecting the mainstreaming of equalities in the council.

12. Risk Assessment

12.1 The plan is an important document which contributes to avoiding the risk that the council's priorities for action and goals will not be understood or achieved.

13. Implications for the Prevention of Crime and Disorder

13.1 The Plan includes improvement targets for community safety which if achieved will contribute to making the city a safer place.

14. Consultation

- 14.1** The plan includes details of how a range of people and organisations have been consulted as a part of Best Value Reviews. The improvement priority areas take account of the results of consultation exercises that have taken place in the recent past.

15. Background Papers

- 15.1** None.

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