

**LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**

**FULL COUNCIL – 28<sup>th</sup> JULY 2003**

**Report From Director Of Policy & Regeneration**

**The Best Value Performance Plan 2003/04**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Each year, the Council is required to produce and publish its Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) in accordance with government guidance. The 2003/04 performance plan is presented to the full Council for consideration and agreement.
- 1.2 The 2003/04 BVPP is Brent's fourth published plan. It looks back over the last three years and forward over the coming three years. It is a statutory requirement to publish the plan each year. This year the government has significantly revised its Best Value guidance following the legislative changes made at the beginning of last year.
- 1.3 The style and content of the plan has changed this year in response to the new guidance. Performance information is reported by Corporate Strategy Theme and the tables of performance indicators continue to be reported separately in the second part of the plan.

**2 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS**

- 2.1 The Government has accepted that the full Performance Plan is not necessarily the most appropriate vehicle for providing information on performance to local people. Rather, the Performance Plan's principal audiences should be the staff and elected members of the authority, groups and organisations with an interest in the authority, and central government.
- 2.2 Each year the performance plan is audited and the Council's auditor is required to publish their report by 31<sup>st</sup> December. For the 2002/03 performance plan, the auditor made no significant comments on the performance plan itself, choosing to focus attention on the systems in place for collecting the performance information.
- 2.3 The structure of the plan is highlighted below. To a large degree, the structure follows the format of last year's plan whilst addressing the new requirements of the government guidance and following the Corporate Strategy Themes.
  - 2.3.1 *About Brent* – provides summary information about the borough. Key events highlighted this time are: the new corporate strategy, Improving Brent, Local Strategic Partnership and Community Plan, Beacon Status, Wembley Stadium, 2001 Census results, Local Public Service Agreement, Comprehensive Performance Assessment.
  - 2.3.2 *Objectives and Priorities* (required by the government guidance) – provides a summary of the corporate strategy.
  - 2.3.3 *Comprehensive Performance Assessment* (required by the government guidance) – given the change in emphasis towards 'corporate' performance management in the new guidance and the requirement to report on the CPA process, this section is included towards the front. It introduces the CPA process, covers the scorecard and refers to the outcomes and improvement priorities.

- 2.3.4 *Consultation* – this section refers to the way we consult, our strategy and the outcomes of recent resident consultation which have not been previously reported in a performance plan.
- 2.3.5 *Performance* (required by the government guidance) – there are a number of changes to this section arising from the guidance and discussions across the authority and with some other London Boroughs.
- This section is sub-divided by corporate strategy themes
  - Reporting on performance now needs to cover a 6 year period – the 3 years preceding the current plan, the current year and the subsequent 2 years. This section includes progress and outcomes of performance improvement over the previous 3 years, including actions taken from Best Value reviews, external inspections and audits, local and national priorities as appropriate. Future corporate and CPA priorities are addressed and targets in priority areas covered. Where appropriate, future Best Value reviews, inspections and audits are discussed.
  - BV Review information - other authorities are looking to summarise reviews in a way that is meaningful to residents by focussing on actions and outcomes that affect the customer. This approach has been adopted for the Brent performance plan, whereby BV reviews are only reported in any detail where they contribute to the priorities discussed under each theme and where there are clear outcomes that benefit the customer.
- 2.3.6. *Brent Council's Budget and Spending Plans* (required by the government guidance) – this section follows CIPFA guidance on good practice.
- 2.3.7. *Statement of Contracts* (required by the government guidance) – this is a new requirement to produce a list of contracts for the last financial year which included staff transfers, and for each to state whether they complied with the 'Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts'. As this cannot be applied retrospectively, the 2003/04 performance plan merely contains a statement of intent – to acknowledge the new requirement and pave the way for reporting in future years.
- 2.4. *Part II 'Performance Digest'* (required by the government guidance) – the digest shows 3 years of trend data (data for the most recent year plus the previous 2 years) and some form of comparison with London Boroughs. It includes targets for the last financial year as well as for 2003/04, 2004/05 and 2005/06 where appropriate.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

- 3.1. The 2003/04 Best Value Performance Plan has been produced in accordance with the government's new guidance. It reports on past performance and future priorities together with performance data for the Council's national and local performance indicators. The plan has been agreed by the Executive and is now presented to full Council for agreement as part of the policy framework of the Council.

**Phil Newby**  
**Director of Policy & Regeneration.**