

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL – MONDAY 28th JUNE 2004

REPORT FROM DIRECTOR OF POLICY & REGENERATION

FOR ACTION

ALL WARDS

The Best Value Performance Plan 2004/05

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Each year, the Council is required to publish its Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) in accordance with government guidance and by the end of June. The final draft of the 2004/05 plan is provided for consideration and agreement by the full Council.
- 1.2 The 2004/05 BVPP will be Brent's fifth published plan. It will look back over the last year and forward over the coming three years. It is a statutory requirement to publish the plan each year. This year the government has made further revisions to its guidance on the content of performance plans in line with the CPA process. The guidance is covered in more detail below.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The full Council are recommended to agree the Best Value Performance Plan 2004/05.

3 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Section 6 of the Local Government Act 1999 requires local authorities to publish a Best Value Performance Plan. The content of the Plan and the date by which it must be published may be specified in an Order from the Secretary of State and its content may also be covered by guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 3.2 The requirements concerning the content of the Plan previously specified by Order have been revoked and are now covered by guidance issued in March 2003 in circular 03/2003 Local Government Act 1999: Part 1, Best Value and Performance Improvement; and, circular 02/2004 ADDENDUM TO ODPM Circular 03/2003 - Local Government Act 1999: Part 1 Best Value and Performance Improvement (Guidance on Best Value Performance Plans), as set out in the detail of the report.
- 3.3 The date by which the Best Value Performance Plan must be published remains the 30th June in the financial year to which the Plan relates.
- 3.4 Regulations made under the Local Government Act 2000 identify the Best Value Performance Plan as one of the plans which makes up the Council's Policy Framework. This means the Plan must be approved by the full Council.

4 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

5 **STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no staffing implications arising directly from this report.

6 **DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no diversity implications arising directly from this report, although the performance plan does contain summary information about the Council's performance in relation to diversity.

7 **DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS**

Government Guidance

- 7.1 The key implications for the production of the BVPP from the 2004 addendum to the 2003 circular are:

General

- 7.1.1 Performance Plans are intended to show local authorities proposals for improvement for the coming year, including how weaknesses will be addressed, opportunities exploited and better outcomes delivered for local people. It will include targets for future performance. The Government believes that all authorities should ensure their improvement planning processes should be integrated with corporate planning arrangements.

Deadline for publication

- 7.1.2 The deadline for the publication of the Best Value Performance Plan will continue to be 30th June each year, or any time up to the end of June.

Intended audience

- 7.1.3 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.

Relaxation of required content of performance plans

- 7.1.4 In accordance with the Government's approach to deregulation it will no longer be necessary to provide any information that can be obtained from other sources. Hence it will no longer be necessary to provide the following information:
- CPA scores;
 - summary financial information;
 - progress in implementing improvement measures over the past 3 years;
 - outcomes or impacts arising from those measures;

- progress against Local Public Service Agreements.

Impact of CPA

- 7.1.5 In line with its approach to delivering freedoms and flexibilities for better performing authorities, the Government is replacing the current 'one size fits all' approach with a differentiated approach that reflects CPA categorisation. For *fair*, weak and poor authorities the following requirements are issued under Section 6 of the Local Government Act 1999:

"All authorities categorised in CPA as fair, weak or poor and any district council or single purpose fire authority where a CPA has not reported, must include the following items in their Performance Plan published by June 2004, and in subsequent years:

- *A brief summary of the authority's strategic objectives and priorities for improvement. This should reflect its corporate/ business planning processes and community strategy.*
- *Arrangements for addressing the authority's improvement priorities, particularly the opportunities and weaknesses identified in CPA (or self-assessment where a CPA has not reported), and the outcomes that are expected to be achieved as a result.*
- *Details of performance:*
 - *outturn performance over the past year on all Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs);*
 - *targets for the current year and subsequent 2 years for all BVPIs.*
- *A brief statement on contracts. The authority should state and certify that all individual contracts awarded during the past year which involve a transfer of staff comply, where applicable, with the requirements in the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts."*

Method of publication

- 6.10. The Government requires that the plan be made widely available. Consultation with the council's auditors has indicated that 'widely available' can be predominantly by electronic means through the council's website. It is therefore proposed that this year the plan will be posted on to the council's website before the end of June and limited paper copies will be produced for reference.

7 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

7.1 The following documents were used in the preparation of this report:

ODPM Circular 03/2003: Best Value and Performance Improvement.
ODPM Circular 02/2004 ADDENDUM TO ODPM Circular 03/2003 - Local
Government Act 1999: Part 1 Best Value and Performance Improvement (Guidance
on Best Value Performance Plans)
2004/05 draft Best Value Performance Plan.

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