

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

MONDAY 19 MAY 2003 AT 2.00 P.M.

COUNTY COUNCIL

TUESDAY 20 MAY 2003 AT 10.30 A.M.

Agenda Item No.

Cabinet

8

County Council

11

BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2003-2004

Report of Acting Assistant Chief Executive (Performance)

Author:- Judith Sharples (Tel. 01992 588318)

Executive Member:- David Beatty

Purpose of the report

To provide a draft version of the BVPP 2003-04 for Cabinet and County Council approval. It is a statutory requirement for the Best Value Performance Plan to be approved by the County Council. However, as the statutory publication date for the Best Value Performance Plan is 30 June 2003 and some of the information for inclusion in the Plan is not yet available, it would be possible for the County Council to approve the draft Plan, subject to further changes being made by the interim Chief Executive in consultation with the Group Leaders.

To invite Cabinet and County Council to consider comments and suggestions of the BVPP Topic Group.

Conclusions

Members are asked to consider if there are any changes they wish to make to this version of the Plan.

Members will note that this is still a draft version and are asked to consider how to provide opportunities for further consultation with the BVPP Topic Group to aid production of a meaningful performance plan.

BVPP requirements and implications

As reported previously the ODPM issued new guidance on the content of BVPPs in March 2003.

The main changes to the content of the Plan are as follows:

- For the first time the plan will need to include outturn data rather than estimates
- Targets have to be set for 3 years rather than just one
- CPA scores must be included
- Progress over the last 3 years in implementing improvement measures and the outcomes of these improvement measures must be reported
- Improvement plans for the next 3 years based on CPA corporate assessment, best value reviews and other inspection programmes must be detailed
- Authorities must certify that they comply with the Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts in relation to staff transfers

The draft BVPP 2003-04 takes account of these new requirements

Changes to the draft BVPP 2003-04

Members will note that this version of the Plan (attached as Appendix 1 to this report) has been developed from the version seen on 28 April.

In terms of data, all changes to the previous version presented to Cabinet are shaded. Noteworthy changes to text are highlighted below (though minor clarifications and corrections and changes to the order of sections have not been highlighted). The most significant difference is the addition of the following sections:

In Section A

INTRODUCTION

Planning ahead with you – message from the Leader

Introducing our Best Value Performance Plan

Let us know what you think

Where to get further information

ABOUT HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

The context for what we do

Serving Hertfordshire people

Developing our priorities

Meeting local and national priorities

Supporting our staff

Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment

In SECTION B

How to Use the Performance Data

In addition, noteworthy changes have been made to the following areas which were previously presented to cabinet:

Pages 11 to 17 - How our budget is spent

Page 31 - Promise 8, Work with the Police and other organisations to reduce crime, and prevent offending by children and young people

Pages 64 to 66 - Promise 23, We will give local communities a better voice to tackle local problems

Pages 69 to 81 - Former section on the Improvement Plan, which has now been reviewed, updated and split under the following headings

- How Well Is Hertfordshire County Council Performing?
- Our Progress In Making Improvements Over The Last Three Years
- Our Improvement Plans For The Next Three Years

Further changes to the data and text

The Plan attached remains a draft version and further improvements need to be made up to the time of publication.

Some gaps remain within Section B (data). For example, financial data is generally unavailable until mid June. In other cases changes in definition or methodology has delayed the figures and explanation of these gaps is provided. Officers are continuing to work on, and improve, this data.

BVPP Topic Group comments.

The BVPP Topic Group met on 4 March 2003 and again on 7 May 2003. They raised a number of general concerns and specific issues around Promises and the indicators used to measure them, and made a number of points as a result.

Many of these have been incorporated into the versions of the Plan produced for cabinet. A full list of these issues and the resultant officer actions and responses can be seen as appendix 2. These include:

- Clarity about Local PSA and 'stretch' targets

- Notes to explain and/or define some of the indicators used
- Re-wording of some of these indicators to simplify and/or clarify them
- Deletion of some indicators deemed, for example, as too specific
- Moving some indicators which better measure a different promise

In addition, the Topic Group made a number of observations which are still to be addressed.

- Actions to measure Promises and Performance Indicators are not as closely linked as they should be
- Members feel that some promises are inadequately measured by the current sets of indicators which should be changed or complemented. This applies particularly to the promises where we are less able to control the outcomes: Promises 1 (work with the community to protect and enhance our environment), Promise 9 working with business to increase prosperity... and Promise 23 (give local communities a better voice...)
- The Topic Group also requested that executive members when reviewing the Promises for next year aim to improve the set to ensure that all can be clearly defined and measured.