

**BVPP TRAFFIC-LIGHT MONITOR: 2001-02 FINAL AND COMPARATIVE
RESULTS FOR 2000-01**

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy)

Report Authors: Geoff Brown tel. 01992 555370 Peter Stanley tel. 01992 555306

Executive Member: Bernard Lloyd

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To submit the final version of the 2001-02 'BVPP traffic-light' report for member scrutiny and provide comparative data from the Audit Commission for the previous year.

2. Summary

- 2.1. The key approach within the BVPP is to show links between a promise, the actions taken to achieve the promise and how success is to be measured. The Resources, Prosperity Partnership and Consultation committee has overall responsibility for the scrutiny of the plan and monitoring performance against the promise measures.
- 2.2. The monitors provided give the final position for performance of key measures (against last year's promises).
- 2.3. The document from the Audit Commission's database shows comparative data for all indicators, whether these are promise measures or not.

3. The BVPP traffic-light monitor

- 3.1. The monitor is arranged by promise and, for each promise, key indicators from the national and /or local sets are used to assess whether it has been met.
- 3.2. The monitors attached show performance against promises for 2001-02. For each indicator the result is coded as
 - *Met or exceeded target (Green)*
 - *Under performed against target by up to 5% (White)*
 - *Missed target by at least 5% (Red)*
 - *Comparison to target not possible (Yellow)*

- 3.3. Overall, the ‘traffic light monitors’ for 2001-02 show a mixed picture of achievement of the promises. Of the 96 indicators¹ that could be compared to target, 44 were met or exceeded, 21 were within 5% of target and 31 missed the target by more than 5%.
- 3.4. It is important to review these results in the context of the information provided in the comments on performance column.

4. Comparison of Performance against Target

- 4.1. The monitor shows where we perform well and where we perform badly. Members will be aware that in many cases the detail of the comment is important in interpreting the result.
- 4.2. Green traffic lights show that we met a target, but may also show only marginal improvement year on year.
- 4.3. The results show HCC performance against target rather than compared with other authorities. A missed target may still be good performance relative to others or vice versa.
- 4.4. **Appendix 1** shows the results for the key indicators measuring the promises to **make Hertfordshire a better place to live and a prosperous place to work and to help people to lead independent lives and involve and serve the public.**

- 4.4.1. An analysis shows that of the 70 indicators overall:

Met (green)	33
Missed by up to 5% (white)	9
Missed by over 5% (red)	14
Comparison not possible (yellow)	14

- 4.4.2. If a target is missed, it does not mean that performance hasn’t improved. In appendix 1, of the 23 indicators where target was missed 11 were indicators where comparison with 2000-01 results is possible. The position for these 11 indicators is:

Performance had improved compared to 2000-01, but not sufficient to meet the target.	8
Performance had declined compared to 2000-01	3

- 4.4.3. Performance declined for three indicators. Despite falling short of our challenging target, the Social Services Inspectorate analysis is that our data

¹ 111 indicators were included but some could not be compared to target because of changes in measurement methodology for example

for BVPI 162 places us in the band of highest performing authorities across the Country for BVPI 162

- 4.4.4. Damage to roads and pavements (BVPI 105) reflects changing organisational/contract arrangements (this is a measurement of repairs).
- 4.4.5. Access to libraries (BVPI 117). Increased use of remote access facilities e.g. for renewals and reservations has led to a reduction in the number of people needing to visit a library to undertake these functions.
- 4.5. It is very clear that the major issue around target setting and reporting is for those indicators measuring the promises to improve education to give children a better future
- 4.6. **Appendix 2** shows the results for the key indicators measuring the promises to **improve education to give children a better future**.
- 4.6.1. As members will know, part of the performance issue here has been due to the aspirational target setting and there are also areas of performance management which are being addressed as a matter of urgency.
- 4.6.2. Summarising the position for this set of promises, there are a total of 41 indicators, of which 12 are green, 12 are white, 16 are red and 1 is yellow.
- 4.6.3. The Authority has maintained its position as a high performing Education service and our performance across the full spectrum of key stages remains better than our statistical neighbours and considerably better than national averages.
- 4.6.4. The performance against local targets needs to be considered in the context of:
- a) aspirational nature of targets originating in the Authority's Education Development Plan which were constructed to drive improvements in an already high-performing service; and
 - b) the very robust negotiating position which DfES have adopted in relation to statutory targets.
- 4.6.5. Looking at more detail at the red category (and discounting the indicators where year on year comparison is not valid), members can identify where improvement in performance has been made during the year or where it has declined:

	No. of reds	No. that improved on last year	No. that declined from last year	No change
Local indicators	11	0	10	1
National indicators	2	1	1	0

- 4.6.6. However this needs to be considered in the context of the position across all local authorities and the fact that there were decreases in the national position in relation to Key Stage 1 Reading, Key Stage 2 English and a stable position in relation to Key Stage 2 Maths, as well as low percentage increases in a range of other tests.
- 4.6.7. Within the data there are, however, specific areas of concern and we are already taking specific measures to address boys achievement and post-16 achievement.
- 4.6.8. In addition, given the recommendation of the CPA report, the aspirational nature of our targets in the BVPP need to be reviewed to make the targets challenging, but realistic and we are currently engaged in that process with respect to the 2002/03 BVPP and 2003/04 BVPP.

5. Setting stretching targets

- 5.1. The CPA review highlighted that we should ‘set stretching but attainable targets against all of the promises for 2003/4’ and also ‘review all targets to ensure that they are not only stretching but achievable’. This work is being progressed through the performance management strand of *Simply Done*.
- 5.2. Officers are now reviewing targets for 2002-03 in the light of 2001-02 actuals as presented to your committee. Discussions with members are taking place to ensure that officers set robust and realistic targets for all local and national indicators where the targets can be changed. Certain targets that have been already published, or agreed with Government through for instance the PSA, would sit somewhat outside this process.

6. Improvements to Reporting Information for Members

- 6.1. A number of improvements to the monitor have been agreed for subsequent reports, these include the addition of financial context and at the request of RPP&C Scrutiny Committee, information on previous year’s performance where comparison can be made. The intention is to make the monitor a useful tool for all members to aid an understanding of performance achieved and allow for meaningful scrutiny.

7. BVPP Topic Group

- 7.1. The BVPP topic group will be looking at performance data to make it more accessible and valuable, for example including explicit comparative ranking with other authorities.
- 7.2. In addition the topic group will consider good practice in terms of the content of the Plan with a view to making it more useful for stakeholders.
- 7.3. Further areas for the group include; an assessment of good practice in the presentation of the Plan and performance data and a review of the scrutiny of

promises currently scheduled for meetings of the Committee.

7.4. Timetable:

November to December:

Consider good practice for producing the BVPP, reviewing the 2002-03 Plan and recommending improvements, particularly in the light of the revised Government guidance.

Scrutiny of HCC's results for 2001-02 compared with other authorities.

Consideration of the presentation and content of the monitoring report, (The monitor for the first 2 quarters of 2002-03 to go to the January meeting of the Resources Scrutiny Committee)

March 2003:

Scrutiny of the draft BVPP for 2003-04

May 2003:

Final BVPP approved by County Council

June 2003:

BVPP published

8. Audit Commission Comparative data

- 8.1. The Committee has also requested to see the Performance Indicator data provided by the Audit Commission during the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) process. The Audit Commission has subsequently decided that this data has a number of flaws and will not be using it as a basis for comparator performance analysis in their future CPA work.
- 8.2. The Audit Commission also appreciates that comparison needs to be considered in a more subtle way than this presentation of the data suggests. For example, the Commission now argues that there should be all authority comparisons for management PIs but most service PI comparison should be on a type of authority basis. Also it may be more meaningful to compare with statistical neighbours than everyone
- 8.3. The attached data (appendix 3) therefore does need to be treated with caution. In particular:
 - Expenditure PIs will be dropped from future CPAs. These crudely cast higher spending as poorer performance and lower expenditure as better performance
 - There is an imbalance between different services (e.g. 24 indicators for transport, 12 in total for adult and children's social services)
 - A breakdown into detail is useful at an operational level but can give a misleading impression of the overall picture. As an example there are 5 PIs for BVPI 3 on cultural & recreational services. This can give a skewed picture when alongside single PIs for other service elements.

- There is also a mistake on the summary sheet for Community Safety as this should show 2 yellows and 1 green (not 2 reds and 1 green).
- 8.4. The 2001-02 data is due in December and this will be provided to the topic group for analysis and consideration.