

**SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 18TH JUNE 2003****DRAFT BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN 2003/04****JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE
AND COUNTY TREASURER****Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to request the views of Scrutiny Commission on the draft Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) for 2003/04, before it is formally agreed by Cabinet.

Background

2. The Council is required to publish a Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) by 30th June each year. The requirements of the Plan are specified by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and the final Plan is audited by the Audit Commission to ensure it complies with legislation.
3. This is the fourth BVPP that the Council has produced. In March 2003 the ODPM issued a Circular (03/2003) which amended the requirements for the contents of the Plan in the light of experience to date and the introduction of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment in 2002.
4. The BVPP must now include:-
 - A brief summary of the Council's strategic objectives and priorities for improvement.
 - The Council's CPA scores
 - Progress in, and future plans for delivering local and national priorities, including best value review and inspection programmes.
 - A range of past, current and planned performance against best value performance indicators.
 - A brief summary of financial information.
 - A brief statement on contracts confirming compliance with Code of Practice on Workforce Matters in Local Authority Service Contracts.
5. Several previous requirements for inclusion in the BVPP have been dropped, the most significant being the requirement for a five year review programme covering all the Council's services.

6. The ODPM Circular also acknowledged that, although the BVPP should still be used as a means of communicating the Council's plans and performance to local people, its principal audiences are likely to be the staff and members of the Council, groups and organisations with an interest in the activities of the Council, the regulatory bodies, and central government.
7. In practice the emphasis of the BVPP is now much more focussed on carrying forward the issues for development that were identified a part of the CPA process introduced by the Government in 2002. The requirement to apply Best Value principles to the delivery of services still applies however.

Current Position

8. The draft BVPP has been constructed to take account of the revised ODPM guidance. The Administration has recently been considering its priorities for development during the remaining life of the Council, and reviewing the Medium Term Corporate Strategy. A report on this appears elsewhere on the agenda. This review and the new guidance from ODPM have provided the opportunity to relate the draft BVPP much more closely to the Administration's priority issues.
9. As with the Medium Term Corporate Strategy, the BVPP having only been recently finalised is being circulated to all members of the County Council as an Information Item.
10. Some, mainly financial, information relating to actual performance in 2002/03 against some of the Performance Indicators is not yet available. It is intended to insert this information in the final version of the BVPP before it is published at the end of June and the Cabinet will be asked to give the Chief Executive authority to make further minor changes to the current draft BVPP to enable this to happen.

Timetable for Decision

11. The BVPP will be considered by the Cabinet on 24th June, 2003 and by the County Council on 9th July. In order to meet the statutory publication date it will be necessary to publish the BVPP by 30th June and submit it to the ODPM on the basis that it is subject to final approval by the Council.

Recommendations

12. The Commission is asked to consider the content of the draft BVPP and indicate what comments, if any, it wishes to make to the Cabinet.

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