

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Tuesday, 24th January 2006, at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors B. L. Fuller C.B.E., Q.F.S.M., (Chairman), P. M. McDonald (Vice-Chairman), G. N. Denaro, Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., C. B. Lanham, D. Hancox (substituting for J. A. Ruck) and N. Psirides J.P.

6/05 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J. A. Ruck.

7/05 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on 10th November 2005 were submitted.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting be approved as a correct record.

8/05 **SELECTION OF TOP 45 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Consideration was given to a report on the selection of a "Top 45" set of performance indicators to help provide strategic focus on those which were felt to be most important out of over 200 indicators which were currently included on the Council's performance management system. The selected "Top 45" indicators would need to be kept under review and arrangements would be put in place to ensure that any cause for concern in connection with a performance indicator outside the "Top 45" was drawn to the Board's attention. Members were keen to ensure that they were involved in setting realistic indicator targets. There were currently two mechanisms for this, the Service Business Plans and the Best Value Performance Plan. The Assistant Chief Executive agreed to bring a report to the March/April meeting on performance indicator targets for the year ahead. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Board agrees to receive a "Top 45" report each quarter allowing sufficient time for the report to be tabled at Corporate Management Team, before being reported to the Board;
- (b) that the Board agrees to receive a second top set of performance indicators at its March meeting which will concentrate on the corporate health indicators such as sickness absence, etc;
- (c) that the Board agrees to review the "Top 45" set of performance indicators on an annual basis;
- (d) that the Board agrees the process for reducing the number of indicators in the Council's performance management system as set out in the report; and
- (e) that a mechanism be put in place so the Board can review and be satisfied that indicator targets are realistic and achievable at the beginning of the year.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the criteria for selecting the "Top 45" be agreed as follows:
 - indicators identified as important by the Audit Commission for future CPA inspections;
 - key performance indicators as documented in the Council's Annual Performance Plan 2005/06;
 - indicators which can be classed as headline grabbing;
 - indicators that can be linked to the Council's Recovery Plan (but not in the Resources Directorate); and
 - indicators for 2004/05 which were in the bottom two quartiles;

- (b) that the “Top 45” indicators selected on the basis of the above criteria, as set out in the Appendix to the report, be approved as an appropriate set to focus on during 2006/07, subject to further review around March 2006 in the light of an updated set of Best Value Performance Indicators due to be received from the Government;

9/05

TOP 45 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT – QUARTER THREE 2005/06

The Board considered performance monitoring information for the “Top 45” performance indicators for the third quarter of 2005/06. The monitoring information was presented in a new, more user-friendly format than previously and featured a “traffic light system” which enabled quick visual identification of indicators which were more than 10% below target (red), between 0% and 10% of target (amber) or on target (green). It was intended that the Board would consider such information on a quarterly basis and make recommendations to the Cabinet on corrective action required. The Board would also be able to request separate reports in relation to a particular indicator.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the lack of commentary and planned action in relation to a number of the “Top 45” indicators is unacceptable and the Board expects this to be addressed;
- (b) that planned action to address under-performance be positive and specific not vague comments;
- (c) that top quartile performance be indicated on each monitoring page to enable the Board to compare the Council’s performance with top quartile;
- (d) that the crime-related performance indicators be submitted broken down by Ward on an annual basis;
- (e) that in connection with BPI 175 (Racial incidents resulting in further action), the Assistant Chief Executive submit a report to a future meeting on equalities issues;
- (f) that in connection with BVPI 183b (Length of stay in temporary accommodation) and BVPI 203 (Change in number of families in temporary accommodation), the relevant Head of Service be asked to report to the next meeting on issues relating to homelessness, lack of affordable housing and hostels; that these issues be discussed as part of the Board’s consideration of the relevant Service Business Plan; and similarly, that the same Head of Service also be asked to explore the use of unoccupied properties within the district;
- (g) that in connection with the local indicator regarding percentage survival of new businesses, the Economic Development Officer be asked to report to the next meeting on the number of people the Council has helped to gain employment, including details of their skills and training received, together with information about the number of jobs retained and lost, and on whether the Economic Development Unit will be able to cope and respond to the demands arising from the redevelopment of the Longbridge site; and that these issues be discussed as part of the Board’s consideration of the Economic Development Business Plan;

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that with regard to the BVPIs regarding Household Waste Management, the Cabinet be made aware of the need to set money aside in the budget to fund the promotion of waste minimisation opportunities;
- (b) that with regard to BVPI 109 (processing of planning applications), the Cabinet note the Board’s concern at the reduced Planning Delivery Grant arising from a downturn in performance due to inadequate staffing levels, and to the need for better forward planning to identify and prepare for major planning issues which are demanding on staff resources;
- (c) that with the regard to BVPI 199d (Enforcement action to deal with ‘fly-tipping’), the Cabinet be informed that the Board feels that the current lack of enforcement and the proposal not to implement enforcement action as part of the Street Scene Strategy until 2008 is not acceptable;
- (d) that with regard to the local indicator on Dolphin Centre usage, the Cabinet note the potential for a budget shortfall during 2005/06 due to the variation between actual number of visitors compared to target.

10/05

AUDIT COMMISSION PROGRESS ASSESSMENT OF THE COUNCIL

The Board considered a report on the Progress Assessment of the Council recently issued by the Audit Commission which was generally regarded as a fair and encouraging reflection and recognised that the direction of travel was positive. Attention was drawn to seven areas for improvement which had been identified by the Audit Commission and to the proposed actions to address these. It was felt that the pace of change had improved significantly and that the Council needed to maintain this pace. It was noted that the Board would examine the Council's Recovery Plan on a monthly basis following prior consideration by the Corporate Management Team. Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Progress Assessment as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be noted;
- (b) that the progress now being made as set out in 4.1 to 4.3 of the report be noted;
- (c) that the presentation given by the Chief Executive at the December meeting of the Government Monitoring Board which identified seven key recommendations from the Progress Assessment and proposed actions to respond to these during 2006, as detailed in 4.4 and Appendix 2, be noted;
- (d) that the overview of the Recovery Plan reported to the December meeting of the Government Monitoring Board, as detailed in 4.6 and Appendix 3, be noted;
- (e) that it be noted that the local television coverage on the day the Progress Assessment was released was inaccurate as the Council does not have a star rating;
- (f) that the emerging arrangements for corporate inspection during 2006 be noted;
- (g) that the problems with sending the Progress Assessment to all Members and the future arrangements for reporting inspection reports to Members as set out in the report be noted;
- (h) that the background information, including the Council's press release, the Audit Commission's press release and the Council response to the draft Progress Assessment that was sent to the Audit Commission, as set out in Appendices 4, 5 and 6 respectively, be noted;
- (i) that the Assistant Chief Executive investigate whether future Audit Commission reports can be made available to Members of the Board 24-48 hours in advance of general public release.

RECOMMENDED: that the Cabinet note the Board's concern at the time delay between external inspections and their findings being reported, particularly as such reports do not reflect the current situation or improvements made since the inspection and therefore can be very demotivating for staff.

11/05

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a proposed work programme for the Board for the remainder of 2005/06 and 2006/07 based on the terms of reference agreed at the previous meeting. A Member referred to the release of information by the Council which he considered to be commercially sensitive in relation to an item which had been considered in private by the full Council meeting on 10th January 2006. The Assistant Chief Executive agreed to raise this issue with the Corporate Director (Resources).

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the work programme set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved;
- (b) that meetings of the Board take place at 2.00 p.m. on the Friday preceding the meeting of the Government Monitoring Board;
- (c) that in view of the number of Service Business Plans to be considered in February, meetings of the Board take place on Friday, 17th February and Monday, 20th February 2006 at 2.00 p.m.;

RECOMMENDED: that the Cabinet be asked to note the concerns raised regarding the release of information in relation to an item considered in private by the Council and to take steps to ensure that this does not happen again.

The Meeting closed at 4.40 p.m.

Chairman