

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

**MONDAY, 16TH NOVEMBER 2009, AT 6.00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillors C. B. Taylor (Chairman), Mrs. M. Bunker (Vice-Chairman),  
S. R. Colella, Mrs. A. E. Doyle, Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths and L. J. Turner

In attendance: Councillor G. Denaro

Officers: Mr. H. Bennett, Ms. J. Pickering and Ms. A. Scarce

50/09 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

51/09 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor K. Taylor declared an interest in item 4 (Quarter 2 09/10 Integrated Finance & Performance Report) as he had applied for a small business start up grant from the Council.

52/09 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Performance management Board held on 19th October 2009 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

53/09 **QUARTER 2009/10 INTEGRATED FINANCE & PERFORMANCE REPORT**

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor G. Denaro, Portfolio Holder for Resources advised that there was a significant overspend to the end of September together with a projected deficit to the end of the financial year. The main reasons for this were:

- the impact of the downturn in the housing market on land charges and building control income targets;
- significant increase in printing charges compared to those originally anticipated; and
- a shortfall on the income from investments due to the rates of return being less than predicted.

The Head of Financial Services advised that a number of actions had been put in place to bring this back in line by the end of the year, including:

- Transfer of an element of funds into a low risk but higher yield investment. Following discussions with treasury advisors it was

understood that the Council could achieve 2.5% on limited investments with similar protection as presently in place.

- A freeze on vacancies. The Council was currently holding a vacancy freeze in consideration of the future joint arrangements with both Redditch and the WETT programme. The freeze would ensure that business critical services were maintained whilst providing savings for the remainder of the financial year.
- Review of non-essential expenditure. This would include the centralising of the office supplies and reviewing non-essential training.
- A review of contracts in place which would identify where renegotiation could take place to reduce costs in the short term.

Members shared their concerns that a reduction in training was not a good idea as it played an essential part in the Council's continued improvement. The Head of Financial Services assured Members that funds would be available for areas of essential spend to ensure services were delivered to the customer.

The Board was informed that the main areas of deficit were Planning and E-Government and that other areas were having to make savings to compensate for this. The significant increase in printing charges was discussed in detail and the Head of Financial Services advised that the supplier was being contacted with a view to reviewing this.

During the discussion it was noted that the Dolphin Centre fitness suite membership had exceed 750. Members discussed how this figure could be maintained and whether or not it was due to customers choosing it as a cheaper option to other gyms following the economic downturn and whether this figure could be sustained in future. The use of a loyalty card system was discussed as a way of tracking and targeting users.

Members raised concerns over the use of agency staff and the Head of Financial Services advised that this matter had been addressed. Members also shared their concern that the overspend had been taken into account in next year's budget forecast and the Head of Financial Services confirmed that the appropriate action had been taken to address this. Concerns were also raised as to why the overspend had not been detected earlier and the Head of Financial Services explained that in future the predicted out turn would be part of the first quarter review as at June 2010.

Members asked to what extent Portfolio Holders were involved in the monitoring process and it was advised that they receive monthly monitoring reports and had monthly meetings with the relevant Head of Service. Members were asked to note that some departments are maintaining good progress and working within their budget.

The Assistant Chief Executive advised that the sickness level continued to improve.

**RECOMMENDED** that Portfolio Holders continue to work with Heads of Service to ensure overspend is managed and brought back in line with the budget.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that it be noted that 62% of performance indicators are improving or stable;
- (b) that it be noted that 58% of performance indicators had achieved their year to date target;
- (c) that it be noted that 80% of performance indicators are predicted to meet their target at the year end;
- (d) that the particular successes and areas of potential concern as set out in the Council Summary be noted;
- (e) that the current financial position on Revenue and Capital as detailed in the report and the proposed actions to mitigate the overspend on revenue be noted;
- (f) that the release of previously approved earmarked reserves of £249k as set out in Appendix 5 be noted;
- (g) that the budget virements listed in Appendix 6 are approved; and
- (h) that Cabinet recommend to Full Council to reduce the Capital Programme 2009/10 by £1.148m as detailed in Appendix 7 to reflect the projects, due to the factors detailed in the report will not be delivered during 2009/10 and that these projects are recommended to be included in the 2010/11 Capital Programme be noted.

54/09 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT (SEPTEMBER 2009)**

The Board considered the Improvement Plan Exception Report as at 30th September 2009.

During the discussion Members paid particular attention to CP1: Town Centre and in particular 1.4.6 Establish Proposed Civic Centre Study Group and commented that this needed to be monitored as the regeneration of the town centre as a whole was an important issue. The Assistant Chief Executive confirmed he would contact the Executive Director (Partnerships & Projects) and relevant Portfolio Holder to request a project plan/timeline for discussion at the next meeting. It was also confirmed that the New Council House Accommodation was on the Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme for 2010/11 and that the Economic Regeneration Policy was on the current Work Programme of the Scrutiny Board, and would be investigated further in early 2010.

The Assistant Chief Executive also drew Members' attention to item 1.5 Train Station and confirmed that Worcestershire County Council continued to work with Network Rail, the current design was not sustainable and there was a shortfall in the funding available. The Assistant Chief Executive confirmed he would contact County to establish the current position and report back to the next meeting.

In relation to FP1: Managing Finances (including Value for Money) Item 5.2.8 Deliver Use of resources action plan in relation to new framework.

Management Performance under CAA would be published on 10th December and would be included for discussion at a subsequent meeting.

Members questioned the need under PR4: Improving Partnership Working item 12.3.1 and the Assistant Chief Executive confirmed that the Council did not have a formal grants policy and a corporate policy was needed to clarify the Council's position.

Members were concerned to note that under HR & OD3: Positive Employee Climate, item 16.4.1 delivery of employee health and wellbeing programme, had been cancelled due to room availability. This was felt to be unacceptable and the Assistant Chief Executive advised that he would check to see that the programme had been put in place and that this situation did not happen again.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exception report together with the corrective action being taken be noted;
- (b) that it be noted that for the 104 actions highlighted for September within the plan 76% of the Improvement Plan was on target (green), 8.7% is one month behind (amber) and 3.8% is over one month behind (red). 11.5% of actions have been reprogrammed or suspended with approval.

55/09 **SHARED SERVICES HIGHLIGHT REPORT - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Assistant Chief Executive advised Members that a Highlight Report was not available as both Full Councils had agreed to the Shared Services and therefore this stage was complete. There would be a composite highlight report available for the Board to consider at the meeting on 21st December 2009. Directors' interviews would take place week commencing 14th December 2009 and then the next stage of interviews would commence week beginning 18th January 2010 and the new single management team was expected to go "live" in mid April 2010. There have been and will continue to be many briefing opportunities for both staff and unions in this process.

The Assistant Chief Executive also briefed Members on the current position in respect of the Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier programme (WETT), particularly with regard to the Council hosting Regulatory Services. The Board will receive regular updates on how the WETT programme was progressing as part of the shared services composite report.

Members asked what the position would be with regard to Portfolio Holders' descriptions as these may vary between Redditch and Bromsgrove. The Assistant Chief Executive responded that this was a matter for members.

56/09 **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY 2010-2013**

The Board considered a report on the proposed Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-2013 which was subject to consideration by Full Council on 18th November 2009.

Members commented that the target dates seemed a considerable time away and therefore questioned their relevancy. A key area of concern was NI188 Climate Change as currently the Council was at Level 0 and was unlikely to reach Level 2 by the end of 2010/11. The report appeared to be focused on performance and less on measures to improve that performance. Members were advised that Climate Change was on the Work Programme of the Scrutiny Board and would be looked at early in 2010. Whilst the Assistant Chief Executive acknowledged that Climate Change must be at the forefront, this would be difficult in the current economic downturn as many changes that need to happen involve a high initial capital outlay. It will be important to align Climate Change improvements to changes in the business as they happen.

Members discussed NI39 – Alcohol harm related hospital admission rates and were advised that this was also on the current Scrutiny Board Work Programme.

With regard to the section Improving Health and Well Being, Members commented on the following items:

- Item 3 Reduce the impact of alcohol misuse in the workplace. Members felt that this was an important area to look at and that brief intervention training for some members of staff would be appropriate.
- NI56 and NI55 Childhood Obesity. Although the PCT were doing a range of things on this, Members felt that involvement should be at the very earliest stage, such as Health Visitors. Members also queried the details of NI56 as they felt the information on the areas of the district where obesity was over 20%, are not in line with those provided previously in the Bromsgrove Profile.
- LI7 Adults in contact with secondary mental health services in employment. Members felt that the key actions would not improve employment for these adults.
- NI117 – 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). Members were concerned that this matter was not being addressed and discussed what was available to these young people. The TRUNK would do outreach work in both Charford and Sidemoor.

Members felt that a summary of the report should be provided in order to show the linkage with the Council's priorities, key issues and measure of success.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the Assistant Chief Executive to ask the relevant Portfolio Holder to revisit NI155;
- (b) That the Assistant Chief Executive clarify information in NI56 with regard to specific district areas with obesity over 20%.
- (c) that in future an executive summary be prepared detailing key issues and the linkage to the Council's priorities.
- (d) that Members felt there was a range of activities available, which perhaps needed to be communicated to the young people in a different way.

57/09 **QUARTERLY RECOMMENDATION TRACKER**

The Board received the Quarterly Recommendation Tracker and expressed concern that item 35/09 (c), introduction of an emergency planning leaflet, had been rejected by the Cabinet. Members also commented on the importance of receiving item 39/09 the Shared Services Highlight Report.

**RESOLVED** that the Recommendation Tracker Report be noted.

58/09 **DATA QUALITY STRATEGY 6 MONTH UPDATE**

The Board considered a report on the progress with regard to the implementation of the Data Quality Strategy Action Plan.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the Data Quality Strategy Action Plan be noted; and
- (b) that in future this update be provided together with the six monthly Performance Management Strategy update report.

59/09 **WORK PROGRAMME**

Having considered a report on the Board's work programming Members shared the Assistant Chief Executive's concern that the agenda for the meeting on 21st December 2009 was long.

**RESOLVED** that the Work Programme be approved subject to the inclusion of a short update from the Head of Financial Services on the Integrated Finance & Performance Report at the next meeting and that the Annual Artrix Performance Report and "What is Excellence?" be deferred until the meeting on 18th January 2010 meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.25 p.m.

Chairman