

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE CABINET**

**10TH JULY 2007**

**COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT  
PLAN 2007/2008**

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Roger Hollingworth, Leader of the Council
Responsible Head of Service	Hugh Bennett, Assistant Chief Executive

**1. Summary**

- 1.1 To formally report the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment report to Cabinet.
- 1.2 To agree the Improvement Plan for July 2007 to June 2008. The Improvement Plan is a detailed one year plan, based on the corporate priorities and high level actions set out in the Council Plan 2007/2010.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Executive Cabinet:-
  - i. Notes the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment report, in particular, the areas for improvement set out on page 7 (**Appendix 1**).
  - ii. Approves the Improvement Plan 2007/08 (**Appendix 2**).
  - iii. Notes that the Improvement Plan 2007/08 does cross reference to the recommendations contained in the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment report (**Appendix 3**), but also contains other actions for 2007/08 designed to deliver the Council Plan 2007/2010.
  - iv. Agree the changes to the Council Plan set out in 3.4, based on the Corporate Management Team's view of the Council's capacity to deliver the Council Plan 2007/2010.

- v. Agrees that further updates to the Improvement Plan 2007/08 may be required, based on discussions between the Improvement Director and Corporate Management Team.

### 3. **Background**

- 3.1. Members will be aware that the Council recently received its first Comprehensive Performance Assessment from the Audit Commission. Overall, the Council received a rating of "Poor", which is the lowest of the five possible ratings. The Audit Commission's report does identify that:-

*"after a considerable period of inaction and poor decision making, Bromsgrove have come a long way, from a very low base, in the past year".*

- 3.2. Despite this progress, the Council still has a significant distance to travel in order to be "Fair" rated and no longer in voluntary engagement with Central Government. The Audit Commission have made four key recommendations. These are detailed on page 7 of their report.

- 3.3. **Appendix 2** of the report contains a detailed Improvement Plan 2007/08, which sets out what actions the Council intends to take over the next 12 months to deliver its 10 corporate priorities as set out in the Council Plan 2007/2010. The Council has previously delivered a recovery plan, focusing on the financial management of the Council and in August 2006 Cabinet approved an improvement plan focused on more outward facing issues like customer service, performance indicators and reputation management. The attached Improvement Plan 2007/08 stays with the same format, but is updated to reflect actions for the year ahead. The Council Plan is wider in its scope than the four Audit Commission areas for improvement, so **Appendix 3** cross references the relevant parts of the Improvement Plan 2007/08 to the Audit Commission's areas for improvement.

- 3.4 Capacity has been identified as an issue in the Audit Commission's report and the 2006/07 Improvement Plan was considered "ambitious" by the Audit Commission and Government Monitoring Board. As a result, the Corporate Management Team have considered this issue and recommend the following changes to the Council Plan 2007/2010 and therefore to the Improvement Plan 2007/08:-

- the switching off of voicemail to be suspended and re-programmed into 2008/09. Whilst Corporate Management Team believe this action will be in the long term interest of achieving a more Customer First culture, there are more immediate management issues around how the "back office" interfaces with the Customer Service Centre, job evaluation and Single Status and the Spatial Project, which need addressing first (Improvement Plan ref. 15.3).
- the roll out of workforce planning to be re-programmed into 2008/09. The Council is to undergo job evaluation and Single Status during

2007/08. Previous advice from the Government Monitoring Board and officer experience from other councils suggests that this is a very difficult project. The Human Resources and Organisational Development Department are unlikely to have the capacity to deliver workforce planning on top of these major changes (Improvement Plan ref. 20.1).

- 3.5 The Improvement Director has also outlined a number of additional actions which may be required to drive the Council through to a “Fair” rating in 2008/09. These require further consideration and will need to be incorporated into the Improvement Plan as they are considered and actions agreed.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The 2007/2010 medium term financial strategy is based on the Council’s priorities, which the Improvement Plan is also based on.

#### **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications to this report.

#### **6. Corporate Objectives**

- 6.1 The Improvement Plan is aligned to the Council’s Corporate objectives and priorities.

#### **7. Risk Management**

- 7.1 The Improvement Plan will be supported by the Council’s strategic risk register.

#### **9. Customer Implications**

- 9.1 Putting the customer at the heart of what the Council does is a key area for improvement in the Audit Commission report and is addressed by the Improvement Plan (see 4., 5.2 and 17.1).

#### **9. Other Sub Headings**

- 8.1 All the following issues have been reflected in the definitions of the Council Objectives:-

Procurement Issues
The Improvement Plan contains a number of procurement issues e.g. town centre, leisure trust etc.
Personnel Implications
See section 20.

Governance/Performance Management Considerations See section 16 on Governance and section 6 on performance.
Community Safety Considerations See section 7.
Policy Considerations The Improvement Plan reflects the ten priorities of the Council.
Environmental Considerations See section 9.
Equalities Implications See 7.4.

## **10. OFFICERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Chief Executive	<b>Yes</b>
Corporate Director (Services)	<b>Yes</b>
Assistant Chief Executive	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Service	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Financial Services	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Legal & Democratic Services	<b>Yes</b>
Head of Organisational Development & HR	<b>Yes</b>
Corporate Procurement Team	<b>N/a</b>

### **Background Papers**

Council Plan 2007/2010, Cabinet, February 2007.

### **Contact officer**

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