

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD

MONDAY, 15TH NOVEMBER 2010, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors C. B. Taylor (Chairman), Mrs. M. Bunker (Vice-Chairman), S. R. Colella and Ms. H. J. Jones

Observers: Councillor G. N. Denaro

Invitees: Ms. A Glennie and Ms. C Garner (Housing Manager, Needs and Money Advice, BDHT)

Officers: Mr. H. Bennett, Mr. A. Coel and Ms. A. Scarce

36/09 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. A. E. Doyle and Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths.

37/09 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mrs. M. Bunker declared a personal interest in Minute No.38/10 (Report and Presentation on Housing and Homelessness) in her role as a director of Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (bdht).

38/09 **REPORT AND PRESENTATION ON HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS**

The Board considered a report from the Strategic Housing Manager on the Homelessness and Housing Register. A presentation was also given by Amanda Glennie, the Strategic Housing Officer and Clare Garner, Housing Manager (Needs and Money Advice) Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (bdht).

The presentation covered the following areas, which were discussed by Members:

- Bdht's role and the service level agreement they have with the Council.
- The Council's statutory responsibilities
- Homelessness and Housing Options
- The work of the Bromsgrove Homelessness Steering Group
- Homeless acceptances and households in temporary accommodation
- Home ownership, lender forbearance and mortgage rescue.
- The work of the Step Up Private Tenancy Scheme

- The Home Choice Plus Scheme, the banding system, properties advertised and the increase in demand for properties and future issues.
- Current position and the risks attached to cutting preventative work and services.

The Board also discussed in detail the Homelessness Grant and the wide range of initiatives that this funded, including a Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) owner occupation debt advisor, NewStarts Furniture Project and Homelessness Prevention Floating Support. By providing successful prevention schemes and reducing the use of temporary accommodation the Council had influenced an increase in the Homelessness Grant funding to Bromsgrove from £32,000 in 2003 to £81,050 for the current year. The Council understood that it was the Government's intention to continue to award Homelessness Grants at the same level as in previous years but in an un-ring fenced form that was likely to become part of the Area Based Grant. The Strategic Housing Manager advised Members that it was crucial that the homelessness prevention services continued in order to avoid increased use of temporary accommodation and the potential expense to the Council of having to provide Bed and Breakfast accommodation.

The Strategic Housing Officer confirmed to Members that there had recently been a satisfaction survey for the Home Choice Plus Scheme and agreed to pass the results of this to officers for circulation to Members when available.

Members also raised a concern in respect of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs), with particular reference to those who had accessed the grants and the level of satisfaction with the quality of the work undertaken. The Strategic Housing Manager agreed to provide further information on this via officers.

After further discussion it was

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the Homelessness Grant funding be ring fenced in order for the preventative measures to continue to be carried out; and
- (b) that the relevant Portfolio Holder is made aware of and investigates further, what is the likely impact and anticipated increase in homelessness and whether it is being appropriately prepared for.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Board notes the performance of the range of homelessness prevention initiatives and success of the Housing Options service in significantly reducing homelessness acceptances;
- (b) that trends indicating a potential increase in demand from homeless or potentially homeless clients following a period of economic downturn and the implications of proposed welfare benefit changes on the demand for homelessness services in the future be noted; and
- (c) that the importance of maintaining continued investment in good housing advice and homelessness prevention services and the cost effectiveness of these services in currently avoiding and reducing future risk to the Council of having to meet excessive bed and breakfast costs be noted.

39/09 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Performance Management Board held on 19th October 2010 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

40/09 **QUARTER 2 INTEGRATED FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT (INCLUDING SUNDRY DEBTORS REPORT)**

The Board considered the Integrated Finance and Performance Report for Quarter 2.

The Board noted the increase in sickness absence and the Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships confirmed that this had been noted and that a performance clinic would be held to review actions to improve the situation.

Members discussed the follow areas in more detail:

- Recycling rate of 43.06%. The Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships agreed to ask the Head of Environmental Services for information on any future plans to expand recycling.
- Community Safety – overspend within this area. Members were concerned as this was a shared service. The Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships agreed to seek further clarification on this item.
- Town Centre Development – Revised Budget £170,000. It was not clear from the information provided, what exactly this referred to and the Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships agreed to seek further information on this for Members.
- Regulatory Services – performance management. The Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships confirmed he was due to meet with the Head of Regulatory Services shortly to discuss this.

The Board had requested a detailed report on outstanding debtors, which had been included within the Integrated Finance and Performance Report. Members discussed this in detail and requested that a similar report be included in the Integrated Finance and Performance Report for Quarter 3 in order to monitor progress on recovery of the outstanding debts.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that it be noted that 59% of performance indicators are stable or improving;
- (b) that it be noted that 59% of performance indicators that have a target have met their targets as at the month end and 76% are projected to meet their target at the year end;
- (c) that the performance figures for September 2010 as set out in Appendix 2 be noted;
- (d) that the successes and areas for potential concern as set out in the 'Council Summary' at 4.1.1 of the report be noted;

- (e) that the current financial position on Revenue and Capital as detailed in the report be noted;
- (f) that the proposed budget virements between £15k and £100k, listed in Appendix 6 be noted;
- (g) that the complaints and compliments data detailed at Appendix 7 be noted; and
- (h) that the request for Cabinet to approve a new reserve of £20k for Voice Recognition Analysis (VRA) within the Benefits Section be noted.

41/09 **ANNUAL FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT 2009/2010**

The Board considered the Annual Report which contained information on the Council's performance and finances during 2009/10. Members were reminded that this was a plain text version and that an "internet" style version had recently been published on the internet.

Members discussed the Top Stories of 2009/10 as detailed at item 4 of the report and commented on the good progress that the Council had made in recent years and felt that the report was a true reflection of the current position of the Council. After further discussion it was

RESOLVED that the Annual Report 2009/10 be noted.

42/09 **SHARED SERVICES**

The Board was informed that the next meeting of the Shared Services Board (SSB) would be held on 9th December 2010. The Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships advised Members that a written update report on Shared Services would be provided at the meeting of the Performance Management Board to be held on 20th December 2010. In the meantime he advised Members that business cases would be put forward to the SSB meeting for Policy, Performance and Partnerships and Human Resources, and that the "systems thinking" stage had begun for the Benefits Team.

Members were advised that the Council had failed to recruit for the Programme Manager's post for Shared Services; this would now be re-advertised internally. The Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships also informed Members that several problems, on a day to day operational level, had also been picked up at a recent staff focus group, and these would be addressed as soon as possible.

43/09 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board considered the Work Programme. After further discussion it was agreed that a report on the performance of Regulatory Services would be included in the January 2011 Work Programme. After further discussion it was

RESOLVED that the Work Programme be noted, subject to the above amendment.

Performance Management Board
15th November 2010

The meeting closed at 8.10 p.m.

Chairman