

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD

MONDAY, 18TH MAY 2009 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs. M. Bunker, Mrs. A. E. Doyle (during Minute No's 1/09 to 8/09), Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths, Ms. H. J. Jones and C. B. Taylor

Officers: Mr. P. Street and Ms. R. Cole

1/09 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that Councillor C. B. Taylor be elected Chairman of the Board for the ensuing municipal year.

2/09 **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs. M. Bunker be elected Vice-Chairman of the Board for the ensuing municipal year.

3/09 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor S. R. Colella. It was noted that a nomination to the Board had not yet been received from the Labour Group.

4/09 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

5/09 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Performance Management Board held on 17th March 2009 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

6/09 **CUSTOMER FIRST STRATEGY REVIEW**

The Board considered a report regarding the proposed adoption of a new Customer Access Strategy to replace the existing Customer First Strategy.

It was reported that the focus of the original Customer First Strategy had been to improve the Council's basic performance, particularly in terms of Best Value Performance Indicators, in order to achieve a "fair" rating from the Audit Commission. The Strategy had recognised however that the long term aim of the Council was to deliver both an excellent performance and an excellent customer experience.

Since the approval of the Strategy in March 2006, much had been achieved and considerable progress had been made. Despite these improvements however it was recognised that because the Council started from a low base, overall satisfaction with the Council and staff satisfaction remained low. Customer Access Focus Groups had taken place and these had indicated there was a need to become more responsive, to concentrate more on outcomes and to communicate more effectively. It was noted that the aim of the new Customer Access Strategy was to increase the focus on these areas over the next three years.

The Board noted that one of the key developments since the previous year was the launch of a new set of National Indicators, of particular relevance was National Indicator 14 which related to reducing avoidable Customer Contacts. It was noted that work was being undertaken on this issue and it was felt it would be useful to receive a further report evaluating the outcome of the investigations and considering what could be done to improve the results.

It was noted that within the Customer First Board Action Plan (action 86) there was a proposal to close the Cash Office at the Customer Service Centre at a later date. Members were concerned that this may have an impact on those customers who did not have easy access to alternative methods of payment and felt that this action should be reconsidered.

The Board queried the delay in undertaking training for middle managers to improve customer communication by ensuring all written correspondence is customer focused, clear and easy to understand (action 63). The Executive Director - Partnerships and Projects undertook seek clarification and to forward information on this matter to the Board.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the significant improvement in the Council's customer performance over the past three years, particularly at the Customer Service Centre, be noted;
- (b) that it be noted that whilst process times have generally significantly improved, customer satisfaction and staff satisfaction remain too low;
- (c) that the recommendation from the Comprehensive Performance Assessment report that "a culture of customer focus should be fully established at all levels within the Council" be noted;

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the proposed updated corporate customer standards as set out in section 5.22 of the Strategy be approved for inclusion in each Service Business Plan and for publishing to customers
- (b) that the Strategy's priorities for the year ahead be approved together with the detailed action plan to support the delivery of these priorities, subject to further consideration being given to the proposal to close the Cash Office;

- (c) that the Strategy scorecard 2009/2010, including the customer measures be approved and that the distance the Council still needs to travel in order to become an excellent Council be recognised.

7/09 **COMPARISON OF 2009/10 TARGETS WITH 2008/09 OUTTURNS**

The Board considered a report on forward targets for 2009/2010 as set out in the Council Plan 2009 - 12 compared to the outturns for 2008/09 together with a list of the National Indicators which apply at District level.

Members raised a number of issues in relation to the targets which had been set and the Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects undertook to ensure that the relevant information was sent to Members on:

- (a) Satisfaction measures for Disabled Facilities Grants and why no targets had been set;
- (b) Diversionary activities including a breakdown of how many users are attending each session and why the future targets have been set at this level;
- (c) Residual Waste per household and why the target remains the same for the next three years; and
- (d) the position regarding the National Indicators which are reported at District level and how information on these indicators may be reported back to the Board.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the comparison of targets and outturns as set out in Appendix 1 be noted, but that in the light of concerns as to whether the targets set demonstrate an appropriate level of ambition, further consideration be given to this matter; and
- (b) that the list of National Indicators as set out in Appendix 2 be noted .

8/09 **PERFORMANCE REPORTING (MARCH 2009)**

The Board considered a report on the Council's performance at 31st March 2009.

During the discussion Members raised the issue of sickness absence and requested that further information be provided to the next meeting as referred to in Minute No 101/08 of the meeting held on 17th March 2009.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that it be noted that 50% of performance indicators were stable or improving;
- (b) that it be noted that 78% of performance indicators which have a target met their target at year end;
- (c) that the performance figures for March 2009 as set out in Appendix 2 be noted; and
- (d) that the summary of the year end position as set out in section 3.4 to 3.6 of the report be noted.

9/09 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT (MARCH 2009)**

The Board considered the Improvement Plan Exception Report for March 2009.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exception Report together with the corrective actions being taken be approved;
- (b) that it be noted that for the 102 actions highlighted for March within the plan 80.4% of the Improvement Plan was on target (green), 3.9% was one month behind (amber) and 2% was over one month behind (red). The actions which had been reprogrammed with approval reflected the reprogramming of the town centre actions as a result of issues relating to Parkside, together with the reprogramming of Human Resource actions as a result of Job Evaluation Implementation.

10/09 **QUARTERLY RECOMMENDATION TRACKER**

Consideration was given to a report which set out the progress of resolutions and recommendations made by the Board since May 2008.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

11/09 **WORK PROGRAMME 2009/2010**

Consideration was given to a report on the Board's proposed work programme for 2009/2010.

The Board felt additional training should be arranged where appropriate, particularly for Members who were new to the Board. In addition reference was made to future issues for consideration which had been discussed at the meeting on 17th March 2009 (Minute No 108/08), but which were not reflected at present in the Work Programme. The Chairman undertook to discuss with the Assistant Chief Executive the further development of the Work Programme.

RESOLVED that the work programme 2009/2010 be approved, subject to the comments referred to above.

The meeting closed at 8.10 p.m.

Chairman