

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD

MONDAY, 19TH APRIL 2010 AT 6.00 P.M.

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

Observers: Councillor P. Whittaker

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

92/09 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ms. H. J. Jones and Mrs. A. E. Doyle.

93/09 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mrs. M. C. Bunker declared a personal interest in Minute No. 96/09 in her role as Council representative for Bromsgrove District Housing Trust.

94/09 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Performance Management Board meeting held on 15th March 2010 were submitted.

Members enquired whether, as noted in Minute No. 89/09, the meeting in respect of the Railway Station's revised design and costings had taken place. The Director for Policy, Performance and Partnerships confirmed that the Executive Director (Planning and Regeneration, Regulation and Housing Services) had attended and a full update of the Railway Station Development would be provided at the Overview Board meeting to be held on 27th April 2010.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

95/09 **DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS - LEAN MANAGEMENT PROCESS REPORT**

The Strategic Housing Manager gave detailed background information and explained that his team had been chosen as a pilot to apply the Lean Management Process to a review of the Council's involvement in approving applications and monitoring the progress of adaptations under the Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) scheme. However, from June 2010 the new Home Improvement Agency (HIA) for Worcestershire would come into force, dealing

with all DFGs irrespective of whether it was a council tenancy (in the case of Redditch), Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) or private sector dwellings. The Review Team had been involved in setting up the new HIA, which aimed to ensure consistent policies and procedures across the county and to include some of the savings identified in the review.

The Strategic Housing Manager advised that last year performance had improved in terms of the element of the process that had been done in house and effectively, all the budget had been committed by December. This meant that high priority cases received after that date could not be processed and potentially the Team was in danger of allocating less needy cases grants earlier in the year. The Strategic Housing Manager advised that it would be beneficial if the budget could be divided up over 12 months and allocated on a monthly basis and that this phased process was being put in place.

The Strategic Housing Manager gave information on, and Members discussed, the following issues arising from the report:

- The allocation of funding in the future, particularly in light of the ageing population. The Government had allocated the same level as the previous year, £310,000 despite a higher bid being put forward.
- The reasons for formulating the countywide HIA; this provided a stronger voice to argue for housing resources into housing and grants and also attracted additional money for supporting people in respect of fast hospital discharge scheme and handyman services.
- The Kick Start funding bid, which was primarily an equity release scheme for owner occupiers to improve their homes, but could be used to top up DFGs where a current DFG was capped at £30,000 if the works needed were above that.
- One of the aims was increased customer satisfaction. In view of the timescale for DFGs to be completed it was difficult to increase satisfaction. The aim was to make their experience as painless and the services as seamless, as possible. Often it was highlighted that other services could be brought in, for example home safety, trips and falls advice. The service could be improved, although it may not impact on how quickly people received adaptations.
- Redundant equipment that is in a private house. A 3 year service agreement was included within the grant for some equipment, for example on a stair lift, after that the person was responsible for its maintenance and when redundant it was often of limited value. However, BDHT was currently working on a recycling scheme and tried to re-use at least straight stair lifts wherever possible.
- The Lean Management Process and how this could be used in other areas of the Council. The Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships confirmed that this was currently being considered and gave further details on the process.
- A contract framework was in place appointing a number of contractors with a set price for specific types of work. This would also be included in the specification for the new HIA and they have been encouraged to develop this further.

- Data collection from Human Resources. The Strategic Housing Manager explained that it had been difficult to calculate the on costs for savings and a broader understanding of Lean management processes across the Council would possibly assist any further review work.

The Strategic Housing Manager advised that during the review process a new finance system had been implemented, which initially had had a negative impact on the DFG process. However, Review Team had worked with Finance to find a solution. This had been very successful and they now had the benefits of the new system without a further delay to the process. Members were concerned that other departments could continue to be affected by the new finance system.

The Board asked if specific funding was available for injured Armed Forces personnel returning from a warzone. The Strategic Housing Manager advised that charitable organisations would be contacted, particularly if a top up of a grant was needed, to assist in such a case. This was a good example of why it was more appropriate to divide the budget over a 12 month period in future.

RESOLVED that the decision to divide the budget over a 12 month period be supported.

RECOMMENDED that all departments are made aware of the Lean Systems Process and that it is used as part of the three year transformation programme.

96/09 **HOUSING STRATEGY - PROGRESS REPORT**

The Strategic Housing Manager provided the Board with background information on the Housing Strategy 2006-2011. The Board discussed the following points in more detail:

- Supplementary Planning Document
- Development of a Countywide Strategy, which the local action plan would sit beneath.
- Homes and Communities Agency
- The definition of “needs” referred to housing across all tenures and house conditions. The Research and Intelligence Officer from the county undertook an annual assessment and analysis for all six districts and in that process identified various issues, including backlog and newly formed households, together with supply of houses and number of units developed each year. The methodology used followed the Government recommended formula.
- Choice Based Letting as a process for allocation of housing to those most in need.
- Energy efficiency and funding from Scottish Power Trust in particular for mobile homes. A Member of the Board informed the Strategic Housing Manager that Scottish Power have specifically provided funding for mobile homes locally (possibly Coventry) and the Strategic Housing Manager agreed to make further enquiries in this respect.

- The provision of Act on Energy advice sessions in the Bromsgrove area would be included within the Climate Change Strategy. The draft Strategy would be available by June 2010.
- Tackling fuel poverty in relation to national indicators, the inclusion of private homes and means testing, together with any link in Bromsgrove to winter deaths.
- The detrimental effect on the surrounding area of long term empty properties and powers available.
- Consideration of home share and co-housing options in the district. The Strategic Housing Manager confirmed that his Team was currently looking at home share for non-priority homeless or younger people.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that progress made and detailed within the Mid Term Review Housing Strategy Action Plan be noted; and
- (a) that Officers be supported in their endeavour to fine-tune the methodology to ensure that housing needs are prioritised as opposed to housing demands.

97/09 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN EXCEPTION REPORT (FEBRUARY 2010)**

The Board considered the Improvement Plan Exception Report for February 2010. Members discussed CP1: Town Centre, 1.1 Area Action Plan and agreed to ask for further information from the relevant Executive Director.

Members discussed in detail CP3: Sense of Community, 3.3.6 Develop and roll out Equality data monitoring process. The Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships gave background information on this and confirmed that the pilot scheme had identified the potential enormity of the work involved in producing this information on a monthly basis. It would be more practical to produce an annual report and this option was being considered.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the revisions to the Improvement Plan Exception Report together with the corrective action being taken by noted;
- (b) that it be noted that for the 77 actions highlighted for February within the plan 66.2% of the Improvement Plan is on target (green), 5.2% is one month behind (amber) and 5.2% is over one month behind (red). 23.4% of actions have been reprogrammed or suspended with approval; and
- (c) that a highlight report on the Town Centre be provided by the Executive Director (Planning and Regeneration, Regulation and Housing Services) together with the relevant Portfolio Holder, and that this be presented to the Performance Management Board meeting on 17th May 2010.

98/09 **PERFORMANCE REPORT (FEBRUARY 2010)**

The Board considered the Performance Report for February 2010 and discussed the following items:

- Attendance at Community coaching sessions following clash of dates with youth club held at the TRUNK.
- Crime levels and in particular the increased number of violent crimes
- Recycling and the new co-mingled system
- Customer Service – the average speed of answered calls. The Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships advised Members that this would be picked up by the new Head of Service, when in post.
- Sickness absence, which remained at a low level.

After further discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that it be noted that 63% of performance indicators are improving;
- (b) that it be noted that 60% of performance indicators that have a target are meeting their target as at the month end and 80% are projected to meet their target at the year end;
- (c) that the performance figures for February 2010 as set out in Appendix 2 be noted;
- (d) that the particular areas of improvement as summarised in section 3.5 of the report be noted;
- (e) that the areas of concern as set out in section 3.6 be noted;
- (f) that better co-ordination take place between the TRUNK youth provision and that provided by the Council;
- (g) the relevant Portfolio Holder works with the Head of Service to ensure that the delivery plan in respect of violent crimes is actioned; and
- (h) that the relevant Portfolio Holder and Head of Service provide the Performance Management Board with a Lessons Learnt Report in respect of implementation of the new recycling arrangements.

99/09 **SHARED SERVICES HIGHLIGHT REPORT**

The Board considered the Shared Services Highlight Report and noted the Risks, Issues and Concerns section. Members also asked for it to be noted that they were concerned at the increased level of pressure and workload of Officers. The Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships assured Members that Officers received good support in order to deal with these issues.

RESOLVED that the Shared Services Highlight Report be noted.

100/09 **COUNCIL PLAN 2010-2013**

The Board considered the draft Council Plan for 2010-13 and discussed in detail the following areas:

- Town Centre and Economic Development Plan.
- Home Improvement Agency and decreased DFGs.
- Increased targets.
- Shopmobility – Members enquired whether this service needed further promotion or if the target was actually the capacity of the scheme. The

Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships confirmed to Members that he would seek clarification from the relevant Head of Service.

- Customer Service Excellence – the Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships confirmed that September 2010 was the date that the self-assessment would be completed. This would create an increased focus on Customer Service.
- Mosaic – Members discussed the option to review the effectiveness of this and agreed that the pilot scheme should be included in the Board's Work Programme.
- Bank Charges – the Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships advised Members that a procurement exercise would have been completed to ensure that the best available rates were achieved.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Council Plan for 2010-13 be noted; and
- (b) that the results of the pilot Mosaic scheme be included in the Board's Work Programme.

101/09 **WORK PROGRAMME 2010/2011**

Members considered the Work Programme and discussed the future role of the Board in detail.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.

Chairman