

EXTRACT

A meeting of The Executive was held on:-

3RD SEPTEMBER, 2007

when the following people were present:-

Councillor Morris	Leader of the Council – Corporate Strategy and Finance
Councillor Mrs. Thomas	Children's Services
Councillor J. Byrne	Young People and Sport
Councillor Peel	Environmental Services
Councillor Kay	Adult Social Care and Health
Councillor Ibrahim	Culture and Community Safety
Councillor Sherrington	Cleaner, Greener, Safer
Councillor White	Human Resources ,Performance and Diversity
Councillor Zaman	Regeneration

Non-Voting Members

Councillor A.N. Spencer
 Councillor J. Walsh
 Councillor R. Allen
 Councillor Mrs. D. Brierley
 Councillor Shaw
 Councillor A. Wilkinson
 Councillor Hayes
 Councillor D. Wilkinson
 Councillor Mrs. Rothwell

Officers

Mr. S. Harriss Chief Executive
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Mr. S. Arnfield	Director of Corporate Resources
Mr. A. Eastwood	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Mr. K. Davies	Director of Development and Regeneration
Mr. M. Cox	Director of Environmental Services
Mr. J. Rutherford	Director of Adult Services
Ms. M. Asquith	Director of Children's Services
Mr. D. Winstanley	Assistant Chief Executive
Mr. A. Donaldson	Head of Policy Improvement
Mrs. V. Ridge	Principal Democratic Services Officer

16. MINUTES

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Executive held on 6th August, 2007 were submitted and signed as a correct record.

17. CENTRAL DEPARTMENTS 3 YEAR PLAN 2008-11

The Chief Executive submitted a report which sets out a working draft of the 3 Year Strategic Plan for the Central Departments – Chief Executive's, Legal and Democratic Services and Corporate Resources.

The 3-Year Strategic Plans were an important component of the Council's Corporate Business Planning Process (CBPP) and the purpose of the Plan was to identify how the Central Departments would:

- Deliver the Council's priority themes within the Bolton Plan;
- Respond to the corporate and departmental Big Issues Papers;
- Deliver a set of strategic service priorities over the following three years; and

- Ensure financial decisions were rooted in strategy by informing the Strategic Resources Option papers in November, 2007.

The report built on the big issues that were agreed by the Executive in July 2007 and provided a framework for the forthcoming discussions around budgets and priorities. A full strategic plan with clear milestones and targets would be brought back to Executive for approval later in the year.

The report provided details about the challenges, opportunities and issues facing the three Departments in 2008/11, together with the priority themes, targets, milestones and lead officers.

In considering the draft strategic plan for 2008/11, it was considered important to review progress against the strategic plan for 2006/09 which showed that very good progress had been made against the 42 key tasks that were agreed by the Executive under the council's previous key aims.

It was noted that 34 of the 42 key tasks had been achieved with a further 7 tasks achieved in part and on target for completion within schedule, meaning that over 80 percent of all key tasks contained within the 2006-2009 Strategic Plan had been completed.

A more detailed breakdown of each task, along with commentary and actions was contained in the appendix to the report.

Resolved – That the three year Strategic Plan be noted and that a more detailed report with clear milestones and targets be submitted later in the year.

18. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD QUARTER 1 2007-08

The Chief Executive submitted a report which provided the Executive with an overview of the Council's performance in the first quarter of 2007-08 including an update on the improvement actions agreed by the Executive as part of the

follow-up year end 2006-07 performance report, presented to the Executive in August.

Members were reminded that at its recent meetings in July and August the Executive discussed the corporate performance dashboard for 2006-07 and agreed a series of follow-up actions and the report provided the following:

- An overview of council performance for the first quarter of 2007-08 (1 April – 30 June);
- An update on progress in implementing the improvement actions agreed in July and August; and
- Further details of actions that were being put in place to improve performance where necessary.

As a consequence of the above the report also provided the following:

- An overview of performance against the Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) as at the end of the first quarter;
- Latest data on sickness absence across the organisation;
- A summary of progress in delivering tasks within Service Improvement Action Plans – a key part of the business planning process;
- An update of progress in delivering targets contained in the Bolton Plan 2007-10;
- Analysis of first quarter outturns for PAF indicators for both Children's and Adults' Social Care, including improvement actions;
- The latest projection for the CPA Housing, Culture and Environment blocks;

- The Council's first quarter performance in meeting its customer care standards;
- An overview of progress in delivering the Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets;
- Revenue and Capital spend and projections, as at the end of the first quarter; and
- Updates on the Council's approach to Value for Money and Risk Management.

The reports key findings were that:

- Service and financial performance at Bolton Council was generally strong;
- Performance of the Council's services was continuing to improve compared with the same period last year, with a small minority of exceptions; and
- Actions to deliver improvements in areas of weakness were in place and on track.

Further updates on performance in all areas, including the implementation of improvement actions, would be contained in the second quarter performance dashboard, to be presented to the Executive in November.

The report informed the Executive that:

- Over two-thirds of quarterly-reported BVPIs were on target which rose to 73% for priority BVPIs;
- 62% of quarterly-reported BVPIs had improved compared to the same period last year. This figure rose to 72% for the priority BVPIs;

- Sickness absence was down, continuing the trend from 2006-07;
- The delivery of tasks from Service Improvement Action Plans and the Bolton Plan were overwhelmingly on track;
- Performance against social care PAF indicators remained strong, particularly in Adult Social Care;
- More complaints (87%) were being responded to within customer care standards;
- Two thirds of quarterly-reported LAA targets had improved performance compared to the same period last year; 55% were on target; and
- Revenue expenditure was on track. Capital projections were within existing resources.

With regard to customer care standards and, in particular, customer complaints, members felt that the definition of what constituted a complaint should be reviewed together the way in which the Authority handled the complaints process.

Performance updates on current departmental three year strategic plans 2007-10 were contained within the draft strategic plans for 2008-11, which were being presented to Executive Members and the Executive.

Resolved – (i) That the improvement actions proposed be endorsed and that Executive Members work with Directors to drive them as part of their performance work.

(ii) That future updates on service performance and progress in delivering improvement actions be provided as part of a second quarter dashboard report in November, 2007.

(iii) That the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be requested to submit a report to a future meeting of the Corporate Strategy and Finance Policy Development Group regarding the process for dealing with customer complaints.

19. VALUE FOR MONEY STRATEGY

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report which provided an analysis of the Authority's performance compared to other similar councils and the proposed 3-year programme of Value for Money reviews.

The Executive was informed Service Managers had completed a self-assessment questionnaire and, taking into account the Audit Commission Value for Money Profiles, each Department had now determined the programme of reviews that it intended to undertake over the three-year period 2007-2010. The proposed three-year review programme was attached at Appendix 2.

These Reviews would be driven and performance managed by the Corporate Performance Management Group and would be subject to review and challenge by the Chief Executive and the Deputy Chief Executive. The outcome of each Review would be reported to the relevant Executive Member.

The Audit Commission had recently issued Value for Money Profiles, which compared the Authority's performance with that of the other metropolitan districts and the Council's statistical nearest neighbours. A general analysis of these two reports has been undertaken and the key points were summarised in Appendix 3.

It was explained that there were no new or significant changes in relation to the overall performance from that reported in previous years which confirmed that the Council continued to provide good value for money in the services it provided. However, it was considered important to ensure that VFM performance was constantly reviewed and, therefore, a more detailed review at service level would be presented to each

Executive Member. The results of these more detailed reviews would be reported back to the Executive Member for Corporate Strategy and Finance.

Resolved – (i) That the Value for Money review programme attached in Appendix 2 to this report be approved.

(ii) That the analysis of the Value for Money profiles be noted and that individual Executive Members be requested to consider more detailed reports on the indicators specifically related to their various portfolios.

20. FLUORIDE REFERENDUM ISSUES

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report that advised The Executive of the current position in relation to carrying out the decision of the Council to undertake a referendum in relation to proposals to add fluoride to drinking water

The Executive was reminded that the Council ,at its meeting on 28th February, 2007 agreed two motions relating to fluoridation of water which restated the Council's position that fluoride should not be added to water without consultation with the people of Bolton and requesting that a referendum be held to ascertain their views.

It was explained that the current position was that the Primary Care Trust (PCT) was waiting for the North West Fluoridation Evaluation Group's report on the costs and benefits of adding fluoride to drinking water. This report was not expected until sometime in 2008 and once the PCT had this information, it would be in a position to consider whether or not to take the issue further. However, it was stressed that any decision not to proceed would have to be unanimous. If one PCT requested the Strategic Health Authority (SHA) to undertake the consultation exercise then it must do so over the whole of the area covered by the remaining 23 PCTs.

However, as it was likely that a number of PCTs would request a formal consultation exercise, the report explained the guidelines which indicated the extent and depth of the consultation exercise which would be required of the SHA.

The Department of Health had issued guidelines which were grouped under five main headings as follows:

1. Working up proposals;
2. The publication of proposals;
3. Consultation and consultees;
4. Ascertaining public opinion; and
5. Evaluating responses and reaching a decision.

The report examined each in detail and explained that any consultation exercise undertaken by a SHA into a proposal to fluoridate a water supply must be as widespread as possible. It was also understood that the timescale for undertaking the consultation exercise could be as much as three months. Furthermore, any evidence either in favour or against the proposal must be as contemporaneous as possible. Evidence which was either out of date or recycled from previous studies would be disallowed by the SHA.

Consequently, it was suggested that there would be little to be gained from the Council undertaking a referendum on this issue unless, and until, the SHA had been requested by a PCT to undertake a full, formal, consultation exercise. As the North West Fluoridation Evaluation Group was not expected to report until sometime in 2008 and that its evidence and conclusions would have to be given full consideration by the 24 PCTs, it could be that any formal consultation exercise would not commence until 2009. Therefore, any evidence gathered via a referendum prior to this time ran the risk of being disregarded when the formal process began.

Resolved – That, for the reasons outlined in the report, any decision on the most appropriate course of action to facilitate the Council’s decision to conduct a referendum on the proposal to fluoridate water supplies be deferred until an announcement is made by the SHA that it has

been requested to undertake a consultation exercise.