

POLICY & REVIEW (PERFORMANCE) PANEL

MINUTES OF A MEETING of Policy & Review (Performance) Panel held in the Civic Offices at 4.00pm on Wednesday 9 March 2005.

(NB: These minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting)

Present

Councillors Tom Blair (Chair)
Simon Boshier
Malcolm Hey
Leo Madden

11. Apologies for Absence (AI1)

Apologies were received from Councillors Hugh Mason and Nické Bentley.

12. Declaration of Members' Interests (AI 2)

No interests were declared.

13. Minutes of the Last Meeting – 15 February 2005 (AI3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy & Review (Performance) Panel held on 15 February 2005 be confirmed as a correct record.

14. Corporate Plan Update (AI 4)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Strategy updating the Panel on the Corporate Plan.

The report outlined that the Corporate Plan is a key part of the Council's agreed framework for managing performance setting actions and targets for the City Council for the next three years against agreed priorities. Members attention was drawn to Appendix 1 of the report in which each target and action was assessed GREEN (action/target currently on course with no concerns identified), AMBER (some concerns identified regarding ability to meet action/target) or RED (serious concerns identified regarding ability to meet action/target).

Members were informed that there were sometimes problems gathering the data as recording methods, especially in areas such as Violent Crimes, were continually changing. However, every effort was being taken to ensure that a baseline was established to allow progress and

achievement to be measured.

The Panel were informed that in Appendix 2 of the report the RED and AMBER actions and targets were examined in greater detail with information on the improvement plans in place for addressing performance. Members were informed that Strategic Directors had agreed, wherever possible, to incorporate actions and targets within their business plans.

RESOLVED that the Panel:

- 1. Agree the assessment of progress against actions and targets within the Corporate Plan;**
- 2. Note the proposed improvement plans for targets where concerns have been identified and suggest any additional improvements actions for next year; and**
- 3. Note the proposals for a report to be brought to Strategic Directors Board identifying key issues to be addressed in producing the next Corporate Plan**

15. Internal Audit Report on a Review of Asset Management – Landlords Maintenance Budget (AI 5)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Consideration was given to a report from the Audit Manager which updated The Panel on the Landlords Maintenance Budget. Members were informed that The Panel had requested that areas of high risk, such as this, be reported back to the Panel.

It was reported that the last time an inspection had been carried out was five years ago and that another was necessary to bring this up to date. Members were informed that a Topic Panel B report which included this matter was being taken to an Executive meeting in April 2005 in which the remaining work would be outlined as needing to be done.

Members voiced concern that the City Council would be in breach of Health and Safety laws if this matter were not addressed swiftly. Members agreed that lack of money was not a valid excuse, although it was recognised that this was a nation-wide problem and not purely isolated to Portsmouth.

RESOLVED that the recommendations contained in the Appendix to the report be forwarded with the Topic Panel B report to the Executive for approval.

16. Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA): Progress on the

Action Plan (AI 6)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Strategy on the progress made with the action plan agreed following the City Council's CPA in 2002.

Members were informed that one main area for concern that remained was the City Council's target for a Clean and Tidy City. It was expected the establishment of a Clean City Manager would address the problems currently faced in combining the different standards exacted by companies and departments contracted to and within the City Council.

RESOLVED that the Panel:

- 1. Note that many of the actions planned have now been implemented;**
- 2. Monitor the further progress with these issues as part of the other monitoring reports to members that cover the same ground (e.g. in the monitoring of the corporate scorecard and of progress with the corporate plan); and**
- 3. Review the programme of clean and tidy city initiatives.**

17. Quarterly Overview of Key Issues from Performance Monitoring (AI 7)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Strategy outlining some of the key issues emerging from the last quarter of performance monitoring.

Members were informed that from the ongoing monitoring of performance, the future performance management agenda for the City Council could be drawn. The process is much more robust than in previous years as weaknesses have now been identified and addressed, although this work is ongoing and evolving. Following discussion it was agreed that in future years, the distribution of potential reward grants, including for LPSA2, would be considered and decided upon at the beginning of the process.

RESOLVED that the Panel:

- 1. Note the performance issues considered by the Strategic Directors Board (SDB) in the last quarter to give an overview of progress on performance management; and**
- 2. Suggest that for the 2nd generation Local Public Services Agreement the issues of what to do with any reward grant**

achieved is decided before the agreement is signed.

18. Supporting People Progress Update (AI8)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Community Housing which provided The Panel with an overview of progress in developing the five-year strategy.

Members were informed that the strategy was aimed at helping people once they had been through other programmes. It was intended to help people continue to live independently and thereby reducing repeat homelessness, reoffending and delayed discharges. Members were informed that of the 160 services offered by the strategy, only two were provided by the City Council with the remaining 29 supplied by outside providers.

It was reported that as the City Council was deemed to be amongst the 30 highest spending local authorities for supporting people, it had been inspected in July 2004. Members were informed that the Supporting People programme had been assessed as a “fair” service, although with “uncertain prospects for improvement”. Members were informed that since the inspection a great deal of work had been done on areas identified for improvement by the inspectors, and these were now incorporated in the Improvement Plan attached to the back of the report.

RESOLVED that the Panel:

- 1. Notes the completion of the Supporting People Strategy; and**
- 2. Notes the Action Plan produced to address the recommendations from the Audit Commission Inspection and agrees to receive updates on progress made.**

19. Homelessness Strategy – Implementation (AI9)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Community Housing which provided an overview of progress in implementing the strategy.

Members were informed that this report was part of a regular ongoing update and that a new strategy for homelessness would be written later in the year. It was reported that currently they were on track to meet their targets for 2004/05 and that the outlook was very positive.

RESOLVED that the Panel:

- 1. Note performance since the publication of the Homelessness Strategy in July 2003; and**
- 2. Support a fresh review of homelessness services in the city by July 2005, in preparation for publishing a new strategy in July 2006.**

20. Best Value (AI10)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Consideration was given to a report from the Head of Strategy which provided The Panel with a general update on the progress of current Best Value reviews and the delivery of Best Value and proposed a programme for future Best Value reviews.

Members were informed that the Best Value programme contains three categories of reviews with the main category being reviews of corporate priorities as outlined in the Corporate Plan. There are two of these reviews currently in progress (Crime and Disorder and Lifelong Learning). The next proposed priority theme to be reviewed is Community Involvement. In response to a question, Members were informed that a paper containing an assessment of progress on the implementation of completed reviews would be presented at a future meeting.

Members agreed that there was a need for Best Value to work along side the Scrutiny process as Best Value and Scrutiny must be complementary and compatible. It was therefore necessary to ensure that work was not replicated and that the recommendations of the Topic Panels were considered within the Best Value process.

RESOLVED that the Panel approve the proposed Best Value programme agreed by the Strategic Directors Board.

21. Best Value Review of Statementing and Audit Commission Review on Managing Special Educational Needs Funding and Supporting Inclusion (AI11)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Consideration was given to a report from the Director of Education and Lifelong Learning which informed the Panel of the progress made with the action plan drawn together following the Local Education Authority Best Value Review and the Audit Commission Review into Statementing.

Members were informed that a ten-point action plan had been drawn up following the reviews, of which seven areas were completed and three ongoing.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the progress on the action plan.

22. (Social Care) Performance Recovery Plan (AI12)

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Consideration was given to a report from the Strategic Director of Health, Housing and Social Care which informed The Panel of progress with the plan.

Members were informed that the “blobs” were being used as an indicator due to difficulties experienced in the past with other measurements that were continually reviewed and changed. It was hoped this would be a simpler system easier to follow and understand.

Although it was unlikely that the overall improvement target of 5% would be met for 2004/5, Members felt that the general maintenance of performance was good and that overall the trends were upwards.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the report.

23. Date of Next Meeting

Members agreed that, because of the tight Budget timetable, the next meeting of the Panel would be held at 4.00pm on Wednesday 13 April 2005.

Meeting closed at 5.33pm

Chair