

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF WIRRAL

CABINET

5 DECEMBER 2002

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE/DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN SUMMARY 2003/04

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to present to Cabinet the proposed revised structure and format for the Best Value Performance Plan Summary for 2003/04. The report and suggested format has been considered by Finance and Corporate Management Select Committee (21st November) and is now being forwarded to Cabinet for approval.
- 1.2. As with previous years, the summary will be delivered with the Council Tax demands towards the end of March 2003.
- 1.3. The full Best Value Performance Plan, which will include all the statutory performance indicators, will be published by 30th June 2003 and will be presented to members for consideration at a future date.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The past year has seen a number of changes to the legislation relating to Best Value. Cabinet considered a draft circular on Best Value and Performance Improvement on 4th September 2002, which replaced previous guidance (Circular 10/99).
- 2.2. In relation to the summary Best Value Performance Plan, the guidance states that authorities now have discretion about the content, presentation and communication of their summary performance information. Guidance still exists for the full Best Value Performance Plan, including the requirement to report on the results of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and subsequent action plans.
- 2.3. The summary plan will no longer be subject to external audit but the provision of summary performance information may be taken into account whilst considering the quality of communication with local people as part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) process.

3. FEEDBACK FROM LAST YEARS SUMMARY BVPP

- 3.1. In line with previous years, the 2002/03 summary edition of the Best Value Performance Plan contained a questionnaire which, amongst other things, sought peoples views on the format and content of the plan. There were 241 responses to the questionnaire and the proposed format has been developed taking into consideration a number of the comments made.
- 3.2. There were a number of positive comments on the plan, including those from more than half the respondents who said that the correct amount of information had been provided.
- 3.3. The areas most frequently stated as containing too much information were 'what the Council does' (14.3%) and 'how well the Council is performing' (13.6). The areas most frequently stated as lacking information were 'improvements to services' (32.7%) and 'how to have your say' (30.0%)
- 3.4. Additional comments centred around:
 - The cost of producing the document
 - The limited appeal to the average Council Tax payer
 - Performance information was difficult to understand
 - The information is too lengthy to maintain interest

4. PROPOSALS FOR THE FORMAT AND CONTENT

- 4.1. With the changes to the legislative requirements and the comments made from the questionnaire, it is proposed that the summary Best Value Performance Plan for 2003/04 be published in a different format in order to further improve the appeal to the general public.
- 4.2. Previous year's summaries have been produced in A4 format of approximately 36 pages and included sections of general Council information, work being completed towards the corporate objectives and finally key performance information.
- 4.3. In light of public perception that this format is expensive and that comments have been made about the length of some of the sections it is proposed that the summary information be published in A5 leaflet form with the main section of information concentrating on the priority areas which will be identified in the corporate plan.
- 4.4. In addition to this the leaflet would also contain information on;
 - Core services e.g. education, social services and benefits
 - Results of audit and inspection, including best value reviews and the results from the Comprehensive Performance Assessment
 - Contact information, including key telephone numbers

- Information on involvement with the Council through Roadshows and Area Forums with area co-ordinator details available.

5. FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The summary Best Value Performance plan for 2002/03 cost 15 pence a copy. Comparative analysis will be completed on the options available to ensure that the costings remain in line with previous years budgets.

6. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. There are no specific implications arising directly from this report.

7. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. There are no specific implications arising directly from this report.

8. PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. There are no specific implications arising directly from this report.

9. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. There are no specific implications arising directly from this report.

10. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. There are no specific implications arising directly from this report.

11. MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1. There are no specific implications arising directly from this report.

12. RECOMMENDATION

- 12.1 That Cabinet considers and approves the revised format for the Summary Best Value Performance Plan for 2003/04.

JIM WILKIE
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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT