

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE			
PORTFOLIO AREA:			
Date of Meeting:	11 March 2002		
Public			
Key Decision:	No	Recorded in Forward Plan:	No
Inside Policy Framework			

Title: CORPORATE PLAN 2002 - 2005

Report of: TOWN CLERK AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Report reference: TC. 52/02

Summary:

This report identifies the process to deliver a Best Value Performance Plan / Corporate Plan for the Council by the revised statutory guidance and deadline of 30 June 2002.

Recommendations:

The Executive is requested to indicate the timings of the process for the delivery in a Corporate Plan as set out in this report.

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1.

2. INTRODUCTION

1. Members will be aware that the Council is poised at a moment of great change with a demanding agenda and a requirement to:

- Better respond to the needs and demands of customers and users of Council services.
- Clarify the future purpose, direction and strategies of the Council.

- Address the issues in the recent report from HACAS Chapman Hendy produced as part of the Organisational Review Best Value process.

1.2 The Councils agenda is positive and ambitious and will require:

- A new corporate plan / Best Value Performance Plan to clearly set direction, priorities and targets by 30th June 2002.
- Proposals to improved staffing and organisational arrangements by 31 May 2002.
- A Culture change programme.
- A 3-year financial strategy to support delivery driven by the Corporate Plan.
- Robust process to systematically monitor and evaluate performance and drive improvement.

1.3 This report concerns the process to establish the new Corporate Plan, which should show:

- How the Council intends to act to deliver Carlisle City Vision.
- The priorities which each of the Councils themes and the objectives and targets to be achieved.
- The future agenda facing the Council including the response to Best Value and continuous improvement, the strive for Quality Public Service and Comprehensive Programme Assessments.
- The objectives and targets to be addressed within the business plans for each service area within a corporate and consistent approach.

1. THE CORPORATE PLAN

1. The current Corporate Plan was introduced in 1998 and since then the Council has led a partnership approach to develop a 10-year Vision for the whole of Carlisle – Carlisle City Vision. It is now appropriate to show how the Council intends to act to deliver the Vision and address its statutory and regulatory functions. This will require agreed corporate priorities, objectives and targets. Most of all it is necessary to ensure the plan is appropriate to the wishes and needs of local people. The City Vision process included considerable consultation with partners, citizen's panel, hard to reach groups and is a valuable starting point.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS

3.1 The Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions has recently issued a Statutory Instrument 2002/305 (appended), which delays publication of the Best Value Performance Plan until 30 June 2002.

3.2 The recent Local Government White Paper 'Strong Local Leadership' – Quality Public Services CM 5237, reinforces the central role of Best Value Performance Plans (BVPP) in focussing on performance, service plans, priorities and financial planning. It is a key document, which sets the corporate direction of the Council and must include:

- A summary of the authority's objectives;
 - A statement on national and local performance indicators, standards and targets;
 - A summary of performance against relevant performance indicators, standards and targets, including final BVPI out-turn data for the previous financial year, and comparisons with earlier financial years and with other authorities;
 - A summary of proposals to achieve standards and targets;
 - Details of the authority's Best Value Review programme;
 - A summary of action plans following any Reviews; and
 - Responses to audit and inspection.
- A summary of the Council's approach to efficiency improvement.
 - A medium-term financial statement.
 - A consultation statement.

3.3 As such, the content contains the elements required in a Corporate Plan for the Council and to fully integrate future planning and performance it is proposed that the requirements of the BVPP be integrated within a new corporate plan for 2002 – 2005. This will need to be published by 30 June 2002 to meet the statutory timetable and to inform service planning.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 As a policy document of the full Council, the proposals of the Executive will require full consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and consultation as appropriate, bearing in mind that the City Vision process has had considerable public and partner involvement. A workshop on Corporate Planning was held with the Executive, Senior Managers and Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny Committees on 01 March 2002 and the process is proposed to continue until a special meeting of the Council to be proposed in late June 2002. Given that there is a fixed final date, it is proposed that the consultation process commences with the views of Overview and Scrutiny Committees prior to the Executive proposals, followed by further Overview and Scrutiny. This can be accommodated within the statutory deadline and constitutional requirements.

4.2 A proposed process to permit this is shown in summary below and the Executive is requested to advise the dates.

Date	
1 March	Service & Financial Planning – Corporate Planning Workshop with District Audit (incl. O & S Chairs?)
	O & S Management Agree Timetable
	O & S Workshop(s) consultation with all 3 Committees
	Executive – Consideration of Overview & Scrutiny feedback and initial proposals
	Executive
	ANNUAL COUNCIL
	Executive – receive draft Corporate Plan
	Possible Special Council – The Leader’s ‘State of the City’ Debate and further Public consultation
	Summons and Papers out for Special O & S Meetings
	3 Special Meetings O & S Community Special Or collectively O & S Corporate Resources Special O & S Infrastructure Special
	Executive Special
	SPECIAL COUNCIL

4.3 The Executive may also wish to consider the possible inclusion of a ‘State of the City’ debate, should the Leader wish, to provide the opportunity for further partners and citizens involvement in the consultation stage of the Corporate Plan.

4. To meet the statutory requirement to publish summary information of performance by 31 March 2002, this information will be included within the

Spring edition of 'Focus' available from 5 March onwards.

4.5 The Executive will be aware that it is a requirement of the Council's Constitution to allow Overview and Scrutiny Committees four weeks consultation on the Executive's proposals for the final plan.

5. STAFFING/RESOURCES COMMENTS

None.

6. CITY TREASURER'S COMMENTS

None.

7. LEGAL COMMENTS

None.

8. CORPORATE COMMENTS

None.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT

None.

10. EQUALITY ISSUES

None.

11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

12. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

None.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is requested to indicate the timings of the process for the delivery in a Corporate Plan as set out in this report.

14. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To meet planning and statutory deadlines.



The Chief Executive
Best Value Authorities

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S DEPT	
FILE	
18 FEB 2002	
RECEIVED TO	CE.
APPROVED	lepd JMB KH
APPROVED	AJW ✓

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14 February 2002

Dear Chief Executive

**Statutory Instrument No. 2002/305 - The Local Government (Best Value)
Performance Plans and Reviews Amendment and Specified Dates Order 2002**

I enclose a guidance note, which explains the effect of the above Statutory Instrument on Best Value Performance Plans and Reviews. Separate guidance will be issued to Police Authorities, National Park Authorities, and Parish and Town Councils.

The Statutory Instrument comes into force on 8 March 2002. This will enable authorities to delay publication of this year's Best Value Performance Plan until 30 June 2002, should that be their choice.

The intention is to issue revised statutory guidance later this year, which will take into account these and other changes brought about, for example, by the Review of Best Value which is expected to conclude shortly.

Any queries on this guidance should be e-mailed to: bv.circular@dtlr.gov.uk or sent in writing

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This guidance note is also available on the Department's Internet web site:
www.local-regions.dtlr.gov.uk/bestvalue/legislation/legislationindex.htm.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

GUIDANCE NOTE

BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN AND REVIEWS

Statutory Instrument No. 2002/305

**The Local Government (Best Value)
Performance Plans and Reviews Amendment
and Specified Dates Order**

**Amendments to SI No. 1999/3251 Local Government (Best
Value) Performance Plans and Reviews Order**

Department for Transport,
Local Government and the Regions
February 2002



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

GUIDANCE NOTE

BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN AND REVIEWS

Statutory Instrument No. 2002/1305

The Local Government (Best Value)
Performance Plans and Reviews Amendment
and Specified Dates Order

Amendments to SI No. 1993/2551 Local Government (Best
Value) Performance Plans and Reviews Order



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Purpose

1. This guidance note explains the changes made to Best Value Performance Plans, Summaries and Reviews by the Statutory Instrument SI No. 2002/305 - The Local Government (Best Value) Performance Plans and Reviews Amendment and Specified Dates Order. It provides guidance to best value authorities in England, excluding police authorities, and to combined fire authorities in Wales. The changes were set out in the White Paper 'Strong Local Leadership - Quality Public Services' CM 5237.

Introduction

2. The White Paper sets out the Government's vision for achieving high quality, customer-focused, public services. It builds on reforms that have been put in place since 1997, and provides the basis for the streamlining of Best Value.
3. The White Paper introduces a revised performance management framework for local authorities. The changes set out in this note are those that the Government believes should be introduced at this early stage to facilitate the introduction of the revised framework and improve the effectiveness of Best Value. It is the Government's intention to bring together all the changes to Best Value in a more comprehensive revision to DETR Circular 10/99 in the summer.
4. The changes made in SI No. 2002/305 are summarised in the box below, and set out in detail in paragraphs 6 to 21 of this guidance note.

Statutory Instrument SI No. 2002/ 05 The Local Government (Best Value) Performance Plans and Reviews Amendment and Specified Dated Order makes the following changes to SI 1999/3251

- a) The deadline for the publication of the Best Value Performance Plan as required by Section 6 of the Local Government Act 1999 (the 1999 Act) has been changed from 31 March to 30 June;
- b) The deadline for the auditor's report on the Performance Plan as required by section 7 of the 1999 Act has been changed from 30 June to 31 December;
- c) The required content of the Performance Plan has been varied by removing the requirement to:
 - summarise any assessment of the level at which, and way in which an authority exercises its functions, and
 - set out the five year period of reviews; and
- d) The requirement for authorities to review all their functions in a five year cycle has been revoked.

5. The effect of the Statutory Instrument is to make the following changes to DETR Circular 10/99:

- **Paragraph 18:** references in this and other paragraphs to the requirement to review all functions within a five year period will no longer apply;
- **Paragraph 55:** the publication and audit deadlines for the Best Value Performance Plan have been changed; and
- **Paragraph 60:** the requirements relating to summary information have been changed.

Best Value Performance Plans

Content of the Performance Plan

6. Section 6 of the 1999 Act and SI 1999/3251 made it clear that the Performance Plan should be a clear statement about:

- What services an authority will deliver to local people
- How it will deliver them
- What standards of service are currently delivered, and what standards the public should expect in the future
- What action it will take to deliver such standards of service and over what timescale

7. This requirement remains unchanged. The Plan should be both a mechanism for accountability and an effective management tool. However, the Government accepts that the full Performance Plan is not necessarily the most appropriate vehicle for providing information on performance to local people. Rather, the Performance Plan's principal audiences should be the staff and elected members of the authority, groups and organisations with an interest in the authority, and central government.

8. The Best Value Performance Plan should focus on information of corporate importance, and should include:

- A summary of an authority's objectives;
- A statement on national and local performance indicators, standards and targets;
- A summary of performance against relevant performance indicators, standards and targets, including final BVPI out-turn data for the previous financial year, and comparisons with earlier financial years and with other authorities;
- A summary of proposals to achieve standards and targets;
- Details of the authority's Best Value Review programme;
- A summary of action plans following any Reviews; and
- Responses to audit and inspection.

9. The Statutory Instrument removes the statutory requirement to include in the Plan any assessment made of the level at which, and the way in which, the authority exercises its functions. This requirement has caused confusion. The implied requirement to report on performance is already included elsewhere in SI 1999/3251. The removal of this requirement will give authorities more discretion on the how they include financial information in the Plan in accordance with paragraph 54 of DETR Circular 10/99.

10. It is proposed to remove the statutory requirement for an efficiency summary and consultation statement, as set out in paragraph 54 of DETR Circular 10/99, in the revision to DETR Circular 10/99 in the summer. The Government is developing better cost effectiveness indicators that will reflect an authority's efficiency. There are also other sources of information about efficiency and consultation, including Best Value reviews and inspection reports.

Deadline for the publication of Performance Plans

11. For 2002 and subsequent years, authorities will be required to publish their Performance Plans by 30 June. This change will allow authorities to include final performance out-turn data for the previous financial year. This will make the Performance Plan a more robust statement of performance and will reduce the amount of preparation and auditing required. It will also allow new administrations elected in May to amend their draft Performance Plan to reflect any new policies and programmes they wish to introduce.

12. For 2002-03, some authorities may choose to publish the Performance Plan in March as previously. Those authorities that do so should provide an update of their performance out-turn data to the Audit Commission by 30 June to allow proper comparison between authorities and to inform the audit and, where appropriate, the assessment processes. It is recognised

that for 2002-03 it may not be practicable to produce final out-turn data for all indicators by 30 June, but every effort should be made to do so.

Deadline for the auditor's report on the Performance Plan

13. The deadline for the audit report has changed from 30 June to 31 December. This is a consequence of the change in the publication deadline for the Performance Plan and the introduction of the new assessments foreshadowed in the White Paper. The Performance Plan will be an important input into these assessments, and the change in the deadline for the audit report to 31 December will allow the statutory audit of the Performance Plan, that is required under Section 7 of the 1999 Act, to form part of the new assessment process.

14. Further guidance on the Performance Plan, its audit and the statutory response to the audit will be included in the more comprehensive revision to DETR Circular 10/99 and in guidance issued by the Audit Commission.

Best Value Reviews

Revocation of the 'five year rule'

15. The White Paper makes it clear that Best Value Reviews should challenge the status quo and better reflect an authority's priorities. Authorities should use Reviews to achieve significant improvement in service provision and performance standards, and to explore alternative options for service delivery.

16. Authorities are no longer required to review all functions within a 5-year cycle. This will give more discretion to authorities to choose what functions they review and when they review them. **It does not remove the legal requirement on best value authorities to review their functions, as specified by Section 5 of the 1999 Act.** The aim of the change is to enable authorities to focus Reviews more effectively on national and local priorities, and on areas of weakness and opportunity

identified as a result of the new assessment process when that is carried out.

17. Authorities should take the opportunity to reassess their planned Review programme in the light of the change introduced by SI No. 2002/305 and the proposals set out in the Local Government White Paper. Further guidance on Reviews will be included in the more comprehensive revision to DETR Circular 10/99 in the summer.

Fire authorities

18. All fire authorities in England and Wales, including single-purpose fire authorities, were required under Article 5(2) of SI 1999/3251 to conduct Best Value Reviews for particular functions according to a common timetable. Notwithstanding the fact that the relevant section of the Statutory Instrument has been revoked, they will still be expected to have conducted the Reviews of their communications and control and procurement functions by 31 March 2002, and their training functions by 31 March 2003.

Summary Information

19. The Government believes that local people should have access to clear and relevant information at the beginning of the financial year, and ahead of local elections. This will improve local accountability, promote awareness among local people and encourage their engagement in local government. The Government believes that summarised information should be made available to local people by 31 March each year, continuing the practice introduced in March 2000.

20. The Statutory Instrument affects paragraph 60 of DETR Circular 10/99. The change in the deadline for the publication of the Performance Plan means that the summary can no longer be a fair and accurate reflection of a Plan published in June. As a result, authorities now have discretion over

the contents of the summary, subject to the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity.

21. It is also intended to give authorities discretion over how the information in the summary is presented and communicated, and the extent to which it should be circulated. Further guidance on summary information will be included in the more comprehensive revision to DETR Circular 10/99 in the summer.