
MEETING: MANAGEMENT BOARD – 10 March 2008
EXECUTIVE – 19 March 2008
COUNCIL – 26 March 2008

SUBJECT: BURY PLAN 2008-11

REPORT FROM: LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

CONTACT OFFICER: H Downie, Head Of Performance and Corporate Planning

TYPE OF DECISION: COUNCIL DECISION

REPORT STATUS: This paper is within the public domain

PURPOSE/SUMMARY:

The Bury Plan serves as both the council's Corporate Plan and Best Value Performance Plan. It is a key document within the council's Policy Framework, reflecting on the past year's performance, setting out the council's ambitions and priorities for the next three years and providing a solid foundation for Departmental Plans and service delivery.

The ambitions and main programmes remain the same as last year. Priority tasks have been updated to reflect our rate of progress and the new challenges facing the council although some further changes may yet be necessary in the light of discussions over the new Local Area Agreement (LAA) and the results of the council's Corporate Assessment.

Best Value Performance Indicator results for 2007/08 will be published as an appendix to this plan when they become available (and no later than June 2008 in line with regulations published earlier this month by the Government).

Monitoring of the Plan will continue with regular reporting of the results to Management Board and Members. Targets will form part of Executive Member's work plans

OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDED OPTION (with reasons):

The council is required by the Local Government Act 1999 to publish a Plan that conforms to statutory requirements.

It is recommended that Members:

- Approve the Plan and identify areas for improvement in the content or format
- Agree to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the leaders of the three main parties, to update the Plan in the light of any amendments caused by the LAA or Corporate Assessment and to add the 2007/08 performance indicator information as it becomes available in June 2008

IMPLICATIONS -

Corporate Aims/Policy Framework: The proposals accord with the Policy Framework. The Bury Plan is a key document requiring approval of full Council

Financial Implications and Risk Considerations The Bury Plan continues to outline the financial implications of our priorities. Funding is already in place for a majority of projects – through external

support, Priority Investment Reserve and Capital Programme although some details still to be resolved on the Local Area Agreement. A minority of schemes are unfunded and attaining our ambition in these areas is dependent on attracting strategic partners or alternative income streams. The absence of agreed sources of funding increases the risk of targets not being achieved.

Statement by Director of Finance and E-Government:

There are no additional resource implications arising from this report. As stated above, the Bury Plan plays a key role in determining resource allocation as part of the priority-led approach to budgeting.

Equality/Diversity implications:

An initial impact assessment has been undertaken and it is concluded that the Plan is largely positive by aiming to reduce inequality.

Considered by Monitoring Officer:

Yes

Are there any legal implications?

The Council has a duty to secure Best Value and the plan outlines measures to comply with this. There is also an obligation to comply with the Code of Practice on Workforce matters in contracts which is mentioned on page 9 of the plan.

Staffing/ICT/Property:

The Plan outlines areas where ICT, asset management and partnership working have had, or are likely to have, an impact. Investment in new projects will be subject to separate, specific approval

Wards Affected:

All

Scrutiny Interest:

Resource and Performance

TRACKING/PROCESS

DIRECTOR:

Chief Executive/ Management Board	Executive Member/ Chair	Ward Members	Partners
10 March 2008			
Scrutiny Panel	Executive	Committee	Council
	19 March 20087		26 March 2008

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Council publishes an updated Corporate Plan and Best Value Performance Plan each year. These documents are an important part of the council's Policy Framework informing future policy and service development as well as advising partners and the community of the council's plans.

2.0 ISSUES

The Bury Plan provides a snapshot of the council. It reports our achievements and assesses the lessons from the past year but most of the space has to be devoted to looking forward and setting out what the council is trying to achieve in the future.

The main features of the Plan are:

- A strong outcome focus – emphasising how we will make a difference in the community (rather than simply listing the services the council delivers);

- Clear links between different planning hierarchies. The Bury Plan feeds off the Sustainable Community Strategy and provides direction for Departmental Plans and targets;
- Better monitoring. Robust targets are in place to measure progress and these will be integrated into Executive Member workplans in 2008/09 to maintain the focus on the bigger picture;
- Exemplifying the links between resources and targets. As well as existing funds and aligning budgets across partnerships, LAA pump priming funds and the Priority Investment Reserve enables further resources to be allocated to our priorities. Using the total amount available to us to achieve value for money (and increasing efficiency) will become more pronounced in the coming years.

Whilst we would normally expect the corporate planning process to be largely complete by March, two major factors are causing delay. Firstly, discussions are still ongoing with Government around the priorities for the Borough to be contained in the LAA. As the LAA will form the basis of how the Government perceives Bury in the medium term, aligning the Bury Plan with the LAA – to ensure effort is concentrated to best effect is essential. Secondly, we are still awaiting the results of the Corporate Assessment inspection in January/February 2008. Past experience suggests that the report will contain areas for improvement and it would be beneficial to start work on such actions as soon as possible by building them into the coming year's plans. Feedback however will only become available towards the end of March.

Despite these limitations, recent guidance from Government requires plans to be approved and published by June 2008.

Subject to comments by Members, the next stages in the process will be:

- Refinement of the plan in response to LAA discussions and the Corporate Assessment result;
- Publication by mid April (the 2007/08 BVPIs will be published as an addendum to this Plan in keeping with the 30 June statutory deadline);
- On-going monitoring of the plan by Management Board and Members

3.0 CONCLUSION

This Plan sets out to build on past successes by identifying what needs to happen to improve outcomes for the community whilst recognising the challenges presented by limited resources and the potential impact on capacity.

Robust monitoring of performance, resources and risks will continue. This puts the council in a good position to progress the issues that are important to local residents and increase value for money from the resources available to us.

List of Background Papers:-

ODPM Circular 02/2004: Guidance on Best Value Performance Plans (amending ODPM Circular 03/2003: Best Value and Performance Improvement available at:
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/>

Contact Details:-

Harry Downie, Head of Performance
 Tel: 0161 253 5125
 Email: h.downie@bury.gov.uk