

CABINET

31 March 2004

BUSINESS PLANS 2004/05

REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Contact Officer: Jacky Adams Tel No: 01962 848356

RECENT REFERENCES:

- PS110 Business Plans Informal Group Recommendations (Principal Scrutiny Committee 12 January 2004, Cabinet 14 January 2004)
- PER68 Personnel Department Business Plan (Personnel Committee 8 March 2004)
- CAS23 Community Services Business Plan (Community, Arts and Social Performance Improvement Committee 9 March 2004)
- HE24 Health and Housing General Fund Business Plan (Health Performance Improvement Committee 10 March 2004)
- EA24 Development Services Business Plan (Environment and Access Performance Improvement Committee 15 March 2004)
- HO34 Health and Housing General Fund Business Plan (Housing Performance Improvement Committee – 16 March 2004)
- CEN51 Finance Department Business Plan (Central Services Performance Improvement Committee – 18 March 2004)
- CEN53 Chief Executive's Department Business Plan (Central Services Performance Improvement Committee – 18 March 2004)
- CEN54 City Secretary and Solicitor's Department Business Plan (Central Service Performance Committee – 18 March 2004)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

To ensure that the Council's business is properly managed and that it is able to deliver its corporate priorities, all departments produce a business plan setting out their key priorities for the year and demonstrating how resources (both staff and finance) will be used to deliver these. These documents form the basis for regular performance monitoring by Cabinet, Principal Scrutiny Committee, Performance Improvement Committees and Personnel Committee (in respect of the Personnel Department).

This year all Business Plans have been produced to a common format designed by Principal Scrutiny Committee and agreed by Cabinet. This format helps to provide a stronger link to corporate priorities and highlight key commitments but does not seek to set out the full workload of each department. In larger departments the Business Plan is underpinned by more detailed Service Plans that are agreed by the Director in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

(continued)

The Business Plans have been discussed at relevant Performance Improvement Committees and the Personnel Committee (for the Personnel Department Business Plan) and comments made by those Committees will be circulated separately. It has also become apparent that some minor updates are required to some plans to ensure that they reflect all agreed corporate priorities; there are clear links between sections 4 and 5; and that targets shown in section 5 are as SMART as possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 That, subject to recommendation 2 below, Cabinet approves the Department Business Plans as circulated to Performance Improvement Committees, as the agreed programme of work for the City Council in the 2004/05 financial year and confirms that it is satisfied that this will allow the Council to deliver its agreed corporate priorities and meet its legal commitments, as far as can be foreseen at present.
- 2 That Cabinet authorises the Chief Executive and relevant Directors, in consultation with relevant Portfolio Holders, to update and finalise their respective Business Plans to take on board comments made at Performance Improvement Committees and make any minor amendments required, with this work to be completed no later than Thursday 8 April 2004.
- 3 That progress against Business Plans is reviewed at least quarterly by Portfolio Holders, Cabinet and Performance Improvement Committees.

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Each Department produces an annual Business Plan that sets out its work priorities for the coming year. Taken together these form the Council's work programme for the year. This report seeks approval to the programme of work set out in the 2004/05 Department Business Plans.

2 Format of Business Plans

- 2.1 In 2003, Principal Scrutiny Committee carried out a review of the format of Business Plans and recommended that a common, more streamlined approach be adopted. Cabinet agreed this format at its meeting on 14 January 2004.
- 2.2 During the pre-scrutiny process, Performance Improvement Committees have raised some issues about the new format. The success of the current format will be kept under review during the year, with any proposed improvements to be recommended to Cabinet in the autumn, prior to the preparation of Business Plans for 2005/06.

3 Content of Business Plans

- 3.1 In previous years Department Business Plans have included detailed service plans, covering all work to be undertaken in the Department during the coming year. The new format seeks to provide a more streamlined plan that clearly focuses on key priorities for the coming year. As such, the 2004/05 Business Plans do not cover all activities taking place within each Department and are supported by more detailed service plans in a number of the larger departments.
- 3.2 The new format is designed to provide a clear link between the agreed Council's corporate priorities and work to be undertaken by all departments in the coming year. Actions set out in Business Plans will then be allocated to individual officers as part of the agreed process of annual appraisals, which is taking place at present. Cabinet is asked to check that it is satisfied that actions described in Section 4 of the Business Plans will deliver the desired outcomes to meet corporate priorities over the next three financial years. The Business Plans have also been prepared to take account of and deliver improvements identified in the draft modernisation and improvement plan that will come for approval to Cabinet and Council in April.
- 3.3 During the pre-scrutiny process, the Personnel Committee and Performance Improvement Committees have been asked to comment on the draft Business Plans. Their comments are set out in the various minute extracts, listed below, that appear elsewhere on this agenda.
- Extracts from Personnel Committee minutes (CAB850)
 - Community, Arts and Social Performance Improvement Committee minutes (CAB843)
 - Health Performance Improvement Committee minutes (CAB844)

- Environment and Access Performance Improvement Committee minutes (CAB846)
- Housing Performance Improvement Committee minutes (CAB848)
- Central Services Performance Improvement Committee minutes (CAB847)

3.4 It has also been recognised that some amendments are required to some plans to strengthen links between Sections 4 (proposed developments and improvements of the service 2004 to 2009), 5 (service priorities 2004/05) and 7 (key performance indicators). Directors are making minor modifications to Business Plans to strengthen these links and it is proposed that authority be given for these amendments to be agreed with relevant Portfolio Holders.

3.5 Business Plans also set out what resources are required to deliver the agreed programme of work and Directors have indicated that they believe that the work identified in these Business Plans can be delivered within available resources. Cabinet is asked to check that resources are allocated sensibly and realistically to achieve desired programmes of work.

4 Use of Business Plans

4.1 The Business Plans should be living documents. During the year they will form the basis for performance monitoring undertaken by Cabinet (looking at progress against the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities) and Performance Improvement Committees and Personnel Committee (for the Personnel Department), who will scrutinise the deliver of work programmes and whether they are having the desired impact. Overall progress against the Plans will also be monitored by Corporate Management Team. In addition, Portfolio Holders will use the documents to monitor progress in their area of work.

4.2 They should also be subject to regular update, to identify where resources can be found to address any new initiatives that are required during the year and agree adjustments to existing programmes of work to accommodate such requirements.

5 Relevance to Corporate Strategy

5.1 Department Business Plans demonstrate how the Council's corporate priorities for the coming year will be delivered.

6 Resource Implications

6.1 Each Business Plan identifies how allocated resources will be used to deliver work identified in the plan.

Background Documents: None

Appendices:

Chief Executive's Department Business Plan (as circulated with report CEN53)
 Development Services Department Business Plan (as circulated with report EA24)
 Health and Housing General Fund Department Business Plan (as circulated with reports HE24 and HO34)
 Community Services Department Business Plan (as circulated with report CAS24)
 Finance Department Business Plan (as circulated with report CEN51)
 City Secretary and Solicitor's Department Business Plan (as circulated with report CEN54)
 Personnel Department Business Plan (as circulated with report PER68)