

CABINET

23 March 2005

BUSINESS PLANS 2005/06

REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Contact Officer: Jacky Adams Tel No: 01962 848356

RECENT REFERENCES:

- HE38 Health and Housing General Fund Business Plan (Health Performance Improvement Committee - 19 January 2005)
- CEN82 Finance Department Business Plan (Central Services Performance Improvement Committee – 25 January 2005)
- PER85 Personnel Department Business Plan (Personnel Committee - 7 March 2005)
- CAS37 Community Services Business Plan (Community, Arts and Social Performance Improvement Committee - 8 March 2005)
- EA32 Development Services Business Plan (Environment and Access Performance Improvement Committee - 16 March 2005)
- HO52 Health and Housing General Fund Business Plan (Housing Performance Improvement Committee - 24 February 2005)
- CEN89 Chief Executive's Department Business Plan (Central Services Performance Improvement Committee – 22 March 2005)
- CEN88 City Secretary and Solicitor's Department Business Plan (Central Service Performance Committee – 22 March 2005)

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).

All Business Plans, other than the HRA Business Plan, are 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. The HRA Business Plan is produced in a format that is in line with central Government requirements.

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 or provided orally at the Cabinet meeting.

Business Plans should be living documents. Given the degree and speed of change that all local authorities are required to respond to, it is proposed that quarterly monitoring reports made to Performance Improvement Committees following discussion with relevant Portfolio Holders should reflect changes needed during the year. This will also allow changes required to continue the process of organisational development to be recognised during the year.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 That subject to comments made by Performance Improvement Committees and Personnel Committee, Cabinet approves the Department Business Plans as circulated to Performance Improvement Committees, as the agreed programme of work for the City Council in the 2005/06 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 notes that Business Plans will be updated during the year to reflect opportunities and pressures arising during the year, with these changes reported to Portfolio Holders and Performance Improvement Committees during the year, with reference to Cabinet if required.
- 3 That progress against Business Plans is reviewed at least quarterly by Portfolio Holders 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 2005/06 Department Business Plans.

#### 2 Format of Business Plans

- 2.1 A new common approach to Business Plans was introduced for 2004/05, with developments to this being agreed in December to respond to issues raised in the first year of operation and new systems being introduced within the Council.
- 2.2 The new format is designed to provide a clear link between the agreed corporate priorities and work to be undertaken by all departments in the coming year. In the recent Peer Review carried out by the Improvement and Development Agency, the Review Team were very positive about the progress being made to develop the Council's performance management framework and drew attention to the fact that a clear link could now be traced from the Council's corporate strategy to its work planning processes.

#### 3 Content of Business Plans

- 3.1 Given the timing of consultation on the proposed organisational development, it was agreed that Business Plans should be produced for the Departments as they exist prior to phase 3 of the restructuring. As in 2004/05, the 2005/06 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. Actions set out in Business Plans have been allocated to individual officers as part of the agreed process of annual appraisals, which has been taking place in recent months.
- 3.2 One of the changes agreed in the Business Plan format was for the top priorities for each department to be set out in section 4a of the document, with other activities set out in section 4b. The purpose of doing this is to ensure that the top priorities are safeguarded should there be pressure on resources. Cabinet is asked to confirm that the actions set out in section 4a of each Business Plan reflects those issues which should be given highest priority.
- 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 – CAB1053
  - Community, Arts and Social Performance Improvement Committee minutes – CAB1054

- Health Performance Improvement Committee minutes – extract from Minutes of meeting held 19 January 2005:

**HEALTH AND HOUSING DEPARTMENT GENERAL FUND BUSINESS PLAN 2005/06**

(Report HE38 refers)

*The Committee considered the draft 2005/06 Business Plan for the Health and Housing Department General Fund. During discussion, Members noted that the effects on the staff establishment and other costs, as a consequence of the proposed legislative changes, could not yet be determined.*

*In response to a Member's question, the Director reported that because of Government guidance there was little scope for the Department to generate additional income from fees.*

*A Member also recommended that the Business Plan should include the Performance Indicators for the top quartile.*

**RESOLVED:**

*That Cabinet be recommended to approve the proposals and targets within the Business Plan as set out in the appendix to the report.*

- Environment and Access Performance Improvement Committee minutes (comments to be reported to the meeting)
- Housing Performance Improvement Committee minutes - extract from Minutes of meeting held 24 February 2005:

**HEALTH AND HOUSING DEPARTMENT GENERAL FUND BUSINESS PLAN 2005/06**

(Report HO52 refers)

*The Committee considered the draft 2005/06 Business Plan for the Health and Housing Department General Fund. During discussion, it was requested that, wherever possible, the Business Plan's headings follow the recent management restructuring of the Department and include 'target dates'.*

**RESOLVED:**

*That Cabinet be recommended to approve the proposals and targets as set out within the Health and Housing Department General Fund Business Plan 2005/06.*

- Central Services Performance Improvement Committee minutes (Extract from 25 January 2005 meeting relating to Finance Business Plan set out below. Other comments to be reported to the meeting):

**FINANCE DEPARTMENT BUSINESS PLAN 2005/06**

(Report CEN82 refers)

*Members discussed the Council's efforts to achieve the Gershon Targets and noted that a Working Group, led by the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, was in the process of drafting a plan to be submitted to Cabinet and*

*then the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). Although the details of the Gershon Targets had not yet been finalised by Government, the Director of Finance commented that the anticipated 2.5% yearly savings were likely to include efficiency as well as cost savings.*

*During discussion, the Committee considered the role of the Customer Service Centre in achieving savings and noted the Centre's reliance upon an improved Council website with increased links to services provided by the County Council.*

*Members were concerned by the high level of staff absences through sickness, but noted the improvement in these figures as a result of initiatives agreed by the Personnel Committee.*

*Further information was provided to Members in respect of the collection of money from car parks and this was considered under exempt business (detail in Exempt Minute).*

**RESOLVED:**

*That Cabinet be recommended to approve the Finance Department Business Plan 2005/06, subject to any necessary minor amendments to be delegated to the Director of Finance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources.*

- 3.4 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 Portfolio Holders (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 delivery of work programmes and whether they are having the desired impact.

- 4.2 Given the pace of change facing local authorities, it proposed that, as part of this quarterly monitoring process, Directors and Heads of Division report to Portfolio Holders and Performance Improvement Committees any changes required to react to new initiatives or to delay or delete a target in the light of new requirements or in order to create resource to address new issues.

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 CEN89)  
Development Services Department Business Plan (as circulated with report EA32)  
Health and Housing General Fund Department Business Plan (as circulated with reports HE38 and HO52)  
Community Services Department Business Plan (as circulated with report CAS37)  
Finance Department Business Plan (as circulated with report CEN82)  
City Secretary and Solicitor's Department Business Plan (as circulated with report CEN88)  
Personnel Department Business Plan (as circulated with report PER85)