

Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee – 2008/09 programme

v.13 March 2008

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Item	Objectives / notes	Action / timescale
Standing items		
Quarterly Performance Monitoring reports against the Council Plan.	<p>These reports provide a summary of the Council’s performance for the parts of the Council within the committee’s terms of reference. The reports identify which targets are BVPIs (Best Value performance Indicators) and CPA (Comprehensive Performance Assessment) indicators. Key service targets assessed as red or amber are included in the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amber (where there is concern about the likelihood of achieving the performance measure by the end of the year) together with recommendations for action • Red (where the performance measure is assessed as inappropriate or unachievable). <p>County Council performance for the following BVPIs is included at key stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BV002a – equality standard level • BV002b – duty to promote race equality • BV011a – women in top 5% earners • BV011b – black / ethnic minorities in top 5% earners in the county • BV011c – top 5% earners with a disability • BV012 – days / shifts lost to sickness • BV014 – early retirements • BV015 – ill health retirements • BV016a – % disabled employees 	All meetings from November 2007 (except September)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BV017a – % ethnic minority employees • BV008 – invoices paid on time • BV156 – % local authority public buildings accessible to disabled people. 	
Forward Plan	A <i>snapshot</i> of the Council's Forward Plan is appended to each committee agenda. The purpose is to enable members to identify and highlight relevant issues for scrutiny. Options for dealing with items identified include: briefing paper, items on scrutiny committee agenda; more in depth scrutiny review.	All Meetings / Democratic Services
Reconciling policy and resources	<p>24 September 2007: Draft Council Plan policy steers were endorsed by Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee; the committee highlighted concerns on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deficits on the 2006/07 Council Tax Collection Fund accounts for Eastbourne and Hastings borough councils and noted the remedial action being proposed. • The worsening position of BVPIs 197 and 53/ teenage pregnancies and intensive home care support for people aged 65 or over (referred concerns to the Lead Member). <p>21 November 2007: Committee requested a copy of a benchmarking comparisons report commissioned through the Institute of Public Finance (IPF). Committee Members to be provided with portfolio plans when available.</p>	September – March (annual)
Audit functions		
Internal Audit Strategy and Annual Plan	Sets out the internal audit strategy, including key themes and detailed coverage across departments for the year ahead.	June (annual)
Annual Internal Audit Report and Opinion	Gives an overall opinion on the Council's framework of internal control; summarises key audit findings and performance against key indicators.	June (annual)
Internal Audit Progress Reports	<p>These summarise quarterly key audit findings, highlight significant control issues and report on delivery of the audit plan and internal audit services' performance against performance indicators.</p> <p>Reports include comments on sharing information from internal audit progress reports with other scrutiny review boards and committees.</p>	All meetings (quarterly)

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Annual Audit and Inspection Plan	Sets out audit and inspection work to be carried out by Council's external auditors. From 2007/08 PKF are the external auditors.	June (annual)
Annual Governance Report	Sets out the external auditors' conclusions from their audit of the accounts and the <i>Use of Resources</i> element of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA).	September (annual)
Audit and Inspection Annual Letter	Sets out the Relationship Manager's overall view of the Council's performance, including the CPA Direction of Travel Assessment, overall CPA scores and results of assessments and inspections by other bodies e.g. Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and Ofsted.	March or June (annual)
Risk Management Annual report	Provides: an assessment of the adequacy of risk management arrangements; planned improvements for the year ahead; and an update on the strategic risk log. 21 November 2007: Risk Management Strategy 2008 – 2010: Noted that risk management training seminars would be offered to all Members.	June (annual)
Strategic risk monitoring log	Provides a chief officer view of the strategic risks facing the authority.	All meetings
Monitoring Officer's Annual Review of Governance	Sets out an assessment of the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements and includes an improvement plan for the coming year, and the corporate assurance statement which will form part of the statement of accounts. 12 June 07: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee recommended to the Governance Committee that the improvement plan for the Corporate Governance Framework should include reference to diversity and the progress made to date to improve the Council's performance in this area.	June (annual)
The Council's Statement of Accounts	Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee has a responsibility to review the accounts prior to approval by the Governance Committee.	September (annual)
Anti Fraud & Corruption Strategy	To inform the Committee of developments in our anti fraud and corruption work, the outcomes of a self assessment against CIPFA's "Managing the Risk of Fraud" and to seek comments on the	March 2008

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	revised anti fraud and corruption strategy before it is approved by Governance Committee.	
Best value and scrutiny reviews		
Best Value Review of a Strategy for a Joint Waste Authority	<p>This review was reported to: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee on 29 November 2006; Cabinet on 30 January 2007; and County Council on 20 February 2007.</p> <p>Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee endorsed the review's recommendations, namely that all local authorities in East Sussex should:</p> <p>(1) continue to work towards closer and better working relationships, potentially including Brighton and Hove, and for that purpose create appropriate formal agreements, and</p> <p>(2) explore the creation of a consortium of all authorities.</p> <p>A draft Municipal Waste Management Strategy was considered by Transport and Environment Scrutiny Committee on 19 June 2007. The Committee recommended adoption of the strategy with an annual review of action plans and a five year review, with all the District and Borough Councils, of the headline strategy and supporting annexes. A further request was made to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment to write to the Boroughs and Districts, on behalf of the County Council to seek their adoption of the Strategy without delay.</p>	<p>Paul Dean (Contact officer)</p> <p>Monitoring reports to T&E Scrutiny Committee: Nov 2007 and June 2008.</p>
Scrutiny review of the County Council's relationship with the voluntary and community sector (VCS)	<p>This cross cutting scrutiny review is being managed by the Community Services Scrutiny Committee and chaired by Cllr Barry Taylor. Cllr Sparks represents Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee on the Board. The committee has completed its work. The Board's remit was to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Council's role in establishing a Local Involvement Network (LINK) that will replace the Patient and Public Involvement Forum funding and procurement [completed May 2007] • the role of individual councillors in working with the VCS • the County Council's role in <i>Change Up</i>. 	<p>Claire Lee (Project Manager)</p> <p>Final report to Community Services Scrutiny Committee: Mar 08 (copied to A&BV members)</p>
Executive Best Value Review of Passenger Transport	<p>This review was undertaken by an Executive member board with the opportunity for scrutiny members to provide evidence at key stages. The Board comprised Cllrs Tony Reid (Chairman), Keith Glazier and Matthew Lock. The Board reviewed the impact on key council policies on</p>	<p>Paul Dean (Project Manager)</p> <p>Monitoring reports:</p>

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	<p>passenger transport provision; assessing ways of increasing efficiency and maximising income wherever possible. In particular it is addressing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the sustainability of rural bus services and alternatives including community transport • specific areas of high spend including home to school transport , special education needs and social care transport • a range of organisational issues and relationships between departments responsible for commissioning and providing passenger transport. <p>Reports to Cabinet/scrutiny:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 30 January 2007 / 5 June 2007 – Cabinet: denominational home to school transport ▪ 5 June 2007 – Cabinet: mileage allowances for non statutory home to school transport journeys <p>Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee commented (24 September 2007):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ need to set a timescale for the agreement of the SLAs between Transport and Environment and Children’s Services/Adult Social Care ▪ a single taxi contract is preferred to attempting to contract with a single provider; a single contract should include all taxi providers who contract with the Council. <p>Cabinet endorsed the report on 25 September 2007.</p>	<p>T&E Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>March 2008 / November 2008</p> <p>Original Review Board to reconvene October 2008</p>
Other scrutiny issues		
Carbon Management Annual Report	In 2004/05 East Sussex County Council took part in the local authority carbon management pilot programme run by the Carbon Trust. Cabinet approved the resulting Carbon Management Action Plan on 19 April 2005 and agreed that an annual report be submitted to the Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee to review progress against the plan. The action plan contains a target to reduce CO ₂ emissions by 14% by 2009/10 compared to 2001/02.	June (annual)
Corporate Assessment (CA) – areas for	The CA inspection visit took place in June 2007. In the Corporate Assessment the Council has been judged to be ‘...performing well, consistently above minimum standards’ by the Audit	No further action

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improvement	Commission. It has been awarded a '3' (good) out of '4' on every area assessed. Similarly, none of the areas assessed by the JAR have scored less than a 3 out of 4 and the Authority has been awarded the top score.	
Peer Review Action Plan – 'Tipping Points'	<p>Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee on 22 March 2007 requested further information on progress in relation to a point in the peer review action plan which states: "<i>Staff generally feel very pressurised, with the reduction in posts and consequent absorption of work by others bringing things close to tipping point</i>".</p> <p>12 June 07: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee requested outcomes of 2007 staff survey to be widely circulated.</p>	No further action planned
Age Well Private Finance Initiative (PFI)	November 2006: Committee requested update report to a future meeting.	Future meeting as appropriate
School surpluses and deficits	<p>24 September 2007: Committee considered progress report and risk management assessment update requested by November 2006 Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee: Recommended that Children's Services Scrutiny Committee receive future annual and periodic reports to allow them to monitor progress on school balances.</p> <p>Also requested circulation of the report on schools final under/overspends 2006/07 to be circulated to Members of the committee.</p>	No further action after completing indicated recommendations.
Planning School Places	<p>12 June 2007: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee requested progress report on the implementation of recommendations in the review of planning school places.</p> <p>21 November 2007: Committee noted progress and referred concerns (recommendation 3 of the Audit Commission report) about changes to the way funding for special educational needs pupils occurs. [Children's Services Scrutiny Committee has subsequently included this issue in its work programme]</p>	No further action planned
ICT business continuity and contact centre update	12 June 2007: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee considered pre-implementation proposals to manage ICT continuity risks in the Council.	No further action planned

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Business Transformation Programme (Adult Social Care)	<p>12 June 2007: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee requested Director of Adult Social Care to report at the end of each phase of the transformation programme.</p> <p>21 November 2007: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee welcomed progress and requested quarterly updates to committee Members.</p>	No further action unless issues identified by committee.
Support to local Members	12 June 2007: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee requested a report on the role of and support offered to local Members and how it might be enhanced.	Mar 08
Property Projects – post implementation reviews	<p>12 June 2007: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee requested post implementation reviews conducted on property projects and lessons to be learned from review findings.</p> <p>21 November 2007: Committee endorsed proposals to improve delivery of capital projects and requested future progress reports.</p>	Nov 08

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