

# Agenda Item

**Executive Board**

**18 October 2006**

**SPs template 2007/10**



## The proposed template of Service Plans for 2007/10

### Summary

A Service Planning Template Task and Finish Forum (TaFF) established by the Scrutiny Committee convened in June to consider the template for Service Plans in 2007/10. The main aim of the TaFF was to streamline the service planning template and make the documents produced more useful and effective.

The suggestions made by the TaFF are set out in sections 2-6 of the main body of the report and the proposed template of Service Plans for 2007/10 which follows.

The Scrutiny Committee's recommendation of 20 September to approve the suggestions made by the Service Planning Template TaFF and the proposed template is set out in section 7 of the main body of this report.

### Recommendation

**That the Executive Board approves the recommendation of the Scrutiny Committee of 20 September as set out in section 7 of the main body of the report.**

#### a) Reasons for Recommendation

A proposed service planning template for 2007/10 and suggestions for the formatting and production of service plans have been made by the Service Planning Template TaFF in response to a resolution of the Scrutiny Committee on 4 April.

#### b) Alternative Options

None.

#### c) Risk Considerations

A failure to make satisfactory progress in implementing the TaFF's proposals may lead to the Council being criticised in a future Inspection and could also compromise the Council's reputation and budgets.

#### d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

Service planning and monitoring conforms with existing Council policy and the Council's current budget.

#### e) Date for Review of Decision

June 2007.

## **Main Body of the Report**

1. On 4 April, the Scrutiny Committee resolved that a small, brief Task and Finish Forum (TaFF) be set up to examine the service planning template for 2007/10 and produce suggestions for the formatting and production of service plans. The TaFF which met on 7 June, consisted of Councillors P W Burrows, Mrs F I Newth and Dr H W Waterworth (in the chair); the Corporate Director - Central Services; and the Head of Organisational Development. The Portfolio Holder for Resources also attended the meeting.
2. Officers proposed that the template for 2007/10 be based on last year's template with the following changes to last year's format:
  - a) That the sections in last year's Part A (Key Service Information) be deleted allowing Heads of Service to focus on sections in Parts B (Performance in 2006/07) and C (Plans for 2007/10). (The Key Service Information would be made available on the Intranet and would be updated by Heads as appropriate.)
  - b) With the quarterly monitoring of Service Plans covering the fourth quarter or year end, Heads would be in a position to draft new Part A (Performance in 2006/07) during the spring. As a result, Heads would be able to present a draft Service Plan with Part A completed to their Service Planning Day in the autumn.
  - c) That the order of the sections "Service Improvements planned for 2007/10" and "Contributions to Key Corporate Improvements planned for 2007/10" be reversed. It is considered more effective if corporate improvements follow immediately after "Key Issues to be faced and/or Options for Service Change in 2007/10".
  - d) That the section "Key Issues to be faced and/or Options for Service Change in 2007/10" distinguish between key issues of a corporate nature and those affecting the service only.
3. Members of the TaFF accepted these changes and agreed a number of guiding principles on which the template for 2007/10 should be based:
  - a) that improving the access for members to the service plans on the intranet be investigated;
  - b) that the key strengths section needed to be removed as the service planning day aimed to strive for commitment to continuous improvements to services;
  - c) that Heads of Service give as much emphasis as possible to bullet points and reducing wordiness;
  - d) that, to overcome issues surrounding parts of the template being uncompleted, a suitable phrase be agreed that all Heads of Service will put in to indicate when an empty part of the template will be completed;
  - e) that portfolio holders should be involved more closely, on a formal basis, in the service plan process.
4. In addition, members felt that:
  - a) a glossary of terms needed to be added for members;
  - b) each Corporate Director should have responsibility for doing the final edit of the Service Plans drafted by their Heads of Service;

- c) that the presentation of information was very important and there was a need to find a way of relating the budget document and the service plan document so members could make informed comments and decisions;
  - d) Heads of Service need to be present at meetings where the Service Plans are presented and the possibility of having an all day meeting was considered.
5. The TaFF then made detailed changes to the service planning template which are incorporated in the papers which follow:
- a) a summary of the proposed Service Plan template for 2007/10
  - b) a blank template
  - c) a template with guidance on and examples of each section.
6. Heads of Service were invited to comment on the changes suggested above and the proposed service planning template.
7. This report was considered by the Scrutiny Committee on 20 September. The Committee “recommended that:
- a) the suggestions made by the Service Planning Template Task and Finish Forum, as set out in the report, and the proposed template be approved, subject to the number of key achievements requested being set at between 6 and 10 with these being decided by the Head of Service in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder
  - b) the template remain unchanged next year to promote stability for Heads of Service in service planning unless there is an overwhelming and compelling reason to amend it.”

### **Legal Implications**

No legal observations.

### **Financial Implications**

No financial implications.

### **Consultation on Reports to the Executive**

The Scrutiny Committee, a Service Planning Template TaFF and Heads of Service have considered the issues concerning this report.

### **Background Papers**

Relevant background papers follow.

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Executive Board  
18 October 2006