

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

Notice of Meeting

THE EXECUTIVE

Tuesday, 18 May 2004 - Civic Centre, Dagenham, 7:00 pm

Members: Councillor C J Fairbrass (Chair); Councillor C Geddes (Deputy Chair); Councillor J L Alexander, Councillor G J Bramley, Councillor S Kallar, Councillor M E McKenzie, Councillor B M Osborn, Councillor J W Porter, Councillor L A Smith and Councillor T G W Wade

Declaration of Members Interest: In accordance with Article 1, Paragraph 12 of the Constitution, Members are asked to declare any direct/indirect financial or other interest they may have in any matter which is to be considered at this meeting

10.05.04

Graham Farrant
Chief Executive

Contact Officer Barry Ray
Tel. 020 8227 2134
Fax: 020 8227 2171
Minicom: 020 8227 2685
E-mail: barry.ray@lbbd.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2004 (to follow)**

Business Items

Public Items 3 is a business items. The Chair will move that this be agreed without discussion, unless any Member asks to raise a specific point.

3. **Development Control Performance Indicators (Pages 1 - 8)**

Discussion Items

4. **Performance Monitoring - End of Year 2003/04 Actuals (Pages 9 - 12)**
5. **Any other public items which the Chair decides are urgent**

6. **To consider whether it would be appropriate to pass a resolution to exclude the public and press from the remainder of the meeting due to the nature of the business to be transacted.**

Private Business

The public and press have a legal right to attend Council meetings such as the Executive, except where business is confidential or certain other sensitive information is to be discussed.

There are no such items at the time of preparing this agenda.

7. **Any other confidential or exempt items which the Chair decides are urgent**

THE EXECUTIVE**18 MAY 2004****REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS		FOR INFORMATION
<p><i>To report back to the Executive in accordance with an undertaking given by Officers at the Executive held on 18 November 2003.</i></p> <p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>This report summarises progress made in the performance of the Development Control service since the approval, by the Executive at the meeting on 18 November 2003, of an Action Plan for the service, resulting from a perceived fall in service delivery. The report notes that performance has increased overall, although there is still room for improvement in the handling of Major Applications.</p> <p>The main Development Control Performance Indicator, which is also CPA critical, is BV109. This is divided into the following three sub-categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BV109a – Major Applications • BV109b – Minor Applications • BV 109c – Other applications. <p>The report notes an improvement of 44.4% in Minor Applications, 31.7% in Other Applications but a fall of 17% in Major Applications between June and December 2003. The report also outlines changes proposed in Planning Performance Indicators for 2004/5 and details this year's Planning Delivery grant.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>The Executive is asked to note this report and that a further report will be presented in the Summer.</p>		
<p>Contact Peter Wright</p>	<p>Head of Planning and Transportation</p>	<p>Tel: 020 8227 3900 Fax: 020 8227 3896 Minicom: 020 8227 3034 E-mail: peter.wright@lbbd.gov.uk</p>

1. Background

- 1.1 At its meeting on 18 November 2003 the Executive considered and approved an Action Plan for Development Control. This Action Plan was initiated by the revelation through performance management of a steady decline in the Development Control

service. The previous report to the Executive which lists the Action Plan is attached as Appendix A. At the meeting Officers gave a commitment to report quarterly to the Executive on improvement in performance. (Executive Minute 194, 18 November 2003 refers)

1.2 The main performance indicator for Development Control is BV109. This looks at the time taken to determine various categories of Town Planning Application against target times. The performance indicator is divided into three sub-categories as follows:

- BV109a – Major Applications, with a target of 60% determined in 13 weeks
- BV109b – Minor Applications, with a target of 65% determined in eight weeks
- BV109c – Other Applications, with a target of 80% determined in eight weeks.

BV109 is also critical to the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) assessment.

2. Improvement

2.1 This report looks at improvement in the service between June 2003 and December 2003. Overall, there has been an improvement of 44.4% in Minor Applications, 31.7% in Other Applications but a fall of 17% in Major Applications between June and December 2003.

2.2 The handling of Major Planning Applications is the hardest target to meet; as these invariably involve dealing with complex Section 106 Agreements. Legislation being introduced in the forth-coming Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act will speed up this process. However, the trend in handling Major Applications is now upwards as shown in the attached table. Also, it should be noted that part of the award of this years Planning Delivery Grant (below) is for improved handling of Major Applications.

Table 1 – Improvement in Service			
BV	June '03	Sept '03	Dec '03
109a	54.55%	36.30%	37.50%
109b	25.00%	54.20%	69.40%
109c	54.70%	72.20%	86.40%

3. Changes to Planning Performance Indicators (PIs) in 2004/5

3.1 Two new Performance Indicators are proposed, to be introduced in April 2004.

- (i) The percentage of appeals allowed against the Authority's decision to refuse. This is designed to deter Authorities who regularly refuse applications to meet BVPI 109 targets. This Council does not, presently, refuse applications to meet BVPI 109 targets and generally has a good track record on appeals.

(ii) Quality of Service Checklist. There are six quality of service measures covering;

- Guidance to applicants,
- Pre-application advice,
- Access to specialist design advice,
- Access to specialist historical advice,
- Team approach to major applications
- Electronic planning services.

Following the implementation of the reorganisation currently underway, it is predicted that the Authority will score well in five out of the six categories on this Indicator and will meet all six indices on the introduction of the IDOX computer software.

3.2 It is proposed to delete two existing Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs).

(i) BVPI 107 - Planning Cost per Head of Population. This is proposed to be removed due to the negative effect it has on Town Planning services for which the Government is trying to increase expenditure through mechanisms such as the Planning Delivery Grant. This move is welcomed.

(ii) BVPI 188 - The number of decisions delegated to Officers as a percentage of all decisions. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) argues that this Performance Indicator (PI) is no longer needed, as delegation is implicit in BVPI 109 and targets.

4. Proposed Service Standard

4.1 The Council has been identified as one of 38 local authorities nationally deemed to be under-achieving on delivery of BVPI 109(b) – Minor Applications. A target of 58% has been set. This target is based on outturn figures at June 2003. Since that time, the Action Plan has been introduced and improvement in this PI is already visible. Performance at third quarter 2003 was 69.4% and work is continuing to ensure that the Authority stay above the national target of 65%.

5. Planning Delivery Grant

5.1 Notification has been received of this year's Planning Delivery Grant award. This increases the amount paid to the Council from £151,000 in 2003/4 to £451,646 this year. The basis of the award is the Borough's location within a designated growth area, its population, the existence of a current Development Plan and for improved performance in dealing with Major Planning applications. Much of the grant award will go towards rolling out the service restructure resulting from the reorganisation of the Planning and Transportation service from the Best Value Review of Regeneration. A further detailed report will follow for Members' consideration in the summer.

Background Papers

- Executive Report and Minute 194, 18 November 2003 re: Development Control Performance Indicators and Action Plan
- Executive Minute 111; 9 September 2003 re: Restructuring Regeneration - Preparing for the Future
- The Governments Performance Indicators for Development Control. www.odpm.gov.uk
- Planning: Delivering a Fundamental Change www.odpm.gov.uk

THE EXECUTIVE18 NOVEMBER 2003REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF LEISURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND ACTION PLAN	FOR DECISION
<p><i>To report to the Executive on the Performance Indicators and Targets for Development Control and Town Planning Applications and set out proposals to achieve an improvement in national targets.</i></p>	
<p><u>Summary</u></p>	
<p>The performance indicators for the Development Control Section are based on the time taken to deal with various types of Town Planning Applications. These are split into three groups namely Major, Minor and Others. Each group is set a national target for making the decision. Major applications have a target of 60% within 13 weeks, 65% of applications in 8 weeks for Minor and 80% in 8 weeks for Other. Last years figures showed a marked down turn in performance mainly within the last quarter and it is this, which needs to be addressed.</p>	
<p>To improve the situation an action plan has been devised and a number of action points from this have been implemented and have already had a significant effect. Figures to 1 September 2003 show a 35% increase in the number of Minor applications determined within time, and the overall quarter statistic has increased to 58.7%. This is only 7% below the Government's target. A 15.6% rise in Other applications has also been attained, which resulted in a 75.6% achievement rate; less than 5% off the Government's target. Assuming staff can be recruited and retained there should be continued improvement in our achievement rate. However, until the underlying problems relating to Major applications are addressed this figure will continue to be subject to major fluctuation.</p>	
<p><u>Recommendations</u></p>	
<p>The Executive is recommended to endorse the Action Plan below and note that the first seven points have already been implemented.</p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changes to the application booking system in line with advice from the Audit Commission. 2. Greater use of Technical Clerks in logging applications and dealing with enquiries to free up Planning Officer time. 3. Bi-weekly report to remind all officers of applications which are coming up to their expiry date in order that these can be fast tracked. This is also a monitoring tool for the Development Control Manager and the Department Management Board. 	

Appendix A continued

4. Greater stress to Officers on importance of time limits through team meetings.
5. Action will be taken on every working day on Applications for which Delegated Authority already exists.
6. Development Control Boards to be held every two weeks.
7. Increase in Officers powers to make a decision on Town Planning applications (now contained in the Council's Scheme of Delegation.)
8. Section 106 Agreements - Policy in Local Development Framework:
Officers will draw up a policy which contains criteria that clearly sets out what contributions will be required for certain applications by area. This will enable faster delivery of applications, as developers will be aware of their obligations prior to submission of an application
9. Seek ISO 9000 Accreditation (by April 2004) to support delivery service.
10. Increase in staff in post to process applications

Reason

To assist the Council in achieving its Community Priorities of '*Making Barking and Dagenham Cleaner, Greener and Safer, Regenerating the Local Economy*'

Contact

Tim Lewis

Group Manager
Development Control

Tel: 020 8227 3706
Fax: 020 8227 3916
Minicom: 020 8227 3034
E-mail: tim.lewis@lbbd.gov.uk

1. Background

1.1 The key issues in the performance of the Development Control Section have been staffing and resources, with a number of experienced officers leaving to more highly paid employment. Difficulties in recruitment have been experienced, due mainly to the lack of qualified planners within London. This has led to a reliance on agency staff, most of whom are mostly successful. It has become self evident from the amount of Officer time involved, that the agency staff take a considerable bedding in period. This is a situation that is reflected across London and the South East, mostly due to high living costs. This is coupled with a marked increase in the number of applications submitted with rises of 20% per year experienced over several years. As a result the Council has fewer staff dealing with more applications, which leads to delays. A recent Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) statement said that Town Planning Officers dealing with mid-range applications should have a case load of no more than 150 applications a year. Staff in this Council are dealing with nearly twice that amount.

Appendix A continued

- 1.2 This problem has been recognised by the recent reorganisation, which increased staff numbers in Development Control. Also the recent recruitment of two Town Planning Officers, who are now bedded-in and the release of an agency planner have led to an up turn in the figures for this quarter. Two Technical Clerks have also been employed within the Administration Section and these clerks are beginning to provide valuable officer support and will continue to do so as their roles increase. This increase has been helped by the increased delegated powers to Officers in the Council's Scheme of Delegation (DLES). At the time of writing this report (this quarter has a few days to run) figures indicate it is likely that an 82% rate of decisions will be dealt with under delegated authority
- 1.3 Other factors are outside the Council's control, namely the delay in the Planning White Paper, which was to set up the mechanisms for achieving these figures and the delays to the system due to Section 106 Agreements. A meeting was held with representatives from the ODPM last week. At this meeting it was highlighted that as a majority of applications contain Section 106 Agreement it was physically impossible to deal with them within the timescale. Some applications that come under the categories of Minor and Other will also have agreements that cause delays. A suggestion was to take the date of the Council's decision as the Date of Decision rather than the Date of Issue. Some council's are adopting an approach of putting planning conditions relating to Section 106 Agreements on the Decision Notice and issuing it. This will enable faster delivery of applications, as developers will be aware of their obligations prior to submission of an application. However, the legality of these conditions is still under review as they may turn out to be difficult to enforce.
- 1.4 One point should be made in respect of Major applications. The percentage of these targets that meet the target time will tend to vary considerably due to the smaller number. In the last quarter the Council dealt with 6 out of 11 applications within 13 weeks which is 54%. This quarter only 4 out of 11 have been dealt within 13 weeks, which is 36.4%. As a result each application has a disproportionate effect of approximately 10% on the quarter figures.
- 1.5 However, as a result of the figures indicated in the above paragraph, improvements to the service have been implemented.

2. Action Points

- 2.1 To achieve an improvement in performance a number of action points were devised. These were:
1. Changes to the application booking system in line with advice from the Audit Commission.
 2. Greater use of Technical Clerks in logging applications and dealing with enquiries to free up officer time.

Appendix A continued

3. Bi-weekly report to remind all officers of application which are coming up to their expiry date in order that these can be fast tracked. This is also a monitoring tool for the Development Control Manager.
4. Greater stress to Officers on importance of time limits through team meetings.
5. Action will be taken every working day on Applications for which Delegated Authority, which now exists under the Council's Scheme of Delegation (DLES).
6. Development Control Boards to be held every two weeks.
7. Increase in Officers' powers to make a decision on Town Planning Applications (now contained in the Council's Scheme of Delegation, (DLES)).
8. Section 106 Agreements - Policy in Local Development Framework:
Officers will draw up a policy which contains criteria that clearly sets out what contributions will be required for certain applications by area. This will enable faster delivery of applications, as developers will be aware of their obligations prior to submission of an application
9. Seek ISO 9000 Accreditation (by April 2004) for the future purpose of supporting delivery service. This is already a target under the Balanced Score Card for this service.
10. Increase in staff in post to process applications

3. **Project Timetable**

The first seven points listed in paragraph 2 above have already been implemented with good results. In respect of the three action points still to be implemented, the Local Development Framework is a priority and is expected to be ready by December 2003. The ISO Accreditation is programmed has already started and is in to the Council's Balanced Scorecard for achievement by April 2004. The increase in staffing is part of the major reorganisation of the Planning Section and it is expected that adverts for the new posts will be sent out in January 2004.

4. **Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The Executive will recall that it received a report on the 9 September 2003 on the Restructuring of Regeneration and the funding for the above proposals and staffing implications was agreed as part of that report.

THE EXECUTIVE**18 MAY 2004****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE STRATEGY**

PERFORMANCE MONITORING	FOR INFORMATION	
<p><i>To update the Executive on end of year actual performance of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Best Value Performance Indicators in CPA Basket</i> • <i>High Risk Performance Indicators that are considered in CPA</i> • <i>Council Scorecard Performance Indicators</i> • <i>PSA targets</i> <p><i>Please note Social Services has been excluded from the presentation as end of year actuals are still not available. However, we will now be presenting end of year actuals to the Assembly on 9 June 2004 and Social Services information will be available at that time.</i></p> <p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>This report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides background information on the monitoring of the Statutory and Council Scorecard Performance Indicators detailed in Barking and Dagenham's annual Best Value Performance Plan. • Presents a series of graphs reporting performance on a number of Performance Indicators highlighted by TMT for your consideration. <p><u>Recommendation</u></p> <p>The Executive is asked to discuss performance as highlighted by the Performance Indicators presented.</p>		
<p>Contact: Sandra Twiddy</p>	<p>Improvement and Development</p>	<p>Tel: 020 8227 2484 Fax: 020 8227 2806 Minicom: 020 8227 2685 E-mail: sandra.twiddy@lbbd.gov.uk</p>

1. Background

- 1.1 In June 2003, Barking and Dagenham Council published its fourth Best Value Performance Plan setting out how the Authority aims to improve its services over the next 12 months. The document has been published in line with the new corporate branding for the Council.
- 1.2 The Statutory Performance Indicators are National Indicators which have been determined by ODPM (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister [*formerly DTLR*] – the Government department overseeing Best Value) and the Audit Commission.

- 1.3 The Council is required by law to collect and publish this information. In the process of developing the scorecards, services have identified key indicators for measuring improvement. This year's plan lists the Council Scorecard Performance Indicators for 2003/04 (Chapter 2 – Managing the Council). Internal Audit has carried out an audit of all the Council Scorecard Indicators to ensure they are robust and collectable.
- 1.4 A central system has been established to monitor each Performance Indicator, which is updated by departments on a quarterly basis. TMT have again selected a number for your consideration for end of year actuals for 2003/2004.
- 1.5 From April 2002, Key Performance Indicators for the quarterly monitoring process have consisted of the Council Scorecard PIs together with a selection of other PIs from each of the departments (these can consist of BVPIs; service scorecard PIs or local PIs). With statutory BVPIs - the emphasis will be on those PIs that are currently in the bottom quartile or have shown deterioration since the previous quarter.
- 1.6 From the 3rd quarter 2003/04 we have focused on those performance indicators that are considered in CPA together with the Council Scorecard performance indicators and for the first time – progress on our PSA targets.
- 1.7 For presentational purposes, each Performance Indicator is being reported in a graphical format, which allows performance to be shown over time and compared with other Local Authorities. PI headings are traffic light colour-coded and "smiley faces" have been added to clearly express how we are performing.
- 1.8 For the national indicators, figures have been included for neighbouring Boroughs together with lines showing the top 25% of performing Councils both nationally and across London. *(Please note it is only possible to compare our performance with the previous year's top quartile targets as these are only released in the December of each year following the outturns for that year).* This will not be possible for the majority of Council Scorecard or local PIs, as they are unique to Barking and Dagenham.
- 1.9 For Social Services performance information, comparison is no longer made with top quartile data. Comparison is now made with Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) performance targets for England and Outer London. The "smiley faces" will not be shown on Social Services graphs. Instead we have used the "blobs" to indicate whether performance is good or bad. i.e. = poor performing = high performing. The Social Services graphs also show a darker grey band to highlight what is good performance.
- 1.10 The note section underneath the graph has been revised to enable Chief Officers to be consistent in the way they report the PI's performance. *(See new headings below).*

Headings
<u>Improvement / Deterioration</u>
<u>Action taken / update since last quarter</u>
<u>Further Action</u>
<u>Corporate Impact</u>
<u>Additional Information</u>

- 1.11 For the majority of Council Scorecard PIs this is the second year of reporting. Targets have been set for the next three years for the majority of these and are presented on the graphs.
- 1.12 The annual deadline for the publication of the Best Value Performance Plan is 30 June. It is still a requirement that a summary of performance information should be published by 31 March. Our summary of performance information for 2003/04 appeared in the March 2004 Citizen.
- 1.13 The Government have specified 98 best value national (statutory) PIs for 2003/04 compared to 97 in 2002/03 and 123 specified for 2001/02. The ODPM Consultation paper issued in July 2002 required comments from authorities on the proposals to change the number of performance indicators and the rationalisation of statutory plans.

2. Quarterly Monitoring

- 2.1 Each Performance Indicator contained in the Performance Plan is being monitored on a quarterly basis where possible. Some indicators can only be calculated on an annual basis and this is shown on the individual graphs. As the majority of the Council Scorecard PIs are strategic, they will only be reported annually unless otherwise stated at the front of the Council Scorecard section in the presentation. The 2002/03 Council Scorecard PIs have been reviewed for 2003/04. Please see chapter 2 of our BVPP for more information.
- 2.2 Quarterly monitoring allows the Council to identify problem areas at an early stage and take remedial action to improve performance. It also identifies areas of good practice within the Council and to share this throughout the organisation. The graphs are a useful visual aid to enable Members of the Executive to challenge Chief Officers on poor performance. The changes to the notes section should further assist Members in performing this role.
- 2.3 This quarterly process is now being used to monitor our Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets which were agreed with Government in 2003. From April 2003 the following council scorecard indicator, **CS29: Percentage of PSA targets met on an annual basis** will be used to monitor its progress.

3. Comparing Performance

- 3.1 Guidance from the ODPM advises each Authority to compare performance with other Local Authorities. The monitoring system established allows the comparison of performance across a number of levels. National indicators provide the greatest opportunity for comparing performance as each Local Authority is collecting and reporting identical information.
- 3.2 *Neighbouring Boroughs.* Research undertaken by the Audit Commission has identified that people are particularly interested in comparing the performance of their Local Authority with neighbouring areas. In the Barking and Dagenham Performance Plan, the neighbouring boroughs of Redbridge, Havering and Newham have been selected for this purpose.

- 3.3 *Top 25% of performing Councils – both Nationally and London.* It is a requirement under Best Value that each Council must aim to perform within the top 25% of Councils within 5 years. For indicators relating to the quality of services, comparison should be made with the top 25% of Councils across the country. For indicators relating to the cost of the service, comparison should be made with the top 25% in London. The ODPM have determined that in most cases, a low service cost is preferable.
- 3.4 *Local targets – For the majority of Council Scorecard, Service Scorecard and local Performance Indicators* comparisons can be made both over time and against the target set. These are identified on the relevant graphs.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 This is the latest report on the monitoring of the Best Value Performance Plan. Subsequent reports to both TMT and the Executive will follow after each quarter and at year-end.

Background papers used in the preparation of the report

- ODPM Consultation document July 2002
- Best Value Performance Indicators 2003/2004 (burgundy book)
- Futures 2003/2004 – Barking and Dagenham Performance Plan