

## THE EXECUTIVE

18 MAY 2004

### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND LIBRARIES

The Chair will be asked to determine whether this report can be considered at the meeting under the provisions of Section 100 (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 as a matter of urgency, in order to discuss monitoring of the BVPI's discussed in this report as part of a wider discussion on BVPI's across the Council.

<b>BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (BVPI 118C)</b>	<b>FOR INFORMATION</b>	
<p><i>The Library Service is currently unable to supply to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) the relevant data for the Best Value Performance Indicator 118c 'Overall Satisfaction' by the required date. This means that the BVPI 118 is currently reserved and that the sub set BVPI 118c is qualified.</i></p> <p><b><u>Summary</u></b></p> <p>BVPI 118 comprises three elements which are used to report on the library services performance :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>118a 'Found a book to borrow'</li><li>118b 'Found the information they required'</li><li>118c 'Overall satisfaction'</li></ul> <p>This report contains details of the events resulting in the failure to report, remedial actions and resultant changes to procedures.</p> <p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>To note the contents of the report for information.</p> <p><b><u>Reasons</u></b></p> <p>To establish the performance of the Library Service to enable the full reporting of BVPIs for the next two years.</p>		
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## **1. Background**

- 1.1 BVPI 118c is a new performance indicator introduced for this year. In 2000/01 BV118c recorded people's satisfaction with reservations. The data has to be collected by means of a national standard survey known as Adult PLUS and all library authorities were required to conduct the survey by the end of November 2003. This survey also provides the data for the existing BVPI's 118a ('found a book to borrow') and b ('found the information they required').
- 1.2 The survey is conducted at a local level but is managed and audited by the Institute of Public Finance (IPF). This organisation also collates the data and produces the final reports. This allows a validated audit trail.
- 1.3 The data is to be supplied to the ODPM by 31 May 2004.

## **2. Main Body of the Report**

- 2.1 In August 2003 the final version of the questionnaire was supplied by the IPF in an electronic format – a Word document attached to an e-mail.
- 2.2 The questionnaire was branded by us with the Barking & Dagenham logo in the pre-defined space and returned to the IPF by e-mail for verification. Any other changes were not allowed.
- 2.3 The IPF electronically returned the verified questionnaire in September 2003. This was then downloaded to a floppy disc and a copy was sent to the Council's Print Section.
- 2.4 4,000 questionnaires were produced and distributed to all eleven library sites during October 2003. The Print Section's normal practice is not to supply a proof copy if the client provides either a hard copy or an electronic version in 'Word'.
- 2.5 The actual survey took place in November over a three week period.
- 2.6 In January 2004 all completed questionnaires (2,087) were couriered to the IPF for analysis and production of draft report.
- 2.7 The draft report was received by e-mail 02 March 2004, when it was identified that the final question of Section C of the survey, had not been printed. This asks for an overall satisfaction rating for the service.
- 2.8 The train of events was investigated. The final question was lost at some point between the document being sent electronically by libraries to the print section and it being printed. Whilst it is common practice to transmit documents in this way, libraries' procedures have now been changed so that documents are proof read in hard copy before and after printing.

## **3. Consultations/financial and other implications**

- 3.1 Immediate e-mail contact was made to the IPF for advice on how to rectify the situation.

- 3.2 Acting on their advice, contact was made with the Audit Commission and the ODPM. They indicated that in their view it was too late to gather and submit data for 118c but that 118a and b would stand.
- 3.3 The Council is determined to redo the survey as quickly as possible in order to ensure that we have covered the full range of performance indicators. We shall use the results of this survey as a basis for further discussion with the Audit Commission.
- 3.4 The survey will be repeated in June. The original survey cost £1,500 excluding staff costs. The IPF have quoted a figure of £1,600 to repeat the survey. Timescales are dependent on their workload. Previous experience indicates a minimum of 12 weeks.
- 3.5 If we undertake the complete survey again, the advice from the IPF is that we would not be expected to repeat it until three years later. However, this will have to be confirmed by the Audit Commission as they may want us to re-do the survey in 2006/07 along with all other authorities so that comparisons can be made as the survey is carried out at the same time.

#### **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 The seriousness of this failure has been recognised by the Library Service and the Print Section.
- 4.2 Library Service procedures have been changed as follows:
- all key documents will be proofed in hard copy before and after printing.
- 4.3 Print Section procedures will be reviewed.

#### **Public background papers (used in preparation of the report)**

Copies of the original and distributed questionnaire.