



# Buckinghamshire County Council

## Report

Deputy Leader

Decision to be taken on  
or after 10 August 2001

Cab Member Report No. DL03/01

Date 6 August 2001

Title 2001-2002 Local Best Value Performance Plan:  
Response to External Audit Report

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Electoral Divisions Affected: All

### Summary

The paper presents a draft of the Council's formal response to an external audit report on the Local Performance Plan.

### Recommendation

**To agree the attached response to the Auditor's report.**

#### **A. The decision required, and why it is needed**

Production of the annual Local Performance Plan is a statutory requirement, and the Plan has to include a range of performance data specified in government regulations. Legislation also requires an annual audit of the Plan by the Council's external auditors.

The Council's Local Performance Plan was published in March 2001 and the Audit has now been completed. The Chief Officer's Management Team received a feedback briefing and a further briefing was arranged for Members and Officers on 26 July. A copy of the report has been circulated to all Members.

The main findings are of immediate importance as we are effectively starting the planning for next year's Performance Plan now.

The positives were:

- a) The Council is committed to continuous service improvement
- b) It is getting there (in respect of Best Value)

- c) The plan complied, in all significant respects, with the Local Government Act 1999 and statutory guidance, except for problems around Best Value Performance Indicators
- d) There was no recommendation that the authority be inspected by the Audit Commission or referred to the Secretary of State.

The areas for improvement were identified as:

- a) Ensure all Performance Indicators are calculated in accordance with the relevant definitions with appropriate supporting evidence
- b) Establish a corporate information management role
- c) Produce performance information as part of operational management
- d) Improve the timeliness, rigour and quality of the Best Value Review process.

The Council is required to make a formal response to any statutory recommendations within 30 working days of publication, which was on 29 June. A copy of the draft response is attached, which must be returned to the external auditor by Friday 10 August.

**B. Recommended action, and the reasons for this**

It is recommended that the draft response be agreed. The draft has been discussed and endorsed by the Chief Officer's Management Team. Members have also had the opportunity to comment at the briefing held on 26 July. Implementation of the proposed action will be a priority and a number of important steps have already been taken.

**C. Other options available, and their pros and con**

There are no other options available. The County Council is statutorily required to respond to the external auditor's report.

**D. Resource implications**

None directly arising

**E. Communication issues**

Copies of the Council's Local Performance Plan and audit report have been widely circulated as well as being available on the Council's website. Copies of the agreed response will be available in main libraries and posted on the website.

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**Decision Taken:**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Decision Not Taken:**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Background Papers**

2001-2002 Local Performance Plan

District Audit Report on 2001-2002 Best Value Performance Plan

Copies may be obtained from the Contact Officer

***Your questions and views***

*If you have any questions about the matters contained in this paper please get in touch with the Contact Officer whose telephone number is given at the head of the paper.*

*If you have any views on this paper which you would like the Cabinet Member to consider, or if you wish to object to the proposed decision, please inform the Head of Cabinet Support by 5.00pm on 9 August 2001. This can be done by telephone (to 01296 382966), Fax (to 01296 383441), or e-mail to [cabinet@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:cabinet@buckscc.gov.uk)*