



# *Corporate Performance Overview Report*

4th Quarter: January-March 2007/08

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Chief Executive

## Overview of Council Performance

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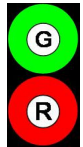
### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out an overview of the Council's performance for the period January-March 2008. It complements the detailed quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports for the period produced by each Director, which were circulated to Members in May. The purpose of this overview is to provide the Executive with a high-level summary of key achievements, and to highlight areas where performance is not matching targets or expectations, along with any remedial action that is being taken to address this.

### 2 Overview of Performance

- 2.1 The Departmental Service Plans for 2007/08 contain 344 detailed actions to be completed in support of the 12 interim Corporate Themes which were agreed by the Executive in March last year. The five quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports show that 317 (92%) of these actions were achieved by year end, whilst 27 (8%) are still outstanding. Annex A contains the complete list of actions, giving details of remedial action being undertaken with regard to those which have not been achieved.
- 2.2 A significant part of the Council's work relates to day-to-day service provision which is not specifically covered by priority actions in Service Plans. However, performance against targets for day-to-day services is also important, and is covered in Annex B of this report. This shows that out of a total of 146 performance indicators, there are only 50 where data is not yet available at the end of the 4th quarter.

Of the 128 indicators where data is available:



79 no. (62%) have already achieved the target or are anticipated to achieve it; and

49 no. (38%) have not achieved the target or are not anticipated to achieve it.

- 2.3 This overall progress maintains a consistent trend, as the anticipated outturns last quarter were 68% "green" and 32% "red".

### **3 Progress against Key Objectives**

- 3.1 Overall the final quarter of 2007/08 saw good progress towards achieving the Council's priorities, rounding off an extremely successful year which culminated in the CPA 'Four Stars, Improving Strongly' rating. Several departments reported previously "red" actions changing to "green" this quarter, with actions which had not been on target last quarter nonetheless being completed on schedule by year end. The following paragraphs highlight some areas of note.

#### *Corporate Theme 1: Promoting the sustainable development of Bracknell Forest*

- 3.2 Work on the Town Centre regeneration progressed well this quarter, with no call-in by the Secretary of State of the revised planning application and no High Court challenge to the grant of permission. Stage D (Design Development) of the Civic Hub project is now almost complete. The Council worked closely with its development partners, BRP, to present evidence to the town centre regeneration Compulsory Purchase Order public inquiry in February. No objectors appeared to give evidence against the Council, and the Government's response is due by the Summer. The current economic climate is being analysed, especially in terms of the potential impact on the development programme. Officers are keeping in close contact with BRP and will keep the situation under review.

#### *Corporate Theme 2: Promoting sustainable communities through housing strategies and maintenance policies*

- 3.3 The entirety of the Council's housing stock was successfully transferred to Bracknell Forest Homes in February, an achievement which will have a positive impact on the Council's budget for 2008/09 and beyond. Progress on a number of other housing objectives slipped because of the pressure to deliver the stock transfer, but these have now been reprogrammed, and a new Chief Housing Officer has been appointed. Consultation took place during the quarter with stakeholders including private-sector landlords on the new Local Housing Allowance, which will be paid to new benefit claimants in private-sector rented accommodation from April. More generally, the Benefits Service completed its year-end process successfully notwithstanding complications arising from the transfer of Council housing stock last quarter. Members were given an update on the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and associated viability study, key components of the Local Development Framework.

#### *Corporate Theme 3: Help create a stronger community which is socially cohesive*

- 3.4 Fourth quarter figures show that overall BCS crime within the Borough fell by a remarkable 20.4% in 2007/08, contributing to a three-year reduction of 12.5%. The 2007/08 result for Bracknell Forest represents the biggest reduction of crime in the Thames Valley force area. The 'Fear of Crime' survey was completed during the quarter, with the results anticipated in June, and it has been agreed that the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership's real-time data on anti-social behaviour within the Borough will be made available to

the public via the Council website. The Community Cohesion Strategy ('All of Us') and the new Voluntary Sector Compact were finalised during the quarter and are due for Executive approval in May. The Council's Race and Gender Equality Schemes were finalised and published internally, and work has progressed on the Equality Standard Action Plan with the aim of achieving Level 3 by March 2009 (BVPI 2a).

*Corporate Theme 4: Increase participation in and enjoyment of, art, culture, sport and recreation*

- 3.5 During the quarter the Council was notified of the successful outcome of its bid to secure Lottery grant funding for renovation of the grounds at South Hill Park: the £2.5m award will assist with the Council's ambitious plans for the site, which including extensive remedial works to trees, stonework and the southern lake, the creation of new gardens and a network of access pathways from neighbouring residential areas, and the provision of improved visitor information.

*Corporate Theme 5: Protect and improve public health in the Borough*

- 3.6 Work under this theme has progressed well this quarter, and Bracknell Forest is now the leading authority in the country on reducing teenage pregnancies. The number of schools achieving the new Healthy Schools Standard was slightly below target, but the progress made nonetheless places the Borough in a good position compared to other authorities. Interim host arrangements were made with regard to the Council's new responsibility under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act to establish a Local Involvement Network (LiNK), which will replace Patients Forums under the Act. The interim host is Evolve (formerly Oxford and Area Consortium for Patient and Public Involvement in Health), and tendering processes are underway to secure a permanent host by September 2008.

*Corporate Theme 6: Improve outcomes for children and young people*

- 3.7 Publication in February of the Ofsted report of the Joint Area Review was confirmation of the success of children's services within the Borough, with an overall grade of 3 out of 4 (Good). Meanwhile, Whitegrove Primary School was judged by Ofsted to be 'Outstanding' – the third BFBC school to achieve this grade. Preparations for the transition from the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership to a Children's Trust were completed by the Partnership for approval by the Council Executive. The capital programme, which includes major projects at Garth Hill School, on the Brakenhale School site and in Jennett's Park, has continued in line with the project plans, with considerable effort going in to ensuring that the projects remain affordable. In addition, the basic restructuring to bring adults' and children's services together was completed, but work will continue throughout 2008 to embed the changes more fully.

*Corporate Theme 7: Increase participation in adult learning*

- 3.8 Work is progressing well in this area. The Adult Learning Plan continues to offer planned opportunities for learning, subject to limitations of the Learning and Skills Council's grant funding.

*Corporate Theme 8: Improve services for vulnerable adults and older people*

- 3.9 Work under this Corporate Theme progressed well during the quarter. The timetable for approving commissioning strategies was met, with the Executive approving Mental Health and Learning Disabilities strategies in February and a strategy for People with Long-Term Conditions in March. Work also began to develop an approach to commissioning substance misuse services across East Berkshire, with the establishment of a commissioning group chaired by the Chief Officer – Adult Social Care.

*Corporate Theme 9: Create and maintain a quality environment*

- 3.10 The Council slightly exceeded its year-end target of 26% of household waste recycled, and although low composting rates during the bad weather in Quarter 4 meant that the 14% target for composting was narrowly missed, a total of 40% of household waste in the Borough was either recycled or composted. A good deal of work was put in to raising public awareness of the temporary closure of the Longshot Lane waste disposal and recycling facility for refurbishment, which is now underway. Additional monies made available by the Council have been allocated to improved cleaning and maintenance of verges on high-speed roads, deep cleansing neighbourhood centres every quarter, more frequent deployment of the chewing gum machine, attending to subways, and improved grounds maintenance.

*Corporate Theme 10: Improve transport and movement in and around the Borough*

- 3.11 Progress under this Corporate Theme was mixed in the final quarter of 2007/08. The Integrated Transport Team and the Smartcard Team worked extremely hard to produce 8,000 new smartcards for the National Concessionary Fares Scheme, and Bracknell Forest will now have the most advanced multi-application smartcard in operation anywhere in the country. Much surveying work has been undertaken to provide raw data for the Highway Asset Management and Highway Network Management Plans, but resource pressures have prevented the final completion and publication of these documents. The 2007/08 target of a 10% reduction in the number of journeys to school made by car has not been met, but the 3% reduction achieved at least represents a good basis on which to build in 2008/09. A review of the Borough's performance on minimising road traffic casualties has been undertaken jointly by a working group of the former Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Panel and a representative of the Thames Valley Police. The report of the review will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission in early June.

*Corporate Theme 11: Improve efficiency, effectiveness and access to services*

- 3.12 In addition to securing approval of the Council's budget proposals for 2008/09, new banking and insurance contracts were finalised during the quarter, and detailed work on the financial arrangements for the transfer of the Council's housing stock was completed, including the implementation of a new payroll service for Bracknell Forest Homes. A new Customer Contact Strategy was published internally, and improvements were made to the online payments software. At year end, over 97.5% of council tax and 99.5% of business rates had been collected, compared with 97.4% and 99.7% respectively at the same time last year. Eighty per cent of council tax was paid by direct debit.

*Corporate Theme 12: Improve Corporate Governance and Partnership Working*

- 3.13 A draft refresh of the Sustainable Community Strategy was published for consultation during the quarter, and a draft of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) was submitted to GOSE, negotiations on which are still ongoing. Proposals were also formulated for the restructuring of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function to align it with the restructured Council departments, and progress was made with the ongoing work of the Council's 15 Overview and Scrutiny working groups.

**4 Performance against Actions and Indicators, Corporate Health, Budgets and Bracknell Forest Partnership Performance**

- 4.1 Detailed performance against targets is set out at Annex B. Information on Corporate Health is set out at Annex C. Budget information is set out at Annex D. Work achieved by the Bracknell Forest Partnership is set out at Annex E.

**5 Conclusion**

- 4.1 Overall, performance against targets during the final quarter of 2007/08 was very good, with a number of key milestones being met. The progress achieved during the quarter has contributed to an extremely successful year for Bracknell Forest Borough Council, in which our solid performance was awarded national recognition in the CPA 'Four Stars, Improving Strongly' rating.

*Timothy Wheadon  
Chief Executive  
June 2008*