

**COUNCIL
24 APRIL 2003**

EXECUTIVE REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Since the Executive report to the previous Council meeting on 26 March 2003, the Executive has met on 10 April 2003. The Executive Decisions taken at that meeting are brought to the attention of the Council in this report.

2. SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

**(a) Social Services Inspectorate – Inspection of Services to Older People:
Action Plan**

An inspection of social care services for older people in Bracknell Forest was carried out in September 2002 by the Social Services Inspectorate. The Inspectorate produced a report of this inspection in January 2003. The report is very positive about many aspects of the social care services for older people in the Borough. It commends the Borough for the “real improvement” which has been achieved since the Joint Review by the Social Services Inspectorate and Audit Commission which took place in the summer of 2000, saying that there has been real progress in how it has carried out its leading role for social care services for older people. It states that this has been brought about through effective leadership of senior management in the Department, and through inclusion of social services within the overall council vision for modernisation, and that this has been underpinned by good leadership from councillors. The report also sees as of key importance in bringing about this improvement: effective partnerships with NHS organisations and two neighbouring Boroughs, the use of Best Value Reviews, an increasingly stable workforce and a strong commitment to promoting the independence of older people.

However, while the report is generally very positive, the Inspectorate makes a number of recommendations as to further improvements that are needed. In response to these recommendations the Social Services and Housing Department had put together an Action Plan which was duly considered and approved by the Executive as a means of maintaining and building upon the progress already made.

(b) Approval Of Capital Programme Schemes 2003/04

Under the Council's constitutional arrangements, the Executive is required to approve those schemes which are to be financed from rolling programmes that exceed £100,000. As the Council had agreed the capital programme for 2003/04, the Executive was invited to approve the allocation to specific schemes.

Appendix 1 details the approved allocations.

(c) Approval Of Tender Lists

The Executive has agreed that the compilation of the final tender list for:

- (a) the contract for cleaning office and public buildings; and

(b) building construction partnerships

should be delegated to the Assistant Director of Environment – Resources.

Given the value of the contracts, these 2 tender lists would normally be subject to approval by the Executive itself but no meetings are scheduled in May due to the forthcoming elections. However the programme for retendering the building cleaning contract, to enable a new contract to be in place when the current contract terminates at the end of September, would require the tender list to be agreed in the second week of May so that tenders can be dispatched on the 12 May 2003 with return on 4 July 2003.

The programme for selecting building construction partner(s), being one of the recommendations of the Best Value Review of Construction and Maintenance, involves an initial formal tender followed by an interview and selection process. In order to have set up and signed the partnership(s) by the end of September, being the key date to ensure involvement in 2004/05 programmes, tenders are programmed to be dispatched on the 27 May 2003, with the shortlist being compiled two weeks before that.

The Executive was satisfied that it would not be advantageous to the Council to delay either tendering process.

(d) Annual Service Plans 2003/04

Under Best Value legislation and Statutory Instrument No. 2002/305, all Councils are required to produce and publish a Best Value Performance Plan by 30 June each year. A key function of this Plan is to summarise the Council's performance against targets over the past year and set out objectives for the year ahead. The annual Service Plans set out on a departmental basis the information that will be brought together in the Performance Plan.

The Executive has approved the annual departmental Service Plans summarising performance against targets for the past year and establishing clear objectives and actions for the year ahead. Select Committees had been consulted on the detailed content of the Plans. Full copies can be obtained from the relevant Director.

(e) Smartcard Project – Scrutiny Arrangements

The Executive considered a request from the Select Committee on Corporate & Resource Issues to provide scrutiny Members with an opportunity to assess and make any appropriate recommendations on the Smartcard project prior to any decision being made to proceed with or terminate the existing contract. The break point on the interim period under the current contract is 17 June 2003.

The precise scrutiny arrangements for the project will depend upon the decision taken in relation to the future overview and scrutiny arrangements for the Council, but the intention is that either the proposed Public Scrutiny Commission or the Co-ordination Select Committee should decide whether to undertake the review itself or appoint a specific panel to advise the Executive Member who is scheduled to determine the matter by 17 June 2003.

3 LOOKING AHEAD

The next Forward Plan will be published on 1 May 2003 and will be available for public inspection at Easthampstead House in the usual way and is also regularly updated online at www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk.

Table 1: Rolling Programmes 2003/04

<u>SCHEME</u>	£000
CORPORATE SERVICES – IT DEVELOPMENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Help Desk System Enhancements 20 - BF Online (Web Site) & BFNET (Intranet) Developments 10 - Content Management System 90 - Internet security check & Enhancement 13 - Firewall & Backup System 32 - Intrusion detection & auditing system 20 - Feasibility/technical consultancy works 15 <p style="text-align: right;">TOTAL</p>	200
EDUCATION – ICT PROGRAMME Funds used to purchase hardware and software in all schools, in line with strategy adopted within the Bracknell Forest ICT development plan for the school curriculum. Funding used to match fund Standards Fund Allocations. Additionally within this allocation is a sum for Education Department servers <p style="text-align: right;">TOTAL</p>	150
EDUCATION – DISABLED ACCESS A programme of disabled access improvements required in schools to meet the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001 and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) legislation recently introduced. Access audits of all schools have been completed and a prioritised list of works identified. Funding is required to cover all Priority 1 work identified and is detailed in the Education Access Strategy. <p style="text-align: right;">TOTAL</p>	160
EDUCATION – SUITABILITY/SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS A rolling programme of major suitability improvement projects approved by the Education Budget-sub Committee (June 2000), following the completion of AMP Suitability Surveys in March 2000. The top project for 2003/04 is the remodelling of lower juniors accommodation to support teaching and learning at Birch Hill Primary School. The assessment of suitability issues in schools is being refreshed for future years in April 2003. <p style="text-align: right;">TOTAL</p>	250

ENVIRONMENT – LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN	
Demand Management & Travel Choice	50
Travel choice promotion works including Walk-to-School weeks, other travel awareness events, Travel Plan guide for schools and promotion of the BFBC Travel Plan.	
Highway Capacity and Roadspace Allocation	120
Package Development and implementation	
Parking	15
Management of on-street parking and residential street parking problems	
Traffic Management	228
Road traffic schemes to maintain safety, encourage appropriate speeds, reduce congestion and the use of unsuitable roads	
Walking and Cycling/Travel to school	424
Schemes to improve conditions for pedestrians and increase cycle use. Linked to Safe Routes to School initiative which includes the provision of safety zones outside schools from existing priority list.	
Bus and Rail Travel	45
Improvements to the accessibility of buses, available bus services and the integration of buses with other modes.	
Access for People with Disabilities	46
Provision of more facilities to help mobility in public areas in order to reduce barriers to movement.	
Freight	20
First phase of signing works to implement freight routing strategy	
Safety	192
Local safety schemes to reduce personal injury accidents at high risk sites.	
TOTAL Integrated Transport Measures	1,140
Highway Maintenance – Structures	313
Structural assessment, maintenance and strengthening of bridges & Subways	
Highway Maintenance – Roads	397
Programme of resurfacing and anti-skid surfacing works to principal & non Principal Roads	
TOTAL Maintenance	710
TOTAL	1,850
LEISURE	
Part of the BFBC contribution towards a £308,000 project to install a new Woodland and Water zone at the Look Out. A grant application for £231,000 has been made to ReDiscover, Science Centre and Museum Renewal Fund. Thus, the total BFBC contribution, if the bid is successful, is planned to be £77,000. The Council should be notified of the outcome in April. If the bid is not successful, it is intended to utilise this £50,000 for improvements project(s) at either, Downshire Golf Complex or Bracknell Sports & Leisure Centre or both.	50
Other improvement projects to be determined by relevant Executive Member.	100
TOTAL	150

<p>SOCIAL SERVICES – ICT REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME</p>	
<p>Rolling programme of IT hardware replacement for the department and including PC's, printers and servers.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">TOTAL</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">213</p>
<p>HOUSING UPVC Window Replacement Central Heating Replacements Capitalised Repairs The works relate to the Council's housing stock and are apart of an ongoing programme. The window replacement programme will be a partnership style contract with options to extend for up to three years thus reducing lead in times and staff resources for works in future years. The priority areas and streets have been discussed and agreed in consultation with the Tenant and Leaseholder Panel.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">400 300 270</p>