

## TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE 14<sup>th</sup> January 2004

### COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT - DRAFT SELF ASSESSMENTS

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PERFORMANCE** (This matter is the responsibility of the Leader of the Council)

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

All District Councils are subject to a Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). For those within Somerset this takes place during 2004.

Each Council has to prepare a number of self-assessments to start the CPA process as follows:

- Corporate self-assessment (about the overall workings of the Council)
- The Management of Public Space
- Meeting the Decent Homes Standard
- Balancing Housing Markets

To remind Councillors that the official CPA assessment process takes over thirty weeks starting 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2004 with the Somerset results being made available to the public in September.

#### 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To obtain Councillors feedback on the Council's revised draft self-assessments and agreement to submit for Peer Challenge.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 All councils are subject to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. It was introduced by the Government's White Paper "Strong Local Leadership – Quality Public Services" and is the cornerstone of changes to the performance management framework for local government.
- 2.2 CPA is about helping councils deliver better services to local communities. The CPA framework measures the effectiveness of the whole council. Its focus is on the leadership, systems and culture that lead to improved services, as well as on the current performance of those services.
- 2.3 The result of the CPA will be an overall assessment, by the Audit Commission, identifying each council as excellent, good, fair, weak or poor. In addition we will agree an Improvement Programme in order to improve our service to the local community.
- 2.4 The overall decision will affect the way the Council is inspected, audited and run in the future. A poor ranking may mean government intervention. It is therefore in everyone's interest to obtain a high score and one that the Council deserves, as it may result in extra freedoms, including plan and inspection 'holidays'.

- 2.5 County and single tier councils received their first assessments in December 2002. Inspections for district councils commenced in June 2003, with results published on a rolling basis. This Council expects to receive its assessment result and Improvement Programme in late summer 2004.
- 2.6 A revised draft set of self-assessments has been prepared following consultation feedback including those from Councillors and the results of the external mock challenge that took place in November 2003.
- 2.7 To ensure the accuracy of our judgements SOLACE (an independent CPA accredited organisation) will now challenge our self-assessments giving us an opportunity to update and finally amend them before full inspection. Their team of three will visit the Council from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> February 2004 to validate our statements and scores.
- 2.8 The Audit Commission between the 10th and 14th May 2004 will undertake the Corporate Inspection. This inspection will take into account the Peer Challenge, our self-assessments, the findings of the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate, audited performance indicators, Best Value inspection reports and plan assessments. The CPA assessment will lead to 'Improvement Planning' identifying areas we need to work on to provide the community with better service.

**3. Draft Self-Assessments**

- 3.1 Having applied the scoring guidance within the CPA framework, the Corporate Management Team (CMT) believe that the Council ought to be classified as 'Good' and have pitched our draft submission accordingly.
- 3.2 The Council has one final opportunity to edit its self-assessments following the Peer Challenge report in March.
- 3.3 All Councillors have had an earlier opportunity to give their views, however you may have some final thoughts you wish to add at this stage.
- 3.4 Attached to this report are the draft self-assessments cross-referenced to evidence in support.
  - (1) Corporate Self-Assessment – this is the main document. You should recognise the Council from the description, which follows a prescribed format.
  - (2) The Management of Public Space
  - (3) Meeting the Decent Homes Standard
  - (4) Balancing Housing Markets

**4. Recommendation**

- 4.1 Following feedback, the Executive is asked to approve the revised set of draft self-assessments that following tonight's comments will be re-edited prior to despatch for Peer Challenge in the last week of January 2004.

**Background Papers**

Council's initial set of mock self-assessments circulated to all Councillors on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2003

Results of SOLACE feedback on mock released in November 2003.

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