

 Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 09.06.09		Agenda Item No.
Title	Member involvement in BIP Projects	
For further information about this report please contact	Maxine Gregory Maxine.Gregory@WarwickDC.Gov.Uk 01926 456854	
Service Area	ODPI	
Wards of the District directly affected	All	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	A&R 17.3.09, minute 868 O&S 17.3.09, minute 3	
Background Papers	Report to Executive 18.3.09 agenda item 6	

Contrary to the policy framework:	Yes/No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	Yes/No
Key Decision?	Yes/No
Included within the Forward Plan? (if yes include reference number)	Yes/No

Officer/Councillor Approval		
With regard to officer approval all reports <i>must</i> be approved by the report author's relevant director, Finance, Legal Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder(s).		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Relevant Director	28/5/09	Chris Elliott
Chief Executive	28/5/09	Chris Elliott
CMT	28/5/09	Andrew Jones & Bill Hunt
Section 151 Officer	28/5/09	Mike Snow
Legal	27/5/09	Peter Oliver
Finance	28/5/09	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	26/5/09	Cllr Caborn
Consultation Undertaken		
Please insert details of any consultation undertaken with regard to this report.		
Final Decision?		Yes/No
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The BIP (Budget and Improvement Programme) has been devised to respond to the continued budget challenge over the next 3 years and includes a range of projects to support customer focussed improvement work and to make significant savings. Member engagement and involvement will be crucial to the success of these projects. This report outlines the recommendations for Member involvement in the first 'batch' of projects.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That Member working groups are set up to run in parallel with a small number of BIP projects.
- 2.2 That where there is no working group set up, the committees may nominate a Member to act as a 'watching brief' in a monitoring role for the projects.
- 2.3 That members identify which projects from the first batch of projects (shown in Appendix 1) should have a working group set up.
- 2.4 To note that the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee will act as programme assurance for the BIP Programme of work.
- 2.5 The Committee nominates members from across all parties to be involved in the Town Hall Steering Group for the Building on Excellence Town Hall project.

3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 Included in the vision statement for the BIP Programme of work is:

"Our councillors and staff will be empowered and motivated to influence and improve the services we provide through excellent political and managerial leadership, supporting it and making it happen."

The BIP Programme Board has recognised the importance of involvement and engagement of Members regarding the projects and since inception has been keen to ensure this is planned carefully. Failure to engage and involve Members as projects progress may result in Member involvement taking place too late in projects or without opportunity for sufficient discussion and challenge. Some of the projects have the potential to affect many District Residents and therefore it is imperative that Members are kept informed and involved. Please see Appendix 1 detailing the first batch of projects.

- 3.2 This report recommends 3 approaches to member involvement in specific projects:
- a) Members set up working groups to run alongside a small number of projects (for example 2-3). The recommendation for a small number of projects is to take account of the resource implications involved for both Members and Officers. Such working groups would work with or alongside Officers to run and implement projects. These groups would need to run at the same pace of the project to ensure project deliverables happen within the timescales required. As the programme rolls out, further details of projects will feed through this process and Members will have the opportunity to get involved in future projects too.

- b) One Member is nominated to act as a 'watching brief' over a chosen project. This Member would carry out a monitoring role and be kept regularly informed regarding the detail and progress of the project. They would also have the opportunity to attend Project Board Meetings if necessary.
- c) Members are not involved in any specific projects.

3.3 The Programme's high level outcomes are:

- **To set a balanced budget every year** - The budget reductions will be delivered by realising the benefits from the portfolio of projects. It is proposed that as the projects take on a clearer shape they should identify the year on year projected savings.
- **To improve our service as measured through :**
 - Achieve top 10% ranking in the Times Best Council's Awards by 2012
 - WDC satisfaction rating with the Council overall in the top 10% of all Council's by 2012 (Place Survey)
 - Service Improvement Index: The average change in citizen perception of improvement of key services.
 - Improve out EFQM score to demonstrate progress towards becoming world class.

Although the Programme Manager (once appointed) will be responsible for leading and managing the setting up of the programme and the day to day activities of the programme, there is an important role for Programme Assurance. This report recommends that the Finance and Audit Committee act in this capacity to ensure implementation of robust programme management that addresses potential problems before they occur and to be able to perform independent reviews and assessments regarding the performance of the programme, ensuring that as projects are delivered, the high level programme outcomes are also on delivered/on target. This will involve receiving and scrutinising twice yearly progress reports regarding BIP.

3.4 The first batch of projects includes: Building on excellence – Town Hall.

The aim of this project is to reduce costs and consider options for the future of the building. Consultants have prepared a feasibility detailing the various options and will present this study to the Town Hall Steering Group. In the past, cross party Member involvement has been present. However, as time has passed and roles have changed this is no longer the case. Before the project formally commences, the Project Manager is keen to ensure the project benefits from cross-party representation and that those Members are included in the Steering Group. Scrutiny Members are therefore encouraged and invited to make nominations.

4. **ALTERNATIVE OPTION CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 Alternative options for Member involvement are detailed in section 3.2. This includes a 'do nothing' option. The BIP Board considers that this option carries the risk that Members are not sufficiently informed of projects which affect the District and that such important pieces of work will not be successful unless Members are informed, involved and part of the decision making processes.

5. BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 The Programme is central to achieving a balanced budget in 2010/11 and 2011/12. It is a key part of our financial strategy.
- 5.2 The 09/10 budget earmarked £1.033m for 'Spend to Save' projects/work as part of the General Fund Balance. It has been agreed to use £105,800 from this reserve to support the Programme. Together with the agreed £65,000 investment in an improved website, £169,000 would be spent from this provision in total leaving £862,200. It is anticipated that the Programme will deliver cost reductions of at least £1.6 million over three years.
- 5.3 Some of the projects in this Programme may need additional resources for research or implementation. Where a strong business case can be made for these additional resources this will require further approval from the Executive. Within the recommendations and report agreed by the Members as part of the February 2009 Budget Setting, it was agreed that the Executive will consider and approve future requests to utilise the £1,033,000 of the General Fund Balance held for "Spend to Save Schemes".

6. POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 6.1 Following consultation with Service Area Managers and recommendations by CMT, the BIP Board has agreed a programme of projects. The list of projects will continue to evolve and will be co-ordinated and managed through the BIP Board.
- 6.2 The Programme's vision, blueprint and outcomes, along with the projects are in line with Building on Excellence and the Corporate Strategy. In particular they support the following aspects of the Corporate Strategy:
- Leadership - to provide clear community leadership and effective management of resources whilst delivering responsive public services in an open and transparent manner.
 - Customers – to improve the efficiency of service delivery to the Council's customers.
 - Our mission: to become world class by 2012.

7. BACKGROUND

7.1 Budget and Improvement Programme (BIP): The Driver

Warwick District Council faces a significant budget challenge over the next 4 years and needs to make savings of at least £1.6million from our base budget. The grant settlement from central government coupled with the declining financial climate make it necessary for us to find new and innovative ways of doing more with less, reviewing services and making improvements to the service we provide to residents.

- 7.1.1 This is a significant challenge and the organisation must take a measured, planned approach in response. The Budget and Improvement Programme (BIP) Board chaired by the Chief Executive, was set up towards the end of last year to ensure this area of work is a priority, stays focussed and is planned.

7.2 **Why adopt a programme approach?**

Programme management will be the mechanism that turns strategic vision into reality - The link between projects and the bigger picture. Strategy, blue print and benefits are the keys for effectively putting programme management into context.

7.2.1 We know that decent project management methodology raises the quality and awareness of project delivery and expectations about the benefits. Structured change with clear objectives, management of risk, timescales and benefits provides control and certainty and ensures focus and delivery is maintained along with accountability. However, we need to monitor, control and schedule projects carefully to ensure we do not end up with several well run projects delivering a variety of products and capabilities but do not contribute to overall aims and strategies. If projects operate in silos, they are by nature focussed, constrained by their brief and not always focussed on the bigger picture. It is essential that someone makes sure the benefits are delivered too and that there is a clear link between projects we invest resource into, strategic vision and how the projects that are delivering new capabilities will enable the achievement of strategic benefits.

7.3 **Programme outcomes**

The 2 high level programme outcomes are:

- **To set a balanced budget every year** - The budget reductions will be delivered by realising the benefits from the portfolio of projects. It is proposed that as the projects take on a clearer shape they should identify the year on year projected savings.
- **To improve our service as measured through :**
 - Achieve top 10% ranking in the Times Best Council's Awards by 2012
 - WDC satisfaction rating with the Council overall in the top 10% of all Council's by 2012 (Place Survey)
 - Service Improvement Index: The average change in citizen perception of improvement of key services.
 - Improve out EFQM score to demonstrate progress towards becoming world class.

7.3.1 A further set of supporting outcomes will be monitored by the BIP Board to enable progress towards the high level outcomes to be monitored.

7.3.2 Project outcomes: As the projects take shape a series of improvement outcome measures will need to be developed for each project which has improvement as a focus. The project outcomes will support the delivery of the high level outcome and the vision. These outcomes will be included in delivery plans for specific projects.

BIP PROJECTS MARCH – SEPTEMBER 2009

PROJECT	PROJECT AIMS/SUMMARY
Culture Trust	Conduct a feasibility study to explore the potential impacts and benefits of setting up a Trust to run existing cultural facilities.
Golf	Progress tendering of golf course with a view to identifying potential additional income for the Council.
South Warwickshire Tourism	Follow up scrutiny work and explore options for continuing to ensure value for money and what's right for Warwick District.
Systems thinking intervention – Housing Repairs function.	Undertake customer focussed review to reduce unwanted demand, improve the process flow, improve the customer experience and reduce costs.
Systems thinking intervention – Benefits function	Undertake customer focussed review to reduce unwanted demand, improve the process flow, improve the customer experience and reduce costs.
Customer access channels including One Stop Shops and WDC's Contact Centre.	Review customer access channels to ensure they meet the requirements of the Districts Residents.
Maximise HPDG in Planning	Review the Service to ensure it operates efficiently to ensure optimum grant available.
Terms and conditions	Review existing terms, conditions and allowances for Staff and Members to ensure fairness, consistency and relevance of policies and where possible, make savings.
Building on excellence, Riverside House and agile working.	To reduce the floor space required by WDC in Riverside House to enable additional income to be generated through rental.
Income generation (scoping stage).	Take a prioritised approach to critically review the provision of services to identify where their level of service can be reduced and where income/usage can be increased.
Payroll	Consider proposals to share/relocate payroll work to WCC in light of their offer.
Legal Services –shared services	To achieve savings and economies of scale by sharing services.
Procurement	To review the highest cost areas of procurement with a view to reducing costs by introducing more efficient procurement practice and contracts. To ensure efficient procurement to allow us to improve the way we manage contracts, suppliers, benchmark their performance and get a better deal.
Energy – scoping	To identify the potential for energy and cost savings and to develop plans for the delivery of these plans.

PROJECT	PROJECT AIMS/SUMMARY
Building on Excellence - Town Hall	To maximise the community benefits of the Town Hall at the same time as reducing our net costs.
Website enhancement	To design a 'user defined' website to increase web access and contact (cheapest access channel) and reduce telephone/visit contact.