
BEST VALUE AND AUDIT COMMISSION PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR 2001/2002

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report seeks Members' comments on the consultation document issued by the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions on Best Value and Audit Commission performance indicators for 2001/2002.
- 1.2. In the event that the proposed changes are adopted there will be a statutory requirement to gather and report on the data, and survey users in accordance with prescribed time frames.

2. INTRODUCTION

The consultation paper 'Best Value and Audit Commission Performance Indicators for 2001/2002' invites comments by 27 October 2000 on broad changes to the Government's approach for comparing local authorities and specific changes to the data requirements for 2001/2002. A copy of the document has been placed in the Members' Room.

3. THE DRAFT GENERAL PRINCIPLES

3.1 Broad Changes

The Government's new approach has three broad objectives

- to keep the number of indicators down to a level which is manageable for best value authorities, whilst still providing appropriate coverage of the functions which they perform
- to develop indicators which will move progressively towards measures of outcome, rather than measuring inputs and outputs
- to develop a joined-up approach to performance measurement by ensuring that the things which are measured and reported upon at the local level are consistent with the key objectives for service delivery which have been agreed nationally and in respect of which improvement targets have been set within the Spending Review.

3.2 Changes for 2001/02

Best Value Performance Indicators will be of two types

- corporate health indicators which provide a snapshot of how well the authority is performing overall
- service delivery indicators which provide a comparison of service delivery in different types of authorities

The Audit Commission will not set performance indicators for 2001/2002.

The number of indicators for District Councils will reduce from 80 to 71.

The most significant changes are

- 6 of the Audit Commission indicators have changed to BVPIs: the remainder have disappeared
- 8 new BVPIs have been introduced covering e-commerce, crime and disorder, customer satisfaction on cultural and related services, the legal service, and environmental health and trading standards. These are listed in Appendix 1.
- In addition to the Audit Commission indicators, 6 BVPIs have been deleted covering complaints, assessment of air quality, estate running costs and electoral registration.

3.3 Changes beyond 2001/02

The Audit Commission will develop a small number of quality of life and cross-cutting indicators. These will initially be run on a voluntary basis but may be adopted as BVPIs once their effectiveness has been considered.

A number of BVPIs involve local authorities undertaking surveys of service users. A three-year cycle is currently operating for these surveys but it is proposed that, as satisfaction ratings are likely to be sufficiently large, the surveys are repeated in 2002/03 and every second year thereafter.

An additional survey of customer satisfaction on cultural and related services will be required. The options are an annual survey or incorporation in the user satisfaction survey, next due to be undertaken in 2003/04.

4. OFFICER COMMENT

The reduction in the number of indicators is welcomed as is the move towards indicators focusing on outcomes. However, data collection will remain an issue, as will the definition of each indicator. There are clearly issues too relating to the relevance and interpretation of some of the new indicators eg BVPI 167

There is a potential problem in collecting data for 2 of the 3 new indicators on community safety as the authority would have to rely on the analysis of data from the police.

There is concern regarding the possibility of undertaking an additional customer satisfaction survey on cultural and related services. By incorporating the questions in the general user satisfaction survey, resource implications would be minimised.

The reduction of the cycle for other statutory surveys from 3 years to 2 years would put additional demands on limited resources.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The Best Value performance indicator on environmental health and trading standards would provide a checklist against best practice. This would assist the authority to take a wider view of the issues relating to effective service delivery.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

The gathering of data specific to crime on Council property would identify risks that could be addressed as part of the Crime and Disorder Strategy.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Changes to the underlying data required for performance measurement would have minimal resource implications.

Any reduction in the cycle time for undertaking surveys would put further demands on resources, either by way of staff involvement or the cost of outplacement.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Following the period of consultation, Best Value performance indicators will be formally specified and compilation of these will be a statutory requirement.

9. PARISH IMPLICATIONS

The Government does not propose to set any BVPIs for Parish Councils.

10. RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That, subject to member comment, the officer views on the document form the basis of the Council's response. (CE)

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Chief Executive

Background Papers:

DETR - Best Value and Audit Commission Performance Indicators for 2001/2002

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NEW BEST VALUE INDICATORS PROPOSED FOR 2001/02

BV Code	Indicator
BVPI 157	The percentage of interactions with the public, by type, which are capable of electronic service delivery and which are being delivered using internet protocols or other paperless methods.
BVPI 166	Score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for environmental health/trading standards.
BVPI 167	Percentage of residents who have participated in a local sporting activity or event, or have attended a local sporting facility in the last three months or in the last year:
BVPI 168	Percentage of residents who have participated in a local arts activity, or attended a local arts facility in the last three months or last year
BVPI 171	Domestic burglaries in local authority owned households per 100 households.
BVPI 172	Vehicle crimes in local authority car parks.
BVPI 173	Has the local authority established a corporate strategy to reduce crime and disorder in their area? YES/NO If no, has the authority established a timetable for doing so?
BVPI 177	Is the authority part of a Community Legal Service Partnership? YES/NO