Best Value Performance Indicator Improvements

To: **Cabinet – 9 April 2009**

Main Portfolio Area **Finance and Corporate Services**

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Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary: **This report provides details of the significant improvements the Council has made against the Best Value Performance Indicators.**

<u>**For information**</u>

1.0   Background

1.1   The Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) set was introduced for the year 2000/01. There have been various amendments to the set but it has remained essentially the same over the past 8 years. However, a new set of indicators (the National Indicators) was introduced in 2008-09, replacing the old BVPI set. 2007-08 was therefore the last year that BVPIs were collected by all councils.

1.2   All data for all Councils for the last round of the BVPIs (2007-08) was released by the Audit Commission at the end of December 2008. Having analysed this data, it is clear that the Council has made massive improvements in service delivery over the past two years.

2.0   Prioritising and target setting

2.1   Over the period 2000 to 2006 Thanet's performance against the BVPIs did improve – but not as well as that of other Councils. Consequently a high proportion of Thanet's BVPIs moved into the third and Bottom quartiles.

2.2   To address this issue, at the beginning of 2006, the Council decided to divide the BVPIs into priority groupings – A, B and C. Indicators prioritised as A received special attention in the quarterly Corporate Performance Packs. Priority A and B indicators were reported via the service performance packs on a monthly basis. Priority C indicators received less attention.

2.4   The target setting process was improved. Quartile boundaries were forecast forwards based on national trends to provide a better benchmark, and managers were encouraged to set targets ambitiously aiming to move Thanet's performance for each indicator up one quartile each year.

3.0   The results

3.1   This approach was in place for a period of two years and has lead to a significant improvement in Thanet's performance.

3.2   In 2006/07 the percentage of BVPIs which improved or stayed the same was close to the national average - around 60%. However in 2007/08 this improved to 74.2%. More

importantly however, Thanet managed to improve 80% of its priority A and B indicators in both years. The Council's approach to prioritising the BVPIs had lead to real improvement.

3.3   The release of the BVPI data for other Councils at the end of December has provided us with hard evidence that Thanet has improved much faster when compared to other Councils.

3.4   The following table shows the proportion of indicators in each quartile in 2007-08.

	A	B	C	All	%
Top Quartile	5	7	10	22	33.3%
2nd Quartile	3	2	9	14	21.2%
3rd Quartile	3	4	8	15	22.7%
Bottom Quartile	2	4	9	15	22.7%

33% of indicators were in top quartile (compared with 16% two year previously).The proportion in bottom quartile had almost halved on the 2005/06 figure.

3.6   The following table shows how the percentage of Thanet's BVPIs were in the top or second quartiles has increased over the past two years:

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Priority A indicators in top or second quartile	17.6%	29.4%	61.5%
Priority B indicators in top or second quartile	29.16%	36.0%	52.9%
Priority C indicators in top or second quartile	45.7%	38.0%	52.7%
All indicators in top or second quartile	**35.1%**	**35.9%**	**54.5%**

2007-08 was the first year that the proportion of Thanet's BVPIs in top or second quartiles was above 40%.

3.5   Using an internally devised scoring system (explained in **Annex 1**) the Council has improved from ranking 233rd out of 238 District Councils to 119th. This is a jump of 114 places making Thanet the 10th most improved District in the Country and the most improved in Kent.

3.6   National data for benefit PIs has yet to be released but we expect the story to be even better as we anticipate that Thanet's performance for these indicators will either be in top or second quartile.

3.7   Thanet's achievements are made all the more remarkable by the fact that more deprived Council's tend to struggle to achieve high levels of performance against BVPIs (see **Annex 2**). Thanet is the 16th most deprived District in the Country.

3.8   Actual improvements against some specific priority A indicators over the past 2 years are detailed in **Annex 3**.

4.0   Reasons for success

4.1   When looking to deliver improvements against the new set of national indicators the Council should look back at the following as the key causes of successful performance improvement:

- Setting clear priorities
- Setting informed and stretching targets
- Consistent and challenging monitoring of performance against those priorities and targets
- Clear understanding among managers and staff of what the priorities are
- Willingness to focus attention and resources on the priorities identified

4.2   The second table above indicates that focussing on a limited number of priority indicators provided the council with a catalyst for improvement across all indicators so that even 50% of the lower priority indicators reached top or second quartile in 2007-08.

5.0   Corporate Implications

5.1   Financial
There are no direct financial implications for this report – it is for information only.

5.2   Legal
There are no direct legal implications for this report – it is for information only.

5.3   Corporate
One of the 2007-11 corporate priorities is to "make the best use of our resources to provide residents with high quality, consistent and efficient services".

Annexes
Annex 1: BVPI scoring system for comparison
Annex 2: BVPI performance and deprivation
Annex 3: Actual improvements for specific priority A indicators

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