

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Agenda Item 84

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject: The Forward Plan
Date of Meeting: 26 January 2010
Report of: Director of Strategy and Governance
Contact Officer: Name: Tom Hook Tel: 29-1110
Mark Wall 29-1006
E-mail: tom.hook@brighton-hove.gov.uk
mark.wall@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 OSC on 20 October 2009 asked for further information on the extent to which the Council's Forward Plan was being achieved within anticipated timescales, and on the monitoring of key decisions delegated to officers.
- 1.2 As part of the 12-month review of the Constitution, the Council agreed at its meeting on the 28th January 2010 that action should be taken:

"To make the Forward Plan itself a more helpful tool to understanding the business of the Council, there needs to be a stronger 12 month projection of decisions (as opposed to focusing on the next 2-3 months). It is recommended that the Cabinet Support Team proactively produce a 12 month programme of key decisions for inclusion in the Forward Plan."

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Overview and Scrutiny Commission note the report and comment upon its findings.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The Forward Plan is published on a monthly basis and lists the key decisions to be taken by the Cabinet, Cabinet Members and Officers under delegated authority for the forthcoming four-month period.
- 3.2 Following the concerns raised by OSC and the 12-month review of the constitution, officers have been reviewing the process for the creation of each publication of the Forward Plan and have compared the council's publication with other Forward Plans produced by other authorities. In so doing, and in taking into account the concerns

raised, it proposed to undertake the following:

- (i) To publish a 12-month version of the Forward Plan after the Annual Council meeting listing the Policy Framework items that will be coming forward for decision and any other policy items that have been identified for the forthcoming municipal year;
- (ii) To maintain the monthly publication of the Forward Plan, covering the forthcoming four-month period, with details of the key decisions to be taken and listing the remaining items referred to in (i) above;
- (iii) To continue to publish a separate Late Items List of the Forward Plan detailing those key decisions that were not notified in time for inclusion in the current publication of the Forward Plan;
- (iv) That the Cabinet Support Team, Legal Services and Democratic Services will continue to work together to identify ways of improving the working of the Forward Plan.

3.3 The information provided in the electronic version of the Forward Plan on the council's website meets the statutory requirements, and:

- details the decision-maker;
- details the nature of the decision;
- details the Cabinet Member responsible;
- details the consultation process;
- details the contact officer

3.4 By clicking onto a specific item in the plan, the above information can be obtained, along with the history of the item, the anticipated decision and the actual report. A hard copy of the plan can also be printed from the web site, but this will only provide the basic level of information that is required.

3.5 In comparing the Forward Plan with other authorities, it does provide as much or gives access to more information than other plans, some of which are only simple word documents (see appendix 1). This will be complimented by the proposed publication of a 12-month version of the plan at the beginning of the municipal year.

3.6 This report also summarises:

- the number of decisions included within the Council's Forward Plans
- the numbers and percentages of decisions withdrawn or deferred
- reasons for deferrals/withdrawals/move at Forward Plan Edition 21
- numbers of delegated decisions included on the Forward Plan

3.7 Within Forward Plan 21 (FP21) published on 15 January 2010 and covering the period February – May 2010 the following four matters had been moved, deferred or withdrawn. The FP when the items first appeared, the Decision-maker and reason stated in the FP for move/deferral/withdrawal were:

(1) Hangleton Bottom - Land Use Options

- Decision Maker: Cabinet
- Originally Due: 20 Nov 2008
- Decision Status: Deferred - This item has been deferred to allow for further consultation and consideration of options and will be brought to a future meeting.

(2) London Road Regeneration

- Decision Maker: Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Employment & Major Projects
- Originally Due: 9 Dec 2008
- Decision Status: Deferred - The matter has been deferred to enable future consideration of the options in line with the publication of the supplementary planning document for the London Road area.

(3) ICT Strategy 2009-2012

- Decision Maker: Cabinet
- Originally Due: 17 Sep 2009
- Decision Status: Withdrawn - The current ICT strategy of November 2009 is a valid strategy until 2010. This strategy has been reviewed and in terms of development activity for ICT, remains valid. The majority of ICT work going forward will be to deliver those work streams from Value for Money and Improving the Customer Experience.

The major part of a revised strategy would be to clarify the governance arrangements around ICT work and projects, with the direction remaining the same. As such a revised ICT strategy has been abandoned in favour of specific governance arrangements for ICT work.

(4) Circus Street Development Site

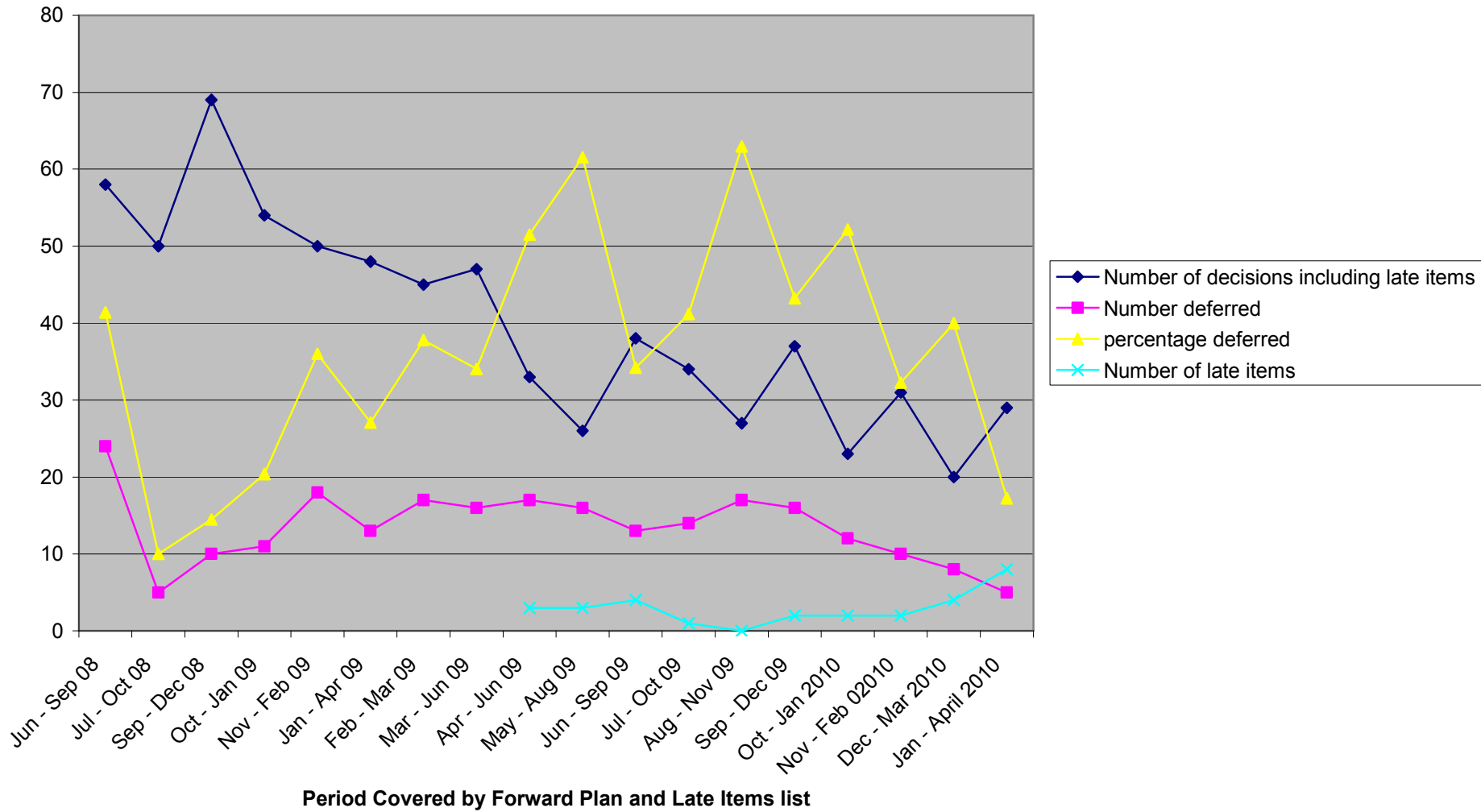
- Decision Maker: Cabinet
- Originally Due: 12 Mar 2009
- Decision Status: Deferred - following the submission by the developers of a further proposal relating to the amended offer, it is considered that there are further negotiations to be undertaken with the developers before officers are in a position to be able to recommend the proposals to Members.

3.8 Between June 2008 and December 2009 the Council's Forward Plans denoted three decisions as being taken under delegated powers.

3.9 The graph overleaf shows the numbers of decisions, deferrals/withdrawals with percentages for the Council's Forward Plan decisions from June 2008.

Forward Plan Decisions

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4. CONSULTATION

4.1 There has been no consultation in relation to this report.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

5.1 Financial implications of deferring or withdrawing decisions are not included in the Forward Plan.

Finance Officer Consulted:

Date:

Legal Implications:

5.2 Legal implications of deferring or withdrawing decisions are not recorded on the Forward Plan.

Lawyer Consulted:

Date:

Equalities Implications:

5.4 Equalities implications of deferring or withdrawing decisions are not recorded on the Forward Plan.

Sustainability Implications:

5.5 Sustainability implications of deferring or withdrawing decisions are not recorded on the Forward Plan.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

5.9 Crime and Disorder implications of deferring or withdrawing decisions are not recorded on the Forward Plan.

Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

5.10 Risk and Opportunity Management implications of deferring or withdrawing decisions are not recorded on the Forward Plan.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

5.11 Corporate/Citywide implications of deferring or withdrawing decisions are not recorded on the Forward Plan.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Comparable Authorities

Appendices 2 and 2A – Latest Forward Plan and Late Items

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

Forward Plans and Late Items list, posted on the Council's website.

