

Report 99.124

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Report to the Environment Committee
from Geoff Skene, Manager, Environment Co-ordination

Amendments to the RPS Implementation Plan

1. Purpose

To seek the Committee's endorsement of a set of minor changes to the RPS Implementation Plan.

2. Background

The Council's 1998/9 performance indicator for the implementation of the Regional Policy Statement states that:

A report will be completed to the satisfaction of Council that demonstrates that the Regional Policy Statement is being implemented according to the implementation plan and within budget.

At the end of each financial year, I prepare a report explaining how the year's activities have met the requirements of the Implementation Plan.

This year, 1998-9, the Implementation Plan requires slight amendment to take account of changes made to the timing of the methods by other Council processes and legislative change.

3. Discussion

The Implementation Plan was prepared in early 1995. It serves to programme the implementation of the 250 methods in the RPS, many of which describe Council actions or commitments to action. Each method is described, given a priority ranking (from 1 to 4, 1 being the most important), assigned a year (or years) to be commenced or completed, and any factors explained which might impact on the preferred year of achievement. As many of the methods describe on-going functions of the Council (such as granting consents, managing rivers, or undertaking soil conservation), these are described in the Implementation Plan as "ongoing", or "as required". Methods where there is some discretion as to their implementation are described as "optional".

At the time of writing the plan, we made a number of judgements about likely future implementation options. These were based on the parameters we knew about at the time, existing business plans, budgets, and so on. Not surprisingly, changing Council priorities and budgetary decisions (for example, the first Long Term Financial Strategy), statutory changes, and other external events have an impact on our ability to stick to the Implementation Plan's requirements. In one or two cases, our expectation of what could be achieved was simply too ambitious and a longer time frame has proved necessary to implement the methods concerned.

An explanation of the proposed amendments to the Plan is contained in the attachment to this Report. Councillors will see that the changes are of a minor nature.

It should be pointed out that the methods referred to in the attachment represent a mere fraction of the RPS implementation work being done this year. The broad range of these methods is described fully in "*Regional Policy Statement Implementation – 1998/99 Projects*" and in my regular Manager's reports to the Committee.

With an increasing emphasis in 1999-2000 on the implementation of the regional plans, and the significant overlaps with the methods of the RPS, we have decided to amalgamate these implementation budgets next year and carry out this work in a more integrated manner. Consequently there is a need for a new performance indicator to reflect the coming together of these two streams of work. The proposed indicator is:

The implementation of the Regional Policy Statement and regional plans has progressed to the satisfaction of the Council and within budget.

While I will continue to report to the Committee on the implementation of the RPS, in future this will not be an explicit comparison with the Implementation Plan. However, we shall continue to use the plan to programme the RPS projects and the changes recommended in the attachment will continue to serve as the prime determinant of when and how the RPS is put into effect.

4. **Recommendation**

That the Committee approves the attached amendments to the Regional Policy Statement Implementation Plan.

Report prepared by:

Approved by:

GEOFF SKENE
Manager, Environment Co-ordination

JANE BRADBURY
Divisional Manager, Environment

Attachment

