11. STRATEGIC PLANNING – COMMUNITY BOARD OBJECTIVES & PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

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Corporate Plan Output: Strategic Planning	

The purpose of this report is to initiate a review of Board Objectives and the development of a strategic planning process resulting in outcome focussed objectives for 2001/2002.

The value and purpose of using outcomes rather than outputs as objectives is that outcomes focus on results of activities or expenditure and allow their impact to be measured. The Board can then ascertain the effectiveness of its expenditure and can concentrate on its role of direction-setting and policy development. The question for the Board being "Are we doing the right things?" In addition, a co-ordinated overall plan focussed on outcomes will ensure resources are allocated to achieving real gains rather than to one-off projects which tackle parts of a problem in isolation and not as part of a coherent strategy.

The process for development of outcome or results oriented objectives involves a number of steps. Firstly, needs or problems are identified. Much of this work has already been done by Beckenham Service Centre staff regarding local needs and problems, eg "The Big View", and by other Council staff in respect of metropolitan issues which have local implications, eg Children's Strategy Research Report 1995. However it may be desirable to update some of this information possibly with the help of focus groups and/or input from local stakeholders and interest groups. This would be additional to the input normally sought annually when Planning Statements are prepared.

Steps to address the identified needs or problems and bring about a desired solution " outputs" are then designed and put in place. These may take the form of programmes, staff activities or expenditure etc.

Finally, social, environmental, or economic measures are developed that show the impact of the outputs on the problem. These are designed to answer the question "has the expenditure or activity made a difference?"

Comparing a results oriented system to the Boards 1999 /2000 Objectives and Performance Indicators shows that the existing Performance Indicators are actually "outputs" and are not designed to measure any results. As a consequence, there is no indication of the effectiveness of the Board's activities and expenditure, eg our objective "to maintain a dialogue with the Spreydon-Heathcote community on community issues" has a performance indicator "To publish a quarterly newsletter." Will the publishing of a newsletter have the desired outcome of maintaining dialogue? How would we know and what is the purpose of the dialogue in the first place?

Another way to illustrate how this process can help to focus on issues which are relevant to our community (issues for which the Council has indicated desired outcomes), is to look at the published Outcomes for the Council's Community Development and Social Well Being Policy (see attached) and ask how we know if these are being achieved in Spreydon-Heathcote.

Community Boards set their objectives in August/September and while this is still some time away the development of outcome focussed objectives will not be a quick process and could involve several facilitated meetings with stakeholder groups. It is suggested that a working party be established to steer the process and develop a draft set of objectives for consideration by the Board at it its July meeting.

Recommendation: 1.   That a working party be established.

2.   That the working party is comprised of Oscar Alpers, Phil Clearwater, plus one other Board member.