

REPORT TO: BEST VALUE SUB COMMITTEE – 19 August 2003

REPORT ON: 4 YEAR BEST VALUE REVIEW PROGRAMME

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

REPORT NO: 551-2003

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to set out a programme of Best Value Reviews for the period 2003-2007.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Member/Officer groups be set up to conduct the reviews set out in section 7 of this report.
- 2.2 Officer groups be established to conduct the reviews contained in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The review programme should be contained in the Council Plan 2003-2007 under the relevant strategic objectives.
- 2.4 The Best Value Sub Committee monitors progress on the review programme and reviews priorities on an annual basis.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report but any savings, efficiencies or investment decisions resulting from the review programme will be reported to the Best Value Sub Committee and the relevant service committee where appropriate..

4. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

The conduct of reviews will include participation from Dundee Partnership partners, and consultation on policies as required. Each review will include in its own report specific local agenda 21 implications.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

Each review will report on specific equal opportunities issues where appropriate.

6. BACKGROUND

- 6.1 The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 placed a duty 'to secure Best Value' on Council's. The draft Ministerial guidance on Best Value includes an expectation that the Council has a strategy to ensure 'continuous improvement'. Part of that strategy is a programme of reviews. The guidance states "a local authority which secures Best Value will be able to demonstrate use of review and options appraisal".

- 6.2 It is up to each authority how reviews are conducted. However, each review should include the following
- consult stakeholders
 - appraise the options available
 - recommend what is Best Value
 - recommend what improvements are to be delivered
- 6.3 The Council has conducted a review programme since 1998. The first review programme looked at each service in turn. In total there were 112 reviews concluded between 1998-2002 which identified 728 improvement recommendations and identified savings totalling £2.9m. This in part led to the Accounts Commission listing Dundee City Council as the 2nd highest improvement rating in the country in its 2000 report (based on the number of performance indicators showing more than a 5% improvement over the previous years).
- 6.4 The Best Value Sub Committee deciding on conclusion of the previous programme to switch the focus to a fewer number of reviews and topics which crossed service boundaries. In the previous year 2002/2003 reviews have been conducted on Staffing, Energy Management and Housing Response Repairs.
- 6.5 The programme of Best Value reviews proposed below are based on specific issues identified through the work of the Dundee Partnership theme groups and in consultation with Council Chief Officers and Conveners. Conveners and Chief Officers were also asked to identify those reviews where the interest and expertise of elected members could be utilised within the time constraints available. Other Best Value reviews within the four year programme will be conducted on an officer only basis reporting back to the Best Value Sub Committee in the usual manner. The initial programme outlined below will retain maximum flexibility in order to address specific unforeseen issues that may become a priority over the next four years and will need urgent attention and this is addressed in Section 9 below.

7. MEMBER/OFFICER GROUP BEST VALUE REVIEWS

- 7.1 The list below includes those reviews in the programme that have been identified as Member/Officer groups. The full list of all reviews is contained in Appendix 1 and identifies the Strategic Theme (mainly from the Community Plan), the high level issue and suggests a specific question as the scope or focus of the review. In recognition of workload on officers and members the reviews are spread over the four years. Setting up this years reviews will commence immediately on final approval of this report.

TABLE 1 MEMBER/OFFICER GROUP BEST VALUE REVIEW PROGRAMME

YEAR	ISSUE	SUGGESTED REVIEW FOCUS
2003/4	Neighbourhood/Community Wardens	Will community wardens be a Best Value approach to building stronger communities?
2003/4	Property and Land	How can the problem of property and land in a state of disrepair be addressed? (Approved at the Planning & Transportation Committee of 20 June 2003)

YEAR	ISSUE	SUGGESTED REVIEW FOCUS
2003/4	CCTV	How can we maximise the Council's investment in CCTV cameras, both for Community Safety and for Housing? (also synergies with Fire & Burglar alarm control)
2004/5	Vandalism	What would be the Best Value approach to tackling vandalism?
2004/5	Older People	Which responses to community safety create the best feeling of improved security for older people
2004/5	Benefits/Council Tax	What changes do we need to make to achieve the statutory timescales for processing benefit applications and also improve Council Tax collection?
2004/5	Factoring	Do the current factoring arrangements for citizens living in tenements provide Best Value?
2004/5	Voter Turnout	How can the Council help more people to vote it in the way it runs elections?
2005/6	Consultation	What is the most effective way to consult local people on local initiatives?
2005/6	Fly tipping	Are there new ways in which we could effectively tackle the problem of fly tipping?
2005/6	Drugs	What is the Best Value approach to tackling the use of illegal drugs in Dundee?
2006/7	Joined up benefit	How can we use the information supplied for claiming benefits to join up the process for claiming other Council benefits e.g. free school meals, clothing grants etc

- 7.2 The Member/Officer review groups will be consist of 3 members of the Administration, 2 members of SNP Group and 1 member of the Conservative Group. The Chief Executive will invite nominations from Group Leaders as review groups are being formed. The Chief Executive has appointed a senior manager to be Lead Officer and identify other officers to provide expertise and ensure the work of the review is complete. The Lead Officers are listed in Appendix 1.

8. CONDUCT OF REVIEWS

8.1 Given the wide range of reviews it is not intended to prescribe any particular method to be applied. However, to ensure some consistency in project planning and monitoring the following milestones in each review process will be applied.

- | | | | |
|----|----------------|---|---|
| 1. | Plan | - | Scope, whom to consult and how, timescale |
| 2. | Define issue | - | The key issue(s), problem(s) to focus on has been agreed |
| 3. | Select options | - | The Best Value option(s) that involves the issue identified at 2 has (have) been selected |
| 4. | Final report | - | Report summarising the review and recommendations is complete |

8.2 The Assistant Chief Executive (Community Planning) will assist Lead Officers in planning the reviews.

9. MONITORING REVIEW PROGRESS AND EVALUATING PRIORITIES

An annual report on the Best Value review programme will be presented to the Best Value Sub Committee. This will assess progress on reviews and enable consultation with Members on the prioritisation of the review programme. Therefore each year the Committee can add to, edit and reorder the programme.

10. CONSULTATION

All Conveners and Chief Officers have been consulted on the content of the Best Value Review Programme.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Local Government in Scotland Act 2003
Duty to secure Best Value Guidance (Draft)
"Dundee in Partnership" – Community Plan

Alex Stephen
Chief Executive

13/08/03

Dundee City Council Best Value Review Programme 2003-2007

APPENDIX 1

M/O = Member/Officer Group

shading indicates start of review

Theme	Issue	Review Question (can be changed - suggestion)	03	04	05	06	Lead Officer
Learning and working	Entrepreneurial culture	Are resources spent encouraging entrepreneurial activity effective?					D Dorward
	Employment	What are the effective approaches to creating employment opportunities?					A Stephen
	Exclusions	When is exclusion from school Best Value and when is it not?					A Stephen
	Digital Inclusion (Internal Investment)	What is the Best Value approach to equipping all school pupils with modern learning tools?					D Miller
	Leaving School Information	Are we getting Best Value out of the variety of organisations that inform or advise young people approaching leaving school or full time education?					J Petrie
	Leisure and Cultural Facilities	What should be the Council's role be in developing cultural and leisure provision within the city?					S Grimmond
	Lifelong Learning	How can opportunities for lifelong learning be developed?					J Petrie
Health & Care	Physical Activity	Can better value be achieved from all the public resources that promote physical activity?					S Grimmond
	Food and Nutrition	Do all the Council's catering operations achieve health objectives?					P Allan
		Should school based catering for young people be expanded?					G Ross Pond
	Drugs – M/O	What is the Best Value approach to tackling the use of illegal drugs in Dundee?					C Ward

Theme	Issue	Review Question (can be changed - suggestion)	03	04	05	06	Lead Officer
Community Safety	CCTV – M/O	How can we maximise the Council's investment in CCTV cameras, both for Community Safety and for Housing (and synergies with Fire and Burglar alarm control)?					D Miller
	Older People	Which responses to community safety create the best feeling of improved security for older people					J Porter
Building Stronger Communities	Neighbourhood/ Community Wardens – M/O	Will community wardens be a best value (economic and effective) approach to building stronger communities?					C Ward
	Neighbourhood Management	Is there a more joined up way of managing the neighbourhood streetscape and landscape?					C Ward
	Support for Young People	Are changes required to the services we provide to young people who need support?					J Petrie
	Consultation – M/O	What is the most effective way to consult local people on local initiatives?					L Roy
	Factoring – M/O	Do the current factoring arrangements for citizens living in tenements provide best value?					P McIlquham
Caring for the Dundee Environment	Recycling	How can the Council meet the recycling targets and be Best Value?					A Stephen
	Property and Land – M/O	How can the problem of property and land in a state of disrepair be addressed?					P McIlquham
	Fly tipping – M/O	Are there new ways in which we could more effectively tackle the problem of fly tipping?					J Petrie
	Vandalism- M/O	What would be the best value approach to tackling vandalism?					D Miller
	Public Transport	What improvements are required to the city's public transport infrastructure to ensure best value for users and for citizens generally?					R Mennie
	Public Highways	What is the Best Value approach to the long term repair and maintenance of our roads					R Mennie

Theme	Issue	Review Question (can be changed - suggestion)	03	04	05	06	Lead Officer
Best Value	Benefits/Council Tax – M/O	What changes do we need to make to achieve the statutory timescales for processing benefits applications and also improve Council Tax collection					
	Rent Collection	How can we improve rent collection?					A Stephen
Customer Focus	Benefits – M/O	How can we use the information supplied for claiming benefits to join up the process for claiming other Council benefits e.g. free school meals, clothing grants etc					D Dorward
Renewing Democracy	Voter Turnout – M/O	How can the Council help more people to vote by the way it runs elections?					C Ward
	Electronic Participation	How can the Council make use of modern telephone voting and internet channels of participation in decision making?					
Health and Safety	Schools	How can we improve the Health and Safety of staff in schools?					
Equalities	Access	What is the best value way of improving the accessibility of Council Services to people with disabilities?					J Petrie
Property Management	Tayside House	To consider and develop proposals for office accommodation when Tayside House is demolished					
	Mobile/Home Working	Should the Council pursue mobile/home working to reduce the overall property requirement?					J Petrie
	Transport assets	How can the Council make more efficient and economical use of transport related assets?					K Laing