

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SERVICES
TO THE EXECUTIVE
3rd March 2006

Best Value Review Programme 2006 - 07

1.0 **Introduction and Report Summary**

1.1 To report on the Best Value Review for the previous year and make proposals for reviews for the year 2006/07.

1.2 The Contact Officers for this report are Tim Sadler, Director of Social and Cultural Services (01235 540360) and Robert Woodside, Principal Performance Management Officer (01235 520202 ext 499).

2.0 **Recommendations**

That the Executive

- (i) *notes progress in respect of the Best Value Review Programme for 2005-06*
- (ii) *approves the Best Value Review Programme for 2006 – 07 as being*

- *A cross-cutting review in respect of the identification of longer term aims for the area and how these are delivered by the Vale Strategic Partnership and other partnership arrangements*
- *A Best Value Review of the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre.*

(iii) *Requests that a further report identifying appropriate "Service Reviews" be brought to the Executive as soon as practicable.*

3.0 **Relationship with the Council's Vision, Strategies and Policies**

- (a) Vision Statement objective A.
- (b) The report does not conflict with any Council Strategies.
- (c) The report complies with existing policies.

4.0 **Background and Supporting Information**

4.1 At the meeting of 14th January 2005 the Executive approved a new approach to Best Value Reviews and a review Programme that covered the period 2005/06 – 2006/7. It also agreed that the programme should be reviewed annually following the Strategic Service Review exercise.

Following the completion of the first of the new style reviews (Waste Management) the Principal Performance Management Officer completed a new Best Value Review Toolkit. This details the general approach to be taken and specifically requires the following to be taken into account:

- The current statutory requirements on how reviews should be undertaken contained in Circular 3/2003 Best Value Performance Improvement. This includes the requirement to carry out reviews using the 4 C's – challenge, compare, consult and competition.
- Approach to Service Inspections - Audit Commission May 2005. This includes reference to the three service blocks which will be the basis of future inspections. These are housing, environment, culture (including sport, play and recreation). Inspections focus on 2 judgements, how good is the service (there is now a sharper focus on how services deliver value for money) and what are the prospects for improvement (including the

arrangements and capacity in place now, and planned, for securing continuous improvements in the future)

- Examples of recent Audit Commission service inspection reports for related areas to the Best Value Review being carried out.

4.2 Four reviews were identified for 2005/06 – 2006/07:

- Services for Younger People
- Waste Management
- Housing Services
- Revenues and Benefits

Good progress has been made on this programme.

4.3 **Services for Younger People**

This review has been overtaken by Council's contribution to work on the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan and the Children and Young Persons block of the Oxfordshire Local Area Agreement. The output of this is reflected in the strategy which will be reported separately to this Executive.

4.4 **Waste Management**

The service Best Value Review was completed in March 2005 and an Action Plan has been agreed.

4.5 **Housing Services**

We are proposing that this review follows on after a reasonable period following the Housing Inspection to check progress.

4.6 **Revenues and Benefits**

This comprehensive review culminated in the report to the Executive at your meeting on 23rd February 2006.

4.7 In establishing a review programme for 2006/07 – 2008/09 officers have looked at the Strategic Service Review, work done by the Directors and Assistant Directors on procurement and other significant issues. The reviews that we recommend adding to the programme as follows:

- A cross-cutting review in respect of the identification of longer term aims for the area and how these are delivered by the Vale Strategic Partnership and other partnership arrangements
- A Best Value Review of the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre.

4.8 We propose to consider further service based reviews once the new structure is in place and we are in a position to receive the views of the respective Assistant/Deputy Directors.

TIM SADLER
DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SERVICES

Background Papers:

Best Value Review Toolkit document (Robert Woodside in Performance Management has a copy)