

COMMITTEE:	CABINET
DATE:	6 MARCH 2002
SUBJECT:	BEST VALUE REVIEWS 2002 – 2004
REPORT OF:	HEAD OF STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT
Ward(s):	All
Purpose:	To formally set the scope of the Best Value Reviews for the next two years.
Contact:	Nick Ritson, Strategic Development Officer, Telephone 01323 415418 or internally on extension 5418.
Recommendations:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Cabinet approve the challenges for the Best Value Reviews for the next two years. 2. That Cabinet note the main points of the presentation by Mark Hough of The Audit Commission. 3. That proposed review arrangements for Emergency Planning be agreed and that Scrutiny Committee be asked to nominate a member and substitute to sit on the Best Value Project Board.
1.0	<u>Introduction</u>

1.1	Experience in carrying out reviews and developments to the best value regime, in particular the White Paper “Strong Local Leadership - Quality Public Services” have emphasised the need for setting and agreeing the scope for Best Value reviews in advance of the actual review to facilitate preparation and to ensure that the reviews are accurately focussed.
1.2	To set the scope of the reviews for 2002-3 and 2003-4 a meeting was held, 12 February 2002, between Cabinet Members, the Corporate Management Team and Mark Hough from the Best Value Inspection Service (Audit Commission).
1.3	<p>At the start of the scoping exercise Mark Hough from the Audit Commission gave a presentation on the changes to the Best Value Regime resulting from the White Paper “Strong Local Leadership - Quality Public Services” and the Audit Commission Report “Changing Gear”. The main points from the presentation are:</p> <p>§ The Audit Commission have seen and are supportive of the modifications to Eastbourne’s Best Value Review Programme;</p> <p>§ All Councils should focus their reviews on what matters to the public and aim to achieve improvements in services that are noticeable to the public;</p> <p>§ The Audit Commission will not be monitoring 2% efficiency savings nor if all The Council’s functions are reviewed over 5 years; and</p> <p>§ The Audit Commission are in a “fluid” state at the moment regarding the introduction of a Comprehensive Performance Assessment framework. It is hoped that pending legislation will make the situation more clear and remove ambiguity.</p>

1.4	<p>This report presents the agreed challenges to the reviews which are:</p> <p>Year 3 – 2002-3: Community Safety; Information, Communication and Consultation; and Housing Management.</p> <p>It should be noted that in this year we will also be participating in a County Wide review of Emergency Planning, as this is a joint review and will be led by ESCC this review was not discussed at the meeting. (Please see paragraph 4).</p> <p>Year 4 – 2003-4: Seafront, Tourism and Grounds Maintenance; Health; and Democratic Services.</p>
2.0	<p><u>The Proposed Challenges</u></p>
2.1	<p><u>Community Safety:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ensure that there are clear linkages between the Eastbourne Strategic Partnership and the Crime Reduction Partnership with particular reference to community and youth engagement; 2. To establish a common press and public relationship strategy that educates and portrays a realistic awareness of actual crime levels and the actions that the Crime Reduction Partnership are undertaking to reduce crime and the fear of crime; 3. To ensure that the management information systems and data management across the partnership are effective; 4. To assess the effectiveness, the integration, future resourcing and development of CCTV in Eastbourne; 5. To consider the structure of the Crime Reduction Partnership; with particular reference to the role of the private sector, the Police Authority, the Judiciary and the equity of contribution across the partnership; 6. To assess the impact and make recommendations on targeting the Council’s licensing policy, new legislation, new initiatives and new external funding opportunities

2.2	<p><u>Housing Management</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To examine and make recommendations on the use of “Introductory Tenancies” and associated measures to assist in the enforcement of tenancy obligations; 2. To examine service standards and their role in forming the above contracts; 3. To ensure the functionality of the links between housing management, youth offending and the Crime Reduction Partnership; 4. To consider the demand for and benefits of expanding the estate management role to include private sector and other landlords; 5. To consider the current methods of collecting rent and to examine other options. 6. To review the effectiveness of leaseholder and tenant consultation.
2.3	<p><u>Information Communication and Consultation</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ensure that there is effective co-ordination and joint working with our partners - particularly the County Council - in consultation and disseminating information; 2. To formulate a comprehensive Press, Public Relations and Media Strategy; 3. To examine and make recommendations on new methods of getting messages from the Council across to the whole community; 4. To ensure that appropriate capacity for carrying out co-ordinated, focussed and meaningful consultation is built throughout the Council; and 5. To consider the links with the review of Tourism (specifically marketing issues) and to ensure that there is effective use of resources and that duplication is addressed.
2.4	<p><u>Seafront Tourism and Grounds Maintenance</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To assess and reduce the financial risk and make recommendations on ensuring the financial viability of all trading operations on the seafront including catering. 2. To examine the contribution of the Council in developing Tourism and in particular assess <p>§ The impact of the events supported by the Council and their contribution to the Council's</p>

2.5

Health

1. To ensure that there are clear linkages between the Eastbourne Strategic Partnership and the Healthy Eastbourne Board with particular reference to community engagement;
2. To consider the impact and opportunities of the restructure of health Services and the role of the Primary Care Trust
3. To ensure integration and “mainstreaming” of Health and Well Being objectives throughout the Council that can be evidenced by common performance indicators and objectives ensuring the uptake and validity of Health and Well Being Impact Assessments;
4. To ensure that resources for promoting Health (especially Supporting People) are maximised across the partnership;
5. To assess and make recommendations on ensuring the effectiveness of new initiatives (Sure Start, Children’s Fund etc.); and
6. To examine the practical implications and operation of the Councils scrutiny role in respect of local health services.

2.6	<p><u>Democratic Services</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To review existing mechanisms and make further proposals on increasing electoral turnout; 2. To make clear recommendations on actions to educate and promote participation in Local Democracy; 3. To review how to make the most effective use of Councillors' time, in particular to look at the balance between engaging the local community and attending Council meetings; 4. To assess and make clear recommendations on the use of Information Technology in Democratic Services; and 5. To develop a means of assessing the success of local democracy with particular reference to community participation.
3.0	<p><u>Implications</u></p>
3.1	<p>Best Value Reviews are the mechanism by which the Council should assess, review and propose actions for effecting the agreed priority areas.</p>
4.0	<p><u>Emergency Planning</u></p>
4.1	<p>As mentioned earlier, the Council has previously agreed to join with the County Council and the other Boroughs and Districts in a review of Emergency Planning. This is intended to look at Emergency Planning and the role of all local authorities rather than just the Emergency Planning Service. An initial meeting of officers from all the Local Authorities has formulated some proposals on how to move this particular review forward.</p>

4.2	It is recommended that a Project Board be established which will comprise two Councillors from the County Council and one from each of the Boroughs and Districts. A project lead officer will be provided by the County Council who will not be an Emergency Planning Officer. The Board may wish to co-opt others to the Board such as members of the Emergency Services but that will be left to the Board. A project team will exist under the Board which will comprise officers from each authority.
4.3	It will be necessary for the final report to be presented to each authority. To follow our normal arrangements, this would need to be done by the Eastbourne Board member and the officer on the project team. It would be advisable if a substitute member could be nominated to ensure attendance of all Board members. It is recommended that the nominee and substitute are appointed, one from each party, following the Eastbourne style. Both members would receive all paperwork and would need to meet regularly with the project team officer to liase on action within Eastbourne. The actual nomination of members should be made by the Scrutiny Committees.
5.0	<u>Summary</u>
5.1	Drawing on the Council's experience from the first two years of Best Value, advice from the Audit Commission and examples of Best Practice, the Council's Cabinet and the Corporate Management Team have agreed challenges for the next two years' Best Value Reviews. Cabinet are recommended to formally approve the challenges identified in this report.
Nick Ritson Strategic Development Officer	
Background Papers: The Background Papers used in compiling this report were as follows: (notes taken from the scoping exercise 12/2/02) To inspect or obtain copies of background papers please refer to the contact officer listed above.	

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