

BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEWS

1. SUMMARY

In February 2006 Audit Scotland issued a report entitled “The Audit of Best Value and Community Planning”. The report and findings related to the performance of Argyll and Bute Council’s statutory duties to secure Best Value. The report recognised the effectiveness of the Audit Committee but requested its role could be further developed to provide challenge on the findings and methodology of Best Value Service Reviews. On the 21st of September 2006 the Audit Committee accepted a reporting process agreed with Audit Scotland and agreed that they commence receiving service review updates on the 8th of December 2006, and thereafter on a quarterly basis.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Audit Committee to challenge the findings and methodology of service reviews.

3. DETAIL

3.1 The agreed process for reporting on service reviews is that lead officers are contacted prior to each Audit Committee by Internal Audit and asked to provide a progress comment for their review. Where a service review is reported complete by management the final report is to be presented to the Audit Committee for review along with any action plan. This process would allow the Audit Committee to evaluate and monitor progress as well as challenge completed reviews.

3.2 The date chosen for a progress update from Directors and where applicable their Heads of Service was the 31st of October 2006. Their comments are provided in Appendix 1. The reviews detailed in the appendix are arranged in the following order of completion:

- Complete - There are 2 service reviews noted by management as complete along with Phase 1 of the Design Services service review with Phase 2 already commenced.
- Still to be completed - Proposed completion dates are given in **BOLD** for the remaining 5 service reviews. These dates range from November 2006 to the end of January 2007.

3.3 One of the main recommendations from the Phase 1 of the Design Services review was that Roads Design Services transfer from Development Services to Operational Services. This decision has now been implemented and is reflected in Appendix 1 both in terms of review title and Lead Officer. The final reports in respect of the 2 completed reviews and Phase 1 are provided in Appendices 2, 3 and 4.

- 3.4 Of the remaining 5 reviews 4 are approaching their final reporting stage and the remaining one is expected to report at the end of January 2007.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The reporting process has commenced and Internal Audit will maintain regular reporting to the Audit Committee.

5. IMPLICATIONS

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| 5.1 | Policy: | None |
| 5.2 | Financial: | None |
| 5.3 | Personnel: | None |
| 5.4 | Legal: | None |
| 5.5 | Equal Opportunities: | None |

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