

**BEST VALUE REVIEW OF
PROTECTIVE SERVICES AND LICENSING**

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1** To provide a progress report on the status of the review, as requested following the meeting of the Audit Committee on 11 December 2009.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1** That the Committee notes the endorsement of the Best Value Project Board (8 June 2010) to suspend the implementation of that process.
- 2.2** That the Committee notes the transition from the Best Value Review of Protective Services and Licensing to the Service Review of Regulatory Services.
- 2.3** That the Committee requests a further update report for its meeting in September 2010.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1** At the meeting of the Audit Committee on 11 December 2009, a report was provided detailing progress on the implementation of the findings of the Review, as previously approved by the Council's Executive Committee on 19 February 2009.
- 3.2** The key changes to be introduced included structural changes of senior and area management roles, to focus more directly on policy issues, service user needs and quality and the integration of the Council's licensing function within the service.
- 3.3** At the time of the December meeting, the process was well advanced, so that –
- two posts had been removed from the establishment
 - preparations had been made to realign the budget to the new structure and to meet the corporate savings target of 15% over three years.
 - arrangements were in place to complete the job evaluation of all new posts
 - arrangements were in place to recruit staff to the new structure

4. SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS

- 4.1** In January 2010 the Project Board approved the Project Implementation Document (PID) and detailed project plans. However, in February it was reported by the Head of Legal and Protective Services that the process would be delayed as a result of the imminent Council restructure. New budget plans were developed with the assistance of the departmental Finance Manager, to take account of the removal of licensing from Regulatory Services.
- 4.2** As a result of the recent corporate restructure, the functions within Protective Services were transferred from 1 April, to form a new Regulatory Services function within Planning and Regulatory Services. The Council's Licensing function was located within Governance and Law.
- 4.3** During this period the corporate regime for new Service Reviews was being introduced. It was subsequently confirmed that Regulatory Services would be included in the programme for 2010 -11 and that the outcomes of the Best Value Review would now be subject to the additional challenges and scrutiny mechanisms incorporated in the new system.
- 4.4** As a result, staff who had applied for posts in the new structure were formally notified that the recruitment process had been deferred, pending the outcome of the Service Review. All other staff were informed of the impact of the Service Review by issuing an update bulletin and by more detailed briefings at team meetings.

5. CURRENT STATUS

- 5.1** A final meeting of the Best Value Project Board was held on 8 June, when it was agreed that the Best Value process was formally discontinued and would be replaced by the Service Review. The Board also agreed that the Head of Governance and Law, together with the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services would review the licensing regime for Liquor and Civic Government Licensing, in order to develop procedures across the services to achieve an integrated licensing service
- 5.2** A new PID and Project Plan, designed to implement the Service Review, were compiled during the first two weeks of June and approved in principle by the Transformation Board on 11 June.
- 5.3** There will be an opportunity to use some of the material produced by management and staff during the Best Value process, although this will now be reviewed and challenged during the implementation of the Service Review, due for completion by 30 September 2010.
- 5.4** /....

- 5.4 A new Project Team has now been established and an initial meeting was held on the 8 June. This team will ensure that the review will now take account of Regulatory Services issues within the context of new departmental and service arrangements and of the changed status of the licensing function.
- 5.5 Collation of the baseline information is well advanced, assisted by input from the staff groups initially formed to support the Best Value process.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Although implementation of the outcomes of Best Value Review has been suspended due to the introduction of the Service Review, it is clear that the new regime will :
 - ❖ build on the significant work already delivered through the Best Value Review
 - ❖ incorporate a broader scope, taking account of broader corporate issue
 - ❖ introduce more rigorous challenge and scrutiny than previously applied

7. IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Policy : In accordance with new policies relating to service reviews
- Financial : The review will deliver a minimum of 15% saving over the three year period, from 2011-12.
- Equal Opportunities : Incorporates equalities impact assessment
- Personnel : HR have addressed recruitment issues

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