

SECTION 8 – PART I

BEST VALUE SERVICE REVIEWS 2000/01 EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

Throughout the course of the last two years a number of service managers have been undertaking reviews of their own services. Executive Summaries of these reviews are contained with Appendix 3 of this Performance Plan.

Services reviewed in 2000/01 are:

- Accountancy Services/Debtors
- Central Emergency Communications System
- Dog Control
- Guildford Philharmonic
- Gypsy Caravan Sites
- Homelessness (inc Hostels)
- Internal Audit
- Local Land Charges
- Management Services Unit
- Meals on Wheels
- Pest Control
- Private Sector Housing Standards/Housing Improvement Grants
- Recycling
- Street Cleansing
- Tourist Information Centre
- Youth and Community Centres

The Council has in place a Best Value Working Group that addresses the legislative aspects of Best Value, assesses the requirements placed upon the Council and provides advice and guidance to all service managers to ensure that review objectives are met. In parallel with this, a range of training is provided to ensure that every manager is armed with the necessary skills to undertake an effective review.

All of these services have responded to the following principles that have formed a basis for all of Guildford Borough Council's service reviews:

Codification

Each service has been identified. Elements of the service have been broken down into constituent parts and the processes have been documented. It is considered important to know the detail of each service to enable effective challenge and comparisons to take place.

Challenge

At this stage, a challenge is placed upon areas of work previously codified. This provides an opportunity to review the way in which services are provided, as well as to eradicate areas of duplication.

Compare

It is considered vitally important to provide service comparisons. Whilst a healthy exchange of information is now commonplace in local authorities, in some areas it has been possible to obtain direct comparisons with the private sector. Opportunities to establish local performance indicators have been taken as a measure of maintaining ongoing comparisons as well as testing effectiveness and value for money.

Consult

All services have been involved in consulting their users. Honest opinions must be asked of users to enable any service improvements to be developed.

Compete

At the end of each review, every service should be in such a position that it is capable of external competition. During 2001, the Best Value Inspectorate will be examining reviewed services and be particularly looking for 'Best Value'. If this is at all in doubt, external competition can be forced.

A further group of services are already in the process of review. Their progress will be reported upon next year.