

APPENDIX I - THE SCOPE OF THE BEST VALUE REVIEW

Audit template criteria	Commentary
<p>Why is the review being undertaken? <i>(Indicate the origin of the review i.e. is it a result of self-assessment, audit inspection, decisions by senior managers, decision by elected members.)</i></p>	<p>The Chief Financial Officer introduced an annual Finance and ICT Service Improvement Plan (SIP) in 2000-2001 linked to aims and objectives of the Corporate Plan. The SIP makes extensive use of EFQM to identify areas of continuous improvement and Best Value Reviews to demonstrate best value for money and evidence of continuous improvement. The ICT Section has therefore successfully implemented a number of year on year improvements through EFQM and is now taking the opportunity to carry out a more in-depth analysis of its service by means of a Best Value Review to more fully address the emerging needs of the recent efficiency and shared service agendas while also addressing some unresolved areas of concerns, namely:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the Council may not be making the most effective or efficient use of its ICT resources to improve Council services and deliver benefits and efficiency savings. 2. lack of ICT cover has been experienced in some service areas due to limited economies of scale 3. difficulties have been experienced for a number of years, and are still continuing, in filling a three year ICT action plan and fully delivering against it. <p>The Best Value review will also enable the ICT Section to more systematically and strategically address the key recommendations that were identified in the customer satisfaction survey conducted in 2005. Among these were :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Users feel inadequately trained in ICT b) Managers were generally less satisfied than operational staff in the ICT service c) Finance users were generally less satisfied than other departments d) Users generally expressed a need for more participation and shorter lead times in the planning and delivery of new systems and developments <p>Although a comprehensive customer satisfaction survey was carried out in 2005, further consultation will be required to explore how ICT can help the Council and its service departments become more effective in its use of ICT.</p>

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<p>What is it intended to deliver? <i>(In all cases this will be an option appraisal and an improvement plan, but there may be occasions when additional or preferred options have been identified at the outset of the review. Care should be taken not to anticipate the outcome of the review as options may not become clear until such time as evidence has been gathered, analysed and evaluated.)</i></p>	<p>The review will consider all the possible options for service delivery including in-house provision, whole or partial outsourcing, partnership working and shared services with neighbouring or other local authorities.</p> <p>A detailed option appraisal, taking account of reliable performance information and benchmarking, will be carried out to identify the best option for the Council that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivers an improved ICT service that is the best value for money that the Council can afford. • makes optimum use of ICT resources to deliver tangible benefits and efficiency savings based on robust business cases • delivers an ICT Action Plan of new developments required by the Council and its service departments. • resolves the key concerns expressed by users through the customer satisfaction survey.

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