

**BEST VALUE GROUP held on THURSDAY 24 AUGUST 2000 in ROOM 22A
SAFFRON WALDEN OFFICES**

Present:- Gaynor Bradley, Will Cockerell, Claire Glover, Simon Martin, John Pares, Joy Postings

1 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 27 JULY 2000

Everyone had seen the minutes of the last meeting.

2 BEST VALUE CO-ORDINATING GROUP

Simon discussed a corporate training and development plan. It was hoped that liP would start to be introduced Councilwide towards the end of October/November but the whole process would take around 18/24 months.

3 DAVENTRY GROUP

There had been no meeting since the one reported at the Group's meeting of 27 July.

John Pares had received several questionnaires mostly from Stratford upon Avon and one from IDEA. The next meeting of the Daventry group was in September. It was agreed that John was the Council's representative on the Daventry Group in Sarah's place.

4 ESSEX AUTHORITIES BEST VALUE GROUP

A meeting had been held re Best Value Performance Plan and the Future. Some authorities appeared to have put more work into the presentation of their documents. Perhaps the A-Z of Council Services or similar could be included with the summary document. It was noted that we have to ensure it does not become a political document.

More information on how each section fits in with the Council's overall functioning could also be useful.

5 **BEST VALUE SUB-COMMITTEE**

It was agreed that all members of the Group should receive Minutes of the Sub-Committee meetings.

6 **COMMUNICATIONS**

No members of the Group had received any feedback on the Best Value Newsletter.

The next newsletter would probably be put out in October. It was agreed that information on performance indicators should be included. It might be useful to focus on the key indicators. It was agreed that Management Team be asked to decide which would be the core indicators. DETR have determined around 12 of what it considers to be the most pertinent performance indicators. Simon agreed to try and find out which of the indicators were used by the Independent on Sunday in their league table.

The group also discussed whether the Best Value newsletter should be combined with Grapevine. It was agreed that members of the Group ask the opinions of the staff in their relevant sections and Joy would speak to Mick Purkiss to gauge his opinion. It was agreed that the BV Newsletter could go on the intranet, as well as details of other websites/sources of information.

7

BVPP

John circulated a timetable for the production of BVPP 2001/02. He would present a progress report to the Management Team, to go to the Best Value Sub-Committee meeting. It was agreed that the time needed to print the BVPP should be checked. The Print Room, Brian Perkins and Ernie Spencer may be able to give guidance.

John said he found the document very useful and refreshingly honest. It was agreed that Councillors needed to contribute more to the next years' BVPP. It was agreed that a lot of the background information could be retained. This would also be useful from a tourism point of view. Improvements and updates would have to be included but John would check with Brian Perkins before it went to Management Team. John would attend the next BCM's meeting to discuss the document. The BVPP has to meet the DA's requirements but still needs to be a living document for all staff.

John will speak to Jenny Jones regarding the design and production of the documents.

It was discussed what other Council newsletters and publications were produced. It was noted that the Council page goes into the newspaper quarterly and the Housing Newsletter goes to tenants six monthly. It was suggested that the brochures could be included with the Council Tax bills. John would speak to Jenny about this.

8

REVIEW MECHANISM

A brainstorming session had been arranged for 9 November between 10.00 am and 12.00 noon where the BV framework process would be reviewed.

Tony Forrow, Simon Martin and Gaynor Bradley may have to send apologies.

Simon was about to start work on the audit side which will be relevant to this session. Best Value Guidance notes went to the Group and Joy informed the meeting that she had done a summary of Member involvement which Elizabeth Forbes wants to discuss at the next Team Leaders meeting.

9 **PERFORMANCE CULTURE**

It was agreed that the issue should be discussed by BCMs/Management Team, and other staff at all levels should be included in discussion. John suggested holding a one day workshop brainstorming the way forward for performance culture and to make this open to all staff. Joy suggested putting this on the BCMs agenda for the October meeting. Joy and John would prepare a briefing note.

Gaynor suggested getting people to think about their service and performance culture, and making them more aware of the objectives in the service plan. Monitoring needs to be thought about and individual as well as group work programmes would be a good idea.

Simon questioned how performance culture could be introduced. Time and work pressures often prevented staff involvement in the service plan process.

10 **TRAINING**

Will to liaise with BDP re CIPFA document.

11 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 19 September. Joy sent her apologies and volunteered John Pares to chair the meeting on her behalf.