

BEST VALUE SCOPING PANEL

29 AUGUST 2001 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Bloxham (Chairman), Councillors Mrs Bradley, Fisher L, Guest, Jefferson, Knapton, Mrs Mallinson and Mrs Styth

ALSO PRESENT: Mr J Mallinson (Head of Policy and Strategy), Mrs E MacKay (Committee Clerk), Mr J Shires, Mr D O'Brien and Mr A Pateman (Political Group Assistants)

BVSP.6/01 APOLOGIES

Apologies for Absence were submitted on behalf of Ms Hook.

BVSP.7/01 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Best Value Scoping Panel held on 15 August 2001 were approved as a correct record.

BVSP.8/01 REGENERATION BEST VALUE OVERVIEW SESSION

The Head of Corporate Policy and Strategy advised that as a precursor to the Scoping Exercise, Internal Audit had been asked to conduct an information-gathering exercise on Regeneration activity within the authority. He provided details of the List of Strategies/Documents etc which had been identified by the Audit Section as contributing to the Regeneration theme. In addition, as a detailed background to Regeneration issues in Carlisle, the Indices of Deprivation Report 2000 was attached in full, along with a relevant extract from the Best Value Inspector's Report on the Economic Development Service.

He highlighted some of the documents contained in the List of Documents/Strategies which contribute towards Regeneration and commented that Departments may have more information on Regeneration but may not be aware that it falls within the category of Regeneration.

Members referred to the Indices of Deprivation Report 2000 and commented that the Indices were still based on old Wards some of which no longer existed, e.g. Trinity, and others had been subject to substantial changes in Ward boundaries e.g. Morton, Stanwix Urban and Castle Wards. They suggested that an examination of Regeneration could not be based on these figures alone as the boundary changes had significant impacts on the Indices of Deprivation within these specific Ward areas.

The Head of Corporate Policy and Strategy advised that when local bids were being prepared, a lot of other local information was also used. He commented that the Indices of Deprivation prepared by the Government were to be reviewed annually in future but that the 2000 Report, although being the most recent Report, would not include changes to the Ward boundaries. New Ward boundaries would not be used by Government until full data sets were available on that basis when 2001 Census data was published. He recognised the frustration of not having the most up to date information, but advised that other information sources could also be used to gain further information.

Members stressed the importance of being able to have an accurate picture of the current situation before identifying areas requiring regeneration. The Head of Corporate Policy and Strategy recognised that some of the information contained within the Indices Report was of assistance but that the information in relation to areas where Ward boundaries had changed would need to be supplemented by local information from Agencies such as Health Authorities, Benefits Agency and Job Centre.

Members also suggested that the Report which had been conducted by Sheffield Hallam University had a significant impact on Regeneration and should be included within the List of Documents/Strategies set out.

In assessing all the information available, Members concluded that the information was not quite adequate enough to move into a detailed evaluation but would not stop them from looking at Regeneration. The Head of Corporate Policy and Strategy emphasised that the intention at this stage was not to identify specific Wards or areas, but rather to look at how Regeneration should be handled by the Authority.

RESOLVED - (1) That it be noted that, in relation to future thematic reviews, it may be beneficial to have more tailor-made data available to examine the issues in hand.

(2) That the information contained in the List of Documents/Strategies and in the Indices of Deprivation Report be noted, with the comment that it was not adequate enough to move into detailed evaluation and that it would have to be supplemented by local information, particularly in relation to those Wards which had experienced boundary changes.

(3) That the Sheffield Hallam Report on Housing be added to the List of Documents/Strategies which contribute towards Regeneration.

**BVSP.9/01 REGENERATION BEST VALUE FUNDAMENTAL
PERFORMANCE REVIEW - SCOPING**

The Head of Corporate Policy and Strategy submitted a paper as a starting point for discussion on scoping the Regeneration Review. He posed a number of questions and set out his thoughts in relation to addressing each of the following areas:-

Where do we need Regeneration?

Members suggested that rather than setting out specific areas, there should be a general statement recognising that in the City Council area, there were a number of urban and rural areas in need of regeneration and that the type and style of regeneration may vary according to the location and indicative factors.

What factors are involved?

Members endorsed the List suggested by the Head of Corporate Policy and Strategy and suggested that the following be added:-

Transport or Access to be added as a new category
Anti-Social Behaviour to be added after Crime
Sport and Leisure to be added as a new category

Who should be involved?

Members endorsed the list proposed by the Head of Corporate Policy and Strategy, suggesting that everybody should be involved in Regeneration. They suggested that this section could be expanded by looking at not just who should be involved, but also how we can involve them.

Where are we now, where do we want to be, how can we progress the Review and what should be the outcome?

Members considered these questions together and endorsed the proposed outcomes for the Review.

They referred to the section on how can we progress the Review and the Head of Corporate Policy and Strategy's proposal that as the Best Value Budget provides for Consultancy Support, three tenders be sought and the Executive asked to release funding. Consultant Support would be provided to an in-house cross-departmental team. Members commented that at this stage a report should be put to the Executive outlining the possibility of appointing consultants to undertake this work and seeking their agreement before seeking tenders.

In relation to the in-house team, it was suggested that a representative from the Planning Section should be included on that team.

RESOLVED - (1) That the Head of Corporate Policy and Strategy in setting out the scope of the Review take on board the comments outlined by Members above.

(2) That the Head of Corporate Policy and Strategy report to the Executive on how the Review can be progressed and the possibility of appointing consultants.

(3) That the in-house team include a representative from the Planning Section.

BVSP.10/01 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED - That the next meeting of the Best Value Scoping Panel be held on Monday, 10 September 2001 at 2.00 pm to discuss the scoping of the Customer Contact Best Value Review.

(The meeting ended at 3.20 pm)