

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF COMMERCIAL ENFORCEMENT – STAGE 3 REPORT

Report By: Performance Officer

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To consider the Stage 3 Report of the Commercial Enforcement Review.

Financial Implications

2. The financial implications vary with each option for future provision. However, the preferred option is thought to be cost neutral.

Background

3. The review commenced in 2001 with the Stage 1 report being approved by Environment Scrutiny Committee in April 2002.
4. A progress report which outlined the changes in the scope of the review and the need to assess more up to date information was approved by Environment Scrutiny Committee in September 2003.
5. The Stage 3 report includes:
 - An appraisal of how the Challenge element of Best Value has been addressed
 - Information gathered from the consultation exercises
 - Information gathered from the benchmarking exercises
 - An analysis of the Strengths and Areas for Improvement
 - The options appraisal part of the process
6. This report summarises the conclusions from the review as follows;
 - The workloads for the services being reviewed are continuing to rise either through consumer demand or through the introduction of new legislation.
 - There is an ongoing need to ensure the Council's Corporate Objectives are reflected in service provision along with the need to meet the demands of the governing National Regulatory Agencies.
 - There is a need to create greater capacity to deliver increased and better services to meet customer and stakeholder demands. To ensure this capacity it is necessary to re-engineer the services using the Council's SIPs project to develop a Contact Centre and to improve the IT to deliver better on line services.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Bob Barker, Performance Officer
on 01432 260985

- There is a need to re-engineer the current “Front Office” and “Back Office” functions to maximise the principle of dealing with service requests in one transaction and by minimizing referrals to the “Back Office”.
- There is a need to create a Divisional recruitment plan to ensure professional staff can be recruited and retained by the Division.
- A Gap Analysis be undertaken on areas where Risk Assessment has not been undertaken.
- Undertake a review of possible joint working arrangements with neighbouring authorities.
- Review the current working practices to maximise the potential for joint working between the three teams.
- Review the funding made available through the fee income from Liquor Licensing to expand the service and to help deliver an out of hours service (this would be cross Division service, including Environmental Protection).
- To ensure that there is integration of the Regional Consumer Direct Service into the Trading Standards Service and the Council’s SIPs programme
- There will be a need to review the impact of the proposed provisions contained in the Bill announced in the Queens Speech to implement the recommendations of the Hampton review on Regulatory Services.

7. The review team, having considered all of the options recommend:

That Environmental Health (Commercial Enforcement), Trading Standards and Licensing are re-engineered to deliver more efficient services

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Members consider the outcomes and findings of the review and recommendation of the preferred option, contained in the Stage 3 Report at Section 8, with a view to making recommendations to the Strategic Monitoring Committee.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Commercial Enforcement Stage 3 Report.
- Hampton Review.