

BEST VALUE PILOT REVIEW - PROPERTY

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 To advise the Sub-Committee about the proposed approach to the Best Value Pilot Review of Property and work done so far.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The first meeting of an officer group was in June 1999. The Review will be led by the Valuer with input from Review team members (yet to be identified). Support will be available from the Projects Team in Human Resources. A reference group will be set up in accordance with Best Value Review Guidelines.
- 2.2 A Review Outline has been drawn up, attached as **Annex A**.
- 2.3 Draft Terms of Reference have been drawn up, attached as **Annex B**.
- 2.4 A Project Plan is being finalised. Tasks will be allocated to members of the Review team at the next meeting.
- 2.5 Further reports on progress will be brought to meetings of this Sub-Committee. It is anticipated that the Review will be completed by the end of December 1999.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That the approach to the Review as set down in the Review Outline paper attached as **Annex A** be adopted, and the draft Terms of Reference, attached as **Annex B**, be endorsed.

4. Background

- 4.1 One of the terms of reference for the Property sub-committee set by Policy and Resources Committee on 13 July 1999 is to oversee the Best Value Pilot Review of the Council's property services. The Review will look at all property and the way in which it is managed. (The draft Review Terms of Reference define 'property' and 'property management').
- 4.2 The Council's wish to be a 'Beacon Council' means that it is necessary to review the way in which property is dealt with across the Directorates. The Asset Management Strategy will set down key objectives against which the efficiency of property and property management can be tested through the Best Value Pilot Review. (The Committee is receiving a report on the Asset Management Strategy at Item 9).

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 The draft Terms of Reference indicate that the Review is likely to raise questions about the Council's current approach to property and its management. The Review will seek to provide choices about the future of property for the Council. Further work will be necessary to identify the benefits and disadvantages of various alternative approaches to property and its management.

6. Implications

6.1 Environmental

The Review will look at the costs of owning property. Energy costs form part of the direct costs of property ownership and will be considered as part of the Review.

6.2 Equalities

The views of the stakeholders and users of property will be sought as part of the Review.

6.3 Financial

Analysis of the direct and indirect costs of property and its management will be a key part of the Review. The Review will seek to identify efficiency measures.

6.4 Legal

The Review will look at alternatives to the traditional methods of property ownership and management. Legal advice about the tenure of property will be sought.

6.5 Staff and Accommodation

The Review will look at the processes and the people involved in property management. Staff across all Directorates are currently involved in property issues.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 A significant amount of the Council's resources are involved in property and its management. The Best Value Pilot Review of Property provides an opportunity to examine the way the Council currently holds and manages property. The principles of the Asset Management Strategy will help to provide a framework for a structured review of property and property management.

Background Papers: None