

# Appendices



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## Five Year Programme of Fundamental Reviews

### Carrying out the Reviews

Business Unit Heads are responsible for the conduct of the Review of services within a corporate framework. Officers collect information about the service, which is then examined by a Review Team of Members, and Officers from all levels, and where appropriate other stakeholders such as users and other service providers. Findings and recommendations for change or improvement are then reported to the Council for a decision for future action.

During the reviews Councils should:

- **Challenge** themselves by asking some very basic questions such as - should they be providing the service at all and if so, how should it be provided and to what level and standard
- **Compare** themselves by looking at performance year on year and against other similar providers to ensure continuous improvements
- **Consult** by finding out what the local community, service users, potential users and other providers think of the service
- **Compete** by assessing whether or not the service could be provided more effectively by another means.

### Review Timetable

The Council took the following factors into account when deciding on its Review timetable:

- How services inter-relate
- How the services are seen by the outside world
- Performance of the Service
- Ease of communication with the outside world
- Staffing implications
- Recent Developments in the service
- History of performance monitoring
- Support services to be reviewed in their own right
- Financial implications
- Members' concerns
- Other Authority timetables
- Use of first year as a learning experience

For operational reasons - long-term illness and the re-tendering of the grounds maintenance contract - some changes were made to the timetable during the year.

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>Social</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Social</b>
Housing Enabling Homelessness Improvement Grants Licensing	Benefits Careline Meals on Wheels Concessionary Travel	Grants & Loans Leisure Facilities Public Conveniences Cemeteries & Churchyards		Health Promotion Commercial Environmental Health Emergency Response Community Safety
	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Economic</b>		
	Council Tax Collection Business Rates Collection	Economic Development and Business Support		
	<b>Environmental</b>	<b>Environmental</b>	<b>Environmental</b>	<b>Environmental</b>
	Development Control Land Use Planning Highways	Countryside and Commons Management Environmental Enhancements Drainage Dogs & Pests	Building Control Car Parks Waste Management	Street Cleansing Pollution Control Grounds Maintenance
<b>Corporate Support</b>	<b>Corporate Support</b>	<b>Corporate Support</b>	<b>Corporate Support</b>	<b>Corporate Support</b>
Print Room Monitoring & Audit	Legal Democratic Support Electoral Registration	Information Technology	Central Purchasing Personnel Financial Services Corporate Strategy Building Design & Maintenance	Reception

## Results of Best Value Reviews carried out in 2000/2001

### 1. Housing Service - Best Value Improvement Plan

This improvement plan has been developed following the considerations of the housing best value review group (November 2000 – January 2001) and the housing service peer review (December 2000).

Housing advice	Implementation	Housing advice	Implementation
1 Develop a strategic approach to the provision of housing advice in Hart.  Whilst various initiatives are taking place on the provision of advice, these need to be co-ordinated in a coherent strategy. The main points will be incorporated within the housing strategy.	Jan 02	6 Develop corporate service level agreement with CABx.  Acknowledged that the Council corporately needs to have a service level agreement with CABx, given level of overall funding provided. Joint housing training with CABx to be initiated where appropriate.	Jan 02
2 Consider development of independent housing advice.  Already provided through CABx, but promotion and development of that service to be considered in partnership with those agencies. Details of independent advice services to be included with all adverse homelessness decision letters.	Jan 02	7 Progress discussions with Waverley and Rushmoor BC's on joint additional direct access hostel provision for young people.  Potential site identified by English Churches Housing Group in Farnham, and joint funding agreement currently being discussed.	Dec 01
3 Consider dedicated computer link between Hart DC and Hart HA.  Can be considered for future IT development, but only one office for each organisation within very close proximity of each other is likely to lessen urgency of such a connection.	Apr 03	8 Improve provision of in-house debt counselling provided through Hart HA.  Housing advisors to be trained in developing financial advice that is provided to those seeking assistance. Floating support specialist to be utilised as appropriate.	Jul 01
4 Consider extension of deposit loan scheme.  Current scheme is targeted at those accepted as or likely to be statutorily homeless. Resources currently not available to extend existing scheme, but can be considered within future budgets.	Apr 03	9 Promotion of service throughout the District.  Specialist homelessness consultant has been employed to assist in complete revision of housing advice information leaflet. New flyer also about to be printed and distributed.	Apr 01
5 Consider extension of lodgings scheme for single people.  UB40 – a local voluntary agency, supported with Council funding - provides a lodgings scheme in large parts of the District. Current resources do not allow for an expanded service to be provided through Hart HA, but can be considered within future budgets.	Apr 03		

## 1. Housing Service - Best Value Improvement Plan, *continued*

Housing register	Implementation	Housing register	Implementation
10 Promotion of service throughout the District.  As for housing advice service - new information leaflet and flyer to be distributed throughout the District.	Apr 01	15 Finalise draft leaflet on re-housing prospects.  This is a challenging area given variations in supply and demand, but leaflet being developed on likelihood of re-housing in different parts of the District, giving information on points level required for offers in specific areas. Consider for possible development as register newsletter.	Jul 01
11 Incorporate greater flexibility into no fixed abode policy.  Single homeless people who have no fixed abode continue to be assessed individually, and Hart HA staff are implementing a flexible approach on prioritisation.	Completed	16 Information technology improvements – 4 key areas, all of which are dependent on the installation of a new applications programme:	Jan 02
12 Significantly reduce groups excluded from the register.  Agreement reached on deleting exclusion of owner occupiers and those with significant capital assets for a trial period of six months. List is now open to most applicants, regardless of current circumstances, with assessment being made on need.	Completed	a) Re-registration. Rather than re-register all applicants annually each April, it is proposed that applicants are re-registered in the month of their initial application. b) Standard letters. A record would be kept of all correspondence sent and received, with reminders sent to the officer dealing with the application if correspondence has not been answered within the target period. Standard letters can easily be produced, and telephone conversations can be stored.	
13 Consider greater use of medical expertise for assessment of applications.  All bar straightforward cases, such as asthma, are currently referred to medical advisor. General advice on common complaints to be sought from qualified physician.	Jul 01	c) Acceptance letter. A full points breakdown will be provided for all applicants at the point of registration. d) Management reports. Provision for statistical information on groups of applicants, and checks on points entitlement for specific applicants.	
14 Promote availability of appointments with staff.  Dedicated parts of the week are currently set aside for personal interviews, but this option needs to be publicised more actively through leaflets and flyers.	Apr 01		

## 1. Housing Service - Best Value Improvement Plan, *continued*

Homelessness	Implementation	Homelessness	Implementation
17 Refresher training to be provided by experienced homelessness advisor.  Specialist homelessness consultant employed Jan-March 01 to advise on standard documents & complete training needs analysis.	Ongoing	23 Ensure that full homelessness assessments are made.  Case law earlier this year determined that full decisions should still be given where an applicant does not qualify under one of the grounds for homelessness. This affects very few cases, but is now being implemented.	Implemented
18 Leaflet on homelessness to be completely reviewed.  Consultant as above employed to advise on re-working of homelessness and housing advice information leaflets.	Completed	24 Revise entire review procedure  Complete review of homelessness review procedure completed, and checked by specialist homelessness consultant. New leaflet explaining the process also developed.	Implemented
19 All standard letters to be revised and checked by experienced homelessness advisor.	Completed	25 Ensure that correct advice is given on loss of temporary accommodation.  All standard letters now revised, and checked by consultant.	Implemented
20 Housing advice pack to be enhanced for homeless applicants.  Additional information now included in revised information leaflet.	Completed	26 Ensure that decision letters are clear on consideration of affordability.  Affordability of last settled accommodation is always considered, although it is accepted that some decision letters may not have been clear on that process being undertaken.	Ongoing
21 Greater use of homeless at home to be considered.  Use of homeless at home now actively utilised, particularly given high numbers currently in bed & breakfast accommodation.	Implemented	27 Ensure that appropriate assistance is given to 16/17 year olds.  New Hampshire-wide protocol on assistance for 16/17 year olds implemented from 1 January 2001. Housing advisors now see all applicants under 18.	Ongoing
22 Reduce use of bed & breakfast generally.  High homelessness demand and low supply over the last 18 months have presented a particularly difficult challenge, with high numbers currently in bed & breakfast placements. All possible options for alternative provision are actively being pursued, including the possible use of local housing association accommodation scheduled for redevelopment as short life housing. Long term solutions depend, to a large degree, on the availability of housing association vacancies, but the target should be to reduce use of bed & breakfast to single figures by the year end.	Ongoing	28 Provide cover for Council contract manager.  Employee within residential Environmental Health team identified as having an interest in homelessness issues. Training to be provided to ensure that homelessness service can continue in absence of contract manager.	Dec 01

## 1. Housing Service - Best Value Improvement Plan, *continued*

<b>Homelessness</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Housing strategy and enabling</b>	<b>Implementation</b>
<p>29 Appropriate separation of duties to be applied in managing temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Hart HA have recognised the need to separate in correspondence the two functions of homelessness management and collection of temporary accommodation charges. Letters confusing the two roles are to be eliminated.</p>	Apr 01	<p>34 Selection of housing association partners to be considered.</p> <p>The Council has three principal housing association partners, but others are brought in for specialist supported provision. A general needs new build programme of around 60 homes per annum probably does not justify any additional providers. The existing partners have worked in Hart for many years, and perform well against all others on performance indicator comparisons. To ensure transparency, however, it would be appropriate to consider an open selection process in the near future.</p>	Apr 03
<p>30 Improve homelessness prevention.</p> <p>The Council, in partnership with Hart HA and voluntary sector agencies, will seek to develop a strategy to improve homelessness prevention and services within the District.</p>	Apr 02	<p>35 Ensure challenging targets are set.</p> <p>Targets have to be challenging but achievable. All those included within the housing strategy and the best value performance plan will be reviewed in that context.</p>	Jul 02
<p>31 Enable easy access to housing advisors.</p> <p>Hart HA to examine the role of their reception staff, and ensure that appropriate advice &amp; assistance is given to all applicants.</p>	Apr 01	<p>36 Black &amp; minority ethnic housing issues to be assessed.</p> <p>2001 housing strategy acknowledges the need for more information, and to undertake further assessment of housing register applicants in this context. The need for continuing work in this area is acknowledged.</p>	Jul 02
<p><b>Housing strategy and enabling</b></p>	<p><b>Implementation</b></p>		
<p>32 Consider staffing levels.</p> <p>The service has been demonstrated to be very low cost against other authorities, but key targets are achieved. Increased resources to be considered within context of Community Plan consultation and other best value reviews, providing overall assessment of Council priorities.</p>	Ongoing	<p>37 Address the wider government agenda for housing.</p> <p>Some elements of that agenda, such as housing and employment initiatives, are not particularly relevant when local employment is less than 1%. Other initiatives, such as the Egan agenda in construction, are being actively embraced at the large Elvetham Heath development. An appropriate local response should be formulated to all such initiatives.</p>	Ongoing
<p>33 Consultation process to be reviewed.</p> <p>Short summary sent to all interested parties, and consultation meeting held. Supported housing strategy follows similar process. Feedback could be improved, and options for increasing external involvement to be considered.</p>	Apr 02		

## 1. Housing Service - Best Value Improvement Plan, *continued*

<b>Housing strategy and enabling</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Housing strategy and enabling</b>	<b>Implementation</b>
38 Initiate a housing association forum.  With only three principal partners, liaison takes place with each on a regular basis. All three are also working in a consortium to provide the affordable housing at Elvetham Heath. A regular 6 monthly forum has been established, however, with the first meeting set for 30 March.	Implemented	43 Consider more detailed assessment of affordable housing supply & demand.  Projected supply of affordable housing known and itemised in detail. Demand assessed from both independent housing needs surveys and housing register assessments. Development of demand model to be considered in future housing needs surveys.	2003
39 Provision of cover for enabling service.  Employee within strategic planning section identified to provide cover on funding of housing associations and enabling generally. Training to be provided within next 6 months.	Jan 02	44 Consider greater use of service level agreements.  Clear service specification included in contract for housing advice, register and homelessness. Other areas of service, including CABx, to be considered.	2003
40 Re-assess balance of tenure provision.  Of 376 new affordable homes completed since 1994, 43 were for shared ownership. Current requirements usually suggest 15% rented and 10% shared ownership provision on larger sites. Assessment of whether provision is an appropriate response to local needs to be made.	Oct 02	45 Repeat peer review exercise for all housing services within the next two years, leading to an updated and revised improvement plan.	2003
		<b>Private sector housing - General</b>	<b>Implementation</b>
41 Ensure that housing association design standards are agreed.  The Housing Corporation Regional Policy Statement makes clear the Council's commitment to affordable warmth. The design standards of the Council's principal partners are similar, and meet Housing Corporation expectations, but it is recognised that summaries of those standards need to be agreed by all concerned.	Jan 02	46 Focus group for Environmental Health.  The importance of stakeholder feedback is recognised and it is intended to set up a focus group to gauge public opinion of the overall standard of service provided by Environmental Health. It is expected that this process will begin early this year.	May 01
42 Involvement of housing associations in s106 sites.  Housing associations are involved in negotiations on s106 sites (affordable housing through planning obligations on larger sites), but it is accepted that they could be more involved in finalising the wording of the affordable housing obligations.	Apr 01	47 Use Hart DC citizens panel.  The citizens panel to be used to gain customer feedback on current policy in relation to allocation of discretionary grants and other aspects of the housing service.	Dec 01

## 1. Housing Service - Best Value Improvement Plan, *continued*

<b>Private sector housing - General</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Private sector housing - General</b>	<b>Implementation</b>
<p>48 Application for Charter Mark for residential Environmental Health.</p> <p>The Environmental Health residential team is currently working towards an application for Charter Mark; this will be submitted in June. A Technical Officer will be attending a training course to assist in this process and the team are producing the necessary procedures and supporting evidence to accompany the application. A customer feedback sheet is also being developed to demonstrate our response to suggestions/issues put forward by our customers.</p>	Jun 01	<p>52 Staff development.</p> <p>The team is generally short of experienced housing officers and has in the past encountered difficulties in its attempts to recruit such staff. Currently various officers are involved in training initiatives to fill this skills gap. A particular need relates to enforcement responsibilities on houses in multiple occupation. The sharing of information needs to continue through the cascade system. Provision made in training budget for specific courses.</p>	Mar 02
<p>49 Update and expand procedures.</p> <p>Whilst residential Environmental Health has a comprehensive range of procedures, these continually need to be updated. Specific attention will be given in the coming months to those procedures relating to grants and houses in multiple occupation.</p>	Jan 02	<p>53 Public health shadowing project.</p> <p>Throughout this document there is a constant theme about the gains to be made from closer, more effective links with healthcare providers. Housing is a significant determinant of health, and the health services have significant numbers of staff actually visiting clients in their homes who can deliver wider messages than at present. This project is currently being planned, initially as a sharing exercise at manager level with the expectation that front line staff will commence the shadowing phase later this year.</p>	Feb 01
<p>50 Update and expand leaflets.</p> <p>An extensive set of Environmental Health leaflets is in place, and a range specific to private sector housing is being produced. It is also hoped to make these accessible to customers via the website.</p>	Jan 02	<p>54 Information technology improvements.</p> <p>There continues to be a challenge in exploiting the full value of the software system we currently use, and additional training for relevant staff is planned within the budget. Specific areas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Additional data on unfit homes.</li> <li>•Incorporating use of standard letters for grants and monitoring the routine inspection programme of houses in multiple occupation.</li> <li>•Compiling information on the private rented sector generally.</li> </ul>	Jan 02
<p>51 Website development.</p> <p>The Council's website is currently in a very early developmental stage as far as most sections are concerned. It is considered important to add information, particularly relating to grant policies to the website as soon as possible. In-house training has been organised to bring the basic skills into Environmental Health.</p>	May 01		

## 1. Housing Service - Best Value Improvement Plan, *continued*

Private sector housing - General	Implementation	Private sector housing – home energy conservation	Implementation
55 House condition & energy efficiency survey.  It is planned to repeat the recent survey in approximately four years time to update the data available to the authority to plan its future housing activities. Budgetary provision will need to be agreed nearer the date.	2005	59 Increase partnership schemes.  Increased use of partnerships can produce cost effective means of increasing activity. Schemes being proposed include condensing boilers, various DIY products and combined heat and power plants. Staffing resources will mainly come from the pilot project staff (see 63 below) and finance will be allocated from the already agreed budget.	Ongoing
56 Level of staff resources.  The recent peer group review of the affordable housing service touched briefly on our private sector activity and recommended that the resourcing level of the service be reviewed. Priority will need to be considered within the context of Community Plan consultation and other best value reviews, providing an overall assessment of Council priorities.	Apr 02	60 New Home Energy Efficiency Scheme training.  This has strong linkages with the Fuel Poverty Strategy. Training would not just involve members of this team, but could include mobile wardens, reception staff, occupational therapists, CAB advisors, voluntary sector agencies, health & social service staff. The Energy Advice Grants Agency will provide free training.	Sep 01
57 Benchmarking.  There is a continuing need to produce comparative data and costs, so that this authority's activities can be robustly compared with those of other councils and, where appropriate, private sector suppliers. The current benchmarking exercise within the County is working to the following timetable: - •Quality review matrix – completed Feb 01 •Detailed cost comparison – June 01 •Comparative data available – Nov 01	Nov 01	61 Health & energy combined action programme.  This scheme, currently in its infancy in Hart, seeks to exploit the linkage between energy and health.	Jan 02
58 Peer review.  The Environmental Health peer review scheme within Hampshire, currently covering food safety and health & safety, is to be expanded to include private sector housing.	Apr 02	62 Improved monitoring.  Reliable information on improved energy efficiency within owner occupied homes is difficult to obtain, although the recent house condition survey was invaluable in demonstrating what has actually been achieved over the last four years. Plans are being made to include most of Hampshire in a cost-effective monitoring exercise. Given relatively low costs, this can be funded from the existing budget.	May 01

## 1. Housing Service - Best Value Improvement Plan, *continued*

<b>Private sector housing – home energy conservation</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Private sector housing – grants</b>	<b>Implementation</b>
63 Hampshire local authority support pilot.  The continuation of this project is seen as vital to the authority's Home Energy Conservation Act programme due to the low level of internal resources. The modest financial provision can be made within the existing budget.	Apr 02	66 Reduce time of grant process, particularly Disabled Facilities Grants.  The Disabled Facilities Grant process involves officers from both County and District Councils. Customer satisfaction surveys have shown that the length of time a grant takes is a major issue. Larger grants can take several months from initial contact with Social Services to the completion of the works on site. Work will be carried out between both Councils to reduce the time taken to a minimum.	Apr 02
64 Accident prevention in older people.  Last year the Council hosted a very successful accident prevention conference. One result of that day was the suggestion of working groups being set up to co-ordinate activities, particularly with the voluntary sector, to reduce accidents. Statistics show that levels of accidents locally among the elderly are above national averages.	Jun 02	67 Increased publicity.  The recent focus group on grants highlighted the problem that the message about the availability of grants was not reaching many of the target audience. A display in the local library is planned and additional contact with local voluntary groups was recommended.	Implemented
<b>Private sector housing conditions</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	68 Action from internal audit of grants.  The action points from the recent internal audit of grants will be implemented, with particular attention given to fraud prevention and means testing of grants in line with the verification framework.	Feb 01
65 Homecheck.  This is a service aimed at the vulnerable, particularly the elderly, which will offer home visits to advise on a range of subjects, including repairs, security and energy efficiency. There is a significant implication as far as resources are concerned, and this will be considered within future budget setting.	Apr 02		
66 Landlords forum.  When resources allow, the pro-active inspection of rented property should be expanded beyond houses in multiple occupation. In parallel with that initiative there will need to be increased contact with landlords. Clearly the data gathered under item 54 above will assist this process.	2003		

## 2. Internal Audit - Best Value Review 2000

1. Best Value is a continuous process. This Action Plan reflects the fact that the first formal Best Value review may be effectively complete but there is a need for continuing efforts to secure continuous improvements in the quality of the service we offer.

2. We believe that the Best Value review has stimulated a number of changes and challenges to the way in which we deliver Internal Audit Services to Hart. The Position Statement describes some of the main changes made so far.

3. The most important outstanding work is to finalise our views on the most appropriate form of procurement. Contacts with other potential suppliers have provided the 'competition' element of Best Value but have also been a major stimulus to the 'consult', 'challenge' and 'compare' aspects.

4. The next stage is to examine the submissions of other potential suppliers, ensure that we are comparing like with like and draw the appropriate conclusions. This will involve detailed discussions with the most promising suppliers and assessing what service they can

provide at what price compared with the in-house team.

5. Nothing is excluded - it may be that full privatisation of the service is appropriate, that the service could be split between an element of in-house provision and an element of contractual provision or the service could remain fully in-house.

6. The possibility of additional resources will also be considered as it may be possible - at least for a period - for additional staff to be self financing from additional income and savings achieved.

7. It is felt that a major effort has been made to consult with our customers and it is still felt that there would be no benefit in trying to consult the public on a little known, internal service.

8. A post audit questionnaire is also being trialed to further improve the feedback received from customers. It is hoped that this, too, will lead to further improvements in the responsiveness of our service to Hart.

9. Significant progress has been made in comparing our costs and

plans within a benchmarking club consisting of eleven Hampshire Districts and Boroughs. More needs to be done on comparing outputs and quality as opposed to inputs in terms of auditor days and costs.

10. There have been many other improvements in the service provided - these are further described in the Best Value Position Statement.

11. The modernising agenda and, in particular, the likely establishment of a Scrutiny Committee may have an impact on the way the Council views its Internal Audit needs and strategy. This must be considered once political and any associated management restructuring is in place.

## 2. Internal Audit - Best Value Action Plan

Task	By When	Task	By When
1 Analyse submissions by other potential providers	12/00	10 Explain and promote Internal Audit and other services to Officers and Members via production and distribution of brief explanatory leaflet(s)	9/01
2 Select shortlist	1/01	11 Explain and promote Internal Audit by written and oral justification of the reworked Service Level Agreement	3/01
3 Devise further questions to shortlisted suppliers (eg: on flexibility, experience, references)	1/01	12 Explain and promote Internal Audit by development of Intranet pages as soon as technology available	2/01
4 Decide on future procurement of Internal Audit service for Hart	6/01	13 Explain and promote Internal Audit by complete rewrite of Budget Book narratives	2/01
5 Investigate possibility of additional staffing on a temporary, self-financing basis to generate savings and new income for Hart	7/01	14 Introduce more rigorous time monitoring with time over-runs eliminated or properly justified in every case	3/02
6 Continue to develop benchmarking measures	ongoing	15 Continue to improve follow-up performance in terms of recommendations followed up compared with number made in year	2000/01 - 50% 2001/02 - 60% 2002/03 - 70% later years - 80%
7 'Score' Internal Audit formally using the Business Excellence Model and decide if this is a useful tool to measure continuous improvement within the service	9/01	16 The purpose and methodology of Internal Audit should be thoroughly reviewed in the light of the new Committee structure and any associated changes to the management structure	3/02
8 Analyse results of post audit questionnaires (for all completed audits 11/00 - 3/01) and decide whether to continue	5/01	17 Negotiate with other Support Services (especially IT) to ensure that changes are fair and reasonable	12/00
9 Continue to secure External Audit approval on an annual basis and operate as a 'Managed Audit' site (as defined by the Audit Commission)	every year		

### 3. Reprographics

Reprographics is an internal support service with the equivalent of 1.5 full time staff members providing printing and high volume photocopying as well as some basic desktop publishing design work. The majority of the Council's specialist design work is provided by the private sector.

The section's main work is to service the Council's democratic support function producing meeting agendas and minutes and the electoral register. It was originally intended that the service should be reviewed as part of these services but as previously mentioned, these services were moved to Year Two.

The Action Plan reflects the fact that although the formal review may be effectively complete there is still a need for continuing efforts to secure improvement in the quality service offered.

#### Action Plan

- Customers have been consulted and although most are satisfied there are areas for improvement
- Recent equipment changes will allow improvement to be made in print quality

- Customer feedback reflects the wish for enhanced artwork therefore training aspects of the service will be addressed
- The review recognised the probable impact of IT developments and agreed the service must be subject to regular review to take account of change
- Whilst it has been possible to compare some costs, contacts made will lead the formation of a benchmarking club
- As and when neighbouring authorities commence their own reprographic review we will seek to collaborate with them in areas where joint working may afford better value and cost-effective service delivery

### 4. Licensing

The Review has been completed as far as is currently possible. Further conclusions cannot be made until more information is available from work done as a result of the improvement plan.

#### Summary of the Review

- Licensing functions are in the main provided by three Business Units reporting to three different service committees. A few other licenses are provided elsewhere
- Most of the licensing services are non-discretionary or needed for sound reasons
- Staff involved in this work typically have other functions to fulfil and often a very small part of their time is spent on licensing
- This spread of responsibilities must appear confusing to our external customers and there might be potential for improving this situation
- Liquor licensing is to be transferred to local authorities from the licensing justices in the next couple of years and this will need to be considered in the review

- Before meaningful comparisons can be made with others to test our performance levels we need accurate time allocation data. This is planned for the first half of the financial year 2001/2002
- More information is required on the needs of our customers to ensure that we are providing the services they need and improved customer feedback systems are also planned in this period
- The improvement plan is designed to gather this vital information to take us to the next stage of the process, which will involve the generation of options for change, selection of the most appropriate option and implementation of this option

## Summary of the key findings of the Auditor's Report on Hart's Performance Plan for 2000/2001

### Preparation and publication of the BVPP in accordance with the Local Government Act 1999 and statutory guidance

Hart's BVPP has been prepared and published in accordance with the Local Government Act 1999 and relevant statutory guidance. We issued an unqualified opinion on 22 June 2000.

The BVPP is presented in a clear manner. The Authority has used colour and tables throughout, which helps to break up the text and draw attention to key issues.

The summary BVPP was distributed to all residences in late March 2000. At the start of our audit in mid February, the Authority had not intended to publish and distribute a summary version of the BVPP. However, after discussion with us, the Authority prepared a summary and we are pleased that this was distributed throughout the District before the statutory deadline.

### Robustness of systems to produce performance information in the BVPP

The BVPP met virtually all of the requirements of the governing legislation in respect of performance information. We also identified a number of good practices in place to ensure that the Authority included relevant and accurate performance information in its BVPP.

Overall, we found few errors. We would like to commend officers on their work in this area, as it has proved problematic for authorities nationally this year.

### Corporate and management arrangements to support the best value performance process

Hart has made progress in the last eighteen months in setting up mechanisms to tackle best value. We have found a strong approach to consultation and commend the Authority on the commitment it has shown to developing the Community Plan. It will be important for the Authority to keep this momentum going in the coming year.

At the time of our audit, the corporate plan required significant further refinement and an authority-wide performance management system had yet to be established. Officers recognise that these are crucial if Hart is to demonstrate continuous improvements in the delivery of services and tackle the issues that it has agreed are the most important to the Authority as a whole.

We understand that the Authority is updating the Corporate Plan, ensuring that service plans are put in place for all units and linking

overall objectives with those of individual members of staff. It is important that these elements of performance management are put in place to provide a framework around which the Authority can base its approach to best value.

At 31 March 2000, Hart had not developed an approach to procurement and competition at a corporate level. As part of each best value review the Authority must review the competitiveness of individual services and this will be reviewed as part of the inspection process. The Authority therefore needs to tackle this issue as a matter of priority.

In considering new approaches to the delivery of some of its services, Hart needs to identify additional services that can be packaged together and reviewed as cross cutting themes. Where appropriate, such reviews would involve other service providers and may be carried out in conjunction with other best value authorities.

Although unqualified, our audit opinion contained two recommendations, in respect of

performance management and competition as referred to above. The Authority is required to respond to these within 30 days of the audit opinion and it will have to report on the progress made in addressing them in next years BVPP.

### **The Way Forward**

Hart is tackling the best value agenda positively. It has taken the initiative to engage the other service providers during the last year and it intends to involve the rest of the local community in this process in 2000/01. By addressing the issues identified in this report, the Authority should enhance its approach to carrying out best value reviews and demonstrating to the public its determination to realise continuous service improvements.

As part of our ongoing work on best value and next year's BVPP audit, we will be reviewing how Hart is tackling these important issues and those identified in this report.

## Hart District Council Corporate Plan - February 2000

Times are changing!

One of the Government's key priorities is its agenda for modernising local government. New duties are being placed on local authorities, for instance to take a leadership role in the community, to consult the community on plans and services and to introduce Best Value generally. This corporate plan takes this agenda on board and sets the direction for Hart into the future.

### What is the Corporate Plan?

It is the document which sets out:

- The overall purpose of Hart District Council (Hart's *Mission*);
- The *Vision* - what position Hart would wish to hold for the community in the future;
- *Beliefs* - What are our collective values - what cultural atmosphere do we want to work within
- *Objectives* to achieve the Mission; and
- *Action* – what needs to be put in place to achieve those objectives.

### Our Purpose - Mission:

*"To secure provision for the needs and wishes of the community of Hart."*

This Mission Statement shifts the focus away from direct service provision to allow the provision of services that the Hart community requires in the most appropriate way. This may not necessarily be direct provision but through others. It seeks to be inclusive - to the whole of Hart's community. It seeks to make provision appropriate to Hart's needs and aspirations.

### What position would Hart like to hold for the community in the future? What is our Vision?

Four statements look to the future:

- "To secure the provision of services of a quality that matches the requirements of the community of Hart."
- "To consult with and respond to the needs of our customers

leaving them delighted with our services, having confidence in us in the future."

- "To be respected as the local employer of choice."
- "To be receptive to new challenges and embrace change."

### Our Collective Values: What are our beliefs?

To illustrate the type of cultural environment we would wish to work within, three key values are set out below:

- "To foster fairness to all by putting people first and behaving with integrity in an honest and open way."
- To foster a working environment where trust, teamwork, support and innovation are harnessed to achieve Hart's mission both within the Council and with others."
- "To respect the views of others."

continued...

## Objectives:

### Leadership

- To establish and maintain strong leadership within Hart District Council.
- To establish Hart as a champion of the community in promoting the economic, social and environmental well being of the area, working with other public, private and voluntary organisations and with local people to do this.

### Services

- To make best use of Hart's resources for the benefit of the community.

### Community

- To establish a strong relationship with the community of Hart by consulting them and to involve them in decisions about service provision.
- To set clear priorities to reflect expressed community aspirations.
- To seek equality of opportunity.

### Excellence

- To ensure that service provision meets the expectations of the community.

## Action List

### Develop and implement a two-way communication channel with both internal and external customers, partners and other stakeholders to:

- develop a listening and responsive culture and to
- ensure that all sections of Hart's community are consulted, heard and involved

Ongoing. Currently in hand

### Review the Council's political, ethical and operational structures and processes to:

- develop and implement an accountable, effective and responsive organisation
- ensure that all processes are equitable in their application
- ensure that training and development is adequate and appropriate to meet the Council's objectives

Timescale: during the 2000/2001 year

### Harness the Best Value process

### Involve all sections of the Community in the preparation of a

## Community plan to:

- ensure that scarce resources are used to meet local needs and priorities

Timescale: Ongoing in 2001/2002.

### To seek out and encourage partnership working with other bodies where it would be appropriate to do so to:

- Encourage and detail the synergy being developed taking advantage of economies of scale in the provision of services

Timescale: Ongoing

## Extracts from the Council's Communications Strategy - Section Two: External Communication

**External Communication covers three key areas:**

### 1. Consultation, Participation and Involving the Public

The main point of the Modernising Local Government agenda focuses on consultation with businesses, partners, customers and potential customers as well as the community at large.

It is relatively simple to consult through representative groups of businesses and partners but to have meaningful dialogue with people as individuals and as part of the community requires a structured approach.

It has already been agreed in principle that a representative group of people should form the core consultative group to address this issue but there will of course be times when this is an inappropriate technique to use.

Below and in the following pages are some key participation and involvement techniques. The choice of technique will depend on a range of factors such as the purpose of the exercise, available resources and statutory requirements.

### Key Participative and Involvement Techniques

Although the list is presented in three separate sections it should be noted that many of the techniques could be entered under more than one heading. We need therefore to keep an open mind when considering options.

### Involvement in Direct Decision Making

Method / Technique	Description	Application
Representative Group of Individuals / Citizens Panels	Representative cross-section of the local authority's population (1000-2500 people) whose views are canvassed regularly either by postal questionnaire, telephone or occasionally face to face if circumstances warrant it.	Testing Opinion, gaining feedback, seeking views. Test specific options or proposals  Can focus on service specific or policy / strategy issues
Panels of Inquiry / Public Scrutiny Committees	Representative cross section of the local authority's population (6 to 12 people)	Scrutiny and Performance review and monitoring - views are intended to inform Councillors' decision-making.
More involvement at Council Meetings	More participative public question and answer sessions at Committee and Council meetings  Hold meetings around District	Gaining feedback and testing opinion

## Involvement in Direct Decision Making *continued*

Method / Technique	Description	Application
Co-option onto Committees	Invite members of the public or interested parties to participate in discussions	
Fora / Neighbourhood Committees and User Groups	Small on going discussion groups usually with specific interests, characteristics or geographical base.  Set or open membership	Dealing with issues which affect their community or area of interest  Can make recommendations

## Seeking Views

Method / Technique	Application	Description
Focus Groups / Survey Panels	Informal groups of 12-20 (focus) or more for a Survey Panel which would probably involve less discussion	To gauge in depth responses to a particular issue  Discuss services from a customer perspective  Involve representatives involved in the service to share views, discuss and resolve conflict or determine action
Opinion Polls / Surveys	Straight question and answer or  Deliberative- Debate before poll is taken  Face to face, telephone or postal	One-off or regular  Service specific or general  Service/customer satisfaction  Cover entire population or particular group
Citizens Juries / Performance Panels	Representative group of people drawn from the community (12-16 people) who are fully briefed on an issue, hear information from and question experts before discussing the issue  Advisory not decisive	To inform the Council's decision making via a report of the jury's views including any differences of opinion

## Seeking Views *continued*

Method / Technique	Description	Application
Conferences / Seminars	Similar to Focus Group but much larger	Public consultation Establish vision
Interactive Web site	Either on the Internet or on a local Authority specific internet site	Inviting e-mail messages on particular issues
Complaints / suggestion schemes	Can be on-going or temporary schemes	Invite comments and suggestions on general or particular issues
Public Meetings	Traditional method of informing public at an open meeting, usually with a panel of Councillors and / or officers	Informing

## Determining Specific Policy

Method of Communication	Description	Application
Referendums	Allowing a vote to be taken on a particular (usually contentious) issue.	Test public opinion about specific issues
Consultation Documents	Traditional method of seeking views by producing a draft document for consultation	Seeking views or facilitating debate on broad options

## Consultation Results

During the latter part of the year two research studies were conducted on our behalf by the MORI Local Government Unit:

**1. A Community Planning & Priorities Survey** conducted by telephone with 1,004 Hart residents to explore community planning issues and priorities for future service provision in the local area.

We were particularly interested in the:

- overall satisfaction with the area and priorities for quality of life
- satisfaction with the Council and how it meets the needs of the area
- importance, satisfaction and usage of local services
- priorities for future service improvements in the District

**2. A Best Value Performance Indicators General Survey**, conducted by post. A number of Best Value Performance Indicators explicitly reflect users' perceptions of a range of services provided. This survey was conducted to provide us with information for these indicators.

*Key Results:*

### **General Satisfaction**

- The majority of residents view Hart positively as a place to live, and are satisfied with the way we run the area overall
- Issues seen as most important in making somewhere a good place to live include good schools and education, adequate public transport, proximity to shops, leisure facilities and open-ness, greenery and countryside

### **Area Priorities**

A number of key issues came up in the survey as being of high importance to residents and also in need of improvement. Residents also feel that these services are not being successfully provided at

present by the Council. Priority areas to address are:

- Reducing traffic levels and congestion and public transport
- Provision of improved leisure facilities, especially for the young
- Communicating with local people by listening to their views and providing them with more information

### **Spending Priorities**

- Top priorities for future improvement are managing traffic congestion, street cleansing and maintenance. Top spending priorities include facilities for children and young people. The arts and heritage emerge as the lowest spending priorities.
- Methods of improving cost-effectiveness which are supported by residents include increasing charges for car parking and for pest control. Residents believe that spending should not be limited on community welfare schemes for the elderly or disabled.

### **Public Involvement**

- Residents would like to have more say on crime and safety, planning and development, transport and meeting the needs of young people. Nearly half of those surveyed were willing to join the Hart Citizens' Panel.

Good schools and education, transportation, traffic management and adequate public transport are the responsibility of the County Council but we shall of course work with them to champion the promotion of improvements in these areas as well as in the areas for which we are jointly responsible.

### **Recruiting a Citizens' Panel**

A further objective of both the Community Planning and BVPIs surveys was to recruit a Citizens' Panel which we can survey in the future with the aim of informing our decision making process. We were able to recruit a Panel of approximately 1,000 residents.

## Local Authority Plans

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### Community Plan / Strategy

Co-ordinates all the services provided to the Community and outlines Community priorities for those services.

Following consultation with the Community and other service providers, the Council leads on producing this document which together with Statutory requirements, Government Policy and Guidance inform the Council's . . .

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### Corporate Plan

Outlines the Council's overall priorities and objectives,

which is supported by . . .

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### Corporate Policy and Strategy plans, eg:

- Community Safety Plan
- Local Plan
- Economic Development Strategy
- Housing Strategy
- Arts and Leisure Strategy
- Health Strategy
- Communications Strategy
- IS/IT Strategy
- Transport Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy

These outline the policy framework and the general direction the Council will take with regard to corporate and Authority wide issues.

The Council's performance and achievement of the objectives outlined in the Corporate and Supporting Plans is reported in the . . .

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### Best Value Performance Plan

A report to the community and others with a stake in the Council, summarising the Council's objectives, how it measures performance and information about past and current performance and future targets.

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### Service Plans

Detailed plans of how individual services are to be delivered and developed within the corporate framework.

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## Extracts from the Council's Best Value Procurement Strategy

What is necessary is that authorities show they have considered all the relevant options for the procurement of the service and that enough evidence has been assembled and considered during the course of the BV review to enable a choice to be made as to which option is most likely to deliver best value on the basis of the evidence" (DETR Circular 10/99).

Each best value review is required to examine all alternative service delivery options and to select those which will ensure value for money and continuous improvement, in terms of both cost and quality, in line with stakeholder requirements.

There is a need for an open mind as to who will provide the service.

The purpose of this procurement strategy is to provide a corporate framework for procurement to help Review teams and ultimately Members, to make a decision on which service delivery option or options to pursue in their review action plans.

### **The choice of Service Delivery Options should be influenced by:**

- the results of the service review
- external rules
- corporate values and objectives
- the existence of a market
- an examination of the benefits of delivering the service through another organisation
- an estimate of the cost of delivering the service through another organisation
- the level of uncertainty and risk

### **Option Appraisal Process**

The purpose of option appraisal is to ensure that the review teams put recommendations to Members that are deliverable. The key questions are:

- have we got the right option?
- Have we got the power to do it?
- Will we achieve value for money?
- Can we afford the project over the whole lifetime of the proposed arrangement?
- What are the risks involved?
- Can we resource the project with people with the right skills?
- How long will it take to put the proposed arrangement into place?
- The option appraisal process must be open and transparent and capable of being audited

## The options for service delivery

### **Pull out or withdraw from an activity**

The Council decides it should no longer provide a service or take part in an activity

#### **Most appropriate**

- evidence of no need or demand for the service
- other providers can continue without intervention or support from the Council
- costs of the service or activity considerably outweigh benefits
- service or activity makes no contribution to corporate objectives

#### **Less appropriate**

- doubts about evidence
- uncertainty about whether the alternative providers do meet existing needs or demands
- potential for future service development

### **In house Service Management**

Service is provided in house. Management may be through traditional hierarchy, internal trading arrangements, or service level agreements. The Authority may involve, or consult, others in decisions about overall objectives and in monitoring service quality

#### **Most appropriate**

- The existing internal service is, or is close to, meeting local targets and national standards
- There is no supply market
- Cost of externalisation is likely to be high

- High impact if service fails

#### **Less Appropriate**

- Poor existing internal services
- Need for external investment
- Active, competitive, market with established suppliers
- Service is easy to specify and monitor

### **Joint Commissioning**

Two or more public service organisations agree to commission or provide services together. There is no 'client' or 'contractor' and the organisation are jointly involved in management

#### **More appropriate**

- Services are provided from a single point (eg a one stop shop, or a call centre)
- Participating organisations are willing to bury their separate identities in the interests of the joint service
- Financial and other risks can be shared on an equitable basis
- Participating organisations do not have the wide range of expertise or sufficient resources to deal with all requests for service - but the volume of requests does not justify further investment by each authority
- Sharing resources, staff etc will produce significant economies and improved quality
- All participating organisations require the same, or very similar, services
- Clear lines of responsibility and accountability are necessary

#### **Less appropriate**

- Organisational identities and imperatives are more important than a seamless service
- There are no obvious and willing partners
- Legal constraints cannot be overcome

### **Market Testing**

The in house organisation competes with external service providers to win the work. This is the same as voluntary competition tendering

#### **More appropriate**

- The pressure of competition is necessary to ensure improvements in in-house performance
- There is an active and competitive supply market
- The service is easy to specify and maintain
- A new service area is being developed and the Authority has no preference between in house and external provision
- In house performance can be benchmarked against competition

#### **Less appropriate**

- Potential suppliers likely to suspect the Council of going through the motions and not bid
- Staff are unwilling to make the improvements necessary
- The costs of preparing for competition (both client and contractor) outweigh benefits
- The in house team has no real chance of winning
- Market testing is suggested as a last ditch effort to avoid externalisation

## Externalisation

### a). Service is provided by external organisations

that compete to do the work. Management is through the specification which sets out the work to be done and the contract conditions that form the basis of the relationship between client and service provider

#### More appropriate

- Poor existing internal services, or new services, where internal supply is thought inappropriate
- There will be a clear client-contractor relationship
- There is an active, competitive market with established suppliers
- Benefit of using the market outweighs the costs
- Service is easy to specify and monitor

#### Less appropriate

- Internal service management is demonstrably best value
- Opportunists or monopolists dominate the market
- The Council's service objectives go beyond a simple value for money calculation
- Service is difficult to specify and monitor
- Other methods of provision offer better value

### b) A contract supplemented by a formal 'partnership' arrangement

The services are supplied through a contract that places greater emphasis on shared objectives and on the relationship with the supplier. These arrangements widely referred to as 'partnering arrangements'

#### More appropriate

- The service is difficult to specify and monitor
- The Authority wants to work with an organisation it can do business with rather than one that just does the business
- It is possible to agree on a programme of future innovation
- There is a high level of mutual trust between Authority and suppliers
- External suppliers can offer savings, innovations or other benefits that cannot be found in house

#### Less appropriate

- Opportunists dominate the market
- The service is easy to specify and monitor
- In house supply is more likely to deliver best value
- The Authority's main objective is to achieve savings

## Transfer

The Authority ceases to be the 'client'. That role is taken over by another organisation. This may be a residents association, charity, co-operative or trust. The Authority may still have a residual role, a seat on the board, nominating people for the service, grant aid, or by subsidising service delivery to the public

#### More appropriate

- The activities of, or services produced by, the organisation fit with the Council's overall objectives

- The local authority and the other organisations agree on the level of accountability required
- The services are provided to the community or the community and individuals make a contribution to the service
- Community groups have or can be trained in the necessary management skills
- The authority have a commitment to community development and to involvement of common use in service management
- The organisational independence is necessary to ensure users 'trust' or 'ownership' of the activity

#### Less appropriate

- The Council has clear service objectives that it wants to achieve
- The service is significant (in financial or operational terms) and needs close management specification and marketing
- Personal and highly regulated services
- It would be more appropriate (in line with best value and the authority's policies) to make contracts, or partnering arrangements, with local or community businesses
- There is little, or no, community interest in service management and delivery
- There is an active supply market and no policy gain can be made by transfer

## Hybrid Options

The Authority decides that no single option is appropriate. The service includes a variety of

different types of activity, or the Best Value tests applied to different parts of the service come up with different answers

**More appropriate**

- A service is made up of different aspects that have different best value tests applied to them (front desk staff and data processing for example)
- Areas of excellence exist side by side with services that need considerable improvement
- Different elements make clearly different contributions to overall service delivery and best value
- There is a wide range of user needs which are best met in different ways
- External resources can most effectively be used to support in house services rather than competing with them
- Evidence from the review is equivocal

**Less appropriate**

- The service is easy to specify and monitor
- The service is a clearly definitive single service
- The service is made up of so many separate elements that a hybrid approach could lead to an unmanageable complexity of contract, agreement and inter-dependencies.
- Economy and effectiveness are served best by a single service delivery organisation

## A checklist for appraising options for service delivery

<b>Stage 1 Eliminate services or activities which should no longer be provided</b>	Record your justification
<b>Stage 2 Decide whether there are any of the core elements of the service which must be retained in-house</b>	Record justification
<b>Stage 3 For each service delivery option (other than pull out) ask the following questions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Is there a policy reason for eliminating this option?</li> <li>•Is there a legal reason for eliminating this option?</li> <li>•Is there a financial reason for eliminating the option?</li> <li>•Is there any other reason(s) for eliminating the option?</li> </ul> <p>SOME OPTIONS MAY BE ELIMINATED</p>	<p>The answers to each question must be recorded in full. Rejection or acceptance of an option must be properly justified.</p> <p>If an option is rejected at this stage is there anything that should be done to remove the obstacle before future</p>
<b>Stage 4 Assess remaining options against the extent to which they can help in bridging the service gap(s) identified in the service review</b> <p>ELIMINATE OPTIONS WHICH ARE NOT APPROPRIATE</p>	Fully document your assessment
<b>Stage 5 Assess remaining options in the light of evidence from other Councils viz</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•What is the Council's experience of using each option</li> <li>•How does each option contribute towards best value for them</li> <li>•Also what opportunity is there for creating a market</li> </ul> <p>ELIMINATE OPTIONS WHICH ARE NOT APPROPRIATE</p>	Fully document your assessment

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**Stage 6** If there is still more than one option left then assess each option in terms of its expected contribution to Best Value and risk to the authority

Fully document your assessment

- Contribution to the 5 'E's, continuous improvement and to the achievement of corporate and service objectives
- Risk to the authority in terms of likelihood of service or function failure and depth of extent of failure

ARRIVE AT YOUR FINAL OPTION

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**Stage 7** If you have arrived at an option which requires you to enter into contract with an external party you will need to examine each of the 'ways to compete' until you have a combination of option and method

Document your choice of approach (including why you eliminated other approaches)

THIS MIGHT BE LEFT TO BE DONE AFTER THE REVIEW AS PART OF THE ACTION PLAN

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## Structure of Local Government in Hart

### Electoral Areas

#### There are five levels of government within Hart.

The three levels of Local Government (Parish, District and County) are not hierarchical in that they are all directly responsible to Central Government, not to each other.

**Parish Council:** There are 17 Parish or Town Councils in Hart. The size of the Council and the extent of its activities depends of course on the size of the Parish.

**District Council:** The district is divided into sixteen wards. Each ward returns one, two or three Councillors depending on the size of the electorate. Elections are held three years out of every four years. Hart's District Councillors are:

Maria Armstrong	LD	01252 875955	Peter Kern	NAI	01252 872975
Susan Band	C&I	01252 843176	Fergus Kirkham	LD	01256 766122
Robert Benford	C&I	01256 702895	Norman Lambert	C&I	01252 850026
Brian Blewett	LD	01276 509146	Brian Leversha	Con	01252 615534
Peter Carr	C&I	01252 811330	Carol Leversha	Con	01252 615534
Hugo Eastwood	C&I	01189 735613	Charles Lynch	LD	01252 875190
Lucy Ellis	C&I	01252 816374	David Neighbour	LD	01276 33043
Rosemary Feltham	C&I	01252 614953	Stephen Parker	C&I	01252 661375
Archie Gillespie	LD	01252 656839	Mark Sallis	C&I	01252 843951
Jonathan Glen	C&I	01256 76364	Heather Shearer	LD	01252 711579
Alan Hammersley	LD	01252 871238	Peter Shoesmith	C&I	01252 621268
Robert Harward	LD	01252 873492	David Simpson	LD	01252 874459
Colin Hazell	C&I	01252 626827	John Stocks	C&I	01252 617141
Andrew Henderson	C&I	01256 862413	Mark Stokes	LD	01276 506243
Richard Hunt	C&I	01252 627775	Viv Street	LD	01252 873916
Peter Hutcheson	C&I	01252 614108	Sarah Wallis	C&I	01256 862285
Roger Jones	C&I	01256 702340	Sharyn Wheale	C&I	01252 616080
Ann Kern	NAI	01252 872975			

**County Council:** Hampshire is divided into Electoral Divisions (similar to but much bigger than District Wards) each of which returns one Councillor. There are five County Electoral Divisions covering Hart. Elections are held once every four years. Hart's County Councillors are:

Mr J Stocks	Con	Fleet Division
Mr P R C Hutcheson	Con	Hawley and Church Crookham Division
Mr J K Glen	Con	Hartley Wintney Division
Mr A Varden	Con	Odiham Division
Mr A P Collett	LD	Yateley Division

#### Political Groups / Parties (abbreviations used):

C&I	Conservative and Independent
LD	Liberal Democrat
NAI	Non Aligned Independent
Con	Conservative
Lab	Labour
Green	Green
UKInd	UK Independent

**Central Government:** There are two parliamentary constituencies covering Hart each returning one MP to the House of Commons:

Mr. G. Howarth MP	Con	Aldershot Constituency
The Rt Hon J Arbuthnot MP	Con	North East Hampshire Constituency

**European Government:** Hart is part of the South East Region which elects 11 MEP's:

Mr J Provan	Con	Mr J Elles	Con
Mr D Hannan	Con	Mr P Skinner	Lab
Mr N Deva	Con	Mr C Huhne	LD
Mr M Watts	Lab	Mr N Farage	UKInd
Ms C Lucas	Green	Emma Nicholson, Baroness of Winterbourne LD	
Mr R Perry	Con		

## Local Government Services

**The activities of local Councils are confined to those specified in law. Some of the services provided by local Councils are obligatory (duty) whilst others are optional (power) eg: a District Council *must* arrange for the collection of refuse but it *may* build houses and sports halls or give grants.**

A brief outline of the main functions of local government follows. A number of functions can be exercised concurrently by County and District Councils or by District and Parish Councils.

### County Councils

Strategic Planning  
Social Services  
Consumer Protection  
Fire  
Libraries, Museums and Art Galleries  
National Parks  
Mineral and Gravel Extraction

Emergency Planning  
Public Rights of Way  
Refuse Disposal  
Highways & Transport Planning  
Education  
Commons Register  
Gypsy and Caravan Sites

Street Lighting  
Tourism  
Births, Deaths & Marriages Registration  
Small-holdings  
Economic Development  
Parks and Open Spaces

### District Councils

Local Planning & Development Control  
Building Regulations  
Licensing and Land Charges  
Cemeteries and Crematoria  
Housing  
Environmental Health  
Refuse Collection

Leisure  
Parks, Commons & other Open Spaces  
Public Conveniences  
Economic Development  
Allotments  
Car Parks  
Museums and Art Galleries  
Footpaths and Bridleways

Electoral Register  
Economic Development  
Tourism  
Markets  
Collection of Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rate  
Emergency Planning  
Community Planning

**NB: London Boroughs, English Metropolitan Districts and Unitary Authorities cover all the functions listed above**

### Parish Councils

Provision & administration of allotments  
Commons, Village Greens and Other Open Spaces  
Cemeteries, Cremation & Burial Grounds

Village Halls  
Bus Shelters  
Ponds, Ditches, Footpaths, and Lighting  
Receiving of Accounts of Parochial Charities

Recreation and Leisure  
Public Conveniences  
• Parish Councils also have a statutory right to be consulted on applications for planning permission.

## Hart District Council Services

### Direct Services

- **The generic term for front line services with direct contact with customers.**

#### Council Tax and Business Rate Collection

Council Tax and Business Rates are collected on behalf of the County, District and Parish Councils and the Police Authority. Various reliefs and exemptions from payment of both are available.

#### Economic Development and Business Support

Various local business support agencies are given financial support through grants or provision of premises. Town and village centre groups are given support. Appropriate commercial development is promoted and encouraged within the District.

#### Affordable Housing and Homelessness

Regular housing need and provision assessments are carried out. Grants are made to housing associations to provide affordable housing. People in need of emergency

accommodation are dealt with and a housing register is maintained through an agency agreement with an housing association. The Council also nominates people for housing association vacancies.

#### Private Sector Housing

Grants are made to homeowners for disabled facilities and to bring private sector housing up to acceptable standards. Housing standards are monitored in the private sector and caravan sites are licensed. Home energy conservation is promoted.

#### Administration of Housing and Council Tax Benefits

The Council administers Housing and Council Tax Benefits for people on low incomes on behalf of the Department of Social Security.

#### Commercial Environmental Health

All food premises in the district are inspected and advice on food hygiene and safety is given.

Accidents are investigated at shops, offices, warehouses and some other premises and routine inspections of these premises are carried out to ensure the health and safety of

employees. Measures are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases.

#### Community Safety

In partnership with other service providers and organisations in the District, a full audit of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour is carried out and a strategy developed to tackle the key issues arising from the audit. Closed Circuit Television surveillance in town and village centres is provided throughout the District.

#### Community Health

The Council is working with other public, private and voluntary organisations to ensure maximum benefit for the Community with regard to health and welfare issues. A grant is made to Hart Voluntary Action to help support voluntary organisations.

#### Support for Elderly and Disabled People

For a small administration charge, a community alarm system provides twenty-four emergency cover for vulnerable people in the District via mobile wardens employed direct by

the Council and cover purchased from a housing association care centre service. In partnership with Hampshire County Council and the Women's Royal Voluntary Service, meals are provided to elderly people in their own homes two or three times a week. Financial assistance towards the cost of transport is provided to some elderly and disabled people.

#### Leisure and Community Facilities

An extensive range of formal indoor leisure facilities is provided at Hart (Fleet) and Frogmore (Yateley) Leisure Centres and the Harlington Centre (Fleet). Velmead Community Centre and the Harlington Centre provide for a wide range of entertainment, welfare and social activities. Outdoor sports facilities and play areas are provided at various locations throughout the District. A holiday play scheme is run during school holidays at the two leisure centres. Provision is made at Fleet Cemetery for burials and this and the redundant cemeteries at St Peter's Church, Yateley and St Mary's Church are maintained.

### **Grants and Loans**

Grants and loans are made to other organisations in the District to provide a wide range of additional leisure, sporting and community facilities.

### **Elections and Registration**

The Register of Electors is compiled and published each year and local and parliamentary elections are conducted as required. A Local Land Charges Register is maintained and requests for searches of the Register are responded to. Various licence, permits and certificates of registration are dealt with by the Council including Public Entertainment Licenses, Community Licenses, Street and House to House Collection Licenses, Animal Welfare Licenses, Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licenses.

### **Land Use Planning and Transportation Policy**

Development in the District is controlled through the planning system. Local planning policies are formulated taking into account the statutory framework and local conditions and circumstances.

### **Development Control**

Planning applications for development are considered and

determined in accordance with policies outlined in the Local Plan. Breaches of planning control are investigated and dealt with appropriately. Advice on planning issues, listed buildings, conservation areas and tree preservation is also available.

### **Building Control**

New buildings and alterations and extensions to existing buildings are regularly inspected to ensure that they comply with Building Regulations to ensure a good standard of health, safety and energy conservation. The Council also carries out control of demolition work and the securing of dangerous structures.

### **Waste Management and Cleansing**

The Council is a partner in a Hampshire wide integrated waste management strategy which aims to reduce waste levels by promoting waste reduction and recycling. A wheeled bin system is in operation for the collection of domestic refuse and recyclable materials. A commercial waste collection service for which a charge is made is also provided. Highways are kept clean and clear of litter. Litter is removed from public places and fly tipping and abandoned vehicles are cleared away. Five public conveniences are

provided and maintained throughout the District. The Council's Direct Services Organisation won the contract to provide these services for a minimum of six years from 1st April 1997.

### **Pollution Control / Minimisation**

Certain environmental pollutants, air and drinking water quality, noise nuisance, contaminated land are all monitored and appropriate action taken to reduce or eradicate any problems. Rats, mice and other pests of public health significance are destroyed in domestic premises. Other pest which have no public health significance such as fleas and wasps are destroyed but are charged for as are services provided to commercial premises. Stray dogs are collected, dog nuisance and dog fouling incidents investigated.

### **Highways Design and Car Parks**

The District's interests are represented on a wide range of highway issues such as cycleways, road safety, traffic calming, on-street parking and local transport planning. The highways and transportation elements of the planning process are dealt with. The Council also acts as agent for Hampshire County Council (The Highway Authority) in certain

Development Control matters and grass cutting in urban areas. Eight car parks are provided throughout the District all week with three others being available during weekends. In all but one weekend car park charges are made to cover the costs of provision.

### **Countryside and Commons Management**

Fleet Pond, Odiham Common, Hazeley Heath and other parcels of common land in Hartley Wintney are all owned and / or maintained by the Council. The Council also acquires, controls and manages land for informal recreation and amenity value.

### **Enhancement / Urban Improvements**

Schemes to improve and enhance the appearance of the built and natural environment are designed and implemented. Assessment of the landscape implications of new developments is also undertaken.

### **Drainage and Grounds Maintenance**

Public health issues concerning drainage are dealt with. Information about sewer maps is made available to the public, first time sewerage systems are promoted to Thames Water Utilities and the Council liaises with the Environment

Agency on pollution incidents, consents to discharge, piping of watercourses and drainage implications of planning applications. Responsibility for the maintenance of primary watercourses in the District and for minimising the risk of flooding is also taken but this work is contracted out. Routine maintenance of Council land including work for Hampshire County Council and the Basingstoke Canal Authority such as grass cutting, shrub bed and hedge maintenance is carried out by a private contractor for the Council.

### **Emergency Planning**

The Council works closely with the Hampshire County Council Emergency Planning Unit to ensure that plans are in place to respond to any major civil emergency.

## **Corporate Management**

**- The overall management and policy-making of the Council as a whole**

## **Support services**

**- The generic term for services within the Council which support the direct service providers.**

### **Financial Management and Control**

The Council has various procedures in place to ensure that financial resources are being managed and controlled in a cost effective and secure way. Guidance is given to the Council and managers on budgeting and financial planning.

### **Audit**

Regular Audit and review of the Council's affairs and procedures ensures probity and value for money. Guidance is available for the Council and managers on financial and procedural controls.

### **Personnel**

Support and guidance is provided for the Council and managers on all staffing issues including recruitment, industrial relations, staff training,

development and welfare.

### **Legal**

Legal guidance is given to the Council in connection with all its business but with specific emphasis on planning matters.

### **Information Technology**

Computer based systems are now vital to the smooth running of the Council. The systems are supported and maintained by in-house staff and maintenance contractors.

### **Office Services**

Administrative services available to all the Council's internal and external service providers include, printing, reception, central purchasing, telephones and cashiers.

### **Member Support**

Administrative support and advice to Councillors, Council and Council committee meetings such as agenda preparation and despatch, minute taking and the preparation of notices and applications required by statute.

### **Building Design and Maintenance**

Building design, contract management and site supervision of the Council's capital and revenue building and drainage projects.

Design and / or supervision is also provided to Parish and community organisations.

## Hart District Council Management

### Political Leadership

The Government has introduced legislation that requires us to change the way we make decisions. Our current committee structure will have to change to one of three options:

#### 1. Directly elected Mayor and Cabinet

A Mayor, elected by the whole electorate of the District, would form a Cabinet from elected Councillors to share in the leadership of the Council. Cabinet members might take responsibility for various aspects of the Council's work but the Mayor would be the political leader for the Community, proposing policy for approval by the Council and steering its implementation by the Cabinet.

The Council Chairman would remain as the Civic figurehead of the Council

#### 2. Council Leader appointed by the Council and Cabinet

All the elected Councillors would elect a Leader from their number. The Leader would then select a Cabinet from the other Councillors to share in the leadership of the Council. Again Cabinet members might take responsibility for various aspects of the Council's work but the Mayor would be the political leader for the Community, proposing

policy for approval by the Council and steering its implementation by the Cabinet.

The Council Chairman would remain as the Civic figurehead of the Council

#### 3. Directly elected Mayor with a Council manager

An elected Mayor would be the key political leader and policy developer for the Council. A paid employee would be appointed as Council manager to work with the Mayor and Councillors to implement policies developed by them. The Mayor would provide the political leadership and the Council manager would provide the managerial leadership.

The Council Chairman would remain as the Civic figurehead of the Council

We are currently consulting with Hart's Community to establish their views on which of the three options open to us they prefer. From May 2001 we shall be piloting the chosen option.

### Operational Management

Depending on the option chosen for the political leadership of the Council, there may need to be a re-organisation of the management of the operational aspect of the Authority. In the meantime, the following chart (overleaf) shows the departmental structure of the Authority.

## Departmental Structure

### Chief Executive

Grahame Jelbart

Representation  
Corporate strategy  
Revenue and Capital  
Budget setting  
Best Value  
Staff Leadership /  
Development  
IS/IT Strategy

Environmental Services	Technical Services	Head of Leisure & Direct Services	Strategy	Finance	Corporate Services	Monitoring & Audit
Ron Percival	Jim Pitkin	Don Wears	Christopher James	David Skelton	Charles Herbert	Adrian Baker
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Development Control</li> <li>-tree and landscape advice</li> <li>-planning permissions and control</li> <li>•Building Control</li> <li>-building regulations</li> <li>•Commercial</li> <li>Environmental Health</li> <li>-food Hygiene</li> <li>-health and safety</li> <li>-cemeteries and burials</li> <li>-entertainment licensing</li> <li>•Residential</li> <li>Environmental Health</li> <li>-housing standards and improvement grants</li> <li>•Pollution Control</li> <li>-energy conservation</li> <li>-air quality monitoring</li> <li>-contaminated land</li> <li>•Dog warden and pest control services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Waste management / Cleansing</li> <li>-recycling</li> <li>-grounds maintenance contract supervision</li> <li>•Highways &amp; Car Parks</li> <li>-highways adoption and advice</li> <li>•Community Safety</li> <li>-Closed Circuit Television</li> <li>•Civic Office security and Council building maintenance</li> <li>•Capital Project</li> <li>-design and supervision</li> <li>•Drainage and Ditch Clearing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Leisure Facilities</li> <li>-Hart Leisure Centre</li> <li>-Frogmore Leisure Centre</li> <li>-Harlington Centre</li> <li>-outdoor sports, parks, playgrounds</li> <li>-play schemes</li> <li>•Refuse Collection</li> <li>-domestic refuse</li> <li>-trade refuse</li> <li>-street cleansing</li> <li>•Public Conveniences</li> <li>•Drainage</li> <li>-sewer clearance</li> <li>-pump maintenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Corporate Policy</li> <li>-housing</li> <li>-environmental</li> <li>-economic development</li> <li>-planning</li> <li>-transportation</li> <li>-health</li> <li>-leisure</li> <li>-community planning</li> <li>-performance management</li> <li>•Housing Services</li> <li>-homelessness</li> <li>-grants to housing associations</li> <li>•Public Relations</li> <li>•Countryside and Commons Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Council Tax and Business Rate Collection</li> <li>•Housing and Council Tax Benefits</li> <li>•Financial Management and Support</li> <li>-sundry debtors</li> <li>-payroll and creditors</li> <li>-accountancy</li> <li>-treasury management</li> <li>•Information Technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Legal Advice</li> <li>•Personnel</li> <li>-policies and procedures</li> <li>-training</li> <li>•Member Services</li> <li>-agenda preparation</li> <li>-minutes of meetings</li> <li>•Grants and Loans</li> <li>-to outside bodies</li> <li>•Land Charges</li> <li>•Elections and Registration</li> <li>-preparation of Register of Electors</li> <li>-arranging elections</li> <li>•Licensing</li> <li>-taxis</li> <li>-fundraising</li> <li>•Office Services</li> <li>-printing</li> <li>-reception / telephones</li> <li>-post distribution</li> <li>-central purchasing</li> <li>•Emergency Planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Internal Audit</li> <li>-financial scrutiny</li> <li>-value for money studies</li> <li>•Performance Monitoring</li> <li>•Complaints Management</li> <li>•Data Protection</li> </ul>