



DEMOCRATIC SERVICES BEST VALUE REVIEW IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2003

Service: Electoral Services	
Issue – Social Inclusion	Solution
No evidence that Elections Stationery is produced in accordance with Royal Society of the Blind Guidance	Use of 'Century Gothic 18 Bold' type in all Elections Stationery for visually impaired voters (Evidence – Royal Society of the Blind) Cost - within existing budget
No evidence that visually impaired voters are targeted regarding the services provided during elections	Use Royal Society for the Blind taped newslines service to advise subscribers in Hart of services for visually impaired during election time Cost – within budget
No evidence that Polling Station equipment is regularly checked in accordance with Health and Safety Guidelines	Implement inventory of all Polling Station Equipment Cost – within budget
No evidence of audit of Polling Stations for access by physically disabled or visually impaired groups	Implement audit of all Hart District Polling Stations and Count venue(s) by Hart Voluntary Action Group in May 2003 Elections Cost – free to Authority
There is no evidence of procedures to encourage Travellers or Homeless Persons to register to vote	There is no permanent Travellers' site in Hart and Travellers that visit the District tend to do so for short periods of time. However, this issue should be raised with the Hampshire Travellers' Forum and through the Hampshire County Council Travellers' Liaison Cost - within existing budget
No evidence that Service considers social inclusion issues in delivery	Election and Registration Plans to include social inclusion issues above Cost - within existing budget
No evidence that all forms of communication are used effectively to advertise forthcoming elections	Client focus group to investigate and cost the following options:- - use of radio and local press to inform electors of dates of forthcoming elections - set up a dedicated elections 'helpline' Placing additional information on Poll Card about election Cost implications

Issue – Training	
Evidence that on-going training is required for Election staff	Targeted training for ALL staff involved in Polling Day, including Count to be included in 2003 Election Plan. Poll Day training event to include :- - mock up of ‘ideal’ polling station layout - demonstration on how to put up disabled booth - attendance at training compulsory Cost – £ within Budget
Evidence that Section staff are afforded access to relevant training and development	Continue to offer membership of AEA to Section staff and opportunity to attend AEA events/meetings. Continue to afford opportunity to attend software users’ groups. Continue to link Training and Development with Council’s Training Plan and Service objectives. Cost - £120 for three AEA Memberships, included in bid for 2003/04 Training Budget.
Issue – Identity and Service Integrity	
Evidence that provision of Election Plan is essential for all Elections to be carried out from May 2003	Election Plan prepared and put in place Cost - £ within budget
Evidence that Postal Vote Application Forms required re-designing after May 2003 Elections	Postal Vote Application Form redesigned. Monitoring procedure to test effectiveness utilised in September by-election (100% success rate) and in place for 2003 Elections Cost - £ within budget
No evidence that Service seeks comparative data from other Service providers in order to improve service delivery	Commitment to participate in Electoral Commission National Benchmarking Exercise Commitment to using results of Test Valley Benchmarking Exercise to analyses procedures and costs when known Cost - £ within budgets
No evidence that Service produces monitoring statistics in respect of costs per head of population	To produce the following statistics as part of the 2002/03 Service Plan and thereafter:- Electoral registration costs per head of population Electoral registration costs per registered elector Election costs per head of population Election costs per registered voter Target: to be within top 25% quartile as stated in the Electoral Commission National Benchmarking Programme Cost - £within budgets

No evidence that existing procedures are regularly monitored and reviewed in partnership with customers	Election Plan will include monitoring and review period of all Service procedures with representatives of main customers Cost - £within budgets
No evidence that objectives of the Service are communicated to customers	1. Set up 'Elections and Registration' 'mini site' on Hart's website 2. Import 'mini' site onto internal Hart Intranet 3. Elections and Citizenship Manager to produce Annual Report on Service 4. Use the Elections and Registration 'logo' on all communications from the Section Cost – all within budgets
Evidence that Service is meeting BV Indicators in respect of Registration.	Registration Plan, created for 2002 Registration, implemented. Review of success of Plan scheduled for January 2003. To be carried out annually Cost - £within budgets. Savings of £12,000 made as a result of implementing Registration Plan
Evidence that Service does not meet BV Indicator in respect of voter turnout during District, Parliamentary and European elections. The 48% turnout at the recent by-election was unusual	Election Plan includes provision to advertise forthcoming 2003 Elections using the 'USE YOUR VOTE' posters designed by young people as part of the 2002 Democracy Week Campaign Cost - £within budgets
No evidence that Service is exploiting all available avenues to secure Registration of eligible persons. Registration Forms are included in Council Tax packs sent to all new householders in the District and the Form is included in the 'welcome pack' distributed by local estate agents. However, there is no pro-active interrogation of available databases to cross-check and seek out 'missing' eligible persons.	Elections and Citizenship Manager to investigate with Council Tax Section whether it is possible to interrogate Council tax software to 'match' data. Cost – within budget Elections and Citizenship Manager to explore signing up the provision of Automated Telephone Electoral Registration System Cost - £ estimated £5,000 for a three year contract
Evidence that Service improvement issues raised during 2002 Elections and 2001 Registration are being considered and, where appropriate, implemented	The Elections and Citizenship Manager produced an Election 2002 Outcome report to Democracy and Finance PRP and drew up an Improvement Plan as a result. This Plan has been incorporated into the Election Plan The Internal Audit Section has investigated the Annual Registration Service as part of its annual work programme and has made a number of specific recommendations that have been set separate targets for achievement.
No evidence that Section is utilising time-saving equipment in respect of post opening	Purchase letter opening machine, jointly with Finance section Cost £437 (allocated in 2002/03 Budget)

<p>Evidence that Section has consulted in the past on the impact and quality of service provided on elections only which should be expanded</p>	<p>To implement an Annual Customer Survey, using the template used for the 2002 Survey Cost - £within budget To set up a client forum in respect of Elections on an annual basis to provide input to the planning and monitoring of the Election Plan To continue to use 'exit poll' for voters at targeted Polling Stations at Elections. Cost - £within budget</p>
<p>Evidence that Council explores cost-effective ways to advise 'attainers' of coming-of-age</p>	<p>To work with Hook Youth Parish Council to redesign the 18th Birthday Cards sent to attainers Cost - within existing budget</p>
<p>Evidence that the Council's procurement strategy is used when purchasing supplies and services (i.e. regular review of process of suppliers and legislation requires more than three quotes are sought for any expenses incurred in respect of elections.). No evidence that purchase partnerships have been set up with other authorities to purchase bulk orders (such as ballot papers)</p>	<p>To review annually prices of suppliers and to continue to adhere to Council's procurement strategy policies. To approach neighbouring authorities to explore possibility of purchasing ballot papers in a consortium. Cost - within existing budget</p>
<p>No evidence of measurable method of allocating costs of service. Cost allocation is currently done on the basis of history and estimation</p>	<p>Head of Support to introduce Time Recording System into Department. Cost - within existing budget</p>
<p>Whilst the Section uses recycled paper internally for all communications issued by the Section, there is no evidence that election stationery ordered from suppliers (such as ballot papers) use recycled paper.</p>	<p>Elections and Citizenship Manager to amend procurement procedure to included assessment of the effectiveness of using recycled paper for official Election stationery. Cost - within existing budget</p>
<p>Evidence that Section responds promptly to complaints or issues that arise as a result of delivering service (i.e. amendment of Postal Vote Application Form as a result of complaints received in May 2002 elections)</p>	<p>Election Plan includes a requirement to provide Presiding Officers with 'complaints monitoring forms' which are studied after each election and an action plan to address each complaint is drawn up (this has been done after every election in 2002/03 so far). Cost - within existing budget</p>
<p>Evidence that Elections and Registration Management software has the capacity for GIS technology but no evidence that consideration of incorporating this technology into Service</p>	<p>The Council has agreed a GIS implementation plan for Development Control and Technical Services. The IS/IT Group will consider if these systems can be integrated with Halarose software to import GIS onto the Section's system.</p>

Service: Committee Services	
Issue – Social Inclusion	Solution
No evidence that Council agendas, report, minutes and advice on meetings are produced in accordance with Royal Society of the Blind Guidance	Advertise availability of 'Large Print' versions of all Council agendas, report, minutes and advice on meetings (Using 'Century Gothic 18 Bold' type) (Evidence – Royal Society of the Blind) Cost – within existing budget
No evidence that Service considers social inclusion issues in delivery	Committee Services Service Plan to include social inclusion issues on the accessibility of Council Minutes, reports, agendas and advice, accessibility of meetings and to accessibility of information on the areas within the Service's remit. All information leaflets produced to be revised to include information on how social inclusion issues are addressed. Cost - within existing budget
Evidence that best practice in other authorities highlighted as good performers are integrated in to the Service (for example, review of agenda format, inclusion of 'Action Points in minutes as a result of 'challenge session' on Minute effectiveness carried out by Forum at Hart in 2002.)	To utilise the best practice procedures that come out of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Committee Administrators' Forum to improve performance in:- Agenda style and information Minute style and information Management of Forward Plan and Key Decision Framework Management of Call-in facilities and procedures Review of training and development programmes for Committee Officers Provision of support to Members Cost - within existing budget
Issue – Training	
Evidence that on-going training is required for Committee staff	Targeted training for ALL staff involved in Committee Services, including monthly 'core activity' training facilitated by Democratic Services Manager Cost - within existing budget
Evidence that Section staff are afforded access to relevant training and development	Continue to offer opportunity to attend:- Hampshire and Isle of Wight Committee Administrators' Forum South East Employers' Democratic Services Officers' Network One Committee Services Officer per year attends the South West Employers Committee Officers Training Course Continue to link Training and Development with Council's Training Plan and Service objectives. Cost - £within 2003/04 Training Budget bid

Evidence that the Members' Training Programme requires refinement to improve Member take-up	Democratic Services Manager to work with Training Manager to cost up and plan a 'Something for the Weekend' Members' Training Programme from May 2003, to cover the elements identified by Members in their Annual Personal Development Plans and to reflect corporate priorities Cost - £no increase in bid for Members' Training in 2003/04 Open up training opportunities required to Local Councils Cost – costs of training provision could be part recouped through charges to local councils that attend training opportunities.
Evidence that Council should consider investment in the continued development of Committee Staff, such as provision and support for the National NVQ in Committee Administration	One Committee Service Officer to be nominated to participate in the 2003 National Committee Administration NVQ Programme Cost - £800 (included in bid for 2003/04 Training budget)
Evidence that Members' induction pack was valued by Members and should be continued	Members' Induction Pack to be distributed to elected members in May 2003. Induction Pack contents to be reviewed for relevance and improvement in February 2003. Induction Pack to include Guide to Outside Bodies Pack May 2003 Cost - within existing budget
Issue – Identity and Service Integrity	
Sporadic evidence that Section has consulted in the past on the impact and quality of service provided and what should be provided	To implement an Annual Customer Survey, using the template used for the 2002 Survey. Cost - £within budget
Evidence that effectiveness of participation at meetings of elected members is appreciated and used by the public	Public Speaking to be continued at Development Control Committees. Planned review of sound system in Council Chamber to take into account feedback in public consultation exercise that public appreciates clarity and ability to hear debate. 'How Was it For You?' public opinion leaflets to be distributed at every meeting and results reported annually. Cost - within existing budget
Evidence that Service seeks comparative data from other Service providers in order to improve service delivery	Commitment to participate in Hampshire and Isle of Wight Committee Administrators' Forum Bi-Annual Benchmarking Exercise Commitment to acting as Challenge Partner and participant in Test Valley Best Value Review Cost - £within budgets
No evidence that existing procedures are regularly monitored and reviewed in partnership with customers	Annual Customer Survey will include monitoring and review period for all Service procedures with representatives of main customers Cost - £within budgets

<p>No evidence that objectives of the Service are communicated to customers.</p> <p>Evidence that Service objectives are not focused and too many</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use Hart's website to communicate Service's functions 2. Import 'mini' site onto internal Hart Intranet 3. Service to produce clear and robust service delivery objectives in Service Plan <p>Cost – £all within budgets</p>
<p>Evidence that existing democratic structures are regularly monitored and reviewed in partnership with customers</p>	<p>Democratic Structures Working Party continues to meet on a regular basis to review and assess impact of decisions-making structures.</p> <p>Cost - £within budget</p>
<p>Evidence that Committee services support provided to partnership Forums are valued (Service Level Agreements have been signed)</p>	<p>Service Level Agreements with Community Safety Partnership and Local Strategic Partnership to be reviewed and signed on an annual basis from September 2004</p> <p>Cost - £within budgets</p>
<p>Evidence that Service is meeting Local BV Indicators</p>	<p>Review of Local Indicators to be built into Annual Customer Survey. To be carried out annually</p> <p>Cost - £within budgets.</p>
<p>Evidence that existing electronic delivery of Service could be improved and expanded</p>	<p>Incorporate the electronic report management system onto the Council's Intranet.</p> <p>Implement a Council-wide training programme on the use of the management system.</p> <p>Import Council Minutes and agendas onto Web in accordance with Performance Indicators</p> <p>Cost implications</p>
<p>Evidence that officer customers would appreciate training in related skills from Committee officers (such as report-writing and training of specific procedures)</p>	<p>Implement specific training pack for report authors on how to write effective reports, how to use the Council's report monitoring system.</p> <p>Review annually the training packs available on the decision-making structures</p> <p>Cost - within existing budget</p>
<p>Evidence that internal report writing procedures whilst clearly communicated to clients are not adhered to, leading to reduction in Service quality and inability to manage proactively report content, style and accuracy</p>	<p>Report 'sign off' sheet introduced, as well as Report Writers' Pack on report standards, effective report-writing and deadline Calendar.</p> <p>Writers' Pack to be incorporated onto Intranet and reviewed annually as part of customer challenge programme.</p> <p>Cost - within existing budget</p>
<p>No evidence of measurable method of allocating costs of service. Cost allocation is currently done on the basis of history and estimation</p>	<p>Head of Support to introduce Time Recording System into Department.</p> <p>Cost - within existing budget</p>
<p>Evidence that Section uses recycled paper internally for all communications issued by the Section.</p>	<p>Office Manager to amend procurement procedure to included assessment of the effectiveness of using recycled paper.</p> <p>Cost - within existing budget</p>

Service: Administration Services	
Issue – Social Inclusion	Solution
No evidence that Corporate and Chief Executive complaints procedures and literature are produced accordance with Royal Society of the Blind Guidance	Advertise availability of 'Large Print' versions of all Corporate and Chief Executive complaints procedures and literature (Using 'Century Gothic 18 Bold' type) (Evidence – Royal Society of the Blind) Cost - within existing budget
No evidence that Service considers social inclusion issues in delivery	Service Plan to include social inclusion issues on the accessibility of Service information All information leaflets produced to be revised to include information on how social inclusion issues are addressed. Cost - within existing budget
Issue – Training	
Evidence that on-going training is required for staff	Targeted training for ALL staff involved in administration function to maintain key skills. Cost - within existing budget
Evidence that Section staff are afforded access to relevant training and development	Continue to offer opportunities to attend activities on Council's Training Programme. Continue to afford opportunity to attend Hampshire Mayors and Chairman's Secretaries Forum Continue to link Training and Development with Council's Training Plan and Service objectives. Cost - £ - included in bid for 2003/04 Training Budget.
Issue – Identity and Service Integrity	
No evidence that Section has consulted in the past on the impact and quality of service provided and what should be provided	To implement an Annual Customer Survey, using the template used for the 2002 Survey. Cost - £within budget
No evidence that Chairman's Secretary has consulted in the past on the impact and quality of service provided and what should be provided	To implement a Customer Survey, using the template used for the 2002 Survey in respect of major Civic Events, including the Civic day and Civic Dinner. Cost - £within budget

No evidence that Service seeks comparative data from other Service providers in order to improve service delivery	Commitment to participate in Hampshire Chairman's and Mayors Benchmarking Survey on an annual basis Cost - £within budgets
No evidence that existing procedures are regularly monitored and reviewed in partnership with customers	Service Plan will include monitoring and review period of all Service procedures with representatives of main customers Cost - £within budgets
No evidence that objectives of the Service are communicated to customers	1. Import Year Book data onto Web and Intranet in May 2003 2. Import 'mini' site onto internal Hart Intranet in respect of central information 3. Office Manager to produce Annual Report on Service as part of Service Plan Cost – all within budgets
Evidence that Council Yearbook is valued as a source of information, but style of Book inhibits interim updating and restricts flexibility	Office Manager to investigate and cost the possibility of producing the Council Year Book in a 'filofax' style format for May 2003. Office Manger to consult on customers' requirements for contents of 2003/04 Yearbook in February 2003. 2003/04 Year Book to be incorporated onto Council's Intranet and Internet Cost implications
Evidence that Chief executive complaints are logged and monitored. Evidence that post received into the Department is logged and response times monitored	Office Manager to produce procedure for Chief Executive complaints logging and monitoring. Efficiency of file logging system to be reviewed annually Cost - within existing budget
Evidence that administration procedures are created	Central Procedure file to be available on Shared computer drive Cost - within existing budget
Evidence that Service is meeting BV Indicators in respect of Registration.	Registration Plan, created for 2002 Registration, implemented. Review of success of Plan scheduled for January 2003. To be carried out annually Cost - £within budgets. Savings of £12,000 made as a result of implementing Registration Plan

No evidence that Section is utilising time-saving equipment in respect of post opening	Purchase letter opening machine, jointly with Finance section Cost £437 (allocated in 2002/03 Budget)
Evidence that quality of administration of Members' Room has been affected by decision to move main Room to different location	Discussion of location of Members' Room is underway at senior level.
No evidence of measurable method of allocating costs of service. Cost allocation is currently done on the basis of history and estimation	Head of Support to introduce Time Recording System into Department. Cost - within existing budget
Evidence that Section uses recycled paper internally for all communications issued by the Section.	Office Manager to amend procurement procedure to include assessment of the effectiveness of using recycled paper. Cost - within existing budget