



REPROGRAPHIC SERVICES

BEST VALUE REVIEW AUGUST – DECEMBER 2000

ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

The Best Value Review identified an overall satisfaction with the service. Particular emphasis was placed on the unit's ability to respond quickly to statutory deadlines. Customers also placed value in having expert reprographic advice available to them with regard to layout, document composition, materials suitability and finish.

Much of the work processed by the unit is related to Democratic Services i.e Agendas, Minutes and Reports, Register of Electors and Elections. There was recognition that the in house service afforded officers both speed and control of sensitive and confidential papers.

Areas for improvement centred on printing quality limitations and graphic design. The study acknowledged that the unit's size and its core work restricted options but it was agreed that there was opportunity to enhance the quality of current work and to develop the very basic graphic services offered by the unit.

The unit staffing is 1.5 F.T.E's and the budget for 2002/03 is £113.400 (includes support costs) Some 40% of its time is spent on Committee and Electoral Registration.

The review identified the need to replace the unit's camera and to upgrade from electrostatic plates to a silver master process. The upgrade was effected at an early stage and improvements were immediate.

General print quality showed a marked improvement. The plate material, although more costly than electrostatic, affords greater print run lengths with improved image quality.

The plate material is much more stable and the unit has started to produce two colour work to close registration, some of this work in the past would have been produced on a colour copier or would have been placed out house.

Tone work is also possible to good effect and the quality enhances the graphic content of documents.

There is still room for improvement in pre press graphic work. The unit is essentially a copier and press room with basic graphic tools. The review recognised that, following the closure of the Council's graphic studio, the print room should undertake some general graphic work and try to improve and develop the service.

The aim will be to give a good general Desk Top Publishing service but to achieve this, both team members require training in computer graphics. Training windows have to be found in very busy work schedules. At this time one member has undertaken a basic word course, essentially for computer familiarisation.

The Action Plan identified I.T. developments and possible impact on the reprographic service. This is an area to be visited regularly as some of the unit's work may well be provided via screen based services. However, at this time hard copy is still the normal method of production.

We have yet to subscribe to a benchmarking group.

We looked to the exploration in a later year, of collaborative working with a neighbouring authority, when that authority commenced its own Reprographic review. We are aware that the Authority has suspended individual service reviews in favour of cross cutting. We will visit this area again at a suitable time.

Action Plan 2002/03

Train staff and develop Desk Top Publishing Service

Finishing Techniques, The principal method of binding finished work involves the use of an ancient thermal binder. Systems are available that can offer a wider range of finishes and when used to complete documents that have good pre press graphics and quality print, the end product can be much enhanced for a relatively low expenditure on equipment. We will look to improving this aspect of the service.

I.T. developments will continue to be monitored for effect on print room production.

We will ensure that the service is cost effective and if opportunities for collaboration occur we will look for mutual economies.

Brian Daly
Office Services Manager

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