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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b> 89
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>27<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2001</b>	<b>CATEGORY:</b> <b>DELEGATED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>IAN REID, DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE</b>	<b>OPEN PARAGRAPH NO: N/A</b>
<b>MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:</b>	<b>JOHN HANSED (5770)</b>	<b>DOC:</b> c:\myfiles\sac\committe\development services\bestvalue-coe.doc
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>BEST VALUE REVIEW: CLEANSING THE ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>REF: JRH/SAC</b>
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE: DS</b>

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## **1.0 Recommendations**

- 1.1 Members are recommended to approve the Final Report and Improvement Plan for Best Value Review on Cleansing the Environment.
- 1.2 That the need for additional resources be considered as part of the continuing refocusing and reprioritisation exercise.

## **2.0 Purpose of Report**

- 2.1 The "Clean Team" have now completed their Best Value Review which has culminated in the production of the following documents

- Baseline Assessment
- Consultation Summary (due for full completion by end September)
- Competitiveness Study (by Techman)
- Final Report, including Improvement and Action Plans

A copy of each of these documents is circulated for Members of the Committee and further copies have been placed in the Members Room.

- 2.2 The purpose of the report is to present these documents to Committee for approval and, in particular, obtain agreement to the content of the Improvement Plan, prior to inspection of the review during the second week in October.

- 2.3 It should be noted that a similar report is to be submitted to the Community Services Committee in regard to the Review's findings and proposals for dog fouling.

### **3.0 Detail**

- 3.1 All required information is set out in the accompanying documents. The Baseline Assessment, Consultation Summary and Competitiveness Study all provided essential background information which was used to identify the key issues for improvement. The Final Report explains how the review was undertaken, how the background information was used and, how the 4C's were applied. The Improvement Plan lists the actions required to ensure that the Services are continually improved as required by the Best Value regime.

### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The improvement plan identifies a range of proposals, which need to be explored in more detail to improve service delivery. In some cases it has been possible to estimate the costs that may be associated with these proposals. As these proposals are developed in detail it will be possible to assess more accurately the costs involved.
- 4.2 The estimated cost and savings associated with some individual proposals are shown in the Action Plan, but some costs may be partially met from existing budgets.
- 4.3 Members will be aware that savings in this service area exceeded the target set as part of the budget from 2000/01 and this was reported to the Finance and Management Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2001. The current financial projections assume that the budgeted savings in future years will be in line with existing budgets. If further savings are identified this could contribute to the cost of introducing the changes identified within the Best Value Report.
- 4.4 The analysis will be helped by recent work undertaken by the Finance Section to bring DSO budgets within the Council's general ledger system as a result of moving to the soft-split arrangements for the Refuse Collection Contract. This may help to identify further recurring savings, which could be available to support the implementation of this review.
- 4.5 At this point in time the Council is in the process of developing a Corporate Plan to guide future spending decisions. This Plan will also help to guide the progress of refocusing and reprioritising council spending.
- 4.6 Clearly members will need to consider any potential improvements and indeed extra resources for the proposals stemming from this Best Value Review in the light of its overall priorities as set out within the Corporate Plan and the available resources that it has.

4.7 As with any developments of this nature there will be a clear expectation that the Division involved identifies savings to contribute to any extra costs, which indeed this reviews begins to do.

## **5.0 Agenda 21 Implications**

5.1 The Improvement Plan contains actions that are intended to enable the Council to meet its statutory waste targets of 14% recycling by 2003 and 21% by 2005.

## **6.0 Corporate Implications**

6.1 The scale of the review has required a very substantial input from a number of staff and has demonstrated the very large resource implications entailed in large Best Value reviews of this nature.

6.2 The Improvement Plan makes recommendations for the restructuring of the Technical Services Division to a no split organisation.

## **7.0 Community Implications**

7.1 Consultation undertaken for the review has confirmed the high levels of importance the public attach to these Council Services.

## **8.0 Conclusions**

8.1 Although the Review has taken considerable time and staff input to complete, the processes followed have been thorough and have drawn on the views of a wide range of stakeholders.

8.2 The community attaches high importance to the service areas covered by the review and have indicated it is important to them to live in a clean environment. All stakeholders have indicated that they consider the Council delivers a good refuse collection service.

8.3 Operationally services have been shown to be cost effective although high central costs are indicated which need to be considered through the relevant Best Value reviews.

8.4 An objective and independent survey judges street cleanliness standards as slightly better than average against very low cost. The additional expenditure, recommended in the Improvement Plan, will enable the improved street cleansing expected by the public whilst still remaining within upper quartile costs.

8.5 The Council's recycling rate is around the national average but must accelerate now to meet new national targets. Additional resources are essential to do this although, as reflected in the Improvement Plan, the Council will maximise partnerships with both the private sector and neighbouring local authorities to meet its targets.

8.6 The Improvement Plan is comprehensive and contains numerous actions, many of which are cost neutral. There are however proposals which have a total cost implication of over £100,000 p.a. and these are seen as essential measures if the Services are to improve in line with public expectation and to enable the Council to achieve upper quartile performance. The increased funding is sought against a background of savings in the service areas covered, effected in 2000/01, of a similar magnitude.