AGENDA ITEM

COMMITTEE: **BEST VALUE SCRUTINY PANEL**

DATE: **23RD FEBRUARY 2004**

SUBJECT: **CDMT UPDATE REPORT**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF POLICY AND PERFORMANCE**

CONTACT OFFICER: **JUDITH INGHAM** **546496**

IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL	**COMMUNITY SAFETY**
EQUALITIES	**ENVIRONMENT**
FINANCIAL	**CONSULTATIONS**
STAFFING	**OTHER**

WARDS AFFECTED: NONE

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1. PURPOSE

To inform Members of the proceedings of the Corporate Directors Management Team with respect to Best Value.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

Best Value Scrutiny Panel is recommended to note the report

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Corporate Directors Management Team (CDMT) Improvement and Procurement Board meet on the last Thursday of each month. The meetings are attended by the Chief Executive, Corporate Directors, the Director of Scrutiny, the Heads of Internal Audit, Corporate Finance and Policy and Performance, the Procurement Manager, two officers from Policy and Performance and two trades union representatives. The terms of reference of the Board include considering Best Value review reports, providing feedback and input into the reviews, monitoring their progress, and then ensuring the improvement plans are carried out.

3.2 This report describes the discussions and findings of the Board in January with relation to Best Value.

4. IMPLEMENTATION OF BEST VALUE IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Children's Services for 11-17 year olds

4.1 Wes Cuell gave an update. The block purchase of foster care placements is showing good progress, and an invest-to-save proposal has been made to facilitate this A multi-agency planning group has been set up to make better use of resources for children in care. Work on Luton Futures (in-borough provision for children in care) is on target.

4.2 CDMT Board asked for a report to the next meeting of the Board on the following;

- Feasibility of the invest-to-save proposal
- Reprovision of Buckle Close children's home, what the problems are and what is being done to resolve them

5. PROGRESS WITH BEST VALUE REVIEWS

Engineering & Transportation	Completion of the review has been deferred for six months (until July 2004) due to recruitment difficulties. Scrutiny Panel to receive an update on the latest recruitment position in April 2004.
Housing Strategy & Private Sector	The review team expect to complete the review in April. (An interim report on progress is attached to this agenda)
Children's services for 0-10 year olds	The Vision report was approved by CDMT Board and the Children's Strategic Partnership Board in September. It was agreed that the Improvement Plan will be integrated with the work on the issues identified in the Green Paper, and other initiatives such as Identification Referral and Tracking, Children's centres, Extended Schools and recommendations from the Lord Laming Inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié.
Sports and Leisure	The final report, the Options Analysis and Improvement Plan, was presented to the CDMT Board this month. A number of points need to be addressed before the report proceeds to the Scrutiny Panel (see item 6. below).
Community Development	Second draft presented to CDMT at this meeting (attached to this agenda also). If the Vision report is accepted by the Scrutiny Panel, then the review team will present the final report, the Options Analysis and Improvement Plan, to the CDMT Board in February.

6. SPORTS AND LEISURE : OPTIONS ANALYSIS AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

6.1 The Head of Leisure, Libraries and Culture presented the final report for this review. CDMT Board had a discussion, particularly about the proposal for a Leisure Trust, and agreed that some additional points need to be added to the report before it can proceed to the Scrutiny Panel. Overall, there is a need for greater clarity on the recommendations, and the financial context. The costs of setting up a Leisure Trust and the staff resourcing for the Trust should be identified. The range of choices for Members concerning capital and revenue expenditure on leisure should be stated, particularly as Leisure is a significant area of discretionary expenditure.

7. HOUSING STRATEGY AND PRIVATE SECTOR (INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT)

7.1 The Head of Housing (Strategy and Private Sector) presented a progress report on this review, which has recently had an interim inspection from the Housing Inspectorate. He stated that a financial appraisal compared to other authorities was being carried out, and that customer testing would be completed soon. The full report should be available by April 2004, though resourcing the review was still proving difficult, and he will have further discussions with the Best Value Officer to obtain extra help. He explained that increasing demand for renovation and improvement grants is creating a shortfall in the budget, and Members have agreed to pilot offering loans rather than grants.

8. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: REVISED VISION REPORT

8.1 The Head of Community Development presented the revised Vision report, and a discussion followed. The Board requested amendments to the report as follows:

- Revise the Vision to reflect desired outcomes from Community Development's work;
- Recommend where Community Development should sit within the Council's structure and where community centres should go;
- Insert a specific question about the financial implications and impact on the medium-term financial plan.

8.2 In preparation for Scrutiny:

- Raise the issue about Trust status and whether community centres should be included;
- Touch on the issue about co-location and use of extended schools and other services.

[Note: A supplement to the report has been prepared to accommodate these changes and this has been enclosed with the agenda for the Scrutiny Panel]

9. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100D

9.1 Minutes of the CDMT Procurement and Improvement Board for January 2004