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LEICESTERSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S
DEPARTMENT
JOHN SINNOTT, MA, Dipl. PA.
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Meeting **Scrutiny Commission**

Date/Time **Wednesday, 8 May 2002 at 10:30 am**

Location **Sparkenhoe Committee Room, County Hall, Glenfield**

Officer to contact **Mr. M.I. Seedat (Tel: 0116 265 6037)**

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Membership

Mr. N. J. Brown CC (Chairman)

Mr. D. C. Bill CC	Mrs. V. P. Bill CC
Mr. P. D. Boult TD, CC	Mrs. C. E. Brock CC
Mr. B. Chapman AE, CC	Dr. R. K. A. Feltham CC
Mr. S. J. Galton CC	Mr. D. A. Gamble CC
Mr. P. A. Hyde CC	Mr. D. Jennings CC
Mr. Mike Jones CC	Mr. A. M. Kershaw CC
Mr. P. C. Osborne CC	Mr. M. B. Page CC
Mr. J. B. Rhodes CC	Lt. Col. P. A. Roffey DL, CC
Mr. N. J. Rushton CC	Mr. S. D. Sheahan CC

AGENDA

Item		Report by	Marked
1.	Minutes		A
2.	Questions asked by electors under Standing Order 35.		
3.	Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).		
4.	Any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.		
5.	Declarations of interests in respect of items on this agenda.		
6.	Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.		

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7.	Presentations of Petitions under Standing Order 36.		
8.	'Better Access to Better Services' - Policy Statement and Initiative.	Chief Executive	B
9.	Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Record Office.	The Scrutiny Review Panel	C
10.	Operation of the Review Panel on Recruitment and Retention of Teachers.	Chief Executive	D
11.	Any other items the Chairman decides are urgent.		
12.	Date of next meeting.		

The next meeting of the Commission will be held at 2.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 26th June, 2002.

Agenda Item 8

LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 8TH MAY 2002

'BETTER ACCESS TO BETTER SERVICES' INITIATIVE

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PART A

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Commission's views on:

   (i) the Better Access to Better Services Initiative (The Initiative).

   (ii) the Policy Statement on 'Better Access to Better Services (The Policy Statement).

Decision of the Cabinet

2. The Cabinet on 23rd April:

   (i) Approved the principle of the Better Access to Better Services Initiative as an alternative approach to improve access to services and information.

   (ii) Approved the Policy Statement on 'Better Access to Better Services' to provide the framework for the Initiative to progress.

   (iii) Approved the initial list of possible projects for the Initiative, and in particular those projects identified as 'Flagship Projects' with deliverable benefits in the first year of the Initiative.

   (iv) Agreed to open discussions with District Councils and other partner bodies to jointly develop the Policy Statement and projects, together with proposals to develop an inter-authority group to progress this further.

   (v) Noted the setting up of an internal officer group to provide suitable programme management arrangements for the implementation of the Initiative.

   (vi) Agreed to receive further reports regarding progress on the development of the Policy Statement and progress of the Initiative.

Reasons for Recommendations

3. The commitments identified in the Medium Term Corporate Strategy and the findings of the Rural Services Review that relate to access and information demonstrate that the proposed Better Access to Better Services Initiative justifies a high priority within the future work programme of the County Council, largely as a result of:

   (i) The demands placed on local government to deliver all services that are capable of being delivered electronically by 2005.

   (ii) The commitments made in County and District Councils Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) Statements to work together to implement the delivery of services that are capable of being delivered electronically.

   (iii) Opportunities to discuss and develop service co-ordination with partners through the emerging Local Strategic Partnerships and other partnership activity.

   (iv) The opportunity to address outstanding matters relating to the Library Review which dates back to 1999.

4. The Policy Statement is intended as a starting point that will provide a basis for discussion both within the County Council and with other partner bodies in recognition of these demands and opportunities to work with partners.

5. The Policy Statement will provide the framework for an approach that would enable work to begin on a series of projects to address a range of access and information issues to ensure that improvements are identified and implemented as quickly as possible. This Policy approach is intended to replace the previously proposed best value review of access to services and information. The Statement:

   (i) Starts from the recognition of the need to work in partnership.
   (ii) Sets out a vision that builds upon the Medium Term Corporate Strategy.
   (iii) Identifies the need to use methods which reflect the publics preferences when accessing services.
   (iv) Recognises the need to exploit ICT as part of this process.
   (v) Recognises that a range of activities already contribute to achieving better access.
   (vi) Identifies the basic principles that underpin the work required.
   (vii) Will facilitate the bidding process which the County Council has to engage in for a number of one-off special funds that are available from the Government.

6. An internal officer group will ensure that there are suitable management arrangements in place to take the Initiative forward and provide a framework for co-ordinating a range of inter-related projects that contribute to improving access to services and information across the Council and with other partners.

Timetable for Decisions

7. The will be implemented over a number of years and will be the subject of progress reports to both Cabinet and Scrutiny.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

The Medium Terms Corporate Strategy 2001-2005

8. The strategy sets out the Councils commitments to achieve its aim of ensuring that services help Leicestershire people by bringing services closer to where people live and improving access to them, so that they are available to all groups in the community. This will be achieved by delivering services that provide value for money and which examine a mix of public, private and voluntary sector options to provide effective, efficient and economical services, and introducing new and improved arrangements to co-ordinate service delivery with other agencies.

Implementing Electronic Government Statement

9. The County Council and District Councils each submitted their Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) statements to the DTLR in July 2001 to provide a framework of how they intend to achieve the 100% target specified in the Best Value Performance Indicator 157 over the next 4 years.

10. Each of these statements sets out a joint commitment between County and District Councils to work in partnership towards implementing e-government targets as this cannot be achieved by a single Local Authority alone.

Best Value Implications

11. The approach outlined in this report is intended to replace the previously proposed Best Value Review. As such the Best Value Inspection Service is taking an interest in the work. A formal inspection of current services and plans for improvement will be made towards the end of the financial year.

Resources Implications

12. A growth bid of £100,000 has been agreed as part of the budget for 2002/03, to supplement existing budgets and £200,000 ongoing for future years for access to services. Growth proposals have also been identified for e-government of £245,000 in 2002/03 and £265,000 ongoing.

13. Detailed costing of the projects that are included in the Initiative will need to be carried out. The actual work done will need to be constrained within the existing resources available including growth.

14. The Local Government On-Line submission to the DTLR may result in additional partnership funding from the Government. If so it will considerably improve the pace at which the access projects and the Government's e-government targets can be achieved.

15. Comprehensive implementation of the Better Access to Better Services project will inevitably have significant long term resource implications, both revenue and capital.

16. At this stage it is not possible to quantify these costs or identify exactly how much Government funding will be made available. Experience of the initial proposals should help to give a better idea of potential costs. Reallocation of existing resources as well as opportunities for external funding will need to be examined including the option of some form of private sector partnership (possibly PFI) to help fund some of the considerable capital investment which is likely to be required, primarily for buildings and I.T.

17. The resource implications will need to be considered in the context of any medium term financial plan and the budget/capital programme processes for the relevant years.

18. The County Treasurer has been consulted on this report and his comments incorporated.

Officers to Contact

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PART B

Background

19. The Best Value Performance Plan for 2001/02 proposed a Review of Access to Services and Information. The Best Value Review would have examined the current position that the County Council has reached in developing access arrangements and the actions that could be taken to improve this position. This process, however, would take at least 12 months to complete, based on previous experience of major cross cutting reviews.

20. The commitments identified in the Medium Term Corporate Strategy, the findings of the Rural Services Review, and the Government requirement to deliver all services that are capable of being delivered electronically by 2005, suggest the Council should take a more pragmatic approach. This approach would enable work to begin immediately on a series of projects to address a range of access and information issues. This approach would help to ensure improvements are identified and implemented as quickly as possible and opportunities for collaboration are maximised.

21. This is particularly relevant when this is considered within the context of the development of Public Service Agreements and discussions around service co-ordination for emerging Local Strategic Partnerships in Leicestershire.

22. In addition, the proposed approach coincides with the launch of the draft National Strategy for Local E-government that has been put forward to Local Authorities for consultation by the DTLR on April 8th 2002. Consideration of the linkages with the Better Access to Better Services Initiative and any future funding opportunities arising from it will be considered in setting up and establishing the Initiative itself.

Proposals

The Better Access to Better Services Initiative

23. The Better Access to Better Services Initiative is intended to provide an approach to enable work to begin immediately on a series of projects to address a range of access and information issues in areas such as e-government, access centres, public relations, and web sites.

24. This approach would help to ensure that improvements are identified and implemented as quickly as possible during the life of the Initiative up to (and beyond in certain cases) the year 2005. In particular it would ensure that the findings of the Rural Services Review that relate to access and information issues are addressed in a broader context across Leicestershire, through a series of implementation measures, rather than simply referred on to a further review.

25. Officers have identified an initial list of projects that would be included in the Initiative, including, in particular, those projects that are intended to demonstrate deliverable benefits in the first year of the Initiative.

The Policy Statement

26. The starting point for the Better Access to Better Services Initiative is a policy statement that will provide a basis for discussion both within the County Council and with partner bodies. The Policy Statement on 'Better Access to Better Services' is attached at Appendix A.

27. Within the framework of this policy a range of projects need to be identified and developed to improve access to services and information. These projects can be categorised within the following broad themes of the Initiative:

(i) Access Points
(ii) Customer Care
(iii) Information Management
(iv) ICT Infrastructure
(v) On-line Information and Transactions
(vi) Organisational Development

28. Collectively these projects will be set against and considered within the broad context of the Policy Statement in terms of how they will each contribute towards meeting the basic principles contained therein, namely:

(i) The Needs to Leicestershire People.
(ii) The Location of Delivery.
(iii) The Times of Availability.
(iv) The Method of Delivery.
(v) The Opportunities for Joint Delivery.
(vi) The Effective Use of Assets.

Possible Projects

29. A range of possible projects that would need to be developed within the policy framework during the life of the Initiative is included in Appendix B.

30. As part of the overall list of projects that have been identified so far a number of projects have been identified as 'Flagship Projects'. These are projects that can demonstrate deliverable benefits to members of the public within the first year of the Initiative and will help to drive its momentum. Appendix C contains an outline of these projects.

31. Some of these Flagship Projects are already underway. 'New Projects' will be developed as part of the development of the Initiative. At the end of the first year the Initiative will hopefully have achieved the following benefits:

(i) Establish at least two new multi-agency centres.
(ii) Provide 20 additional access points through the Leicestershire Rural Partnership.
(iii) Establish at least two projects using Post Offices as access points.
(iv) Provide four ICT centres in Libraries.
(v) Ask the Public for their access preferences in Leicestershire.
(vi) Develop a charter for customer care standards.
(vii) Produce a combined A-Z of public services.
(viii) Improved translation and interpretation services.

(ix) Develop at least 25 electronic transactions on-line.
(x) Develop additional information on the web-site.
(xi) New arrangements for highway network management that may include using the internet and single access telephone number for reporting.
(xii) Web site for Leicestershire Care On-line launched.
(xiii) Access to computers and the internet available in all Public Libraries.
(xiv) Increase number of schools with broadband communications subject to funding.
(xv) Include and promote the Better Access to Better Services Initiative and Policy Statement in training for customer services.

32. Subject to members views on this list of projects and any others that members might wish to include, this will be combined with the Policy Statement to provide a basis for further discussion with partner bodies to identify areas of collaboration.

Management Arrangements

33. In order to oversee the ongoing management of the Initiative and ensure that its strategic direction is maintained within the County Council, it will be necessary to establish an internal officer group to act as the Programme Management Group for the Initiative. The potential position of this group with that of other decision making groups of the County Council and other relevant bodies is illustrated in Appendix D.

34. This will be achieved for the most part by redefining the work of existing groups (and possibly membership). Key to the management of the Initiative, however, will be:

(i) A Programme Management Group to develop the projects within the Initiative and co-ordinate the work of other internal officer groups that are connected with this.

(ii) A Chief Officer to lead the work of the Programme Management Group and to positively promote the Initiative within the County Council and to partner bodies.

(iii) A Cabinet Lead Member to oversee the Initiative with support from other members.

(iv) Regular progress and monitoring reports to Cabinet Lead Members.

(v) An Inter-Authority Partnership reporting to County/District Chief Executives and Leaders meetings to provide a focus for extending opportunities for collaboration as part of the Initiative and overseeing the management of jointly delivered projects. Such a body is proposed in the Local Government On-line submission.

35. In addition an inter-authority Local Government On-line submission has been made to the DTLR in response to its request to demonstrate how the statements on partnership working in approved IEG statements would work in reality. This has provided an important foundation upon which the building blocks of creating an inter-authority partnership can be developed further

and there is a strong correlation between the projects identified in the Initiative (Appendix B) and those included in the submission which include:

(i) Portals – the user friendly front end to a number of community service web sites such as Charnwood On-line, the Learning Portal in Leicester, and the Welland Pathfinder Community Portals.

(ii) MAGNET – 'Multi Agency Geographic Network' providing map based community information via the internet through point and click maps or from the input of a postcode.

(iii) Infolinx – a database of community information on the internet.

(iv) Transactions – public interaction via the internet or other electronic means for financial and non-financial transactions alike.

(v) Information – a common understanding and approach to using and sharing information between authorities.

Consultations

36. Consultations have been undertaken with all Chief Officers of the Council and their comments have been incorporated within this report.

37. Initial discussions have also taken place at Leader level with District Councils. Further detailed discussions will take place with District Councils and other potential partners.

38. The first year targets include proposals to undertake consultation on service delivery and information requirements, taking into account the outcome of previous consultation wherever possible.

Equal Opportunities Implications

39. The Initiative will improve the accessibility of services and information provided by the Council, making these accessible to all groups in the community and responsive to people's needs.

40. This represents a positive step towards tackling inequality and discrimination by improving access to services and information whilst building on our existing approach to equal opportunities. Access issues will also be an important element of the County Council's statutory Race Equality Initiative.

Background Papers

1. Medium Term Corporate Strategy 2001-2005, Leicestershire County Council.
2. IEG Statement, July 2001, Leicestershire County Council.

List of Appendices

(A) Policy Statement on 'Better Access to Better Services'
(B) List of possible project for the Initiative
(C) Flagship projects with year 1 deliverables.
(D) Organisation process diagram

APPENDIX A

LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Excellence for Leicestershire – Working Together to Deliver Quality Services.

Policy Statement on 'Better Access to Better Services'

Excellence for Leicestershire -Working Together to Deliver Quality Services

Policy Statement on 'Better Access to Better Services'

Foreword by Mr Barber, Leader of the County Council

Leicestershire County Council is embarking upon a journey to design its services to help Leicestershire people to continue to enjoy life in a safe, prosperous, healthy and attractive County.

To achieve this we will need to work in partnership with other service providers to deliver accessible services that not only provide value for money but can also be accessed in a way that meets the needs of Leicestershire people.

We intend this policy statement to demonstrate our intent to work with people in Leicestershire and with other service providers in the public, private, community and voluntary sectors to ensure that all our services are co-ordinated jointly and offer choice in how they are accessed.

We recognise that each provider has their own individual identity and autonomy in agreeing a shared vision on accessible services. We believe that working together in true partnership will ensure the development of common goals in delivering Better Access to Better Services.

We will promote our vision as a starting point for discussion between all public service providers to develop a shared vision of working together to deliver accessible services to the people of Leicestershire.

This is the County Council's commitment towards achieving Better Access to Better Services in Leicestershire and all public service providers are invited to join us upon this journey and share this experience together.

Our Vision for Better Access to Better Services

Our Vision of the future is one where public services are accessible and provide choice to all people who live and work and study in Leicestershire. These will be accessible in a way that provides value for money, be better for our customers and of a quality that will deliver a brighter future for Leicestershire to meet the challenges of an information age society and the needs of our communities.

Background

Community services are delivered by a number of different service providers for a variety of different needs.

These services are accessed by people in Leicestershire for many reasons, that may often be linked or overlap. Access to them is available in a number of different ways that might include:

- Face to Face meetings in council premises and in the home
- Visiting buildings
- Using the telephone
- Writing a letter
- Sending an e-mail
- Using the internet
- Interactive digital television

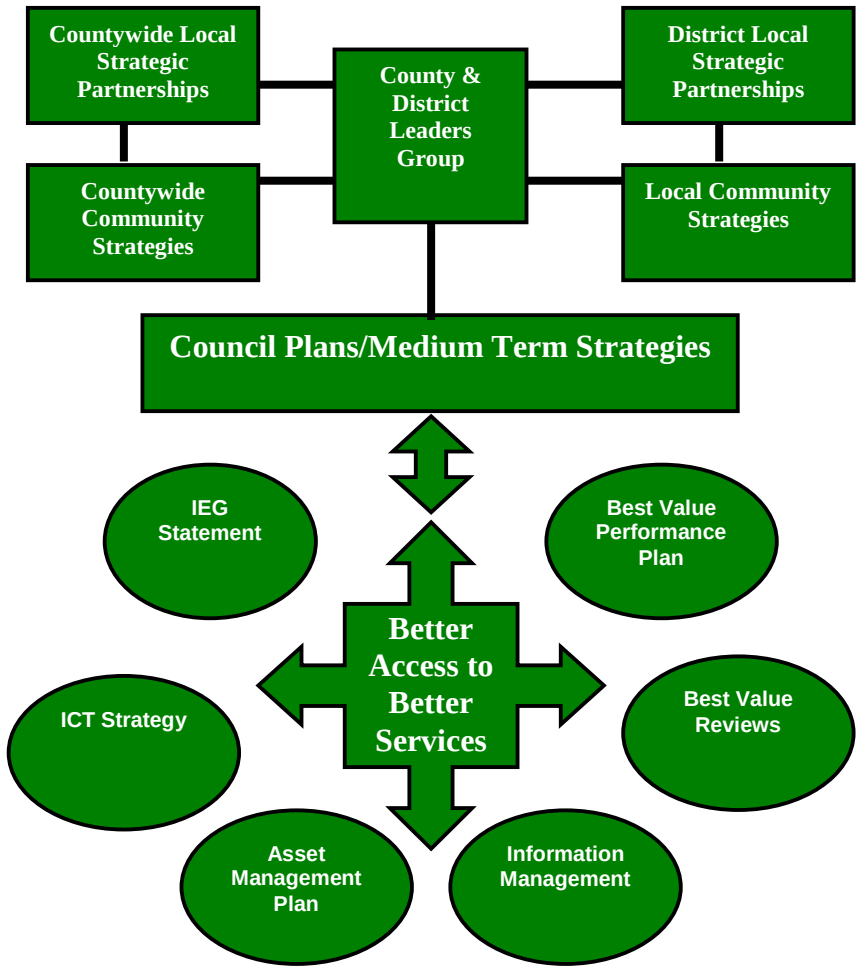
The public sector is being challenged to deliver 100% of services electronically by 2005, whilst continuing to meet the challenges of best value and opportunities for joint delivery of services in partnership with other agencies.

It is important that the delivery and accessibility of community services is determined by the needs or preferences of people using them, the existing services already provided, and the resources available to achieve this, and by working in partnership. The need to utilise and exploit advances in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is important, although it is only one aspect. Therefore, better access to better services should be driven by the following themes:-

- The needs of Leicestershire people
- The location of delivery
- The times of availability
- The method of delivery
- The opportunities for joint delivery
- The effective use of assets.

As well as the potential and suitability for utilising and exploiting advances in ICT.

At this time a range of initiatives that relate to the delivery of, and access to, services and information are being undertaken by the County and District Councils as well as other bodies. These are linked to the principal County Council plans, policies and strategies illustrated in the diagram below. Appendix 1 contains a brief summary showing some of these linkages.



Strategic Aim and Objectives

Community Service providers will each have their own proposals and strategic aims and objectives to guide the work they carry out to deliver services in the future for the people of Leicestershire.

Our Strategic Aim will be to work to offer choice in the way public services are accessed and thus improve access to services for all Leicestershire people. Services will be accessible to all groups in the community and responsive to people's needs and how they choose to access them.

Our Strategic Objective will be to transform our organisation to ensure that access to services is co-ordinated effectively between all our partners and we change the way we '*do business*' to achieve our aim. This will ensure that services that people want to access are provided and developed in a way that most appropriately meets their needs, our partners, and our own.

Basic Principles of Accessible Services for Leicestershire

Our Leading Principle will be to ensure that people can access public services in the way that is most convenient for them.

To achieve this we will need to focus the co-ordination and integration of our services within the County to meeting the needs of the people of Leicestershire, and will begin this process by adopting the following basic principles in our approach:-

The Needs of Leicestershire People

- **Develop consultation strategies and protocols to ensure consultation is co-ordinated between services**
- **Establish the needs of Leicestershire people for the public services they receive and the preferred method of access.**

The Location of Delivery

- **Assess different options for the location of a range of integrated service outlets where public services can be accessed.**
- **Provide both mobile and static locations where people can access public services.**

The Times of Availability

- **Explore the options to extend the times and availability of public services.**
- **Assess the potential for electronic delivery outside traditional working hours.**

The Method of Delivery

- **Assess the different methods available to deliver each service.**
- **Tailor public services so that they can be accessed by the most suitable method.**

The Opportunities for Joint Delivery

- **Support effective partnerships to achieve real improvements and economies of scale in accessing public services.**
- **Explore and develop new and improved arrangements to co-ordinate efficient access to public services between agencies.**

The Effective Use of Assets

- **Transform the way we 'do business' as an organisation to focus on providing better access to better services.**
- **Manage our assets (staff, property, information, & finance) to ensure they are used effectively.**

Excellence for Leicestershire – Working Together to Deliver Quality Services

Appendix 1 - Leicestershire County Council Policy Commitments on 'Better Access to Better Services'

Excellence for Leicestershire – Working Together to Deliver Quality Services
Leicestershire County Council Policy Commitments on 'Better Access to Better Services'

Policy Area	Policy Commitment by Leicestershire County Council
Leicestershire County Council Medium Term Corporate Strategy 2001/2005	"We will provide community leadership for the County. We will ensure that Leicestershire communities play an important part in identifying the problems that affect them and help them shape the solutions to those problems. We will take the lead role in this important task, which will include the preparation of a community strategy covering a range of public services." "We will work to bring services closer to where people live and to improve access to services for people who live in rural areas or away from town centres. Services will be accessible to all groups in the community and responsive to people's needs. We will act positively to tackle inequality and discrimination building on our existing approach to equal opportunities. We believe that the multi tier system of local government in Leicestershire gives opportunities both to plan services strategically and to bring services closer to people. We will work with the district, parish and town councils and with other agencies to achieve this." "We will introduce new and improved arrangements to co-ordinate service delivery with other agencies. These will include arrangements to address how the Government's target, that 100% of services that can be delivered by electronic means should be available electronically by 2005, can be implemented within the resources available." "We will pursue the development of a Public Service Agreement with the Government."

Excellence for Leicestershire – Working Together to Deliver Quality Services
Leicestershire County Council Policy Commitments on 'Better Access to Better Services'

Policy Area	Policy Commitment by Leicestershire County Council
Mr H Barber, The Leader of Leicestershire County Council - The Leaders comments on Public Service Agreements and Community Strategies. (County and District Leaders Meeting, 17th September 2001)	"We want to establish some new ways of working, within the County Council and with others, to ensure that our priorities are identified and met. A corporate strategy, a public service agreement, and a Leicestershire community strategy are key tools to help us achieve these aims." "A positive approach to working in partnership with others to improve public services in Leicestershire will be at the centre of our approach. Joint work with district councils – to make two-tier local government work effectively in Leicestershire – is particularly important to us." "The whole process will, of course, need to be overseen by a local strategic partnership." "I hope that the partnership can also oversee some detailed work to secure some practical initiatives to improve service co-ordination in the County. These might include improved arrangements for co-ordinating consultation, better sharing of information about Leicestershire communities and some joint approaches to the problems and opportunities of introducing 'e-government'. "However, before we get along this road too far, we need to talk to you and other key partners in more detail".

Excellence for Leicestershire – Working Together to Deliver Quality Services
Leicestershire County Council Policy Commitments on 'Better Access to Better Services'

Policy Area	Policy Commitment by Leicestershire County Council
Statement by Professor Preston, Deputy Leader of Leicestershire County Council on E-government and Access to Services. (County and District Leaders Meeting 17th September 2001)	"The County Council is embarking on a process to consider the wider issues of access to services and information, of which electronic solutions form just a part. In fact, we believe that the solutions should not be led by ICT but by an assessment of client expectations about the means of delivery, its location, service availability times and the acceptability of the format in different circumstances and to different groups."
Implementing Electronic Government Statement	"The Council is committed to ensuring that delivery of public services is integrated, effective and appropriate. To achieve this we will: ❑ Establish the needs of customers for public services and organise service delivery in ways which meet those needs. ❑ Foster partnerships and work in partnership with other service providers from the public, private and voluntary sectors. ❑ Offer Choice and flexibility; using technology to complement the way services are accessed, not to replace them."

Excellence for Leicestershire – Working Together to Deliver Quality Services
Leicestershire County Council Policy Commitments on 'Better Access to Better Services'

Policy Area	Policy Commitment by Leicestershire County Council
Information and Communications Technology Strategy, Policies and Guidelines (1999)	" To make the best use of opportunities to enhance the quality, accessibility and cost-effectiveness of front-line services and supporting functions through the innovative and effective use of Information and Communications Technology."
Corporate Information Management Policy (1999)	"To offer choice in terms of where, when, and how information can be accessed. To aim to make information available as widely as possible, as close to the user as possible, and as speedily as possible"
Corporate Information Management Strategy (1999)	"The Authority will aim to maximise the range of formats and delivery methods in which information is published, and will vary them according to type of information and target audience. The Authority will aim to maximise public access to information by providing kiosks, public internet access points, and other forms of terminal as appropriate."

Excellence for Leicestershire – Working Together to Deliver Quality Services
Leicestershire County Council Policy Commitments on 'Better Access to Better Services'

Policy Area	Policy Commitment by Leicestershire County Council
Best Value Performance Plan 2001/02	"We will produce an E-government strategy in 2001/02 outlining how we will develop electronic service delivery in line with the Government's requirements in this area." "Promoting better Government by improving the ways in which we work to ensure the right services are delivered to the people of Leicestershire."
Interim Report of the Property Review Panel	"A more corporate approach should be taken to ownership and occupation of property by the County Council. Property should be managed in a planned integrated fashion. The County Council should seek to work in partnership with other agencies, where appropriate, and deliver services from jointly occupied premises where this is a cost-effective means of meeting service needs."
Corporate Asset Management Plan	"It is a requirement that all services deal with property issues as part of Best Value Review and service planning."

Excellence for Leicestershire – Working Together to Deliver Quality Services
Leicestershire County Council Policy Commitments on 'Better Access to Better Services'

Policy Area	Policy Commitment by Leicestershire County Council
Rural Services Review	" The County Council should seek better co-ordination by departments working more closely together in the delivery of individual services provided by the County Council to ensure that efficient service delivery is achieved." "The County Council should seek to develop a range of outlets for information about the County Council services and facilities." "The County Council should develop its consultation strategies and protocols to ensure arrangements for consultation are co-ordinated between services." "The County Council, in undertaking its community leadership role, should work in partnership with other bodies to: ❑ Ensure that information and services provided by ICT are co-ordinated between agencies. ❑ Develop co-ordinated approaches to the delivery of services with all relevant agencies. ❑ Develop a range of inter agency outlets for information about services and facilities including the use of 'access' centres. "In order to make this information and services available to the public the County Council should also invest in ICT, including public access points."

Excellence for Leicestershire – Working Together to Deliver Quality Services
Leicestershire County Council Policy Commitments on 'Better Access to Better Services'

Policy Area	Policy Commitment by Leicestershire County Council
Leicestershire Rural Strategy 2001 –2006	"The Partnerships vision is that rural Leicestershire will be made up of thriving and inclusive rural communities where there is access for all to a range of services and facilities and the opportunity to develop both existing and new facilities." "The information and electronic services programme will develop ICT through co-ordinated action between service providers to make services and information more accessible."
Review of the Libraries and Information Services Network, Service Delivery Policy and Strategy (1999)	"The County Council has an exciting opportunity to transform its library and information service into a modern, high-performance, cost-effective service, relevant to the needs of all people in Leicestershire, now and in the foreseeable future. From rural areas to market towns, by harnessing the latest Information and Communications Technology (ICT), and in line with current corporate thinking, people will be able to access all County Council and other public services, at, or close to their homes. By involving communities, and other partners including the Health Authority, District and Parish Councils, and the voluntary and private sectors, in planning services and looking at innovative ways of delivering them, even the smallest communities can experience massive improvements in access to those services. This includes the improvement of the bookstock at all libraries, the easy availability of ICT services, and, in some places, longer opening hours and increased staffing levels to ensure adequate access to these facilities, especially for people living in rural areas who have to travel to access some facilities."

Excellence for Leicestershire – Working Together to Deliver Quality Services
Leicestershire County Council Policy Commitments on 'Better Access to Better Services'

Policy Area	Policy Commitment by Leicestershire County Council
Social Services IT Strategy	"Our vision for the social care community is that information management, systems and technology are used to deliver the maximum improvement in the quality of services to the public. We will do this by making information about services available and accessible to members of the public and service users, thereby ensuring fair access to those services;" and,"using ICT to support greater intergration and partnership working, particularly with the Health community."
Better Care Higher Standards – A Local Charter for Leicestershire 2000-02	"Information will be widely available in different languages and formats giving accurate and clear information…"

Appendix C: Better Access to Better Services - Year 1 Programme Deliverables 2002/03

Programme Area	Deliverables	Means of Delivery	Contact	Key Delivery Dates
ACCESS POINTS	❑ Establish at least two new multi-agency centres.	❑ ***New Project:*** - Suggest Lutterworth or Fleckney, as part of the development of a Countywide approach to the overall provision of multi-agency centres.	Various involvement from LCC officers in Libraries & Information and P&T Policy Team on a range of projects. Lead Officer to be agreed.	Agree way forward by March 2003
	❑ 20 additional access points. Eg. Shepshed, Blaby, Asfordby, Fleckney and South Wigston.	❑ ***Current Project:*** – Leicestershire Rural Partnership (LRP) commitment – Subject to funding and community needs.	Ray Smith (LRP) John Winter/Nicole Rickard, LCC contacts	By March 2003
	❑ Establish at least two projects using post offices as access points for specific services following completion of the Your Guide, Post Office evaluation.	❑ ***New Project:*** - To be developed in conjunction with the Post Office as models of best practice.	To be Agreed.	Agree way forward by March 2003.
	❑ 4 ICT centres established in libraries. Eg Fleckney and Lutterworth.	❑ ***Current Project:*** - County Council, Libraries & Information Service commitment.	Libraries, contact Margaret Bellamy/Peter Oldroyd.	By March 2003

Appendix C: Better Access to Better Services - Year 1 Programme Deliverables 2002/03

Programme Area	Deliverables	Means of Delivery	Contact	Key Delivery Dates
CUSTOMER CARE	❑ Public asked for their access preferences in Leicestershire.	❑ ***New Project :*** - To be developed possibly using Leicestershire Matters publication to promote the widest possible distribution within the County and greatest opportunity to respond.	To be agreed. Initial contact Paula Dodd, Public Consultation Co-ordinator.	Public asked by March 2003.
	❑ Develop a charter of the standards of customer care that the public can expect from the County Council for publication and display in council building open to the public.	❑ ***New Project :*** - To be developed to promote the County Councils commitment of working together to deliver quality services.	To be Agreed.	Agree a way forward by March 2003.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	❑ Combined A-Z of Community Services Published	❑ ***New Project :*** - To include wider scope of Community Services	To be Agreed.	Agree a way forward by March 2003.
	❑ Improved translation & interpretation service	❑ ***Current Project :*** - To widen the availability of County Council information in alternative languages.	Initial contact Gayle Wells	Agree a way forward by March 2003.

Appendix C: Better Access to Better Services - Year 1 Programme Deliverables 2002/03

Programme Area	Deliverables	Means of Delivery	Contact	Key Delivery Dates
ON-LINE INFORMATION & TRANSACTIONS	❑ Develop at least 25 new electronic transactions that could include: - interactive library borrowing services - reporting faulty street lights - reporting road defects payments & bookings on-line	❑ ***New Project:*** - To be developed as part of the County Councils commitment towards implementing e-govt targets by 2005 in the Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) Statement.	John Winter/Andy Roberts, ISU	Identify 25 Council transactions capable of electronic delivery by March 2003
	❑ Additional information provision that could include: - school catchment areas - tourism & heritage - Health information	❑ ***New Project:*** - To be developed as part of the County Councils commitment towards implementing e-govt targets by 2005 in the IEG Statement and Information Management Strategy.	To be agreed	Agree schedule of information to be added on-line by March 2003.
	❑ New arrangements for highway network management that could include: - Providing additional information on-line - reporting information on-line - Providing a single telephone number for reporting.	❑ ***New Project:*** - To be developed as part of the best value review of highways network management & linked with developing new electronic transactions.	To be agreed.	Agree a way forward by March 2003.

Appendix C: Better Access to Better Services - Year 1 Programme Deliverables 2002/03

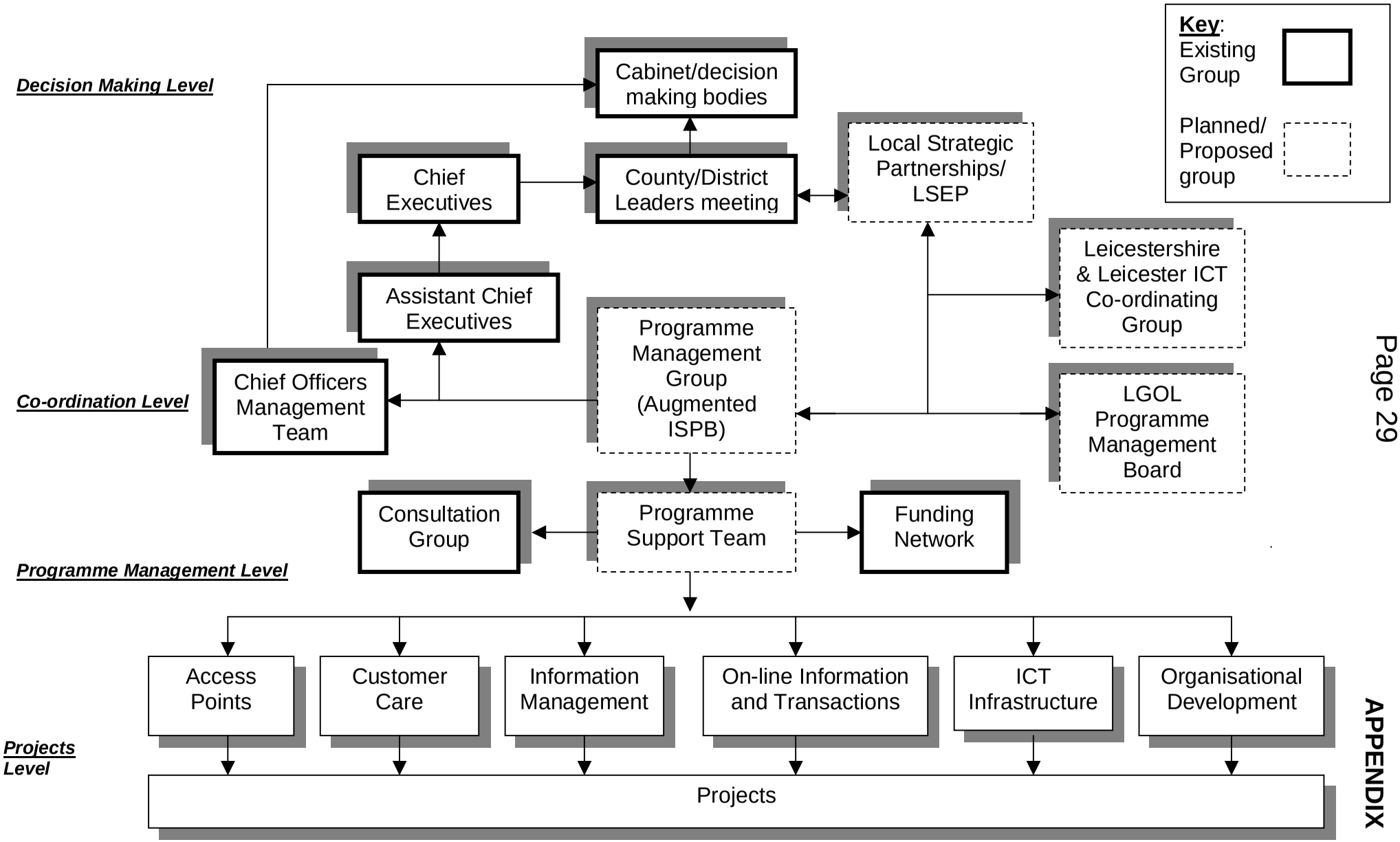
Programme Area	Deliverables	Means of Delivery	Contact	Key Delivery Dates
ON-LINE INFORMATION & TRANSACTIONS CONTINUED…	❑ Leicestershire Care On-line web-site to be launched.	❑ ***Current Project:*** Joint pilot project (Social Services Dept., Health and Harborough District Council) to use internet to: - Linked to the Corporate Web-Site Development project, this joint project will develop protocols for electronic communication and more effective information sharing. - The project will be funded from the Invest to Save Budget Award. - Provide information and services directly into peoples homes - Reduce need for people to make office visits - Improve communication between agencies Addresses some of the social problems created by isolation, disability and rural location.	Peter Chester, Social Services	Web site to 'go live' 10 April 2002, main pilot Sept 2002 – Mar 2003.

Appendix C: Better Access to Better Services - Year 1 Programme Deliverables 2002/03

Programme Area	Deliverables	Means of Delivery	Contact	Key Delivery Dates
ICT INFRASTRUCTURE	❑ All Public Libraries to have access to computers and the internet.	❑ ***Current Project :*** Part of achieving complete Peoples Network status within the County.	Peter Oldroyd/Margaret Bellamy, Libraries and Information Service	Full Peoples Network status by March 2003.
	❑ Increase number of schools with broadband communications to a minimum of 100 subject to NGfL funding.	❑ ***Current Project :*** Ongoing project subject to NGfL funding.	John Winter/Andy Roberts, ISU	Timetable for roll out agreed within two months of funding approval.
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	❑ Include and promote the policy of 'Better Access to Better Services' in the 'Improving Customer Service' training course.	❑ ***New Project :*** - To be developed as part of the County Councils commitment to the development and training of staff in delivering quality services.	To be agreed	Agree a way forward by 2003.

EXCELLENCE FOR LEICESTERSHIRE – WORKING TOGETHER TO DELIVER QUALITY SERVICES

ORGANISATION PROCESS DIAGRAM FOR BETTER ACCESS TO BETTER SERVICES INITIATIVE



LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 8TH MAY 2002

LEICESTERSHIRE, LEICESTER AND RUTLAND RECORD OFFICE

FINAL REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to set out the findings of the five member review panel established to examine the difficulties being experienced at the Record Office.

Terms of Reference

2. The Scrutiny Commission on 14th November 2001 agreed to establish a five member review panel with the following terms of reference:-

   a) To examine the process by which the building and equipment was specified and procured;

   b) To examine the process which led to the County Council taking legal action which resulted in a cost to the Authority of approximately £600,000;

   c) To examine the suitability of the existing building and equipment in relation to future needs and demands on the service.

Membership of the Panel

3. The membership of the Panel, agreed following consultation with the Group Whips, was as follows:-

   Mr P. C. Osborne Mr N. J. Brown Mr O. D. Lucas
   Mr N. J. Rushton
   Mr B. Page

   Mr Osborne CC was nominated as Chairman of the Panel.

Conduct of the Review

4. The Panel has had four meetings, including a site visit to see first hand the problems at the Record Office. The Panel at its first meeting decided to conduct the review in two parts:

   i) the first to deal with the siting of the Record Office, the process by which the building and equipment was specified and procured and the conduct of the legal proceedings;

   ii) the second to deal with current policies in relation to retention of records, issues relating to rectifying the building problems and future space requirements and how these are best provided.

5. The Panel requested the following information to enable it to fulfil its remit.

   a) Purpose/Function of the Record Office:

   - Legal requirements for keeping records;
   - County Council policy for keeping records and reasons for going beyond strict legal requirements.

   b) Background to the siting of the Record Office:

   - Reasons for seeking new site;
   - Process of identification of potential sites and evaluation of such sites;
   - Reasons for choosing the Wigston site;
   - Expected lifespan of the building when commissioned.

   c) Details of the specification, the tendering process and the contract with particular reference to the:-

   - racking equipment;
   - flooring;
   - engagement of structural engineers;
   - engagement of architects.

   d) Identification of Problems

   - When did the problems first come to light?
   - Why was there a delay between identification of the problem and action taken to resolve these?
   - What provision was there in the contracts for arbitration?

e) Basis for taking Legal Proceedings

- Expert technical advice;
- Advice of Counsel;
- Details of and outcome of any attempts at a negotiated settlement;
- Outcome of Legal Proceedings.

f) Proposals for the future

- Options for dealing with the immediate problem of the racking system;
- Implications of the emerging view from Leicester City Council regarding their continuing involvement with the Record Office;
- Medium/Long term requirements of additional storage requirements and the siting of such.

6. The Panel also interviewed the following officers as part of the investigation:

Mrs H. Broughton	Head of Museums
Mr A. Morrison	Director of Property
Mr G. Walsh	Chief Architect
Mr C. Harrison	Chief Archivist
Mr R. Boam	Assistant Head of Legal Services.

7. The following parties were involved in the design and construction of the Record Office:-

Architect	ADW Partnership
Structural Engineer	Gordon Hewitt Associates (GHA)
Quantity Surveyor	Department of Property
Main Contractor	Fairclough Building Ltd (now AMEC)
Shelving Installation	Britannia Storage Systems Ltd

Key Findings of the Review Panel

(A) Siting of the Record Office

8. The Panel reviewed the documentation submitted to the Libraries and Museums Committee, the Financial Planning Subcommittee and the Policy and Resources Committee during the period 1988 to 1990. It was clear from the documentation that the need for a new Record Office had been made. The issue then facing the Council was to identify a suitable and affordable site. Several sites were evaluated. These included:

- Extending the previous Record Office site at 57 New Walk;
- Former All Saints CE School, Wigston (the current site);
- Former Police Station on Blackbird Road, Leicester;
- St Marks Church, Leicester;
- County Hall Site.

9. With regard to the lifespan, the Panel noted that the Wigston site was planned to have a 16-year lifespan in terms of storage capacity. This was in line with national guidance that record office developments should have capacity for approximately 20 years expansion. The Wigston site did offer the possibility for further development albeit the cost may be higher due to access problems and the need to level the site.

10. The Panel has noted that the Wigston Site was not considered ideal given the problems in relation to access and limitations in size. Whilst it was recognised that the best option would have been to locate the new Record Office on the County Hall site (on the grounds of access, parking and links with other services provided from the site) the cost of so doing (£1,975,000 at November 1986 prices) would have been approximately 55% more than the cost of locating at the Wigston site (£1,255,000 at November 1986 prices). ***The Panel therefore concluded that in those circumstances the decision to locate on the Wigston site was reasonable.***

(B) Process for engaging Consultants/Determining the Specifications

11. The Panel was advised that the consultant architect and structural engineers were selected from an approved list of consultants in 1990. In accordance with the County Council's standing orders and financial regulations, inclusion of a Consultant on a standing list was subject to financial checks and scrutiny of details of projects undertaken together with the Consultant's ability to handle work at specified levels of competence.

12. Consultants were awarded work on a rotational basis, taking into account their experience of undertaking projects of similar magnitude, existing workload and staff resources. Having taken account of the foregoing information the decision to appoint would have been taken by one of the then Assistant Directors (Architecture).

13. The Panel was advised that this process of appointing consultants had now been changed. Although select lists are still maintained, the award of a contract is generally on the basis of a competitive tendering process. In addition following the completion of any major project there is a formal performance appraisal of the consultants engaged on the project which is then used to inform the allocation of future work.

14. The engaging of consultants was dependant on the nature of work to be carried out and the capacity within the Department to undertake the work.

15. With regard to major building works, the Panel was advised that the consultant architect would normally be responsible for oversight and co-ordination of the whole project.

16. The Panel was advised that the specification for the racking system and floor loading had been determined by the then Director of Museums, Professor P. Boylan after lengthy discussions with a specialist company Bruynzeel.

17. The Panel welcomed the changes that have been made to the process of engaging consultants and allocation of work. The Panel was however concerned, it appeared in the case of the Record Office, that the client department was taking the lead in determining technical specifications. ***The view of the Panel was that client departments should limit themselves to advising on the purpose and function and leave the technical specialist to design and build a structure which was 'fit for the purpose'. The Panel was of the view that use should be made of 'design and build' unless this form of construction was deemed inappropriate.*** The involvement of the client department and Bruynzeel in determining technical specifications for the racking system and floor loading may have served to confuse rather than clarify overall responsibility for the project.

(C) Seeking Expert advice and taking legal proceedings

18. The Panel was advised that problems with the floor came to light soon after the building was completed. As a result in 1995 discussions were held with the architects (ADW) with a view to finding causes and possible remedies.

19. Following these discussions the decision was taken to seek expert advice from a structural engineer. Several firms were contacted and asked to produce a brief on how they would conduct the investigation. Arising from this, Scott Wilson Kirkpatrick (SWK) were selected. SWK are one of the biggest structural engineering consultancy companies in the country.

20. Following the receipt of the structural engineer's report in 1998 the decision was taken to seek Counsel's Opinion. The Chambers selected specialise in construction matters and the Barrister appointed to advise has had 22 years experience in the field. The initial conference with Counsel included the Legal Department, Property Department and SWK. Arising from the Conference a considerable number of issues

were looked at in more detail including the commissioning of further reports from SWK.

21. Based on the advice received proceedings were issued against architects (ADW) and the structural engineers (GHA). The view of Counsel was that there was insufficient evidence for breach of contract or negligence for Britannia to be included in the proceedings. It was expected that the matter would be settled without the need for Court proceedings and to that end ADW and GHA were contacted giving them the opportunity to put things right. When this approach was unsuccessful both companies were offered the opportunity to go to arbitration in accordance with the terms of their engagement, but ultimately, it was agreed to process the case through the Court.

22. The Court Case lasted four weeks with an additional 2 days for dealing with costs. The Judge concluded that blame lay with Britannia. Britannia were not a party to the proceedings and the Judge had previously refused a previous application by solicitors representing GHA to include Britannia in the proceedings.

23. An application was made for leave to appeal to the Court of Appeal but this was unsuccessful and reflected the fact that it was difficult to overturn a decision based on factual interpretation as opposed to legal interpretation.

24. The Panel was advised that the issue of costs was still with the assessors. ADW had submitted a claim for £320,000 (plus interest) and it was hoped that this could be settled at approximately £260,000 (plus interest). GHA had submitted a bid for £120,000 (plus interest) and again it was hoped to agree a sum of approximately £90,000 (plus interest). GHA would also be required to pay the County Council the costs for the part of the case relating to the wind bracing, estimated at approximately £30,000 (plus interest).

25. Officers stated that whilst Cabinet Lead Members had been kept informed of the intention to pursue the case and of progress and scale of the legal action, Lead Members were not specifically advised of the potential professional costs in the event of the case being lost.

26**. The Panel was satisfied that appropriate professional advice had been sought and that the decision to commence legal proceedings was reasonable given the professional advice received.** The Panel was however concerned that elected members were not kept fully briefed and considered that the Cabinet should have been advised by way of a formal report of the implications of the case, including an analysis of the cost implications to the County Council if, as has happened, the Council were not successful. ***The Panel therefore recommend that the Cabinet and County Solicitor should develop a protocol to:-***

i) ***ensure that the Cabinet is made aware of those cases where the Council is proposing legal action and the cost to the Council of not succeeding could be considerable – for instance cases likely to be dealt with in the High Court.*** {The Panel noted that in some instances, such as child protection cases, there might be no alternative other than to incur the expenditure and that these may be an exception}.

ii) ***Ensure that Cabinet members are advised at key stages in the process in any civil proceedings brought by the Council in particular the point at which arbitration/mediation may be appropriate;***

iii) ***establish a mechanism to ensure that the progress of Court proceedings are monitored and any significant cost overruns or major changes are brought to the attention of senior officers and Cabinet members.***

D) <u>The impact of any review of the current policy of retaining records in terms of space requirements, conservation and public access and research.</u>

27. The Panel was advised that under the Local Government Act 1972 (Section 224) 'principal councils' (counties and unitaries) have a general responsibility to:
'... make proper arrangements with respect to any documents that belong to or are in the custody of the council or any of their officers'.

28. This responsibility applies not only to current records but also to historic archives which are chiefly of cultural significance. In the case of Leicestershire the archive which records the activities of the County Council and its predecessor authorities including the Leicestershire Court of Quarter Session, begins in the 17th century. The parallel archive of Leicester City Council and the former Borough of Leicester (in the care of the Record Office under the joint arrangement) begins in the 12th century.

29. Principal councils are also 'archive authorities' for their areas, and by virtue of the Local Government (Records) Act 1962 are empowered not only to promote public use of their own archives, but also to acquire archives from other sources, either by purchase, gift or deposit on loan, so that they can be similarly available for public use. Under this power all English county councils, in the period before and after the

Second World War, established record offices and pursued active policies of collecting, preserving and providing access to archives from a very wide range of origins, for the cultural and educational benefit of the community. Thus the Record Office is typical of equivalent county archive services in that the majority of its holdings come from and record a very broad spectrum of the community - from miners to landed families, from shops to large manufacturing businesses, from charities to political parties, and from churches to campaigning secular groups. This network of largely county-based 'all-purpose' record offices is a unique strength of British archives, recognised by the Historical Manuscripts Commission:

'Local authority archive services remain the key plank in the national strategy for protecting our written heritage'. (HMC, Archives at the Millennium, 1999).

30. The Record Office as presently constituted has the significant added value to researchers of housing the core local studies library collection for County and City alongside the archives. This includes not only books but also photographs, maps, film, video and recorded sound (including oral history). The significant research benefits of being able to access and cross reference all these archival and local studies resources on one site was a principal factor in choosing the new site, as being capable of accommodating all the existing holdings with space for potential expansion.

31. ***The Panel has not sought to undertake a detailed review of the current policy of retaining records. However the Panel was of the view that any such review should take into account the following:***

- ***The loss to*** researchers, and educational, lifelong learning and leisure ***users*** of the benefits ***of direct and immediate access to a comprehensive range of resources;***

- ***The inability of any other body***, public or private, ***to offer an equivalent service*** or set of services in terms of resources, preservation, conservation, public access and broader public benefit (e.g. through exhibition and outreach work);

- ***The inability of many,*** if not most, ***of the owners*** and originators of the deposited archives ***to preserve their archives to appropriate standards*** (as defined by the British Standard, Recommendations for the storage and exhibition of archival documents, BS 5454:2000);

- ***The loss of a resource base which would enable the County Council to participate in and benefit from the growing interest at regional and national level in the***

value and cultural potential of archives, as reflected in the activities of Resource (the Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries), the Regional Archive Councils, and the Government Policy on Archives (1999).

E) <u>The outcome of discussions with Leicester City Council on their continued use of the Record Office including any issues raised during the renegotiation process.</u>

32. The Panel was advised that there has been a 'de facto' agreement in place with Leicester City Council since 1997. There has been a formal agreement in place with Rutland County Council since 1997.

33. The financial value of the agreements with Rutland and Leicester are £39,080 and £205,010 respectively in 2002/03. Rutland County Council undertook a Best Value Review of the Service in 2000/01 and agreed to continue the Record Office Joint Agreement based on existing performance targets, until further notice.

34. For a variety of reasons, the legal agreement with Leicester City Council has not yet been signed. Since 1997, therefore, services have been delivered to the City Council in terms of acquisitions, care and management, access and retrieval of City collections, as per the draft agreement. Working papers on acquisitions and access were developed between the former City Head of Libraries and the Chief Archivist in 1998/1999, to identify and deliver against a range of joint working principles, but these have not been formalised to date.

35. In 2000 the City Council undertook a Review of Access and Inclusion within the Libraries Service. This identified concerns with the Record Office joint arrangement and recommended that the arrangement be subject to a Best Value review, which was undertaken in 2001. The various options offered by the Review Panel included a feasibility study with the aim of working towards withdrawal from the Joint Arrangement in 2005. However on 14 January 2002 Leicester City Council's Cabinet agreed that the joint arrangement should be renegotiated and formalised, with emphasis on the areas where the present service was perceived to fall short of requirements for the people of Leicester, i.e. collections, access, ICT and inclusion. The option of working towards withdrawal from the joint arrangement and its replacement by a community heritage centre for the City was rejected on grounds of cost. This appears to indicate that the City is committed to the joint arrangement to meet its core archive and local studies responsibilities for the foreseeable future.

36. An 'away-day' between officers of City and County Councils was scheduled for 20 March to consider potential improvements to the joint arrangement. In the event because of concentration on internal restructuring within the City Council, the envisaged meeting was not

possible but an initial meeting did take place between the Head of Museums, the Chief Archivist, and the Head of City Libraries.

37. As indicated in the Best Value review, the renegotiation will concentrate on issues of social inclusion and community involvement in and with the Record Office. A two stage process is envisaged. The officer 'away day', now rescheduled for 2nd May, will explore a range of issues and ideas, and produce proposals for possible initiatives. These will then be circulated to community groups and interested parties, and will form the basis for discussion at a conference for stakeholders on 12th June.

38. From these discussions it is anticipated that any draft revisions necessary to the joint agreement will be formulated for submission to City and County members in the autumn.

39. ***The Panel has noted the comments made by the City Council and their desire to renegotiate the agreement so as to improve access and address issues of inclusion including services to minority ethnic communities. The Panel was keen to ensure that the implications and costs to the service of any such renegotiation should be clearly identified and these should be drawn to the attention of the Cabinet. There was the expectation that any costs would be met by the City Council though it was recognised that a proportion may have to be met by the County as the development of services to minority ethnic groups would also benefit County residents.***

40. The Panel was advised that the Head of City Libraries reiterated the City's desire to sign the version of the joint agreement finalised in 1999 as a basis for its renegotiation, and the County Solicitor has been requested to make the necessary arrangements. ***The Panel was concerned that no formal signed agreement existed with the City Council and is of the view that on completion of the renegotiations a formal agreement should be drawn up and signed as soon as possible.***

(F) Impact on the service of conserving records in an electronic format.

41. The Panel was advised that it was important to distinguish between the potential offered by digitisation as a means of offering surrogates for or networked access to the original documents, and any possibility that it might offer an alternative means of preservation. In this respect digitisation is exactly parallel to the long-established use of microfilm or microfiche, and offers the same benefits in some areas and weaknesses in others.

42. For some 20 years the Record Office has had a programme of microfilming heavily used archive series (particularly parish registers and wills) in order to provide surrogates which protect the original documents from damage by overuse and allow copies to be accessed in a limited number of other centres (mainly libraries). However it is important to stress that the originals, often documents many hundreds of years old, are not discarded in favour of the surrogates, but safeguarded for their intrinsic value.

43. The Record Office is currently embarking on digitisation of the Newton archive of 2,500 photographs recording the building of the Great Central Railway ('The Last Main Line') as a partner (with two other projects on waterways and aviation) in the '3 Centuries of Transport' consortium, which is largely funded by a successful grant application to the New Opportunities Fund (NOF). The financing of the whole project illustrates well the true costs of this sort of enterprise - the total project, which will digitise, catalogue and create websites around 11,000 images, is estimated at £827,718, of which NOF is contributing £582,370.

44. While simply to digitise routine documents is not nearly so costly, when the millions of individual documents held by the Record Office are considered, the potential cost would be very high, even if the exercise were thought desirable. However there are other arguments against transfer to electronic media as a means of permanent preservation. Loss of the evidential value of the original document (the 'real thing') has been touched on, as has the need to ensure continued availability of both hardware and software, including need to migrate data at regular intervals, particularly as platforms become obsolete. With an invoice which is only needed for six years this may not be a significant issue; with an archival document which is to be kept permanently it will be a recurrent, and costly, one.

45. There are also practical technical obstacles. Just as the image quality of microfilm has always varied, so electronic data can become corrupted and there are serious concerns about the long-term viability of specific media (e.g. CD-ROMs where there have been reports of delamination problems after only a few years' life). Electronic data can also be easily manipulated which has led not only to resistance to its use as legal evidence but also to a debate on whether digitally 'improving' a damaged photograph destroys its archival and evidential integrity.

46. In addition to the cost of transfer there would be the further cost of providing and maintaining sufficient machines to provide the necessary public access at the Record Office. This is an issue even with such simple and cheap machines as microfilm readers, and is likely to remain a relatively more serious one with electronic hardware.

47. The Panel concluded that digitisation and networking offers enormous potential for extending access to precious original records but the costs could be prohibitive. ***Any digitisation programme should only be undertaken if substantial resources were made available from external sources such as the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) or Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The on-going costs of maintaining and updating digitised records in new formats should also be noted and, if possible, included in any funding bid. The Panel also noted that digitisation of records would have a marginal effect on the current and medium term storage requirements of the service.***

(G) <u>The current estimate for rectifying the problems on the first floor of the strongroom, including the cost of decanting.</u>

48. The Panel was advised that a sum of £275,000 would be required to rectify the problem. This includes decanting costs. This also includes a sum of £75,000 to undertake the work necessary to rectify the windbracing in the building – the cost of which would be borne by GHA, the structural engineers. A sum of £200,000 had been included in the 2002-03 capital programme. The time frame for the repairs is estimated at 3 – 4 months.

49. The Panel was advised that the proposed solution would be to lay new rails, which will be level when the floor is loaded. There are three technical alternatives for doing this. The final decision will be made at the stage of detailed project design. The Panel was further advised that the Cabinet had authorised the Director of Property to enter into a contract, based on a single tender and/or negotiation with Britannia Storage Systems Limited as it was impractical to get another supplier to quote for the disassembling/re-assembling/and servicing of the units originally made by Britannia.

50. The appointment of Britannia would also ensure a 'single point of responsibility' for removal/storage/re-assembly of the racking, leveling the floor rails and getting it all to work properly

51. The Panel was also advised that the remedial work would not result in a change to the storage capacity on the first floor. The reason for this was that the design loads adopted were derived as a result of liaison between Professor Boylan and Bruynzeel Storage Systems Ltd. As a result the floor was designed by the architects (ADW) and the consultant engineers (GHA), to support a 'superload' of 8.3kN/m² whereas British Standard BS 5454: 1989 'Recommendations for Storage and Exhibiting Archival Documents' recommends 11kN/ m². In addition, the floor design did not take into account the location of the tracks and potential increase in load due to 'point loading effects' of the mobile shelving. The net effect of this is that it will now not be possible to load the first floor shelving fully.

52. ***The Panel was extremely concerned that the remedial action would not allow the first floor shelving to be loaded fully but concluded that the remedial work should proceed on health and safety grounds***.

(H) Future Needs of the Service

53. The average rate of addition to the Record Office's collections is some 500 linear feet annually. This rate of additional space is likely to be required for the foreseeable future if the service is to fulfil its functions as the core archives and local studies centre for the three supporting authorities, and if the County Council, Leicester and Rutland are to meet their responsibilities as principal councils and archive authorities.

54. Despite the move to creation and holding of new records in electronic form, it is likely to be many years before the majority of historically valuable paper archives are gathered in and safeguarded.

(I) Options for addressing future needs

(i) Utilising space in the Record Office complex

55. The Panel was advised that the existing buildings are presently all utilised for collections storage; public research, meeting room, and rest area / exhibition and shop space; staff office and work areas; or conservation studio. The conservation studio was specially designed and converted to offer the required light and space for effective conservation work. A survey in 1993/94 indicated that some 20% of the archive collections then held required immediate conservation activity to prevent further deterioration. To relocate the conservation function elsewhere on the site would require the creation of a similar specialist area, at significant cost, and would impact on other activities or services.

56. The only other possibilities for storage of any sort within the main existing building would involve either sacrificing the meeting room or installing a mezzanine floor in one of the general offices. Security to the standards required by BS5454:2000 would be difficult and costly to achieve in the main building even if a suitable area could be identified; in effect a high security ‘cell’ would have to be created within the building. Security of the free-standing conservation block could be upgraded but the cost is likely to be significant.

57. ***The Panel concluded that it would be costly and impractical to seek to utilise space in the main building for storage purposes.***

ii) Extension of the existing strongroom and other Property Options

58. The Panel was advised of a desktop analysis that had been undertaken by the Director of Property which had considered the following options:

- A two storey extension on the existing site
- New Facility on a green/brownfield site
- Purchase and conversion of an industrial building
- Extending other County Council buildings
- New build on the County Hall site

Details of the desktop analysis is attached as an Appendix to this report.

59. Based on the information provided the Panel noted that the most economical option would be to extend the existing site at an estimated cost of £750,000. This would increase capacity by 60% and would result in a 30 – 35 year lifespan in terms of storage capacity. [This compares to the most attractive new build option – building on the County Hall site – which would offer a lifespan of some 40 years at a cost of £2,200,000].

60. The Panel noted that there was a strong possibility of a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. Such a bid would be helped further by acknowledgement that the County Council met the whole cost of providing the Record Office in the first place (and of remedying the defect which subsequently appeared).

61. ***The Panel therefore expressed the view that the future needs of the service can be most economically met by extending the existing site and that the possibility of external funding should be actively pursued. The Panel in noting the difficulties regarding access to the site suggested that should an adjoining property become available the County Council should seek to purchase/lease the site so as to enhance the access to and facilities provided on the site.***

CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

61. The Scrutiny Commission is asked to note the findings of the Review Panel (***the principal points have been highlighted)*** and to draw these to the attention of the Cabinet and County Council.

Mr P. C. Osborne CC
Chairman of the Panel

APPENDIX

WIGSTON RECORDS OFFICE

PROPERTY OPTIONS

Assumptions used in developing Options

Figures given below are for a facility similar in size and type to the present one. The figures are 'order of magnitude' estimates.

The existing repository has a floor area of 780m^2. The public access and office areas total 800m^2 and the conservation block is 225m^2.

All the other options to be considered provide for relocating the facility elsewhere, and selling the Wigston site.

The estimate receipt for the sale of site is £700k. However, the vehicular access to the rear of the building for car parking and service vehicle use is across the All Saints C of E Primary School site, via their main entrance.

The school is under the Diocesan authority and very serious difficulties are envisaged, in terms of negotiating vehicular access for non-County Council use.

It may, therefore, be that the building could only be used for alternative County Council uses, and the estimated receipt of £700K may not be achievable, although it may be possible to move another service to Wigston and sell a building elsewhere.

The 60% additional building costs shown in the various options, are for building only, i.e. they do not include racking.

All the options are based on re-use of the existing racking system.

Option 1; Extend the strongroom at Wigston

Total cost of £750,000

Potential future storage expansion could use, say half, of rear car park. A two storey building would give up to 500m^2 of additional storage. This would represent an increase of around 60% per m^2 in capacity. Cost estimate would be around £1500 per m^2 i.e. **a total cost of £750,000**.

Option 2; New facility on green/brown field site

Costs are as follows;

	£k	
Site acquisition	300	(1)
New building	2000	(2)
Relocation costs	100	
	2400	
Less receipt for Wigston	700	
Nett Cost	1700	
Additional storage capacity of 60%	500	
Total cost	**2 200**	

Note:

1. development land would need to be identified and bought – if the land is in the Council's ownership there may be a loss of potential capital receipt.

2. The new build would have to be fully financed, before the receipt was achievable.

3. Time frame to completion 1½ - 2 years.

Option 3; Purchase and convert an Industrial Building

If the present facility was to be duplicated, a standard industrial unit would need extensive modification to strengthen the floor for the stores and to create the public access/office areas.

Costs are as follows;

	£
Good quality industrial unit	700
Floor strengthening/track installation	100
Office/public areas	320
Air conditioning	160
Removal costs	100
	1380
Less Wigston receipt	700
Nett Cost	680
Additional storage capacity of 60%	400
Total cost	**1 080**

Notes:

1. Time frame 1-1½ years.
2. Need to fully finance prior to receipt.
3. Location/public transport to industrial estate could be problematic.
4. Many Authorities have created new records facilities. Industrial-type buildings have, generally, not been considered appropriate.

Option 4; Extend other County Council buildings

Two sites have been considered. Rothley Library site and Snibston.

Rothley Total costs £2,220,000

The site is held on a 10 year lease, which expires in 2007. It is fully utilised. It is very unlikely that Planning Consent would be granted on the open space area at the rear, because of the impact on surrounding residential buildings. However, if planning was achieved, nett costs would be similar to Option 2, i.e. £1,700,000 + £500,000 for any expansion (assuming the owners were willing to sell or grant a long lease, which is unlikely).

Snibston Total Cost £1,880,000

A facility could be built at the rear of the main building. The nett cost here would be approximately £1, 380,000 + £500,000 for any expansion –

Certain parts of the site are ruled out by planning restrictions. The area behind the main building is not ideal, as there are access and other practical problems.

Note:

1. Time frame for both options would be 1½ - 2 years.
2. Need to fully finance prior to receipt.
3. Location of Snibston within the County may be an issue?
4. No other suitable sites have been identified.

Option 5 – County Hall Site

Build on County Hall site, and incorporate Modern Records. This would free up some accommodation in County Hall.

Costs are as follows;

	£
New building	2300
Relocation	100
	2400
Less Wigston receipt	700
Nett Cost	1700
Additional storage capacity of 60%	500
Total cost	**2 200**

Notes:

1. Time frame 1½ - 2 years.
2. Need to fully finance prior to receipt.
3. Accessibility/location good.
4. There is an opportunity cost (capital receipt foregone) of c.£300k.
5. There would be advantages to bringing Archives and Modern Records within close proximity, and to develop Modern Records management.

Conclusions

There are three basic types of options;

- ~ Repair Wigston
- ~ Buy and convert
- ~ New build

Of the new build options, County Hall site is clearly the most attractive, overall.

Pros (+) and cons (-) are shown below:-

	Repair	**Buy/Convert**	**County Hall**
Cost/cash flow	+ + +	+	- - -
Location	+ +	- -	+ + +
Future Expansion	+	+ +	+ + +
Building Suitability	+	- -	+ + +
Running Costs	+	- -	+ +
Timescale	+ + +	+	- -
Dependence on Capital Receipt	+ + +	-	-

LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 8TH MAY 2002

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

OPERATION OF THE REVIEW PANEL ON RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF TEACHERS

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Scrutiny Commission of the conclusions drawn from the experience of conducting the five-member panel review of Recruitment and Retention of Teachers.

Recommendation

2. The Education and Heritage Scrutiny Committee on 1st May will be considering the recommendations arising from the five member Review Panel's investigation and the experience gained from the Review. Subject to any comments arising from that meeting, the Scrutiny Commission is recommended to consider the conclusions set out in paragraphs 9 to 16 of the attached report (Appendix 1) in the context of establishing further review panels in the future.

Background

3. At its meeting on 22 August 2001, the Education and Heritage Scrutiny Committee resolved to recommend to the Scrutiny Commission that it should conduct an in-depth review of Recruitment and Retention of Teachers by establishing a five-member review panel. The Commission supported this recommendation at its meeting on 5 September 2001.

4. The Review Panel on Recruitment and Retention of Teachers met for the first time on 19th November 2001 and held four meetings in all before reporting on its findings to the Education and Heritage Scrutiny Committee on 1 May 2002.

5. The conclusions and recommendations of the Review Panel are attached at Appendix 2, for the Commission's information. These were approved by the Education and Heritage Scrutiny Committee on 1 May 2002 and referred to the Cabinet for consideration.

6. As this Review Panel, and the Review Panel appointed to investigate issues relating to the Leicestershire Records Office, are the first

Review Panels to have been established by Scrutiny, it was felt by the Panel that its experience could usefully be shared with the Scrutiny Commission before further Review Panels are set up.

Background Papers

Minutes of the meeting of the Education and Heritage Scrutiny Committee on 22 August 2001 and the Scrutiny Commission on 5 September 2001

Officer to contact

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LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

APPENDIX 1

EDUCATION AND HERITAGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
1 MAY 2002

OPERATION OF THE REVIEW PANEL ON RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF TEACHERS

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to explain how the review of Recruitment and Retention of Teachers was undertaken and to review the lessons learned from it that can be used to inform the future conduct of reviews by member review panels.

Recommendation

2. The Education and Heritage Scrutiny Committee is recommended to note this report and to refer it to the Scrutiny Commission for consideration.

Background

3. On 22nd August 2001, the Education and Heritage Scrutiny Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive on its future work programme and identified Recruitment and Retention of Teachers as an issue that it wanted to examine in some detail. The Director of Education was asked to submit a position statement on the subject to the Committee's next meeting and a joint report of the Chief Executive and Director of Education was submitted to the meeting on 3rd October 2001. This report invited the Committee to determine the scope of a review panel to consider what the Council could do to address problems with recruiting and retaining teachers.

4. The Committee referred to the Education and Heritage Scrutiny Spokesmen the task of defining the scope and terms of reference of the Review Panel. A report was submitted to the Committee on 31st October that outlined the outcome of the Spokesmen's meeting. The following points were made:-

   - it would be appropriate at the first meeting of the Review Panel to identify the scale and scope of the problem of recruiting and retaining teachers and for it to consider a paper on the current work being done and potential sources of information on successful work/innovation elsewhere on this subject.

- the spokesmen were happy for the panel to identify the scope and scale of its review but felt that it should work towards being able to offer proposals for helping to recruit and retain teachers by the end of May 2002.

- the panel should talk to a wide range of stakeholders but avoid duplicating work being done by the Headteacher/Officer Reference Group. It was important for the Panel to work in partnership with this group to avoid duplication and to explore areas where joint working might be appropriate.

- the Panel should seek to arrange its first meeting early in November.

5. It was also reported that through the Political Group processes, Mrs V P Bill, Mrs R Camamile, Mr J W Royce, Mrs M L Sherwin and Mr D J Knaggs had been nominated to serve on the Review Panel. Mrs Bill was subsequently appointed as Chairman.

Progress made by the Review Panel

6. The Review Panel met on four occasions, on 19th November and 17th December 2001 and 29th January and 21st March 2002. At the first meeting the Review Panel recognised that:-

   - It needed to be aware of work already in hand and to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.

   - It would be useful to know what other LEAs were doing on this subject.

   - It should identify the reasons behind the difficulties and the scale of the problem locally. To this end, it would be sensible to seek the views of local stakeholders.

   - Recruitment and Retention had been identified as an additional local priority in the Education Development Plan at the EDP Conference on 12 November 2001.

7. The Review Panel received a report from the Director of Education that referred to the difficulties facing Leicestershire schools in recruiting and retaining teachers and the action being taken by the Education Department to support schools and help to address these difficulties.

8. At its two subsequent meetings the Review Panel gathered information about the reasons behind the problem of recruiting and retaining teachers from both the national and local perspective; information about the work being done nationally and locally to address the problem and ideas as to what the Council could do to help tackle the problem locally. The sources for this information were:-

- Consultation with local stakeholders – The Recruitment and Retention Reference Group of Headteachers, the Teacher Trade Unions, the Co-opted Members of the Education and Heritage Scrutiny Committee and representatives of the Teacher Training Institutions at the Universities of Leicester and Loughborough.

- A summary of the responses to a questionnaire issued to every newly qualified teacher in Leicestershire. This sought to discover the factors affecting NQT's decisions to apply for posts in Leicestershire and to identify patterns that might inform future recruitment strategies.

- The Executive Summary of Price Waterhouse Coopers Draft Final Report for the DFES on the main factors that determine teachers' and headteachers' workload and the development of a programme of practical action to eliminate excessive workload and to promote the most effective use of resources in schools to raise standards of pupil achievement

- A summary of the proposed actions in Local Priority 7 of the Education Development Plan "to support the LEA's programme of school improvement through establishing a strategy for the recruitment and retention of teachers and headteachers."

Experience Learned from the operation of the Review Panel

9. It is essential to identify the terms of reference and the scope of the review to be conducted at the first meeting.

10. The potential sources of information and the resources required to support the review process should also be identified at the first meeting, although this may not be clear until the review has progressed.

11. It is important to be aware of other work being done on the subject for review. A headteacher/officer reference group had already been formed to address recruitment and retention. This had two consequences for the Panel – in one respect it was a potential source of information and advice to the Review Panel but, conversely, the Panel did not want to duplicate its work.

12. A realistic timescale for conducting the review and drafting conclusions and recommendations needs to be agreed. This is not an easy task because the review can identify unforeseen information or issues that may affect the timescale

13. The informality of Review Panel meetings, the small numbers of people involved and the conduct of meetings in private, is conducive to undertaking consultation; to getting a full and frank exchange of views and to ensuring that all those attending participate actively.

14. The opportunity to focus attention on a single subject area allows a more in depth approach to scrutiny than is possible at a normal Scrutiny Committee meeting.

15. The Review Panel has provided an opportunity for Members to identify what information they need and to draw out that information first hand from direct questioning, rather than by commissioning reports from officers.

16. The review has had to rely a great deal on anecdotal information from consultation. Since the introduction of Local Management of Schools and increased delegation to schools from the LEA, Governing Bodies have been responsible for filling teaching vacancies in their schools. Schools have detailed information about their own recruitment and retention difficulties, but the LEA does not have a central database about the position across the county. The Council should consider whether the Education Department ought to collate and maintain county-wide information on recruitment and retention of teachers. The Recruitment Strategy Manager to be appointed by the Education department could be asked to research the feasibility of compiling and maintaining county-wide information about vacancies, recruitment and retention of teachers.

Officer to Contact

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rprrtrb

LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

APPENDIX 2

EDUCATION AND HERITAGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1 MAY 2002

MEMBER REVIEW PANEL ON THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF TEACHERS

REPORT ON THE OUTCOMES OF THE REVIEW.

Purpose

1. To report the outcomes of the review and present recommendations to the Committee.

Recommendations

2. That the Education & Heritage Scrutiny Committee agrees the main findings and recommendations of the review panel and that these are forwarded to the Cabinet for consideration.

Background

3. The review panel was established following a meeting of the Education and Heritage Scrutiny Committee on 3 October 2001. The terms of reference were agreed by the Spokespersons of the Committee and were reported to the Committee on 31 October 2001. It was agreed that it would be appropriate at the first meeting of the Review Panel to identify the scale and scope of the problem of recruiting and retaining teachers and for it to consider a paper on the current work being undertaken and potential sources of information on successful work/innovation elsewhere on this subject. It was agreed that the Review Panel would work towards being able to offer proposals for helping to recruit and retain teachers by the end of May 2002. It was recognised that, while the panel would need to talk to a wide range of stakeholders, it would also need to work closely with the headteacher/officer reference group on recruitment and retention in order to avoid duplication.

   Through the Political Group processes Mrs. V.P. Bill, Mrs. R. Camamile, Mr. J.W. Royce, Mrs. M.L. Sherwin and Mr. D.J. Knaggs were nominated to serve on the Review Panel. Mrs. Bill was subsequently appointed as Chairman.

Recruitment and Retention of Teachers

4. The recruitment and retention of teachers has become increasingly difficult during the last few years, but it is only in the last two years that this has had a significant impact in Leicestershire schools. Early difficulties arose mainly in secondary schools, especially upper schools, which were seeking to appoint specialists to posts in shortage subject areas such as Maths, Science and Modern Foreign Languages.

5. A number of factors have contributed to the increasing difficulties which schools in all phases are having in recruiting and retaining teachers including:-

- fluctuations in the level of economic activity – fewer graduates enter teaching when the economy is prospering.
- limitations on the numbers of students entering teacher training.
- an increasing drop-out rate among new teachers after about three years in the profession.
- increasing demand for teachers in response to national education strategies and funding.
- increasing demand for supply teachers as teachers engage in a range of training activities arising from national initiatives and more teachers are released from teaching to undertake professional activities including classroom observation.
- the diminishing number of teachers seeking to take on senior responsibilities especially headships because of the perceived level and nature of public accountability.
- the age profile of the teaching profession means that a high proportion of teachers will retire in the next few years.

Information from Leicestershire headteachers and principals confirms that these factors have been evident in local schools.

Work in Progress

6. A reference group of headteachers, officers and a representative of the Teachers Consultative Committee (TCC) has met regularly since Spring 2001. Having identified a range of issues relating to the recruitment and retention of teachers the group decided to focus its attention initially on the issue of supply teachers, without whom it might prove necessary to close schools. The reference group has explored the possibility of a contractual arrangement with a supply agency whereby Leicestershire schools would receive priority. The senior management team of the education department has approved further work on this proposal.

7. The adviser with responsibility for the induction of newly qualified teachers (NQTs) has undertaken a survey of NQTs to ascertain their reasons for applying for teaching posts in Leicestershire and to acquire other information to assist in targeting the recruitment of NQTs. The results of this survey have been reported to the Review Panel and feature in its findings and recommendations. They have also been used as the basis for developing a web page on teaching in Leicestershire which went on line in February and will be further developed.

8. The LEA was informed in January of an allocation of funding from the DfES for 2002-2003 to support the appointment of a Recruitment Strategy Manager. This post was advertised as a fixed term contract or a secondment. Two people have been appointed on a job-share basis and will take up post on 1 May.

9. Following the annual headteacher conference in November 2001 on the Education Development Plan (EDP) it was agreed that the recruitment and retention of teachers should be a key priority within the EDP for 2002 – 2007. An extract from the EDP relating to this priority is attached to this report as Appendix A. A detailed action plan for 2002 – 2003 is being prepared and will form the basis for the work of the Recruitment Strategy Manager.

10. During 2001 – 2002 the LEA has worked with Leicester LEA and Leicester University to run two Return to Teaching courses attended by a total of 35 people, several of whom are now teaching in Leicestershire schools on either a contractual or a supply basis. Funding has recently been secured to run further courses for 40 people.

11. There has been a significant increase in interest in the Graduate Teacher Programme through which graduates aged 25 or over can train as teachers while employed in schools. The scheme is funded by the Teacher Training Agency and requires schools to work closely with a body (usually a University) which is accredited to award Qualified Teacher Status. Although the LEA has no direct role in this programme officers are regularly involved in providing advice and guidance both to schools and to individuals. At the present time a number of individuals are engaged in this programme in Leicestershire schools. The LEA has recently received information about the Fast Track programme for new teachers that will come into operation in September 2002 and is evaluating this programme in relation to the needs of Leicestershire schools.

12. Following promotion by the LEA a number of teachers have been accredited as Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs). It is anticipated that 30 teachers will be accredited as ASTs by the end of this school year, including teachers in Primary, Secondary and Special Schools. These posts offer career enhancement for classroom teachers and may contribute to a retention strategy.

Consultations

13. During the course of the review the Review Panel met a range of consultees to gather information about the reasons behind the difficulties in recruiting and retaining teachers and ideas about the actions which the Council could undertake to help address these difficulties locally. Those consulted were:

- Members of the Recruitment and Retention Reference Group
- The Teachers' Professional Associations
- The Co-opted Members of the Education and Heritage Scrutiny Committee
- Representatives of the teacher training departments at Leicester and Loughborough Universities.

The panel was advised by two officers of the Education Department who also provided the Review Panel with documentary evidence.

Main Findings of the Review

14. Recruitment

- The appointment of a Recruitment Strategy Manager would help to address the issue during 2002 – 2003.
- There is a need to more actively promote teaching as a career which the Careers Service could be asked to address.
- There is a need to promote Leicestershire as a place in which to teach and a place to live. This implies work with local teacher training institutions to promote the benefits of teaching in Leicestershire and work with the City Council

if appropriate, further development of the web-site and a reappraisal of advertising materials and procedures.

- Close links need to be maintained with local teacher training institutions so that they can promote, for example, the induction programme for new teachers in Leicestershire schools. Although many Leicestershire schools already offer placements for trainee teachers there is a need to promote the benefits of partnership arrangements with local teacher training providers as a means of increasing the recruitment of NQTs.
- Accurate information needs to be kept centrally by the LEA about vacancy levels in Leicestershire schools and the use of supply teachers.
- The potential benefits of a contractual arrangement with a supply agency should be further explored as should strategies to recruit supply teachers to serve groups of schools.
- Particular strategies may need to be developed to address specific recruitment issues e.g. the recruitment of headteachers in small schools and teachers in shortage subjects.
- Further strategies need to be developed to encourage former teachers to return to teaching, including consideration of childcare arrangements.

15. Retention

- The ability of schools to offer financial retention incentives is limited by budgetary constraints, although national research shows that pay is not a major factor in the recruitment and retention of teachers.
- A local response is needed to the forthcoming national developments resulting from the research undertaken by Price Waterhouse Coopers into teacher and headteacher workload including administrative support in schools and a reduction in bureaucracy/paperwork.
- Retention in secondary schools might be helped by planned opportunities for teachers to gain experience in both High and Upper Schools.
- The development of a local programme of support and development for recently qualified teachers beyond their induction year could help to address the issue of the 30% of teachers who leave the profession within their first three years.
- The LEA should encourage teachers to remain in Leicestershire through its programme of continuous professional development and by encouraging schools to recognise specialist teachers and support their career progression.
- The LEA needs to support schools in responding to and managing new routes into teaching and structural changes in the profession e.g. Fast Track and ASTs.

16. Other Aspects

- It is important for the LEA to recognise stress in schools and to support schools and teachers in managing this. (The budget growth item enabling the appointment of a Welfare Adviser – Education was welcomed.) An appointment has recently been made to this post. The appointee is expected to take up post by 1 June.
- There is a need to address locally the poor image of teaching in the media.
- The LEA should take steps to minimise the impact on teacher morale and hence on recruitment and retention of new initiatives and the pace of change; also create opportunities for creativity and initiative within Leicestershire schools to counteract the perception of over-prescriptive working practices.

- Improvements to the working environment within schools impact positively on morale.
- The need to promote the positive behaviour of most pupils in Leicestershire schools given the deterrent effect of perceived behaviour problems in schools.
- In order to enhance its status among applicants nationally, the LEA needs to portray itself as innovative by promoting successes and the distinctiveness and creativity that characterises many Leicestershire schools.

Links to the Education Development Plan 2002 - 2007

17. The activities detailed in Priority 7 of the EDP provide a programme to address the issues relating to the recruitment and retention of teachers during the next five years. The programme will be reviewed annually and developed in response to national developments and any changes in local circumstances.

Recommendations

18. (a) The committee is asked to recommend to Cabinet that it:

(i) Notes the main findings of the review.

(ii) Endorses and supports action to develop the following themes within the EDP.

- Advertising campaigns including the use of the County Council website.
- Activities within Development Groups to provide training opportunities for potential returners and to secure local supply teachers.
- The development of a post induction programme for recently qualified teachers to enhance both recruitment and retention.
- Work to establish a Leicestershire Supply Pool with an external agency as appropriate.
- The development of a strategy for the continuous professional development of teachers in Leicestershire.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the work of the Recruitment Strategy Manager in relation to the longer term recruitment strategy.

(iii) Agrees that the authority should take action to:

- Promote Leicestershire as a place in which to teach and live.
- Develop the County Council/Education website and encourage schools to develop their own websites.
- Secure positive media coverage of teaching and of Leicestershire schools (locally and nationally).
- Sustain and enhance stress management support for schools.
- Develop systems to recognise and celebrate the achievements of individual schools and (groups of) staff.

(b) The committee is also requested to consider the view of the panel that it should reconvene during Autumn 2002 to consider progress on the implementation of its recommendations and report back to this committee in December 2002.

Resource Implications

19. The appointment of a Recruitment Strategy Manager for 2002 – 2003 will facilitate work on priority issues relating to the recruitment of teachers. The DfES grant to support this is for one year only. Other activities will be funded within the existing resources of the department.

Equal Opportunities Implications

20. The activities detailed within the EDP and in this report are intended to support the recruitment and retention of qualified and potential teachers. It may be appropriate to target particular groups in certain circumstances e.g. women returners, men into primary education, ethnic minority groups.

Officers to contact

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SCS/LP/74/46/SR/LPH
19 April 2002

APPENDIX A

PRIORITY 7	**To support the LEA's programme of school improvement through establishing a strategy for the recruitment and retention of teachers and headteachers**
PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITY	The programme of activity will be as follows: • Promote the career opportunities available in Leicestershire schools. • Establish a co-ordinated career development strategy, which maximises all available resources. • Alleviate the difficulties, which schools are encountering in finding suitable supply teachers. • Establish a structure within the Education Department for addressing recruitment and retention issues.
PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAMME	This programme will contribute to the LEA's overall strategy for school improvement by: • Minimising the negative impact of recruitment and retention difficulties on schools' programmes for raising standards. • Ensuring a high quality workforce of teachers. • Providing a career structure, which will attract and retain teachers and Headteachers.
RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PLANS	The following plans will make a significant contribution to the activities proposed for this priority: • Continuing Professional Development Strategy • Management Development Strategy • Identification and Dissemination of Good Practice Strategy. • Small Schools Development Strategy
TARGET GROUPS	The programme is aimed at: • Teachers and Headteachers in schools in all phases. • Schools with particular recruitment difficulties. • Teachers who are new to the profession or to Leicestershire. • Teachers seeking career enhancement. • Teachers seeking flexible working opportunities.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES	• By April 2002 a minimum of 30 returning teachers will have completed a 'Return to Teaching' course. Monitoring data will show that most of these have secured teaching posts in Leicestershire. • By April 2002 there will be a fully operational LEA web page specifically designed for teachers seeking posts in Leicestershire. • By September 2002 monitoring data will show significant use of the site and there will be positive feedback from users. • By December 2002 there will be a fully operational Leicestershire Supply Teacher Agency which, by July 2003, will have subscriptions from 50% of Leicestershire schools. 90% of schools will show that the Agency has helped alleviate difficulties in finding supply teachers. • By 2004 the LEA will have met its DfES target for the appointment of ASTs and there will be significant involvement in the Fast Track programme. • Annual monitoring of newly qualified teachers will report no significant retention difficulties following completion of the induction year. • Annual feedback from schools will show a 90% satisfaction rate that actions taken through this EDP priority are helping alleviate their recruitment and retention difficulties.
RESPONSIBILITY	The key individuals and groups responsible for this programme are: • Assistant Director (School and College Support). • Principal Adviser responsible for ASTs and Fast Track Teachers. • Principal Education Personnel Officer. • Education Officer responsible for Recruitment and Retention. • Adviser with responsibility for Newly Qualified Teachers. • Reference Group of Headteachers and Principals.
MONITORING AND EVALUATION	**The key monitoring and evaluation activities will be:** • The Headteacher Reference Group, and appropriate officers, will meet once each half term to monitor the programme of activity. • The Education Officer will meet termly with the Principal Adviser responsible for ASTs and Fast Track Teachers to review the progress of these schemes. • The Education Officer will meet termly with the Adviser with responsibility for newly qualified teachers to monitor the recruitment and retention of newly qualified teachers. • The Education Officer and Principal Education Personnel Officer will meet termly to monitor the Supply Teacher scheme using feedback from participating schools. • Appropriately timed reports to the EDP Liaison Group • Six monthly monitoring reports to Senior Management Team of the Education Department, Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee. • Evaluation is through regular meetings with the Assistant Director for School Effectiveness, The Advice and Inspection service management team, and the reference groups of headteachers and officers.

- Annual report to Cabinet
- The Assistant Director (School and College Support) will meet termly with the Education Officer and Principal Education Personnel Officer to evaluate the impact of the overall programme of activity.
- The EDP Liaison Group will meet regularly to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme.
- Evaluation will be informed through regular feedback from Development Groups and individual schools.

All the above must be read within the context of the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy identified in Annex 4 of the EDP.

Specific activities to support Priority Seven

Promote the career opportunities available in Leicestershire schools.	**Timing**	
	Yr 1 (term)	**Yrs 2-5 (yr)**
• Mount national advertising campaigns, including use of the County Council Website, targeted at newly qualified teachers, returners to teaching and teachers seeking career enhancement. • Extend the current NQT induction programme to ensure Continuing Professional Development opportunities in the post-induction period. • Work with local Development Groups of schools to mount training opportunities for potential returners to the profession. • Continue to take advantage of funding opportunities through the Teacher Training Agency to provide 'Return to Teaching' courses and other courses as appropriate. • Work with schools and the Teacher Training Agency to co-ordinate the operation in Leicestershire of the Graduate Teacher Programme and other similar schemes as they develop. • Work with schools and the DfES to provide professional development opportunities for classroom assistants and nursery nurses, including routes into teaching.	Summer Summer Summer Autumn	Ongoing

This activity makes a significant contribution to the following themes:
Theme 9.

Establish a co-ordinated Career Development Strategy, which maximises all available resources.	**Timing**	
	Yr 1 (term)	**Yrs 2-5 (yr)**
• Develop and implement the LEA/Regional Continuing Professional Development Strategy. • Extend the LEA's involvement with the AST programme. • Support school involvement in the Fast Track Scheme in order to recruit high quality entrants to the profession who can be developed as future leaders and managers in Leicestershire schools. • Provide career enhancement opportunities for Leicestershire teachers through use of secondment opportunities, including placements in schools in different settings and phases.	Autumn	Ongoing Autumn and ongoing Yr 2 Autumn

This activity makes a significant contribution to the following themes:
Theme 9.

Alleviate the difficulties, which schools are encountering in finding suitable supply teachers.	**Timing**	
	Yr 1 (term)	**Yrs 2-5 (yr)**
• Establish a Leicestershire Supply Pool in conjunction with a commercial supply agency.	Autumn	
• Operate regular professional updating sessions for teachers in the Supply Pool.	Summer	
• Advise Development Groups on recruiting and training supply teachers in their localities.	Autumn	
• Continue to promote 'Return to Teaching' courses among potential supply teachers.	Summer	Ongoing

This activity makes a significant contribution to the following themes:
Theme 9.

Establish a structure within the Education Department for addressing recruitment and retention issues.	**Timing**	
	Yr (term)	**Yrs 2-5 (yr)**
• Identify an officer who will co-ordinate the LEA's Recruitment and Retention Strategy.	Autumn	
• Maintain a cross-phase Reference Group of Headteachers and Principals.	Ongoing	Ongoing
• Provide briefings for elected members.	Ongoing	
• Provide an advice line for Headteachers and Governors.	Spring	
• Provide training opportunities for Governing Bodies and Headteachers on issues related to recruiting and retaining staff.		Yr 2 Autumn
• Ensure a regular flow of information to schools on local and national initiatives, including sources of funding, designed to address recruitment and retention issues.	Ongoing	Ongoing

This activity makes a significant contribution to the following themes:
Theme 9.

EXTRACT FROM THE DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EDUCATION AND HERITAGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 1ST MAY 2002

142. Report of the Review Panel on Recruitment and Retention of Teachers

The Committee considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and the Director of Education about the outcome of investigations by the five-member Review Panel into Recruitment and Retention of Teachers. The report also described the experience gained from conducting the review.

A copy of the report, marked 'B' is filed with these minutes. The Committee also received a presentation on the Education website "Come and Teach in Leicestershire".

The following comments and issues arose from discussion:

- Work was proceeding through the County Council Public Relations Unit with schools on the possibility of placing block advertisements of teaching vacancies in the local newspapers. This could help to reduce advertising costs.

- If schools had sufficient budget provision it could be more effective for them to appoint a permanent teacher without specific class responsibilities rather than employing supply teachers to cover teachers away on training or for sickness absence.

- It was more cost effective to use agencies to provide supply teachers than for the LEA to set up its own pool of supply teachers as the agencies also took on the responsibilities and associated risks.

- It was noted that some schools, and groups of schools, maintained their own lists of supply teachers as the quality of supply teachers from agencies was variable.

- Some members felt that although the information provided on the Education website was good, the presentation of the website itself should be improved and that the access to various components of the information should be simplified.

- It was important to be able to provide a comprehensive list of teaching vacancies both on the website and in paper form for those applicants who had no access to IT.

- Some schools had their own websites, linked to the Education website, but other schools did not. All schools should be encouraged to develop their own websites and link those to the Education website. These could, if considered appropriate, include the facility to access job application forms via the website.

- It was suggested that the Council should consider making representations to the government about the adverse impact of constant change, new initiatives, increased bureaucracy and the inspection regime on the recruitment of new people into the teaching profession.

- In relation to the process of conducting the five-member review, members who had served on the panel reported that they had found it an effective way to obtain and assess evidence, investigate matters and reach conclusions and that had been a substantial measure of cross-party agreement on issues.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the recommendations of the Review Panel set out in paragraph 18 of Appendix A of the report be approved and referred to the Cabinet for consideration, subject to adding the following to the Panel's recommendations:

(i) As a matter of urgency, the Director of Education should explore ways of obtaining a more comprehensive list of teaching vacancies than is currently available on the Education website;

(ii) Efforts should be made to make the Education website more vibrant and attractive for potential users and easier for users to access the various components of information on it.

(iii) Schools should be encouraged to develop their own website to link into the Education website to enhance the information available to potential applicants for teaching posts (including application forms if considered appropriate).

(b) That the conclusions set out in paragraphs 9 to 16 of Appendix B of the report be approved and referred to the Scrutiny Commission for consideration.