

Best Value Performance Plan

Best Value is based on the provision of a performance management framework that will allow assessment and comparison of the way in which the Constabulary works. While financial savings may result, this is not the main objective. The emphasis is on producing a quality of service at an appropriate cost, which balances the expectations of everyone from local communities to the Home Secretary.

The Police Authority reviews its services by subjecting them to what has become known as the “4 C’s”, that is: Consult, Challenge, Compare and Compete. To ensure that all ways of providing a service are fully considered, the Authority also subjects services and functions under review to a fifth C: Collaboration.

When assessing the value and quality of its services, consultation with appropriate stakeholders, other Best Value authorities and the commercial sector is essential. This is undertaken by a variety of techniques including focus groups, face-to-face interviews, citizens’ panels, meetings and surveys of both internal and external customers of our services as well as victims of crimes.

The reason for providing a service, the level of that service, the way in which it is delivered and the service objectives are challenged.

The Authority compares its performance with other organisations who provide similar services by using performance indicators, by benchmarking and by identifying best practice.

The Authority must be competitive in terms of economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equity and environmental considerations. This is being achieved by reference to similar services or functions provided by other Best Value authorities, the commercial sector and other businesses.

Hampshire Constabulary Procurement Department is fully aware of the requirement to abide by codes of practice on workforce matters under Best Value. This is important when contracting-out services that involve the transfer of staff (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981) from the Authority to a service provider.

The Best Value review programme

In 2003, Hampshire Police Authority agreed to a new system of Best Value Reviews as a result of an amendment to the Local Government Act 1999. The amendment removes the statutory duty on police authorities to review their services over a five-year period.

This amendment enabled Hampshire Police Authority to adopt a risk assessment-based approach, tailored to more closely meet the needs of the Authority, the Constabulary and the public.

Best Value Performance Plan

Consequently future Best Value review programmes will be set only for the forthcoming year rather than for a five-year period as was previously the case. Each year, the programme will be based on extensive consultation with Authority members and Constabulary staff and will also take into consideration external reports from HMIC (and others), legislation, performance information and issues emerging from internal reviews and assessments. This approach will enable the Authority to determine the most appropriate areas for review in the forthcoming year that are likely to have the most impact in terms of service improvement and value for money.

The issues arising from the consultation and from the other sources listed are considered along with Audit Commission advice that reviews should be large and strategic in nature. Consequently, other factors considered include the National Policing Plan, Hampshire Police Authority's policing priorities, the Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF) Indicators and Home Office guidance. An assessment is then conducted to identify areas that present significant risk to service delivery in terms of performance and efficiency.

This process was conducted during 2003/04 and the results were consolidated to determine on overall priority for review. These priorities are:

- Domestic violence
- Contact with the public
- Crime Investigation
- Supervision
- Procurement

Consequently a programme of reviews will commence in April 2004 with domestic violence as the first area under scrutiny. The review programme will continue to run according to the listed priorities, subject to the annual review process previously outlined.

Best Value reviews are led by a manager related to the service under review and are supported by a team at Police Headquarters. Independence is assured by inclusion of Authority members, specialists from other areas or departments and participants from other sectors and organisations. For example, the Crown Prosecution Service provided an independent challenge member for the criminal justice issues review.

The team at Police Headquarters co-ordinates, assists, project plans and monitors the reviews and provides expertise in the use of the review tools (for example, process mapping, activity analysis and use of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model).

Best Value Performance Plan

A Review Scrutiny Board has been established. This comprises the Chairman of the Authority's Performance Panel, the Chief Constable, the Clerk to the Police Authority, the Director of Finance and a senior manager not directly involved in the review. The Board approves the review proposals for each review and the personnel for the evidence gathering team. It also assesses and challenges the results and action plans arising from the review, before recommending the final action plan to the Authority for approval. The final action plans recommend activities to be undertaken to bring about the required improvements and specify how progress will be delivered and what time scales have been set to achieve them.

These action plans are monitored on a quarterly basis by the Authority's Performance Panel until every action recorded on the plan for a review has been completed. Every action on every action plan has an outcome section to give stakeholders a clear understanding of the desired effect of the recommendation and how both the implementation and outcome can be measured. There is also a clear indication against each action that will contribute to national, Authority or Force priorities. Financial implications are also indicated in these action plans by showing whether any associated costs are actual or opportunity costs, and whether any associated savings are cashable or non-cashable. There is an explanation as to whether costs and savings are one-off or year-on-year.

Recommendations contained in these action plans are subject to a priority rating system (high, medium or low) and associated risks attached to implementing recommendations are identified within these plans. There is an assessment of the likelihood of predicted outputs and benefits being achieved. This assessment uses the following definitions:

- Definite - where the outcome can be stated with certainty
- Probable - where the outcome is considered likely, based on substantiated evidence
- Expected - where the outcome is considered likely, based on practical knowledge/experience
- Intangible - where the outcome cannot be proven but is logical

Completed Best Value reviews and associated recommendations

Since the publication of last year's Annual Policing Plan, three Best Value reviews have been concluded: Personnel, Licensing and Criminal Justice Issues. A synopsis of the approach to the five Cs and of the key recommendations for these reviews is shown on the following pages. Implementation of these outcomes will ultimately lead to an improvement in local policing services.

Best Value Performance Plan

Personnel

The overall **challenge** element identified that although the provision of the personnel function is not a statutory requirement, it is considered necessary to retain certain parts in-house to support Force strategic priorities.

Initial **consultation** was carried out prior to the commencement of the review with staff associations to gauge their views on how the Force deals with recruitment, sickness and diversity. In an effort to reach as many members of staff as possible, an email was sent to all staff saying that a Best Value review had commenced and requested their views.

Business and Property Services carried out **competition** assessments for all component parts of the Personnel Department. Some parts were identified as suitable for outsourcing and led to further work to market test for a suitable supplier.

Comparison of the personnel function within Hampshire Constabulary was made with that of other police forces, agencies and private sector organisations in order to identify best practice.

Guidance given on the application of competition and **collaboration** stated that non-core police functions should be subject to competition assessment and that core police functions should be subject to collaboration assessment. The review team applied this assessment to the police recruitment function.

The key recommendations of the review were as follows:

- To improve communication between BCUs and departments
- To improve recruitment procedures for police officers and police staff in order to recruit and retain the correct number of staff with the skills and ability to deliver the Authority's Annual Policing Plan and the Force's Strategic Plan
- To create, implement and develop robust policies to ensure staff feel valued, give their best and stay with the Force
- To put greater emphasis on attendance-management strategies that contribute to the Authority's Annual Policing Plan and the Force Strategic Plan in order to reduce sickness levels to an average of 6.5 days per annum for all staff by 2005
- To merge and redefine the roles of Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare in order to create a safe working environment, maximise good health and make the best use of resources by reducing sickness
- To create and implement policies to provide effective support systems and structures in order to attract, recruit and retain minority groups that reflect the community
- To implement policies to enable staff to achieve a work/life balance in order to retain staff with carer responsibilities
- To set up a working party to consider decentralising the personnel filing system and to examine the further use of electronic form submission in order to minimise paperwork, duplication and bureaucracy

Best Value Performance Plan

Criminal Justice Issues

The use of a **challenge** matrix identified that whilst the service is not statutory, it is an integral part of Hampshire Constabulary's reason for being and has a vital role to play in the effective policing of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. A withdrawal of the service provided by the criminal justice function would have dramatic effects across the rest of the service as it provides a gateway to justice for the Constabulary and the public.

Extensive **consultation** was conducted to ascertain the views of stakeholders, partners and customers. Methods of comparison varied according to the approach taken by the various subgroups within the review team, for example all Criminal Justice Units (CJUs) within Hampshire Constabulary were compared with each other and with other forces nationally.

The methods of **competition** also varied according to the approach taken by the various subgroups within the review team; for example the Police National Computer (PNC) sub-group considered whether it would be viable to pay another force to complete Hampshire Constabulary PNC tasks.

The key recommendations of the review were as follows:

- PNC in Hampshire Constabulary should be centrally managed
- The PNC functions of record creation and enhancement should be removed from local CJUs and given to the new centralised PNC Bureau, together with an appropriate and agreed number of staff
- The relocation project for the Central Ticket Office be endorsed and given a high priority to ensure that staff time is allocated to the task
- Magistrates' Court Witness Warning Teams should be implemented in regional areas to take advantage of economies of scale and the benefits of being located in Glidewell sites

Best Value Performance Plan

Licensing

In order to ensure that a robust **challenge** was applied to the review a number of methods were used. These were:

- external review team members;
- application of a challenge checklist; and
- action sheets.

Following a discussion regarding the practicalities of **consultation** with various stakeholder and customer groups, it was agreed that public consultation should be limited to certificate holders and other members of the shooting community.

A list of forces was drawn up to enable **comparison** against the family of forces most similar to Hampshire Constabulary; neighbouring forces; best performers for shotgun and firearm renewal processing times; and best performers in terms of backlogs.

Due to the nature of the appropriate legislation, a **competition** matrix was not applied. Savings have already been made within the Licensing Department by printing application forms in-house.

Managers of neighbouring forces were contacted to gauge the feasibility of **collaboration** and interest levels, but it was difficult to see how legal implications could be overcome.

The key recommendations of the review were as follows:

- To ensure that the cost of the process is covered and to review the level of fees charged
- To increase the number of permanent staff and monitor workload levels in order to plan staff resourcing during peak periods