

IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY FOLLOW-UP VISIT

Report of the Chief Executive

SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report considers the findings of the IDeA follow-up visit in March 2002 and sets out a series of proposed actions.

Paragraph 4.6 and Appendix 1.

- 1.2 The overall conclusion of the IDeA is that ...

- There are many areas in which the Council has made good progress since the original review:
 - ❑ there is now much greater clarity about the overall vision and priorities for the authority
 - ❑ new political management arrangements are functioning effectively and are generally viewed in a positive light
 - ❑ good reports received for Best Value reviews.
- Communications have been given greater priority and the importance of a performance management framework and culture is beginning to be recognised.
- The message of the final follow-up visit is for the leadership to continue to see through the work it commenced in response to the Peer Review, and on which it received support from the Alliance consultancy last year.
- In particular, it needs to ensure that the vision and priorities are translated into comprehensive targets so that progress can be tracked easily both internally and externally. In so doing, it will be essential to promote an organisational culture that recognises good performance and tackles poor performance. This is linked to the point made by frontline staff about the need to ensure that the Council acknowledges and values their efforts.
- Make sure that senior managerial and political leadership continues its efforts to focus on strategic issues and that mechanisms such as levels of delegation are facilitating this.
- Essential that the training and development opportunities are available to make sure that Members have the skills needed to fulfil their new roles, to equip them for the Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny or Area Panels, particularly those who joined the Council for the first time in May 2002.
Appendix 1, Paragraphs 52 – 57.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2. Option evaluation is not appropriate to the report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To consider the findings made by the IDeA Team on their final follow-up visit.
- 3.2 To ask for further reports during 2002 on the progress made on the three corporate action plans drawn up following the IDeA Peer Review and the IDeA / Capita Alliance Review.
- 3.3 To refer the report to the Scrutiny Management Commission for comment.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3. To consider whether satisfactory progress has been made since the IDeA first visited the Council in July 2000 and to continue to monitor progress.

MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 5.1 The Improvement and Development Agency – IDeA - reviewed the Council in July 2000 during an intensive one-week visit from a peer review team and identified the Council's strengths and key improvement areas. They made ten main recommendations. Policy Committee first considered the IDeA's findings on 4 October 2000. The progress we had made against these was set out in the Improvement Plan that Policy Committee considered on 28 February 2001.
- 5.2 Three members of the review team made a follow-up visit on 21 March 2001 and focused on seven out of the ten key recommendations as they considered those, currently, to be our highest priority.
- 5.3 Many of the team's conclusions related to the issues we were then exploring with the help of the Capita / IDeA modernisation / regeneration consultancy. Others referred to the progress we had made in implementing their original ten key recommendations and some flagged up further issues that we incorporated into the Improvement Plan.
- 5.4 We had expected the final follow-up visit to be in October 2001 but agreed with the IDeA that it would be more sensible for this to be deferred until we had introduced the new Constitution in December 2001. Four Members of the team made their final visit on 7 March 2002. The oral feedback received on the day was publicised in the Members Bulletin and in One to One. A copy of the full report is attached as Appendix
- 5.5 The final follow-up visit had two main objectives:
 - to assess the progress which the authority had made against the key recommendations of the original review report and in building on the work of the IDeA / Capita consultancy

- to look at the current position of the authority against the competencies set out in the Local Government Improvement Programme's – LGIPs – benchmark of an "ideal" authority.

5.6 The report sets out the programme for the visit and the methodology used to elicit progress against each of the ten key recommendations. We are therefore proposing to add the following actions to either the IDeA improvement Plan, the Performance Management Action Plan – PMAP, or the Communications Action Plan – CAP, when they are next updated. The additional actions are set out under the key recommendations in the report. There is no proposed action for key recommendations 7 or 10.

1.	<p>Develop a clear vision for Derby City Council underpinned by a corporate strategy with clear priorities and outputs/outcomes</p> <p>Develop measurable outcomes for each of the Council's ten priorities including setting local targets and indicators. <i>Paragraph 12.</i></p> <p>Develop a system of reporting progress at a more local level, for instance, at the Area Panels. <i>Paragraph 14.</i></p>	<p>PMAP / IDeA IP</p> <p>PMAP</p>
2.	<p>Make sure that senior management and members have the time and the space for Strategic Thinking</p> <p>Continue to prioritise joint working for Cabinet and COG. <i>Paragraph 16.</i></p> <p>Keep delegations under review to make sure that Cabinet is focusing on strategic issues. <i>Paragraph 19.</i></p>	IDeA IP
3.	<p>Facilitate the spread of learning from innovation</p> <p>Develop and build on employee conferences. <i>Paragraph 21.</i></p>	IDeA IP
4.	<p>Show its staff that it values them and make sure that they have a full range of development opportunities</p> <p>Carry through work / life balance initiatives that will assist individuals while improving / at least maintaining service delivery. <i>Paragraph 24.</i></p> <p>Consider adopting a more formal type of scheme for recognising the efforts made by employees <i>Paragraph 26.</i></p> <p>Promote an organisational culture which recognises good performance and tackles poor performance. <i>Paragraph 55.</i></p>	<p>IDeA IP</p> <p>IDeA IP</p> <p>IDeA IP</p>

5.	<p>Give sufficient priority and weight to the review of political structures</p> <p>Keep all aspects of the political management arrangements introduced in December 2001 under review. <i>Paragraph 31.</i></p>	IDeA IP
6.	<p>Enhance the provision of member training and support</p> <p>Introduce more skills development training for members to support the successful execution of new roles and responsibilities, for example, chairing meetings, speed-reading. <i>Paragraph 35 and 36.</i></p> <p>Use the cross-party Member Service Working Party to develop members training programme to support the new arrangement. <i>Paragraph 37.</i></p>	<p>IDeA IP</p> <p>IDeA IP</p>
7.	<p>Revisit its Best Value processes and structures both at officer and member level</p> <p>No additional actions proposed.</p>	
8.	<p>Adopt a more positive and pro-active approach to media relations</p> <p>Work to change the external perception that the Council is defensive in its dealings with local media. <i>Paragraph 43.</i></p> <p>Working to change the perception that the Council does not promote itself locally and nationally as positively as it should. <i>Paragraph 43.</i></p>	CAP
9.	<p>Devise and implement an effective performance management system</p> <p>Produce more timely and focused performance management information. <i>Paragraph 47.</i></p> <p>COG and Cabinet to continue to emphasise commitment to performance management and proactively use material being produced to reinforce this. <i>Paragraph 48.</i></p>	PMAP
10.	<p>Produce a strategic vision for ICT which takes account of emerging technologies</p> <p>No additional actions proposed.</p>	

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5. The total cost of the IDeA peer review was circa £20,000, including arranging workshops.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6. None arising directly from this report.

PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7. The IDeA considers that we are being pro-active in responding to the people management issues they have raised.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

8. None arising directly from this report.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9. There are no implications relating specifically to the follow-up visit.

Background Papers:

None other than those already in the public domain