

West Wiltshire District Council

Cabinet

2nd June 2004

Tourism Information Centre Best Value Review Scoping Report

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet agreement to the scope and timescales of the Best Value Review into Tourist Information Centres (TICs) within West Wiltshire.

2. Key issues

Previous BVR's have been undertaken in order to establish the general measures that are required to improve the level and quality of service provided. The review of TICs has been established specifically to provide answers to a number of key questions regarding the future provision and operation of TICs within the District. As a result the review will be much more focussed.

Options to be considered by the Review

1. The status quo
2. Expansion of the role of TIC's into more multi-purpose information centre's.
3. Reduction in the level of activities in the TIC's and a reduction in the level of funding provided to the TICs directly by the Council. This option includes investigations into alternative forms of delivery and partnership options.
4. Withdrawal from direct provision and direct funding of all TIC's in the District.
5. A different approach in each town

Key questions for the review to address

- What benefits do TICs currently bring to the local economy?
- How do TICs support the other WWDC resources devoted to tourism support?
- How does current TIC provision match with regional, sub-regional and local priorities?
- What further benefits could current TICs bring and at what level of resource?
- How best is tourist information (and other information) provided across the District, and in collaboration with surrounding Districts/Counties?

3. Best Value Principles

To provide the information required for Cabinet/Council to consider the review team will need to have regard to best value principles. For example the review team will:

- Challenge the current position and identify any additional options that the review team want to investigate and present to the Cabinet.
- Identify the key stakeholders and draw up a robust consultation plan that will allow them to express their views. It must be clear to see how these views are then used/not used by the review team.
- Collect any relevant comparative data from other local authorities and similar which helps to benchmark the service and identify other options which are available to improve the service.
- Consider the service delivery issues for each option i.e. delivery in partnership with other LA's/voluntary sector, external service providers, internal service provision, etc.

4. Final Report

The final report to Cabinet will address each of the options through a SWOT analysis. This will also allow for any other options arising from the challenge process to be considered.

To assist Members in reaching a decision it may be necessary to provide a strong recommendation based on this analysis. This will be the subject of discussions prior to completing the final report with both the Portfolio Holder and the Corporate Team. The recommended option will be accompanied by an outline improvement plan.

The Review Team will be required to collate the relevant and appropriate information such that logical and informed conclusions can be drawn. The conclusion of this review needs to be evidenced driven.

The final report will also need to link explicitly and very clearly with relevant Corporate Plans, Corporate Strategies and relevant Service Strategies. One of the initial tasks for the Review Team will be to establish the key strategic linkages (i.e. Corporate Plan, Service Strategy, Economic Development Plan etc).

5. Timetable

	Milestones
Project scope and PID (Corporate Team)	12 May 2004
Cabinet Agree Scoping Report	2 June 2004
Undertake project work	June-July 2004
Collate findings into an options report	August 2004
Draft report to Corporate Team	1 September 2004
Cabinet to decide which option to adopt	29 September 2004
Council to approve Cabinet recommendations	3 November 2004

6. Resource Requirements

The estimated resource implication for this review is as follows:

Lead officer time (1 day per week from May-August)	20 Days
Additional input for data collection, team meetings etc	5 Days
Consultation exercises, printing, postage etc – in house	£250

Review Team

For this review Cllr. Michael Mounde and Ian Gallin, Corporate Director will act as the client.

The exact details of the review team have yet to be finalised, however this report can confirm that we will be seeking the involvement of the following organisations and named individuals. With the Portfolio Holder we are still considering whether there are any additional groups or individual who we should involve in the review.

Internal Officers	Bryan Walker (Lead Officer) Suzanne McCulloch (General Support and Guidance) Lee Boyes (Economic Development) A TIC Manager (tbc) Sarah Hickey (Legal) Janice Ferguson (Finance)
External Members	Dot Williams (Wiltshire Tourism) Local Tourism Rep (tbc) WWEP rep (tbc) Town Council Rep (tbc)
Councillors	To be confirmed

It is likely that we will hold a series of meetings to discuss the key stages in the process and seek views with external group and bodies and with Councillors. The Internal Officers will be the main driving force for completing the key activities. In

terms of user consultation, a key element of any review, we believe that we have sufficient information from user surveys and usage figures currently collected within the TICs, combined with recent public consultation, to not have to carry out any specific consultation around this review with users. This however will be kept under review and we may feel that this is warranted, particularly around specific options as they emerge.

In addition to the Review Team it will be necessary to call upon other professional support services, such as Personnel and Finance to address key issues as and when required.

7. Implications

Financial implications: There are no financial implications arising as a result of this report. Clearly the outcome of the Best Value Review may contain financial implications these will be addressed in the final report.

Legal issues: There are no legal implications arising as a result of this report. Clearly the outcome of the Best Value Review may contain legal implications these will be addressed in the final report.

Human rights. There are no human rights implications arising as a result of this report. Clearly the outcome of the Best Value Review may contain human rights implications these will be addressed in the final report.

8. Recommendation

Cabinet are asked to agree the scoping report as set out above.

Authors

Portfolio Holder(s)
Councillor Michael Mounde

Name of Officer
Ian Gallin Corporate Director