

# HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Agenda Item No.

4

**CABINET**  
**MONDAY 22 APRIL 2002 AT 2.00 P.M.**

## **BEST VALUE REVIEW OF SERVICES TO SCHOOLS**

Report of the Director of Children, Schools and Families

Author: Les Craggs Tel: 01582 830364

Executive Members:- Robert Gordon and Bernard Lloyd

### **1. Purpose of report**

To consider and adopt the recommendations of the Best Value Review of Services to Schools.

### **2. Summary**

The recommendations cover five areas for improvement:

1. Getting to know schools better through improving information systems and working closer with schools in targeting their needs effectively,
2. Improving school outcomes through creating a small intervention team and focusing the work of other School Development Advisers to prevent schools being placed in an Ofsted category,
3. Getting the best out of all staff through creating integrated teams of advisers and admin staff and improving training and development opportunities and processes,
4. Getting the best out of the business through adopting flexible and realistic pricing and setting up improved business management systems,
5. Further developing the School Improvement and Advisory Service (SIAS) role in brokering services from other providers including schools.

### **3. Conclusion**

Cabinet is invited to consider whether to adopt the recommendations of the review.

#### **4. Background**

The recommendations set out in section 5 are a product of 5 key processes that were undertaken during the course of the review:

- a Consultation with Heads, Teachers, Governors and SIAS staff
- b Analysis of comparative performance data and feedback from schools
- c Challenge from a range of external stakeholders at all stages of the review
- d Discussions on different ways of tackling identified problems
- e Testing the feasibility of implementing the emerging ideas

The review highlighted a number of areas where practice and performance could be improved. These included:

- being better at listening to schools and involving them more in targeting training provision,
- improving the way information on individual schools is held and used
- ensuring that all advisers deliver services to the same high standards
- developing the brokering and quality assurance role of SIAS in relation to other providers, including schools themselves
- increasing the range and getting better value out of training venues
- enhancing the way that SIAS facilitates and adds value to the exchange of learning and good practice between practitioners within schools
- improving the way in which SIAS develops and uses the skills and expertise of all its staff to maximise the use of adviser time in focusing upon school improvement
- improving the consistency of work planning and work management across the organisation

A copy of the detailed methodology, position statement, and results of hypothesis testing is available upon request.

## **5. Recommendations of the Review**

1. That the School Improvement and Advisory Service (SIAS) should get to know schools better through:
  - a Setting up a single file for each school containing all existing available information from a wide range of sources within Children, Schools and Families (CSF), and in the longer term, testing the feasibility of an online database on each school that is searchable, secure, accessible and linked to good practice Websites. The cost implications of such a database will be part of the feasibility study.
  - b Working closer with schools through a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) consultative group representing schools, SIAS and higher education institutions, to target the training needs of schools more effectively.
  
2. That school outcomes be improved through:
  - a Setting up a small intervention team to focus on schools that, through inspection, have been placed in an offside category in order to effect rapid improvement.
  - b Focusing the work of other School Development Advisers to work in ways that prevent schools being put into an offside category.
  - c Aligning SIAS operations with those of Quadrant based CSF staff to increase integrated working.
  - d Making good use of existing and new quality standards and quality assurance protocols for school improvement, backed up by a system of peer coaching and support for advisers to ensure schools receive services that are consistently of the highest quality.
  
3. Getting the best out of all staff through:
  - a Creating integrated teams of advisers and admin support staff, fully implementing the performance management processes for all staff and improving workload planning within the teams
  - b Setting up processes for enabling admin staff to take on higher order tasks
  - c Improving the training and development opportunities for all staff through a programme based on the strategic priorities of the organisation
  - d Improving the current arrangements for managing training programmes including those for identifying individual needs, allocating resources and signposting opportunities.

4. Getting the best out of the business by
  - a Adopting realistic and flexible course pricing which is accepted by schools
  - b Setting up improved systems to run major events and conferences
  - c Making best use of IT resources by staff through additional training
  - d Simplifying the time-recording system to enable better work planning and monitoring
5. Further developing SIAS role in
  - a Brokering services from commercial and other providers, including schools, in order to provide the most effective service to teachers and schools with a particular reference to special schools.
  - b Providing training courses in a variety of venues other than Wheathampstead Development Centre.

Details of outcome measures and targets in relation to each of the recommendations are set out in Appendix 1 of this document.

Details of the implementation plan in relation to each of the recommendations are set out in Appendix 2.

## 6. Financial implications

The tables below set out the financial implications of the recommendations.

Summary of funding issues 2002 – 2006.

Existing budget for implementing the recommendations over 4 years	£1,346k
Savings	£480k
Additional income	£255k

Over the next 4 years, £1,346,000 of the existing budget principally targeted at secondary school underachievement will be redirected towards improvements within all schools, which will:

- produce £480k savings through efficiencies;
- generate £255k additional income;
- improve responsiveness of the service to schools in line with the findings of the best value exercise;
- make a greater contribution to school improvement.

The feasibility tests in the recommendations will evaluate the potential for further internal efficiency improvements and savings.

	Budget ('000s)					Savings ('000s)					Income ('000s)						
Rec	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	Total	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	Total	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	Total		
1	7	40	40	40	127												
2	13	347	347	347	1054			240	240	480							
3	28	30	30	30	118												
4	22				22							85	85	85	255		
5	19	2	2	2	25												
Total budget over 4 years					1346	Total savings over 4 years					480	Total additional income over 4 years					255

## Appendix 1 Outcome Measures and Targets

	Recommendations	One off costs	Annual costs	Net potential savings	Net potential income	Outcome measures	Outcome targets
1.	<p>The School Improvement and Advisory Service should get to know schools better through:</p> <p>a Setting up a single file for each school containing all existing available information from a wide range of sources within CSF, and in the longer term, testing the feasibility of an online database on each school that is searchable, secure, accessible and linked to good practice websites. The cost implications of such a database will be part of the feasibility study.</p> <p>b Working closer with schools through a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) consultative group representing schools, SIAS and higher education institutions, to target the training needs of schools more effectively.</p>	£7k	£33k			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rise in proportion of users rating the service as good or better</li> <li>OfSTED reports indicate improved standards of teaching and learning and leadership and management. (CSF plan 2.3.1/1.6)</li> <li>Protocols in place regarding use of data and access. (CSF plan 6.1.1 and supported by 6.1.3)</li> <li>Users and stakeholder groups feedback that new services are reflecting their wishes and ideas. (CSF Plan 7.1.4)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From 56% in 2001.02 to 60% in 02/03, 65% in 04 and 70% in 04/05</li> <li>Primary (Teaching &amp; Learning). From 95.6% in 2001 to 96.7% in 2002 and to 97.8% in 2003</li> <li>Secondary (Teaching &amp; Learning). From 82.3% in 2001 to 90.5% in 2002 and to 95% in 2003</li> <li>Primary (Leadership &amp; Management). From 79% in 2001 to 80% in 2002 and to 83% in 2003</li> <li>Secondary (Leadership &amp; Management). From 70% in 2001 to 80% in 2002 and to 83% in 2003</li> <li>Protocols on paper based systems by June '02 –System in place by Sept 2002</li> <li>Service development reports to be approved annually by stakeholder groups (SSC MPG, PHF, HASH, CPDAG)</li> </ul>
2	<p>Improving school outcomes through:</p> <p>a Setting up a small intervention team to focus on schools that, through inspection, have been placed in an OfSTED category in order to effect rapid improvement.</p> <p>b Focusing the work of other School Development Advisers to work in ways that prevent schools being put into an OfSTED category.</p> <p>c Aligning SIAS operations with those of Quadrant based CSF staff to increase integrated working.</p> <p>d Making good use of existing and new quality standards and quality assurance protocols for school improvement, backed up by a system of peer coaching and support for advisers to ensure schools receive services that are consistently of the highest quality.</p>	£5k £8k	£347k	£240k		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in the number of schools placed in an OfSTED category (CSF plan 1.7.2)</li> <li>Reduction in the percentage of schools causing concern to the LEA</li> <li>Increase in the number of schools cleared of Serious Weaknesses. (CSF plan 1.7.2)</li> <li>All schools causing concern making at least reasonable progress within 6 months, as measured through reports from Intervention Team. (CSF Plan 1.7.2)</li> <li>HMI reports note practice and support from CSF. (CSF Plan 1.7.2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction in the number of schools requiring special measures or with serious weaknesses from 4.4% in 2001 to 3.5% in 2002 and to 2.5% in 2003</li> <li>Schools giving rise to concern to the LEA from 12% in 2001 to 11% in 2002 and to 10% in 2003</li> <li>Through 6 monthly report to an existing Member panel</li> <li>Reports scrutinised and benchmark data gathered in 2002 with a view to setting targets for 2003-2004</li> </ul>

	Recommendations	One off costs	Annual costs	Net potential savings	Net potential income	Outcome measures	Outcome targets
3	<p>Getting the best out of all staff through:</p> <p>a Creating integrated teams of advisers and admin support staff, fully implementing the performance management processes for all staff and improving workload planning within the teams</p> <p>b Setting up processes for enabling admin staff to take on higher order tasks</p> <p>c Improve the training and development opportunities for all staff through a programme based on the strategic priorities of the organisation</p> <p>d Improve the current arrangements for managing training programmes including those for identifying individual needs, allocating resources and signposting opportunities.</p>	<p>£24K</p> <p>£4k</p> <p>£25k</p> <p>£5k</p>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the level of vacancies in SIAS (CSF Plan 2.2.3)</li> <li>Reduce the turnover rate in SIAS (CSF Plan 2.2.6)</li> <li>Increase satisfaction of staff as shown in management measures surveys. (CSF Plan 2.2.6)</li> <li>Increase the proportion of staff at SIAS experiencing cross professional work -e.g.: Admin staff doing higher order" work such as project management, Advisers working with other CSF staff (CSF Plan 2.4.2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From 20% in 2001 to 15% in 2002 and to 10% in 2003</li> <li>From 13.5% in 2001 to 12% in 2002 and to 11% in 2003</li> <li>First survey still to be carried out which will produce benchmark data. Targets set from this data</li> <li>15% of managers have experienced cross professional work by the end of 2002 and 35% by the end of 2003</li> </ul>
4	<p>Getting the best out of the business by</p> <p>a Adopting realistic and flexible course pricing which is accepted by schools</p> <p>b Setting up improved systems to run major events and conferences</p> <p>c Making best use of IT resources by staff through additional training</p> <p>d Simplifying the time-recording system to enable better work planning and monitoring</p>	<p>£10k</p> <p>£3k</p> <p>£3k + training in Rec 3c</p> <p>£6k</p>			<p>£85k</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in income generated from courses (CSF plan 2.4.3)</li> <li>Increase in the proportion of courses that are break-even or better</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10% increase in income generation by 2003. Future targets set from this figure</li> <li>Currently 50-55% rising to 60-65% in 2003/04 and 70-75% in 2004/05</li> </ul>



## Appendix 2 Best Value Implementation Plan

ACTION	Finish	Resp
<b>1 Get to know schools better through</b>		
<b>1a – Setting up a single file for each school containing all existing available information from a wide range of sources within CSF, and in the longer term, testing the feasibility of an online database on each school that is searchable, secure, accessible and linked to good practice websites. The cost implications of such a database will be part of the feasibility study.</b>	<b>January 2003</b>	<b>Jenny Newman</b>
Set up a project group including reps from Assessment, School Development Advisers, Finance, MIU and CI		
Agree a list of items of data that need to be included in each school's file		
Interview heads and officers about the contents of the files		
Investigate ways of achieving efficient data collection from a variety of sources		
Decide model and implement		
Investigate where other on-line database systems are in operation.		
Develop options for such a database and undertake a cost benefit analysis so as to fit with CSF's overall ICT strategy		
Consult with appropriate experts and stakeholders		
Report on feasibility of online database		
<b>1b – Working closer with schools through a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) consultative group representing schools, SIAS and higher education institutions, to target the training needs of schools more effectively.</b>	<b>Dec. 2002</b>	<b>Jeff Smith</b>
Establish a CPD Group, representing schools, SIAS and HE		
Use the CPD Group to review priorities and training needs termly, and give direction to future developments		
Establish a consultative group of CPD Co-ordinators from schools as a sub group of the CPD Group		
Develop systems to receive School Improvement Plans in electronic format and synthesise data		

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>Finish</b>	<b>Resp</b>
Assimilate individual and com school needs with national and CSF priorities		
Produce guidance to CPD providers on designated priorities		
<b>2 Improve school performance through</b>		
<b>2a – Setting up a small intervention team to focus on schools that, through inspection, have been placed in an OfSTED category in order to effect rapid improvement</b>	<b>July 2002</b>	<b>Gill Jones</b>
Strengthen the Adviser team		
<b>2b – Focusing the work of other School Development Advisers to work in ways that prevent schools being put into an OfSTED category</b>	<b>Sept. 2002</b>	<b>Gill Jones</b>
Provide support from advisers and consultants in schools where there are subject weaknesses		
Enhance governor training in schools with potential weaknesses		
<b>2c – Aligning SIAS operations with those of Quadrant based CSF staff to increase integrated working.</b>	<b>Dec. 2002</b>	<b>Jenny Newman</b>
Audit existing linkages between teams/individuals and the four quadrant offices		
Identify best practice and generate protocols as to what constitutes effective linkages between SIAS teams and Quadrant offices		
Consider co-ordination and communication needs and set up a series of events to pump prime better linkage		
Prioritise SIAS teams/elements that don't naturally offer themselves to such linkage eg single posts; devise strategies to compensate		
Evaluate the impact of the scheme against service delivery		

ACTION	Finish	Resp
<b>2d – Making good use of existing and new quality standards and quality assurance protocols for school improvement, backed up by a system of peer coaching and support for advisers to ensure schools receive services that are consistently of the highest quality.</b>	<b>Sept. 2002</b>	<b>Jeff Smith</b>
Collate and agree quality assurance protocols on consultancy and training		
Train advisers and consultants, through induction and post appointment training		
Audit the frequency of interaction between line managers and staff		
Prioritise from audit data where ratios need to be improved		
Identify peer coaches and mentors who can supplement line managers and identify resource implications		
Produce a job description and clarify any training needs		
Carry out training programme		
Implement and monitor the scheme		
Evaluate the impact of the scheme		
<b>3 Getting the best out of all staff through</b>		
<b>3a – Creating integrated teams of advisers and admin support staff, fully implementing the performance management processes for all staff and improving workload planning within the teams</b>	<b>Dec. 2002</b>	<b>Jeff Smith</b>
Develop the model in more detail to specify: - Sub groups within SDA and Teaching & Learning , Role of Office Manager/ Co-ordinator within the teams		
Inform staff and schools of changes		
Plan better location of staff		
Create a programme that ensures teams focus on developing com goals and working in partnership		
Fully implement performance management processes for all staff		
Set out clearly the core support tasks to be carried out by an administrator		

ACTION	Finish	Resp
Build this into the Induction and Performance management of all admin staff		
Develop partnership agreements between advisers and their admin support based on the core tasks to clarify expectations		
Set up regular planning/ prioritising sessions between adviser and admin support		
Arrange a team development programme as part of SSC Conference Programme		
Set up a process where Managers monitor the Team situation		
Set up a process to ensure all initiatives, projects and proposals are rigorously considered with regard to their impact on school improvement		
<b>3b - Setting up processes for enabling admin staff to take on higher order tasks</b>	<b>July 2002</b>	<b>Gill Jones</b>
Review the work programme of advisers in order to identify aspects that could be undertaken by non-advisory staff		
Audit admin staff for their willingness, capacity and expertise to undertake higher order tasks, including project management		
Devise and implement a training schedule to prepare the group of "para-professionals" for their new work		
Consider incentives, rewards and protocols		
Establish 3-5 pilot schemes		
Evaluate success		
<b>3c - Improve the training and development opportunities for all staff through a programme based on the strategic priorities of the organisation</b>	<b>Sept. 2002</b>	<b>Jeff Smith</b>
Arrange a team development programme as part of SSC conference programme		
Give Admin Manager (People) the role of ensuring development needs and opportunities are identified and managed across the whole admin structure		
Establish an annual review of DMT strategic priorities to inform the development of the training programme		
Establish systems to equitably allocate training funds		
Establish central information point for training opportunities		

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>Finish</b>	<b>Resp</b>
<b>3d - Improve the current arrangements for managing training programmes including those for identifying individual needs, allocating resources and signposting opportunities.</b>	<b>Sept. 2002</b>	<b>Jeff</b>
Establish a CPD Group, representing schools, SIAS and HE		
Assimilate individual and com school needs with national and CSF priorities		
<b>4 Getting the best out of the business by</b>		
<b>4a – Adopting realistic and flexible course pricing which is accepted by schools</b>	<b>Sept. 2002</b>	<b>Jeff &amp; Steve</b>
Test the feasibility of setting course prices at levels comparable with similar organisations		
Use historic data to set future income and attendance targets		
Set up an improved course planning that aims to meet the cost of training though appropriate pricing or minimum attendance targets		
Develop and implement an improved marketing plan		
Implement revised course planning form to ensure target audience, appropriate numbers, links to CSF Strategic plan, and evaluation arrangements are included		
<b>4b – Setting up improved systems to run major events and conferences</b>	<b>Sept. 2002</b>	<b>Jeff</b>
“Improve CPD admin systems through closer links between all aspects of the process, and streamlined systems”		
Reconfigure existing responsibilities to ensure that CPD systems and events are managed by a single person		
<b>4c – Making best use of IT resources by staff through additional training</b>	<b>Sept. 2002</b>	<b>Jeff</b>
Carry out a IT training needs assessments		
Develop an IT training strategy		
Based on its findings extend current programme for admin staff to ensure all staff (advisers and admin) have a core understanding of IT resources and use it effectively.		
Investigate and if appropriate pilot the use of voice activated software and/ or standard Dictaphones to ascertain organisational benefits over transposing from hand-written documents.		

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>Finish</b>	<b>Resp</b>
<b>4d – Simplifying the time-recording system to enable better work planning and monitoring</b>	<b>Dec 2002</b>	<b>Steve</b>
Identify the strengths and weaknesses of existing system		
Identify the requirements of people and businesses		
Develop proposals (particularly IT based) for changing the existing system and consult on them		
Report on agreed proposals		
New system implemented		
<b>5 Further developing Siam's role in</b>		
<b>5a – Brokering services from commercial and other providers, including schools, in order to provide the most effective service to teachers and schools with a particular reference to special schools.</b>	<b>October 2002</b>	<b>Jenny</b>
Identify AST, school staff and national figures as contributors to Inset delivery		
Reach an agreement with commercial providers and HE to work in partnership in inset delivery.		
Meet school needs through brokered services where specific LEA expertise may not be available, for example in supporting special schools		
<b>5b – Providing training courses in a variety of venues other than Wheathampstead Development Centre</b>	<b>April 2003</b>	<b>Jeff Smith</b>
Carry out an analysis of potential training venues and report on feasibility to DMT		
Market Wheathampstead Development Centre facilities (in line with recommendations of the Personnel BVR) within CSF and to a wider market to counter reduced usage		
Collate and agree quality assurance protocols on constancy and training		
Train advisers and consultants, through induction and post appointment training		