

Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
Corporate Issue (All Wards)

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:

CABINET

25th February 2002

Advice Strategy

Report of the Director of Environment, Development & Commercial Services

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report defines the relationship between the City Council and the Community Legal Service Partnership for Leicester; establishes the City council's priorities for the commissioning of advice services; and details the arrangements necessary to secure Best Value in the provision of advice services within Leicester. The strategy has been subject to public consultation throughout December 2001 and January 2002. Details of the responses to the consultation are included at para 5 in the supporting information to this report.

2. Summary

2.1 This report highlights the role of advice services in contributing to the aims of Leicester's Community Plan and:

- Defines the relationship between the City Council and other partners within the Community Legal Service Partnership for Leicester – ensuring that maximum use is made of other funding opportunities for advice services;
- Identifies the strategic priorities for advice services for the period 2002 – 2005 by assessing provision in the City Centre, at neighbourhood level, and for communities of interest;
- Provides a Charter for advice services which must be met (appendix 2);
- Sets out the budget for advice services and makes explicit the requirement to make savings of 2% per year in the level of Council funding in accordance with the requirements of Best Value;
- Details the creation of a single commissioning point for advice services and indicates the arrangements necessary to introduce a performance management framework into advice services whether or not these are directly provided or are provided by voluntary sector agencies.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That the continued participation of Leicester City Council within the Community Legal Service Partnership for Leicester is approved for the period of this strategy;
- 3.2 That the strategic priorities contained in Section 3 of the supporting information are approved as the basis for future commissioning decisions. These include the need to increase the amount of initial advice being provided in local communities and to communities of interest, consolidate services at Leicester Law Centre and Leicester Money Advice Ltd., develop targeted take-up campaigns, and improve the quality of advice provision through the development of accredited training programmes and the adoption of a customer charter for advice services;
- 3.3 That the role of the single commissioning point for advice services set out in Section 4 of the supporting information, be approved and that the performance of advice services be reported annually to Cabinet and to the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee. The single commissioning point shall assess the need for and supply of advice services in the City, introduce standard performance indicators for advice services, and compare the performance of advice services in the City with those operating in other local authority areas. The commissioning point shall also be proactive in seeking external funding for advice services wherever possible;
- 3.4 That funding for advice services be linked to the attainment of the Community Legal Service Quality Mark from April 2003 onwards and that directly provided services also attain the Quality Mark from that date.
- 3.5 That the Charter for Advice Services be approved and that all advice services receiving funding from or being provided by the Council demonstrate that the terms of the Charter are being met over the period of this strategy.

4. Headline Financial and legal Implications

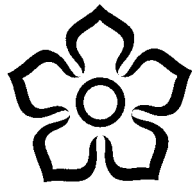
- 4.1 The budget for advice services due to come under the management of the single commissioning point is £1.1 million. The strategy acknowledges the requirement from Best Value to reduce expenditure by 2% per annum over the period of the strategy. This will be achieved by reconfiguring service provision over the lifetime of the strategy. Commissioning decisions will be based on an objective assessment of need and supply for advice services and take account of the overall performance of advice providers.
- 4.2 Service specifications for Council funded voluntary sector advice agencies will need to be renegotiated to incorporate improved performance indicators; reflect the terms of the Advice Charter and, from April 2003, make funding conditional on the attainment of the Community Legal Service Quality Mark.
- 4.3 Decisions relating to the degree of funding for individual services will need to take account of the Council's contractual relationships and may require the re-negotiation of service specifications or termination of contracts.

5. Comments from Strategic Planning & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

- 5.1 The Strategic Planning & Scrutiny Committee considered the Advice strategy on 6th December 2001.
- 5.2 The Committee expressed broad support for the aims of the strategy and was particularly keen to see improvements in the quality and performance of advice services commissioned from the voluntary sector, and to see an increase in the provision of services at a local level.
- 5.3 The Committee noted that there had been a lack of co-ordination in the provision of advice services for some time and that the proposals to commission services from a single point in the authority provided an opportunity to address this.
- 5.4 A full minute of the comments of the Committee is attached to this report.
- 5.5 It is recommended (para 3.3, above) that progress towards the aims of the strategy be reported to the Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.

6. Report Author/Officer to contact:

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Advice Strategy

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. Background

- 1.1 Advice services provide people with the opportunity to realise their rights and legal entitlements in the areas of Social Welfare Law including housing, welfare benefits, employment, debt, immigration, and consumer law. Advice underpins many of the objectives with the Community Plan for Leicester. There are specific goals for advice services in the Community Plan relating to diversity, as well as strong links with initiatives to create sustainable jobs, ensure that a decent home is within reach of every citizen, and contribute to the reduction of health inequalities by increasing personal incomes.
- 1.2 During the course of the Best Value Review of Advice Services (BVR) conducted in 2001, the service faced a fundamental challenge. In response to this it has been recognised that many of the services provided, although discretionary, support the provision of statutory services or underpin corporate objectives that link into the Community Plan.
- 1.3 Examples include:
- Welfare benefits services within the Social Services Department (the Benefits Support Team) which bring in additional revenue via the Standard Spending Assessment and allow charges to be made for core services. These services are targeted at people with disabilities;
 - Provision of welfare benefits and debt advice via E&D which have positive knock-on effects on housing revenues in terms of increased housing benefit and lower rent arrears, improved Council Tax collection rates, and contribute to the prevention of homelessness. These services are targeted at people on low incomes and are more likely to be used by members of minority ethnic communities;
 - Immigration advice services contributing to the inclusive and diverse nature of the City;

- Employment rights work links with the aim of creating a sustainable local economy, particularly in respect of issues like the enforcement of the National Minimum Wage;
 - Consumer advice services ensure that vulnerable consumers are able to obtain redress and are not placed at a disadvantage because of personal circumstances.
- 1.4 The commissioning of advice services is currently split across three Council departments (Social Services, E&D, and Housing) and this has hampered the co-ordination of service both in terms of creating duplications and preventing the introduction of common standards and performance indicators to ensure that Best Value is being obtained.
- 1.5 Whilst all three commissioning departments have provided services that meet specific needs for their departments, these separate strategic considerations have not been linked and the result has been to overlap services. This is clearest in respect of welfare benefits advice where both E&D and Social Services commission services providing specialist representation and to complete claim forms. Specialist housing advice services are also commissioned by both E&D and Housing. The result has been an ad hoc development of advice services in these areas, with no comparison of efficiency or relative costs being made across the two departments.
- 1.6 Of particular concern, identified by the BVR, was the fact that there had been little or no attempt to match the supply of advice services to the identified needs of the local population. There has also been a failure to consult with residents regarding advice services.

2. Role of the Community Legal Service Partnership and City Council

- 2.1 The launch of the Community Legal Service Partnership (CLSP) for Leicester in April 2000 and the inclusion of Advice Services within the first year of the authority's Best Value Review programme have both highlighted the need for change.
- 2.2 The CLSP brings together advice service providers and funding bodies in order to plan and co-ordinate service provision to achieve the best use of resources. The Lord Chancellor's Department (LCD) has opened up funding previously paid to solicitors as legal aid to not for profit agencies which can often provide better value for money. However, in doing so the LCD has also developed a rigorous quality assurance system for agencies (the Quality Mark). The Legal Services Commission, which administers funding on behalf of the LCD and has responsibility for the Quality Mark, is also keen to ensure that services reflect identified need and are co-ordinated so that people seeking advice can find this at the time it is required.
- 2.3 The role of Leicester CLSP is to improve the quality and accessibility of civil legal advice and information for residents of Leicester City. This will be achieved by undertaking six distinct but related goals:
- Promoting the CLS Quality Mark and other initiatives to improve access and quality of advice;
 - Monitoring legal need and supply in Leicester with a view to identifying any gaps in services and barriers to access;

- Facilitating the promotion of the CLS network of providers to members of the local communities;
 - Facilitating the involvement of users and potential users in the development of the CLS in Leicester;
 - Improving working relationships between funders and providers;
 - Maintaining a strategic overview of advice and information issues.
- 2.4 Shortly after the creation of the local CLSP, the BVR of advice services was launched in Leicester and many of the recommendations made within the Improvement Plan and subsequent BV Inspection report link to the work of the CLSP.
- 2.5 It is important to clarify the roles of the CLSP and the City Council in developing advice services for the City. The CLSP is a strategic partnership that brings together funders and providers of services. It identifies advice needs; measures supply; highlights gaps in the provision of services and works to develop policies and procedures that will allow for quality assurance in provision (the Quality Mark) and improved co-ordination of service (referrals protocols, practitioner forums etc). It, therefore, sets the overall context in which services will be developed.
- 2.6 Within the partnership the City Council is the funder of advice services that has the greatest freedom in terms of its commissioning decisions. The Legal Services Commission can fund only those services provided to eligible clients (i.e clients who would have qualified for legal aid) whilst Leicestershire Health must focus advice on the users of health services (e.g. the palliative care service) or focus on securing improved health outcomes.
- 2.7 The City Council also provides the greater amount of funding for advice services within the City, and is also a direct provider of advice services in the Housing, Social Services and E&D departments. The Council's total budget for advice services is currently in excess of £1.5 million.
- 2.8 Whilst the City Council is free to develop its own strategy for advice provision within the City, the opportunity to maximise the effectiveness of Council funding by attracting resources from other funding bodies would be lost.
- 2.9 As a result, it is proposed that the City Council shall continue to play a key role in the CLSP for Leicester and that it will take account of the work of the CLSP when making its own advice provision and commissioning decisions. In many cases this will mean considering what advice cannot be met by other funders within the partnership and picking these up within the City Council strategy. Where the City Council is currently funding work that could be funded by either the LSC or Leicestershire Health then the authority shall have a reasonable expectation that these areas will benefit from funding from those sources in order to free up funding for other areas of advice.
- 2.10 However, where the City Council identifies opportunities of this nature it will seek to ensure that funding is not reduced without first securing an agreement that alternative sources of funding will be made available from other funders.

- 2.11 Such a partnership approach to the funding and provision of advice services may mean that commissioning decisions made by the Council cannot be linked as clearly to areas of its own priority. For example, the City Council is less likely to fund specialist services in welfare benefits as the majority of people receiving these services will be eligible for LSC funding and could receive LSC funded services. However, in return for additional funding by the LSC in this area, the City Council can pick up funding needs in areas such as Employment where very few people are eligible for LSC funding or concentrate its resources on advice at non-specialist levels.
- 2.12 In effect, the role of the City Council will be to wrap service provision and commissioned services around those services that can be funded and expanded by other funders within the partnership.
- 2.13 This means that the Council shall both explore the possibility of obtaining Legal Service Commission franchises for its directly provided services, and also commission advice services in the voluntary sector at non specialist levels or in areas of law where LSC or Health funding will be harder to obtain.
- 2.14 In addition, because LSC funding is predominantly given in respect of case-work, it will be left to the City Council and Leicestershire Health to look at funding policy and development work (e.g. training). Where possible, the City Council will work within the CLSP to apply for external sources of revenue for this work.
- 2.15 In respect of Consumer Advice, the establishment of a Leicester Consumer Support Network (CSN) earlier this year aims to bring together local authority and voluntary sector providers of Consumer advice to develop good practice, encourage joint working, and promote the adoption of the CLSP Quality Mark. The themes of the CSN are clearly similar to those within the CLSP at large, and there are close links between the two, although the CSN concentrates specifically on consumer advice provision. However, for the City Council the provision of Consumer Advice also links with its regulatory role within trading standards.
- 2.16 A separate Best Value review of the regulatory services is planned and this will need to examine the links between Consumer advice and the authorities' regulatory functions.

3. Strategic Priorities for the period 2002 – 2005

- 3.1 A number of factors have influenced the emerging priorities for the next 3 years. These are:
- The City Council's budget strategy
 - The assessment of need and gap analysis conducted by the CLSP
 - The results of consultation through the residents survey
 - The BVR and the recommendations of the Best Value Inspectors
 - The CLSP conference held on 16th October 2001 and provider feedback
 - Responses to the consultation of this strategy held throughout December 2001 and January 2002

3.2 The City Council's budget strategy and the Best Value Review require 2% savings per annum from the Advice Services budget over the period of this strategy. As a consequence of this, an ongoing priority for the management and commissioning of services is to deliver efficiency savings whilst at the same time providing for continuity of service delivery. The Advice services budget for the Environment and Development (E&D) Department currently stands at £985,215. This will be expanded due to the transfer of project management arrangements into E&D of a number of advice services currently commissioned by the Social Services Department. The total budget for advice services under the management of E&D will amount to £1,090,478 following this transfer. Advice services that are directly provided by Social Services and Housing will remain within those departments.

3.3 The gap analysis conducted by the CLSP has highlighted the need for development of services in the following areas:

Gaps in CLS Provision By Category & Level of Advice				
Category	General Help Level	General Help Plus Casework	Specialist	Comments
Welfare benefits	Yes	Yes	Yes	<p>Need to improve provision at all levels, but particularly in relation to benefit assessment and completion of benefit application forms. Other gaps include training and 2nd tier support, benefit take-up work, services targeted at the elderly and disabled, home visiting and adequate language support.</p> <p>Better links with other service access points could be established e.g. GP surgeries and health centres.</p> <p>Solicitors are not funded to provide representation services and Not for profit agencies are finding it increasingly difficult to obtain free medical reports to support client benefit appeals.</p> <p>Dispersed delivery model.</p>
Debt	Yes	Yes	Yes	<p>Need to improve provision at all levels, but particularly the capacity to deal with more straightforward multiple debt cases at the General Help and Casework level.</p> <p>New combined money advice service will provide opportunity for casework support to Leicester Law Centre's generalist service.</p> <p>Better links with other service access points and publicity of telephone service.</p> <p>Gap in language support.</p> <p>Centralised service delivery model.</p>

				Limited choice of service provider may be problematic.
Housing	No	No	No	Leicester has a high need for housing advice which seems to be met by a good mix of housing advice within the Not for profit sector and private practice. No significant gaps or waiting times for appointments identified. Emergency representation may be limited.
Employment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Need to improve provision at all levels. There seems to be a particular need for improved representation services at Employment Tribunals. Some Trade Union representation, but Leicester has significant numbers of low-p [aid non-unionised labour force. No win no fee solicitor work often inappropriate due to relatively small levels of compensation. Common problems – final payments, changes to terms & conditions, low pay. LCC has identified need to campaign on low pay and minimum wage.
Immigration & Nationality	Yes	Yes	Yes	Need to improve provision at all levels. Significant gap in the provision of specialist immigration advice locally. The new licensing arrangements for immigration advice may limit community groups provision of immigration advice. CAB previously reported a significant number of nationality type enquiries. Centralised model of service delivery.
Consumer & General Contract	No	No	No	Leicester CAB and Consumer Advice Centre deal with a high volume of consumer advice enquiries. CAB role expected to be taken on by Leicester Law Centre. No significant gaps in provision currently identified.
Education	Yes	Yes	Yes	These are all relatively new areas of law with new legal rights. There are few specialist providers and considerable lack of awareness of rights.
Mental Health	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Health & Community Care	Yes	Yes	Yes	

- 3.4 Responses to the consultation for this strategy have however highlighted that there is inadequate housing advice provision at the local neighbourhood level. Current services at the Law Centre and SHARP are both concentrated in the City Centre. This point will need to be considered when putting together bids for additional resources to improve advice services at the local level, with the possibility of either SHARP or Leicester Law Centre providing specialist support.
- 3.5 As mentioned in Section 2, it is essential that the City Council take account of the role that other funders can play in meeting the needs identified by the CLSP when it makes its own assessment of priorities. In particular, specialist services in Housing, Welfare Benefits, Debt, and Immigration & Nationality are likely to draw substantial funding from the Legal Services Commission, and ways to increase this will need to be explored. Likewise, the emerging advice areas of mental health and health & community care are likely to fall within the remit of Leicestershire Health. This leaves employment as an area of law in its entirety but with emphasis on improving the capacity for Employment Tribunal work, and the levels of advice from Information to General Help with casework in respect of other areas. Specific comments made by the CLSP in relation to matching advice to alternative service access points (such as G.P's surgeries) will be explored in pilot studies in the SRB5 area, and in discussions with the Health Action Zone and the outcomes of these will inform future commissioning decisions.
- 3.6 However, the experience of linking advice closely with other services used by key client groups suggests that this is a possible model that could be rolled out – particularly in respect of welfare benefits provision. For example, the Palliative Care Project, managed by Leicester Charity Organisation Society currently provides benefits and debt advice to recipients of palliative care. This receives funding from Leicestershire Health and predicts additional benefit take-up for this client group of approaching £1 million. Specific projects based around communities of interest, and addressing barriers to take-up of entitlements and rights, need to be developed in conjunction with agencies that provide core services to those groups.
- 3.7 The results from consultation via the Residents Survey¹ indicate that there is a significant preference for telephone, or face to face interviews, with initial contact often preferred with the customer's own locality. The precise nature of local service delivery is however uncertain with both WERAS and Money Advice Unit outreach sessions at local community venues being poorly attended in the past.
- 3.8 Comments made during the consultation on this strategy have been supportive of the idea to use local community based agencies that already exist as access points to advice rather than creating a new set of specific advice agencies in local communities.
- 3.9 The need to increase the provision of advice services at a local level was also recognised by members of the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee at their meeting of 6th December 2001. These services should form a basic front-line with specialist services organised on a city-wide basis to provide ongoing support, consultancy and training.
- 3.10 _ Over the period of this strategy there needs to be a greater commitment to provide advice services to meet the needs of people in local geographical communities. This

¹ Headline findings are attached as Appendix 2 to this report

has been highlighted in the Council's Revitalising Neighbourhoods initiative, and as with communities of interest such as the disabled, the City Council will endeavour to move advice services closer to the people that need them.

- 3.11 _ The balance between the level of service provided in each locality, or to each community of interest, and that provided by centrally based teams needs to be assessed and determined. In the past it has been possible for locally based agencies to find themselves developing services to specialist level and providing everything from form filling to representation services, often with small staff teams. The same is true of services that seek to serve a defined client group. This model frequently represents an ineffective use of resources, and can duplicate the work of specialist teams that have been established for the purpose of tribunal/ court representation.
- 3.12 The City Council will ensure that initial contact points for advice services are available for people in their local communities (of place or interest) and co-ordinate support for advisers working at that level by developing central teams of specialists either within the Council's own services or within City Centre based agencies. In building local teams, the City Council expects to be able to draw down additional resources from neighbourhood regeneration programmes, or by entering into partnership with other agencies. Casework support and consultancy will be sought from centrally based specialist providers.
- 3.13 _ The Council is also committed to creating high quality and accessible advice services within the City Centre. The bringing together of generalist and specialist services within Leicester Law Centre is progressing and the need to provide more suitable accommodation, to give a higher profile to that service and to improve access for disabled people is an immediate priority. The creation of the largest single specialist Money Advice agency in the East Midlands is also near to completion, and a developed role for that provider – including the provision of training and support to non specialist debt providers is envisaged.
- 3.14 The BVR review and the subsequent Inspection Report highlighted the need for an overarching strategy for advice services on which future commissioning decisions could be based. However, within this general recommendation, there were a number of specific proposals. These either related to specific strategic priorities (e.g. developing training programmes for advice workers, and signing up agencies to a Customer focused Charter) or to putting in place the mechanisms to secure Best Value in the commissioning process (single commissioning point, development of performance indicators).

3.15 _ The particular strategic priorities arising from the BVR and the Inspection can be listed as:

Specific Strategic Priorities Arising from the Best Value Review and the Best Value Inspection Report		
BVR Improvement Plan	Inspectors Comments	Recommendation
Increase consultation mechanisms to inform commissioning decisions	Draw up a consultation plan to maximise public and partner involvement in the process by end September 2001	<p>That this strategy be subject to public consultation throughout November and December 2001 and that specific views be sought of Members, advice agencies and funders, community groups and representative forums.</p> <p>An annual consultation exercise will take place via the Residents Survey.</p> <p>Customer feedback, gathered in a way that can be compared across agencies, will be an obligation built into advice service specifications from April 2002 onwards.</p> <p>The Council shall use 'mystery shopper' techniques to obtain ongoing performance information from April 2002 onwards.</p>
Consider Workforce Issues	Develop a training plan for all staff and volunteers involved in advice delivery	<p>The City Council shall, in conjunction with the CLSP, work to develop accredited training programmes for advice volunteers and staff.</p> <p>External funding will be sought to progress this work and the CLSP shall consult on a number of options including the use of NVQ assessments.</p> <p>Agencies shall be encouraged to develop trainee positions involving shadowing and mentoring.</p>
Adopt a single set of quality assurance standards for advice services.	Develop a customer charter and partner protocol for the delivery of advice services	<p>The City Council shall require all advice services to obtain a Quality Mark from the CLS by April 2003.</p> <p>The Customer Charter included with this report at Appendix 1 shall be approved and compliance monitored via service specifications.</p>
	Develop an IT action programme to improve the streamlining of services and inter-working between Council departments by April 2002.	<p>Develop advice services pages on the City Council website with links to the Directory of Advice & Support and other advice agencies.</p> <p>Assess the feasibility and, if possible, provide for read only access for advice workers employed by the local authority to Housing Benefit records.</p>

- 3.16 The conference of the CLSP held on 16th October 2001, and responses to the consultation regarding this strategy have both highlighted the need to develop interpreting and translation services that can be accessed by advice providers. The City Council shall seek to attract additional resources in order to develop this work over the period of this strategy.
- 3.17 Responses to this consultation also highlighted the need for more targeted take-up campaigns around welfare benefits. For example, in respect of Working Families Tax Credit by providing information and pro-active services to registered child minders or targeting carers networks for information on disability benefits.
- 3.18 A number of responses to the consultation also requested that action be taken at a centralised level to increase awareness of advice agencies and to provide access to advice via telephone, internet and e-mail facilities. The promotion of service gateways links with the national e-government agenda and we shall be seeking to work within the Community Legal Service Partnership to progress these issues.
- 3.19 Providers within the city have a long-standing tradition of participation in informal networks to exchange information, focus on changes in legislation, and to highlight general concerns of a social policy nature. However, the extent of participation in these networks, and the outcomes associated with them, have been variable. In order to encourage advice providers to raise the problems experienced by their clients at a policy level, the City Council will support the creation of practitioner forums within the CLSP and look to these for guidance in determining a publicity and social policy programme for each of the three years of this strategy.

4. **Securing Best Value in Advice Provision**

- 4.1 The BVR and the subsequent Inspection both highlighted a lack of co-ordination at a strategic level in the commissioning of advice services. This led to the recommendation that a single commissioning point be established within the authority. At Directors Board held on 3rd July 2001, it was agreed that this commissioning point should be established within the Environment & Development Department.
- 4.2 The role of the single commissioning point is to:
- Operate as the main point of contact between the authority and the CLSP;
 - Provide recommendations on the strategic priorities for advice services;
 - Commission services that meet the needs of Leicester's communities and are based on agreed strategic priorities in line with the principles of Best Value;
 - Introduce and monitor performance indicators (including financial efficiency) for advice services through service specifications and direct service information;
 - Compare performance between local providers and with those in other local authority areas and utilise this information in future commissioning decisions.
- 4.3 When commissioning services the authority will need to take account of the availability of funding from other partners within the CLSP and shall seek to maximise this.

- 4.4 In order for directly delivered services to draw down funding from the Legal Services Commission, they must first demonstrate that the advice they give is independent. The implications of this need to be further investigated although there is the potential for the directly provided Welfare and Employment Rights Advice Service to make an application for funding from the Legal Services Commission.
- 4.5 The services falling within the remit of the single commissioning point shall be:

Service	Currently managed/ commissioned by:	Budget²
Welfare & Employment Rights Advice Service	E&D	241,600
Leicester Money Advice Ltd	E&D	220,300
Leicester Law Centre	E&D	339,915
Saffron Lane Advice Project	E&D	20,400
Hitslink Management Co-operative	E&D	163,000
Age Concern	Social Services	29,535 ³
Mosaic: shaping disability services	Social Services	46,339 ⁴
Bangladesh Youth & Cultural Shomiti	Social Services	12,437
SSAFA Forces Help	Social Services	16,925
Total		1,090,478

- 4.6 Directors' Board of 3rd July 2001 agreed that the commissioning of SHARP (specialist housing advice provider) would remain with the Housing Department although the services provided by SHARP will be reviewed in the context of this strategy. However, the consultation response from the Legal Services Commission (attached as appendix 3) questions the exclusion of SHARP from the single commissioning point.
- 4.7 In order to inform commissioning decisions, E&D will take on the project management responsibilities of advice services provided by those projects listed in para 4.5. This shall facilitate the introduction of common performance indicators combined with a single approach to the monitoring of financial information.

² Controllable budgets only

³ This represents that proportion of Mosaic's total funding which is spent on the delivery of advice services.

⁴ This represents that proportion of Age Concern's total funding which is spent on the delivery of advice services.

- 4.8 Leicester City Council is currently participating in a national pilot to develop performance indicators for advice services. These include both quantitative and qualitative measures of performance and will be linked to resources in order to establish comparable unit costs across a number of agencies. New Performance Indicators shall be incorporated into service specifications from April 2002 onwards.
- 4.9 The City Council will also take a pro-active role in securing external funding for advice services either by developing pilot projects with other partners (such as those currently being undertaken with respect to the Minimum Wage) or by facilitating bids to regeneration programmes (e.g. SRB5 programme and Objective 2).

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Legal Implications

These are set out in the main report.

Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph References Within Supporting information
Equal Opportunities	Yes	1.3, 3.3, 3.6, 3.15, 3.16, 4.2 Advice services have a significant impact on minority ethnic communities and people with disabilities and this strategy proposes to increase the targeting of services to these groups.
Policy	No	
Sustainable and Environmental	No	
Crime and Disorder	No	
Human Rights Act	No	
Elderly/People on Low Income	Yes	1.3, 3.3, 3.6, 3.15, 3.16, 4.2 Advice services have a significant impact on increasing incomes through benefit take-up, much of which is targeted at the elderly.

4. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

Advice Strategy (draft for consultation) – Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny
11/12/01

5. Consultations

- Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny 06/12/01. Comments from the committee are highlighted at para 5 of the summary report and a minute of the meeting is attached to this report for information.
- A draft of this strategy has also been distributed to over 250 agencies and individuals with comments invited throughout December 2001 and January 2002. Copies have

been available from the Council's website and a press release was issued detailing the consultation process.

- 16 responses have been received. These have generally been supportive with 85% agreeing with the strategic priorities identified in the document. Additional comments have been included in the strategy as a result of the consultation in the supporting information (paras 3.4, 3.8, 3.15, 3.16, 3.17, 4.6).
- The response from the Regional Legal Services Commission has been included as appendix 3.

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