

# Newsletter 2002/03

## Introduction

Welcome to the 2002/03 Local and Regional Government Research Programme Annual Newsletter. The newsletter provides details of new projects to be commissioned in 2002/03 and updates on current projects and recent research findings. It also outlines a programme of longer-term research projects being set up over the next 3-5 years to evaluate the local government modernisation agenda.

The Local and Regional Government Programme contributes research-based information for policy development and evaluation on the major elements of local government and regional governance such as the role and structure of local and regional government, democratic renewal, service delivery, management and finance. The programme has continued to expand since its start in 1988/89. The budget for 2002/03 is £2.32m.

We are keen to generate interest amongst research contractors and welcome expressions of interest both from those who have worked for us in the past and those who are new to the programme. If you wish to be considered when we draw up shortlists for invitation to tender, please complete and return the enclosed form to us at the address given on it. If you have any general questions or comments about the research programme, or the work of the Unit, please contact:

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### New projects for 2002/03 include:

- Local government reorganisation: the effectiveness and impact of unitary authorities
- Surveys of local authority trading and procurement activities
- Staff involvement in Best Value
- Beacon Council Round 4 Public Satisfaction and theme-based research
- E-government and hard-to-reach groups
- A feasibility study into evaluation of community strategies
- The relationship between plans, ring-fenced grants and best value Performance Indicators

*continued overleaf*



Service Quality



Participation



Finance



Management



Regions

### New projects for 2002/03 include: *(continued)*

- Technical review of the robustness of Best Value Performance Indicators
- Collecting & collating local authority data to support measurement of cost-effectiveness
- The relationship between performance and context: action learning research
- Measuring the cost-effectiveness of local authorities: stage two
- Research on links between corporate assessment scores and packages of freedoms and flexibilities
- Developing grant distribution formulae
- Rate relief for small firms
- Monitoring and evaluation of the operation of the Bellwin scheme
- Definition of a local authority company
- Developing the Single Pot assessment process
- Research on electoral registration
- Best practice across a range of functions and activities involved in implementing new council constitutions
- Civic education of young people
- Implementing electronic voting
- Evaluation of the role and impact of regional chambers
- Review of the policy-making process: the introduction of elected regional assemblies

### Medium and long-term projects (3-5 years) include:

- Rationalising Partnerships
- Long Term Evaluation of Rationalisation Process for Local Authority Planning Requirements
- Evaluation of packages of freedoms and flexibilities
- Use of freedoms in relation to council tax discounts and exemptions
- Long-term evaluation of the operation and effectiveness of elected regional assemblies

# New Projects for 2002/03 and Medium/Long-Term Projects

If you would like to express an interest in tendering for any of these projects, please return the enclosed form as soon as possible.

## General Governance Issues

### 1. Local government reorganisation: the effectiveness and impact of unitary authorities

A structural review of local government in England was undertaken between 1991 and 1996 that resulted in the creation of 46 unitary authorities. Since the introduction of unitary authorities there has been almost no research anywhere undertaken into their effectiveness and impact. As a consequence, we know very little about the relative efficiency of, and public perceptions towards, unitary authorities as opposed to other types of council. As part of the commitment to evaluating policies, and to inform future decision-making, there is a need to research the impact of local government reorganisation. There would be merit in the research evaluating the outputs and outcomes of reorganisation in terms of: identifying what benefits are supposed to flow from the creation of unitary authorities; the extent to which they achieve them, and in comparison with other types of authority; and, how far their current performance can be explained by decisions made at the time of reorganisation and the evidence base for those decisions. There is also scope to include a comparative assessment of the relative performance and impact of unitary authorities in Scotland and Wales, possibly by drawing upon analysis of those authorities in close geographical proximity to the boundaries. The evaluation would need to include a feasibility stage to identify potential methods for identifying and measuring the impacts.

## High Quality and Improving Local Services

### 2. Surveys of local authority trading and procurement activities

*Expressions of interest are not required for this project*

Research is needed to provide baseline data on the extent to which local authorities are trading with

other public bodies under the Local Authorities (Goods & Services) Act 1970 – there is currently no reliable, comprehensive data on local authority trading activities. A survey of all local authorities in England could usefully provide up-to-date information on the type, value and volume of goods and services local authorities are trading, and to whom they are supplying these goods and services. It would provide a useful baseline against which to measure changing levels of local authority trading, using powers under s16 of the Local Government Act 1999, and to evaluate the impact of these changes. Similarly, in order to provide time-series data, it might be useful to follow-up a survey that was carried out in 2000/01 in support of the DTLR/LGA (Byatt) Review of Local Authority Procurement to consider how local authority procurement is developing. The time-series data produced would be helpful in tracking the development of local authority procurement in the longer term, in particular, the effect on the ground of the Byatt Procurement Review, other procurement policy initiatives and changes in legislation.

### 3. Staff involvement in Best Value

Research could usefully investigate, across local authorities, the current nature and extent of employee involvement in Best Value. Research might provide information on the systems and arrangements being put in place to enable staff involvement and how widespread such arrangements are across local government. In addition, in-depth research might consider their impact on existing Best Value and procurement processes, as well as the effect on the workload, roles and skills of employees and on relations between employers and employees.

Within this broader framework, a key aim of the research will be to scope and monitor the perceived problem of a *two-tier workforce*. Many local authority employees have transferred under TUPE arrangements into the private sector. These arrangements (pay & working conditions) are considered, on some occasions, to be favourable in comparison with their new private sector colleagues and newly recruited private sector staff with similar roles. Such arrangements have, arguably, had a negative impact on both morale and employee performance. On the other hand, it is argued that there is a clear need for local flexibility in the processes by which terms and conditions are negotiated, and the real issue is raising procurement

and human resources skills within local authorities. This element of the employee research will attempt to unravel these effects in relation to the implementation of Best Value and procurement processes.

#### **4. Beacon Council Round 4 Public Satisfaction and theme-based research**

As in previous years, public satisfaction research is required to support the Beacons application and selection process. The outputs will be used both by potential applicant LAs in applying for Beacon status, and the Beacons IAP (Independent Advisory Panel) to select successful authorities. The project will determine user-satisfaction baselines both for overall LA performance and for each of the specific service areas relating to the 10 Round 4 themes. The project will also provide direct support to the IAP in assessing LA applications. Following recent reforms, separate theme research is not being commissioned for round 4. However, rounds 5 and 6 (announced in April 2002) may result in research to both: provide baselines of good practice for dissemination, and to support local authorities and the IAP in application and selection activities.

#### **5. E-government and hard-to-reach groups**

It is something of a paradox that those with the greatest dependence on public services – the socially excluded – are least likely to have access to the technology that would improve interaction and communication processes. There is, therefore, a need for research to identify and provide detailed information and good practice guidance on what innovative local authorities (and other public sector agencies) are doing in terms of enabling access and communicating electronically with these 'hard to reach' groups. Of particular interest are examples of authorities that have succeeded in including citizens in their decision-making processes and assessments of the quality of electronic service delivery. This research would aim to complement existing work with the 25 pathfinder authorities and the recently commissioned process evaluation of local electronic government.

## **Strong and Confident Community Leadership**

#### **6. A feasibility study into evaluation of community strategies**

Community strategies should have a tangible impact upon the quality of life experienced by local communities. Their effective implementation by local authorities, and their LSP partners, is key to the local realisation of benefits resulting from the modernisation agenda. Good practice demands that LSPs establish effective monitoring arrangements of their community strategies in order to determine the extent to which they are delivering the outputs and outcomes they intended, and that they represent an effective use of resources. Further, such performance management systems need to be embedded within the decision making processes of the LSP and its members. Indeed, Government guidance on community strategies (published December 2000) stresses the importance of monitoring progress on key outputs and outcomes – and reviewing strategies on the basis of that information. It is likely that progress in establishing effective performance monitoring systems is both differential and embryonic, and that research could explore the types of indicators being used, their purpose, validity and potential value, and also produce monitoring and evaluation guidance for LSPs on the development of effective performance management systems. In particular, the research could analyse the use of output and outcome indicators, measurements of sustainability, and the 'value added' of community strategies.

#### **7. Rationalising Partnerships**

Since the late 1980s, partnerships have flourished at the local level bringing together local stakeholders (such as the LA, development agencies, the private, voluntary and community sectors, the police, etc.) to undertake joint planning and delivery. Recent years have seen growing concerns about consultation fatigue, and the duplication of effort and resources. This has precipitated some streamlining e.g. the Home Office guidance to bring together Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs), Youth Offending Team (YOTs) and Drug Action Teams (DATs). LSPs provide an ideal opportunity to rationalise a large array of partnerships. There may be a need (following initial scoping exercises within the ongoing LSP research project) to undertake a more detailed mapping and examination of progress

towards, and good practice on, partnership rationalisation. Given that very few partnerships are statutory, there is scope to develop good practice guidance on (1) rationalising partnership structures, and (2) rationalising partnership activities – such as integrating consultation mechanisms to meet partners’ needs and, through assimilating resources, provide more professionally robust findings.

## **8. Long Term Evaluation of Rationalisation Process for Local Authority Planning Requirements**

Following the Local and Regional Government Research Unit review of LA statutory and non-statutory service and policy planning requirements (published January 2002) a review could be undertaken into the progress made on rationalising plans, evaluating the impact of changes to the requirements and assessing the need for further improvement. This research could involve a detailed examination of the process of rationalisation for LA plans (including the strengths and weaknesses of the process), both at a local and central Government level, as well as the outcomes delivered. In examining the processes underpinning plan rationalisation, there is scope that the research could formally consider the policy-making process and the ways in which evidence are used within it.

## **Performance Management Framework for Improvements**

### **9. The relationship between plans, ring-fenced grants and Performance Indicators**

Policies on reducing plans, restricting ring-fenced grants and rationalising PIs are, to a large extent, inter-related. It will be important, therefore, to ensure effective and efficient use is made of any inter-relationships and potential trade-offs at both central and local government levels. However, there is a general concern amongst Government departments that the removal and restriction of these requirements may reduce their ability to control inputs and behaviour at the local level. Further issues may arise relating to trade-offs between the three areas, for example, one approach to reducing the current burden of plans is to extend the scope of existing PIs, or introduce new ones. One way to understand how best to deliver reductions and make the most of rationalisation and

trade-offs might be to commission a small-scale study to examine how these relationships are managed at the local level. The study could explore the potential reactions from local authorities to reductions in both plans and PIs (and the replacement of ring-fenced grant in high performing councils), and their views on more active participation in the design of future plans, ring-fenced grants or PIs. Lessons from this research could then be fed into thinking around mechanisms, in particular the Policy Effects Framework, for controlling the introduction of new PIs, plans or ring-fenced grants across Government.

### **10. Technical review of the robustness of BVPIs**

*Expressions of interest are not required for this project*

There is a need for a small-scale technical review of BVPIs, building upon the work undertaken by the Department, NIESR and ORU last year, to make further improvements and, where necessary, to rectify the significant minority of indicators that are deficient in capturing the salient features of services provided by local authorities. This project has benefits for the ‘collection and collation of local authority data to support measurement of cost-effectiveness’ (see 11. below) and ‘measuring the cost-effectiveness of local authorities’ projects outlined below (see 13. below). The project would investigate:

- The extent to which BVPIs are consistent, or can be/need to be ‘rationalised’; i.e. are good/poor measures of performance;
- Whether current and proposed BVPIs suffer from ‘mis-specification’ (this could also include some cognitive testing);
- Whether current and proposed BVPIs create perverse incentives;
- The extent BVPIs have reached their ‘sell by date’. Most local authorities achieve near 100% in a few BVPIs, but if they relate to important services, performance may suffer if not directly monitored;
- The extent input and output/outcome measures relate to the same thing;
- The robustness and suitability of substituting some financial BVPIs with RO data;
- The possibility of gathering data to amend for net rather than gross BVPI related data;

- The possibility of gathering data to account for capital costs.

This project is of particular importance as a result of the reduction of the total number of indicators from 123 to 95 and the White Paper undertaking to provide a sound base for measuring current performance and improvement over time.

### 11. Collecting & collating local authority data to support measurement of cost-effectiveness

As one of its Departmental PSA targets, DTLR need to ensure continuous improvement in the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of local services through overall annual improvements in cost effectiveness of two per cent or more. There is potentially a large amount of data relevant to local authorities that could be used to support methods being developed to measure this target, but very little has been done to bring this together within and across government departments. This research project would seek to rectify this gap in the evidence base. The project would have the following objectives:

- To assess the extent to which a quantitative measurement of local authority cost-effectiveness needs to be dependent on the BVPIs;
- To fill in the information gaps not covered by BVPIs, such as the division of inputs into labour, capital and material expenditures;
- To limit the burden on local authorities in separately gathering information necessary to assess the cost effectiveness of local government at the aggregate national level;
- To collate different sources of user/opinion surveys for use in the basket of indicators that forms part of the method of measuring cost-effectiveness; and,
- To collate contextual data from, for example, the '2001 Census', 'New Earnings Survey' 'Labour Force Survey', and 'British Crime Survey'.

This is purely a technical piece of research and the intention would not be to rival the information base being pulled together for the comprehensive performance assessment. Instead, the aim would be to provide local authority costs, performance and contextual data that is only of use in the specific method developed for measuring the Department's local government cost-effectiveness PSA target.

### 12. The relationship between performance and context: action learning research

*Expressions of interest are not required for this project*

As part of research on measuring cost-effectiveness, the Department has been examining the relationship between performance, cost and the context in which different local authorities operate. Some of the results of this work were published with the 2000/01 BVPIs. One of the most interesting findings is the range of variation in performance of local authorities with similar contexts e.g. levels of deprivation. Clearly, some local authorities are outperforming what could be expected given their circumstances. Equally, several are significantly under-performing. As well as contributing more in-depth knowledge to the development of methods for measuring cost-effectiveness, action learning based research might be valuable to investigate why these outliers are more successful at overcoming their context and what good practice lessons might be disseminated to others. Similarly, under-performing authorities could be looked at in greater depth to examine what is acting as a barrier to them achieving service delivery nearer to what might be expected given their circumstances.

### 13. Measuring the cost-effectiveness of local authorities: stage two

Further work is necessary to build upon the research project being carried out by the National Institute for Economic and Social Research on the relative and absolute effectiveness of local authority performance using frontier analysis, such as Data Envelopment Analysis/Stochastic Frontier Analysis, because:

- The original analysis had to be undertaken on incomplete and unaudited BVPI/ACPI data, much of which was not directly comparable;
- The use of any single year's relative effectiveness scores is arguably misleading as an indicator of local authorities relative performance;
- The appropriate weights to attach to each service in deriving overall efficiency/effectiveness measures need to be finalised
- Further refinement is necessary to make allowance for the effects of inflation, normal time lags between increasing inputs and translating these into outputs/outcomes and the treatment of capital expenditure.

The proposed work would include:

- A re-run of the cost-effectiveness analysis over a 2 year period to evaluate robustness of results, including consideration of the sensitivity of rankings to the use of different years data on identical indicators and changes when different indicators are employed;
- An analysis of the feasibility and robustness of using expenditure weights;
- Investigating alternative sources of information for constructing weights including, for example, those based on the importance placed by consumers on services using existing and new consumer satisfaction surveys;
- A comparison with more transparent and simple alternatives to measuring cost effectiveness, (but using the NIESR report as its benchmark);
- An assessment of how the reported scores could be usefully employed, and;
- A peer review of the methodology and outputs.

## Freedom and Flexibilities

### 14. Research on links between corporate assessment scores and packages of freedoms and flexibilities

*Expressions of interest are not required for this project*

Whilst the package of freedoms and flexibilities to be given to high performing councils is clear and there is reasonable clarity over the set of actions to be taken with regard to poor performing authorities, appropriate bundles of freedoms and flexibilities for striving and coasting councils may need more careful thought. The need for and potential use of freedoms may not always come through from LPSA negotiations and particular combinations of flexibilities given to some striving councils may also be suited to several coasting councils. Similarly, actions to encourage and support development in coasting councils may also be needed for some services in striving councils. This suggests that small-scale, in-house research based upon case-study examples from the Audit Commission's corporate assessment work might help to tease out some of the less obvious links between freedoms and flexibilities and striving and coasting councils.

### 15. Evaluation of packages of freedoms and flexibilities

As part of the Local and Regional Government Group's policy evaluation programme, it will be necessary to undertake an evaluation of the process by which freedoms and flexibilities are decided upon and used by local authorities to achieve improvements in the quality of their service delivery. For instance, has the policy been delivered and acted upon in the ways intended. Research could feedback useful lessons for policy implementation. In the longer term, it will also be important to assess the actual impact of packages of freedoms and flexibilities upon the efficiency and effectiveness of local authority service delivery.

## Local Government Finance Reform

### 16. Developing grant distribution formulae

In the Local Government White Paper the Government gives a commitment to develop new fairer and more intelligible grant distribution formulae in 2002 to be used in the distribution of grant for 2003-04. Research is on going into developing new formulae, for example, for the element of the SSA formulae. This general heading is providing for any further research required within the limited time frame i.e. by summer 2002, for influencing the 2003/04 settlement.

### 17. Rate relief for small firms

A key aspect of the rate relief for small businesses is its targeting. The Department has proposed it should be for those that only occupy one property. The relief will be paid for by a supplement on other ratepayers. There is, however, no firm data on how many ratepayers occupy only one small property with which set the level of that supplement. Research is needed into the number of businesses that occupy only one property, within the rateable value limits. It would also be worth looking at the number occupying 2 or 3 properties, as just one may be too restrictive e.g. a small shop with a separate small warehouse or storage on a different site, could count as two properties. Results will be needed by Autumn 2003.

### 18. Monitoring and evaluation of the operation of the Bellwin scheme

The Bellwin scheme is the main means of providing further grant to local authorities where problems,

such as emergencies or disasters, have arisen from circumstances beyond their control. The scheme has recently undergone a review of the funding arrangements and the Department has consulted on the proposed changes, including the possibility of a more flexible approach on short-term capital expenditure and setting the funding of the Bellwin scheme on a proper footing by introducing new funding arrangements, with separate provision earmarked for Bellwin expenditure which could be carried forward if not used. The implementation of these changes needs to be evaluated to ensure that they are operating in the way intended but, more importantly, in the short-term, basic research is required to establish what the grant funding is being spent on i.e. the balance between revenue and capital expenditures and one-off schemes or longer-term investments etc., and whether this is a consistent picture across the country.

#### **19. Definition of a local authority company**

*Expressions of interest are not required for this project*

Transactions by a company under the effective control of a local authority are treated as if undertaken by the authority and therefore add to the borrowing of the parent authority in terms of capital resources. A study may be helpful in developing an alternative to the present complex mechanism and updating the definition of a controlled company in line with modern accounting practice. Specifically, the study might examine whether an accountancy-based test would work in practice.

#### **20. Developing the Single Pot assessment process**

*Expressions of interest are not required for this project*

In spring 2001, the Department commissioned York Consulting Ltd to undertake an evaluation of the implementation and development of asset management plans and corporate capital strategies – the arrangements which currently form the assessment element of the Single Capital Pot. The findings and recommendations from this study have implications for Departmental guidance to local authorities and the assessment criteria applied by each of the Government Offices. To understand how adjustments might be made to these materials to address particular issues identified by the research, the Department wishes commission, on a call-off basis, an organisation with a developed understanding of both asset management and capital

planning in local government and the current single capital pot assessment process.

#### **21. Use of freedoms in relation to council tax discounts and exemptions**

The Government is looking to delegate more decisions on council tax discounts and exemptions. Local authorities will have the freedom to remove or reduce the discount given for second homes or long-term empty homes, and will have discretion to grant discounts and exemptions beyond the existing national framework. In the long-term, research will be needed to evaluate the use made of these freedoms by local authorities and their impact on local house markets and the number and duration of empty homes.

### **Local Democracy and Accountability**

#### **22. Research on electoral registration**

Local authority estimates for the rate of return of Form A (for electoral registration) average around 95% of the eligible population. Many of those that make use of the electoral register, including within central government, are concerned that actual registration may be a much lower proportion of the population and that the proportion is in decline. Research is needed to more accurately gauge the level of ‘under registration’ in local authorities. Beyond this, we would want to know who it is within the population that chooses not to register and what are their motives, as well as the most effective local authority approaches to registration. A specific, sub-issue for this research would be consideration of how local authorities do, and might, provide a facility for anonymous registration – are there lessons from overseas? Ideally, the research will be jointly commissioned and managed with the electoral commission.

Linked to this, but for the longer-term, a research study might determine the lessons from early operation of a rolling register and the general impact of moving away from a ‘firm’ register. The research, through impact analysis and process evaluation techniques, might consider whether the process is weakening or strengthening the quality of the register, in particular: whether mistakes can be corrected more quickly, whether the process is more convenient and whether there are any unintended consequences, such as double registration (in different areas) and low levels of re-registering.

### **23. Best practice across a range of functions and activities involved in implementing new council constitutions**

As part of the 2001/02 LRGRU Programme, the Department commissioned a study to consider emerging good practice in terms of the operation of overview and scrutiny arrangements in new council constitutions. Further to this, research might present emerging best practice across a range of functions and activities involved in the operation of cabinet government at the local level. For example, the operation of: the cabinet itself, area arrangements, forward plans, officer structures, the full council and partnering arrangements. This study would coincide with the start of the long-term evaluation of new council constitutions and the new ethical framework. However, its specific purpose would be to quickly pull together any emerging practice in order to allow a wider range of local authorities to learn lessons from those that have introduced seemingly effective arrangements. Given the commitment that was given to review the Access to Information rules within new constitutions, this could also encompass a small research project considering the operation of Forward Plans within new council constitutions and the classification of key decisions within them.

### **24. Civic education of young people**

The Local Government White Paper contains proposals to set up and support programmes of civic education for young people in an attempt to increase their engagement in local government. Research might investigate the effect of providing 'civic education' to young people on issues including the workings of local government, their rights and responsibilities, etc. This research might involve an experimental approach or action research methods. Consideration of similar groups of school pupils, some provided with civic education and others not, might establish how their knowledge of, and attitudes towards, local government and local politics, as well as their levels of political mobilisation, differ and change as a result of receiving such education. The research findings could be used to inform guidance for local education authorities and schools on how to effectively provide civic education in an effort to increase the interest, knowledge and participation of young people in local politics.

### **25. Implementing electronic voting**

*Expressions of interest are not required for this project*

A jointly-commissioned research study will report just before the 2002/03 LRGRU Programme year on issues around the implementation of electronic voting for parliamentary and local government elections. The report will cover: the conditions under which electronic voting can be successfully introduced; the potential barriers to implementation and ways they can be overcome. A further project is required to develop a comprehensive implementation plan. The plan will detail the realisable timetable and critical path for implementation including the timing of resource inputs, legislative and regulatory change, transitional arrangements and the maintenance and review of the system post-implementation.

## **Regional Governance and Broader Policy issues**

### **26. Evaluation of the role and impact of regional chambers**

The Regional Chambers are voluntary bodies with considerable scope to determine their own role. They have been designated by the Government and given a statutory role in scrutinising the RDAs and, in some regions, the local authorities have decided that the Chamber should be the regional planning body. The Government has also encouraged the Chambers to develop a broader role as a focus for their region, for example, by working with other bodies in the regions on strategies and policy-making, and has made available £15m over the three years from 2001/02 to help the Chambers fulfil their scrutiny and wider role. The Fund has enabled the Chambers to expand their activities substantially from late-2001. It is important to evaluate how the Chambers have performed and whether the Fund is delivering good value-for-money. Evaluation of the Chambers would need to consider, amongst other things, the impact of their initiatives and use of resources, contribution (and views) of stakeholders, and the added-value they bring to regional policy-making and delivery. The evaluation would also need to incorporate two specific issues:

- Evaluation of the Regional Chambers Fund: to identify the nature of the objectives of successful bids, the extent to which those objectives are realistic and appropriate, the processes by which they are implemented and the outcomes that

arise. There will also be a need to consider the nature of any bids refused, and the views of those within the Chamber/region about the process, to provide guidance on further funding allocation.

- Review of the scrutiny role by Regional Chambers: Chambers have been tasked with providing a scrutiny role towards the RDAs. Scrutiny can and does take a variety of forms in different Chambers. Research could investigate those processes: identify what constitutes good practice (which does not imply there is a single 'model' that all regions should follow), what skills are required, and what sort of outcome follows from 'good scrutiny'.

## **27. Review of the policy-making process: the introduction of elected regional assemblies**

The Government places strong emphasis upon improving the process of policy-making – following key reports produced by the Cabinet Office – which focus upon the need for policy making to be more robust, evidence-based, inclusive, flexible and innovative, and include feedback loops in which to learn from experience. Yet there is little detailed research that charts the ways in which policy is developed or implemented. The policy concerning the introduction of elected regional assemblies is large-scale, involving the development of new government arrangements. Following the publication of the White Paper, longitudinal research could 'track' the process of policy development and implementation, both centrally and within the regions. Through documentary analysis, observation and depth interviews with officials and others, the research could provide information on the decisions made by government and ERAs, their rationale, and their implications, and provide scope for learning about the ways in which policies concerning governance structures are created and embedded.

## **28. Long-term evaluation of the operation and effectiveness of elected regional assemblies**

As part of the Department's commitment to evaluation, it will be necessary to undertake a long-term evaluation of ERAs. This will need to consider the extent to which, collectively and individually, the assemblies have met the objectives set for them. For example, the evaluation would need to consider issues concerning both the region and the nation,

including: notions of regional accountability (actual and perceived); co-ordination of service delivery and joining-up of strategies; improved policy outcomes, strengthening of regional identity and degree of inclusiveness, and national objectives towards inter-regional growth disparities. The research will need to roll out across regions as the policy is implemented within individual regions. It will be necessary, in the first instance, to ensure that baseline information is collected prior to the implementation of the policy. It will be necessary for the research to draw appropriate links with other related LRGRU research reviewing the role of Chambers and governance relationships within the regions, as well as English Regions Network research to support the role of the Chambers.

## **Summary of the 2001/02 Research Programme**

In 2001/02, the Local and Regional government research programme consisted of 72 projects. There were 46 new projects and 26 on going from the previous year. Brief details of a number of key projects undertaken within each of the main research themes of the programme are given below.

### **Best Value and Service Delivery**

#### **Long Term Evaluation of Best Value and Its Impact**

*Contractor: Cardiff Business School and partners*

Starting in early 2001, this is an objective, rigorous and robust evaluation of the success of local authorities' approaches towards Best Value. It will identify Best Value's impact, both in terms of its aims and objectives and as a key component of the Local Government Modernisation Agenda (LGMA). The first phase of the research involving a census of local authorities and residents surveys are now complete, and the case study work is underway. A preliminary report linking these elements with the 2000/01 best value performance indicator baseline data will be published later in the year.

This project also included a feasibility study on a research framework to enable evaluation of the process and impact components of the LGMA. *Issue-based and progress reports throughout the study. Final report in 2005.*

## **Use of local Performance Indicators in best value**

*Contractor: AMION Consulting, in association with KPMG and Pion Economics*

This project was commissioned to review the use of local Performance Indicators (PIs) in Best Value. The research has identified the critical role of local PIs in building an overall framework for performance management. Significant progress is being made in the use of local PIs, although more needs to be done if their full potential is to be realised. Performance management in general is becoming well established within the fabric of many of the local authorities studied. Local PIs are forming an increasingly important component of the Performance Management Framework. However, further effort is still required in relation to issues, such as, local accountability, higher-level indicators, partner involvement and creating linkages between indicators at different levels in the hierarchy. *Guidance based on the research was published in December 2001.*

## **A feasibility study on disaggregating BVPIs**

*Contractor: Department of Geography, University of Leeds*

The overall remit of the project was to assess the extent to which it is possible to disaggregate Best Value Performance Indicators for areas within local authorities. Assessment was based on a three-fold typology: 1. Surveys of residents to discern levels of satisfaction; 2. Counts of 'events' made by Local Authorities using routine administrative data to represent the varying levels of service delivery; and 3. Assessments of the state of play within local government in terms of their ability to geo-code and model data. Whilst the majority of BVPIs are not suitable for disaggregation, there is a small set for which it would be feasible, reliable and desirable for authorities to disaggregate if they felt it worthwhile. This would help to develop better information on the importance of tackling social inclusion and encourage information sharing between local and central government. It would also be beneficial to model appropriate indicators, where direct disaggregation is not possible, in order to build a national sub-authority level picture of how authorities perform given different levels of deprivation.

*Final report produced March 2002, awaiting publication.*

## **BVPI User Satisfaction results**

*In-house research project*

In 2000/01, every Local Authority in England undertook a series of surveys which asked citizens and users of specific services about their satisfaction with the services provided by their authority. A "Topline" report was produced to present the levels of satisfaction for each of the indicators nationally and by LA type collected in the General, Tenants, Benefits, Planning and Libraries surveys. The national average overall satisfaction with the service provided by councils was 65% with highest levels of satisfaction being reported on household waste collection (86% satisfied) and least satisfaction being reported on the handling of complaints (40% satisfied). A more detailed report will be published in Summer 2002. This will provide more commentary on the results, further analysis, will look at the findings of the questions around the indicators and will also discuss the views of users and non-users of services.

*Topline report published February 2002, Main report to be produced Summer 2002.*

## **Democratic Renewal**

### **The Development of Overview and Scrutiny**

*Contractor: INLOGOV, University of Birmingham*

Inlogov have been commissioned to undertake a largely case study-based examination of the development of overview and scrutiny within new council constitutions. The research focuses on the positive lessons from local implementation and will ultimately aim to disseminate practical solutions to barriers and obstacles relevant to local authorities whatever their constitutional arrangements.

*Due to publish in spring 2002.*

### **Public Attitudes to Directly Elected Mayors**

*Contractor: IFF Ltd with in-house analysis and reporting*

In summer 2001, IFF Ltd administered surveys of the public in ten cities and large towns in England. The subsequent report by LRGRU provides information on residents' attitudes to their local authority, voting and present and potential political leadership. A key issue of the research is attitudes to directly elected mayors and the difference people think such a person might make to the way things are run in their area and their involvement in the political process.

*Published December 2001.*

## **The Implementation of Electronic Voting**

*Contractor: DeMontfort University*

A research team led by De Montfort University was (jointly) commissioned to investigate the requirements for, and potential barriers to, the implementation of remote electronic voting. Through a range of research methods, involving a number of key stakeholders, they have sought to identify the conditions under which electronic voting could be successfully introduced for national and sub-national elections.

*Due to publish in May 2002.*

## **Innovation and Best Practice**

### **Evaluation of the Beacon Councils Scheme**

*Contractor: Local Government Centre, University of Warwick*

The Beacon Council scheme is designed to spread good practice and innovation amongst local authorities. Jointly commissioned with the IDeA, this research examines processes surrounding the implementation of learning activities and the participation of local authorities in rounds 1 (and 2) of the scheme. The research also includes a feasibility study on how to evaluate the extent and impact of learning and change that has occurred as a direct result of the Beacon Council Scheme.

*Final report published in December 2001.*

### **Beacon Council Scheme: Round 3 themes**

*Contractor: various contractors across the eleven themes*

Researchers were commissioned to produce short empirical reviews of the issues and the evidence required to identify 'excellent' practice in each of the eleven round 3 beacon themes. The reports were used by applicant authorities in applying for beacon status and also by the advisory panel in determining the selection process. An overarching summary of the key findings from the eleven individual reports was also produced. In support of the assessment process, MORI were commissioned to establish baseline figures of public satisfaction for the individual themes and general performance.

*Published in July 2001.*

### **Promoting Electronic Government**

*Contractor: CDW & Associates*

In order to draw together the experience of pioneering local authorities, DTLR and the Treasury have funded, through the Invest to Save Budget, a

project on Promoting Electronic Government which is designed to draw together the experience of leading authorities, and help others by summarising the experience of pioneers in an accessible way. The project provides a framework, a self-assessment process and a set of learning materials which help local authority leaders and chief executives, as well as frontline staff, to work through the challenges of successful implementation. It recognises that the challenge is about much more than technology, and that a well-prepared local authority will need to make progress on a whole range of critical success factors – including partnership working, procurement, improving customer access, pulling together its service processes and information resources, and developing robust business cases. The PEG FastTrack self assessment leads into a structured series of diagnostic tools, briefing notes and case studies, which authorities can use to strengthen their self knowledge and future performance. Outputs can be seen at: [www.peg.org.uk](http://www.peg.org.uk)  
*Final outputs due May 2002.*

## **Community Leadership and Well-being**

### **Review of Local Authority Statutory and Non-Statutory Service and Policy Planning Requirements**

*In-house project*

This research provides a comprehensive review of the current planning requirements for (existing and proposed) service and policy plans that central government places on local authorities. The project involved an in-depth documentary review of planning guidance and legislation, accompanied by interviews with officials across central government and interviews with case study local authorities in order to explore the scope for streamlining plans. The report sets down, for the first time, a comprehensive list of all local authority planning requirements, alongside an analysis of the nature of the 'plan burden' and recommendations for ways that government might reduce it.

*Report published February 2002.*

### **Local Strategic Partnerships: evaluation and action research**

*Contractor: Local Government Centre, University of Warwick*

Commencing in March 2002, this research project will: (a) establish a framework by which LSPs can be

evaluated both in terms of a long-term summative evaluation and a shorter (3-year) formative evaluation, (b) undertake the formative evaluation of processes and preliminary impacts, and (c) provide action research to support both LSPs and the development of LSP policy at local, regional and central levels. In addition to active dissemination activities built into the project design, there will be a stream of practically focused outputs on range of LSP-related themes on, for example, partnership and process rationalisation, neighbourhood renewal and community leadership.

*Guidance materials produced throughout the study. Final report in 2005.*

## Local Government Finance

### Evaluation of the development of Asset and Capital Management

*Contractor: York Consulting Ltd.*

York Consulting Ltd have been commissioned to undertake an evaluation of the implementation and development of asset management plans and corporate capital strategies, the arrangements which currently form an assessment element of the Single Capital Pot (SCP). This three-year study involves evaluating local authority processes and emerging outcomes as well as consideration of the Government Office assessment role. The study will also contribute to a wider evaluation of the SCP and to the overall evaluation of the local government modernisation agenda.

*Baseline report published February 2002.*

### Consulting on Council Tax and Spend Decisions

*Contractor: MORI and University of Manchester*

Whilst guidance on consultation is available, little has been produced that is specific to consulting on local tax and spend issues – an area that presents particular difficulties. A research team, led by MORI, has been commissioned to develop guidelines to provide practical support to those authorities committed to carrying out quality and effective consultation. Professor Gerry Stoker at the University of Manchester will draft the guidelines based on case study research and a review of relevant material.

*Due to publish in summer 2002.*

### Evaluation of the Capital Challenge Pilot Scheme

*Contractor: York Consulting Ltd.*

Through a single bidding round, administered on a regional basis, principal and single purpose authorities could bid for credit approvals for capital expenditure under a Capital Challenge Fund (announced in 1996). York Consulting Ltd, through a range of research approaches involving authorities and Government Offices, undertook a full post hoc evaluation of the three year Capital Challenge Pilot Scheme in terms of its original aims and objectives. *Published August 2001.*

### Review of the EPCS formulae with SSAs

*Contractors: IPF Ltd. and NERA*

The EPCS SSA relates to all local authority revenue account services for which there is no provision in the other elements of SSA. This includes: magistrates' courts; libraries; culture and heritage; sport; parks; planning; economic development; waste collection and disposal; council tax collection; concessionary fares; street cleaning; and environmental health. The Government is keen to move to a grant system, which is fairer, simpler, more stable and robust than the current system. A key aim of this research is to identify options for making EPCS spending assessments that are more compatible with the Government's principles for local government finance formulae.

*Final reports published in Spring 2002.*

## Regional Governance

### Mapping the availability and use of regional intelligence data

*Contractor: Institute for Employment Research Warwick Business School, Warwick University*

This project has undertaken a review of the availability and form of regional and sub-regional data sources, relevant to the needs of RDAs, GOs and other regional bodies. The research has reviewed past and present data sources and consulted users (through face to face and on-line interviews and focus groups) on the effectiveness of these sources and key gaps which exist.

The research will produce two outputs: a report on key data gaps (as perceived by users of data) and priorities for addressing them, and a data catalogue comprehensively collating information on data sources within a number of policy domains.

*Data catalogue delivered end March 2002.*

# Guidance for Potential Contractors

This section gives general guidance on the way contractors are selected for research projects.

## Expressions of Interest

Expressions of interest are very welcome, but they do not guarantee inclusion on the shortlist for invitation to tender. The information that contractors provide on the enclosed form will be used in drawing up a shortlist, usually of between 3-6 names depending on the nature of the project and extent of expertise amongst potential contractors. Projects included in the newsletter form the basis of work for the coming year. Inevitably, however, there are changes to the announced programme during that time. Policy priorities may change, generating new information requirements, or projects originally suggested may no longer be needed or may require modification. The programme is sufficiently flexible to allow for this. The enclosed organisational details form asks for information about the expertise and experience of potential tenderers which will, in part, allow us to develop shortlists for any *extra mural* projects.

## Invitations to Tender

Formal invitations to tender will include:

- the specification of the project outlining the objectives, relevant details and what contractors are expected to provide in the tender;
- the standard contract conditions;
- the date for receipt of tenders;
- the expected timing for the announcement of the award.

Three weeks is the usual period for submitting tenders, although for urgent projects that period may be shortened.

## Tender Documents and their Assessments

A tender assessment panel will examine the tenders. The panel will look at the appropriateness, quality and cost of contractors' proposals, and they will take into account:

- understanding of the issues being addressed;
- familiarity with previous relevant research;
- the experience of the research team;
- the proposed costs.

Interviews may be held to assist with this assessment. Normally these will involve the tenderer making a short presentation and discussing the proposals more fully, including responding to the questions of the interviewing panel.

## Awarding Contracts

The assessment of tenders normally results in the selection of a preferred tender, although the Department is not bound to accept any tender. All tenderers are informed of the outcome. The successful tenderer then agrees a programme of work with the Department for inclusion in the formal contract.

## Evaluation System

An evaluation system has been designed in consultation with previously-used contractors and the Programme's policy customers. There is an internal procedure to evaluate all contracts within the Local and Regional Government Research Programme on completion.

The purpose of the evaluation system is to improve the workings of the programme, by informing future research and enabling the process to run more smoothly and effectively in future. It will also enable contractors to be provided with comments from the Department on their satisfaction with both the management of the research and the quality of the outputs and will give contractors the opportunity to offer feedback to the Department.

## Organisational Details

This form can be downloaded at: <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/rsrnews.htm>

We would be grateful if you could complete and return this form to help us build up a clearer profile of the expertise amongst potential tenderers for our research projects. You are encouraged to return it as you may otherwise miss the opportunity to be considered to undertake research projects for the Unit.

A single copy of this form should accompany expression of interest form(s).

Contact name:			
Job Title:			
Name of organisation:			
Address:			
Postcode:			
Tel:		Fax:	
e-mail:			

### MAIN AREAS OF EXPERTISE

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

- Capital finance
- Revenue finance
- Taxes and charges

#### SERVICE DELIVERY

- Best Value
- Best Value Performance indicators
- Beacon Councils
- Electronic government
- Local PSAs
- Procurement

#### REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

- Regional chambers
- Regional government/devolution
- Regional governance structures

#### DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL

- Stakeholder participation
- Political management structures

#### CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

- Community leadership/planning
- Partnership working

#### GENERAL

- European/international experience
- Preparation of guidance
- Public satisfaction measures
- Local government law
- Innovation, cultural and Organisational change
- Ethical considerations

#### METHODOLOGY

- Large scale data manipulation
- Quantitative data analysis
- Qualitative techniques
- Design/facilitation of focus groups
- Design and use of case studies
- Survey design
- Survey fieldwork and analysis
- Policy evaluation techniques
- Data mapping/GIS
- Literature reviews



Please list any other relevant skills or subject expertise that may be of interest:

**Have you undertaken research previously for the DTLR (or its predecessors)?**

If yes, please give the title of the project/s and dates undertaken below. *Please continue on separate sheet if necessary.*

Send completed forms to:

Research Administrator,  
Local and Regional Government Research Unit  
Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions  
Floor 5/D5, Eland House  
Bressenden Place, London SW1E 5DU

OR

e-mail to: [lg\\_research@dtlr.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:lg_research@dtlr.gsi.gov.uk)

Date form completed:

# Local and Regional Government Research Programme 2002/03

## Expression of Interest

Please complete one form per project (copy as required)

This form can be downloaded at: <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/rsrnews.htm>

Whilst responding does not guarantee inclusion within any tendering shortlist, you are advised to complete and return the form as you may miss the opportunity to be considered.

We would be very interested in receiving any supporting material you may have about you and/or your organisation.

Project Number	Project Title
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Contact name:			
Job Title:			
Name of organisation:			
Address:			
Postcode:			
Tel:		Fax:	
e-mail:			

Please briefly outline the relevant experience of your organisation, specifically related to the above project. You are asked to list details of specific projects overleaf.



**Please provide details of your capability and expertise to undertake the above project**  
(e.g. methodological expertise, numbers of relevant staff etc):

**Please provide details of recent relevant projects undertaken or in progress.** Please give the title of the project, and details of the sponsoring organisation (with contact name and details). **Please continue on separate sheet if necessary.**

Send completed forms to:	Date form completed:
Research Administrator Local and Regional Government Research Unit Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions Floor 5/D5, Eland House Bressenden Place, London SW1E 5DU  OR e-mail to: <a href="mailto:lg_research@dtlr.gsi.gov.uk">lg_research@dtlr.gsi.gov.uk</a>	

## Evaluation of RDA strategies and action plans

*Contractor: University of Dundee, Ove Arup and Aston University with partners*

This research has evaluated the form and content of the Regional Strategies and Action Plans prepared by the RDAs. Drawing on interviews and focus groups within each region, there were two specific objectives: an evaluation of the rigour and appropriateness of the proposals from an intra-regional and inter-regional perspective, and the identification of best practice and transferable lessons for RDAs. The report discussed the content of the strategies, the extent to which they are internally and externally consistent, the analysis used to underpin them, and the nature of action plans flowing from them.

*Final report delivered December 2001.*

## Review of RDA performance and monitoring frameworks

*Contractor: Segal Quince Wicksteed with Oxford Economic Forecasting*

This aim of this research was to review the interim performance monitoring and evaluation framework established for RDAs. Specifically, it sought to: identify improved core State of the Region indicators; review the extent to which RDAs are able to provide accurate estimates for their activity indicators and develop monitoring and evaluation guidance for RDAs.

*Report and guidance issued May 2001.*

## Projects in the 2001/02 research programme not currently let:

- Delivery of the Best Value reviews (*Project 1*)
- Process evaluation of Local-PSAs (*Project 6*)
- Standards of conduct, public opinion and the role of media coverage (*Project 15*)
- Preliminary research on the use of the well-being power and other extensions of local government powers (*Project 17*)
- Local authorities as community leaders (*Project 19*)
- Impact of new and emerging technologies on local government (*Project 23*)
- Public attitudes to local expenditure and service diversity (*Project 26*)

- Preparing for a new capital finance system (*Project 28*)
- Public knowledge and use of information on local authority expenditure (*Project 29*)
- Evaluation of rate reliefs (*Project 30*)
- The impact of regional policies on inter-regional concerns and national priorities (*Project 32*)

**Any further Expressions of interest in these projects are welcome.**

(The 2001/02 LRGRU Newsletter is available at [www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/news2001.pdf](http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/news2001.pdf))

## News

### Long term evaluation of the Local Government Modernisation Agenda

A programme of long-term, large-scale policy evaluations is being put in place right across the Local Government Modernisation Agenda (LGMA). The second tranche of these, the long term evaluation of LSPs, Electronic local government, new council constitutions and the ethical framework, a process evaluation of LPSAs and evaluation of Asset Management Plans and Capital Strategies have been or are about to be let. A similar programme is being developed for the regional government/governance agenda. Evaluation has an important part to play in determining whether the individual components of the LGMA are delivering and how they might be fine-tuned to increase their effectiveness. It will also provide detailed information about the long-term impacts of each of these policies.

Individual evaluations will not, however, provide a picture of the cumulative effect of the LGMA as a whole. The unit has, therefore, been developing an overarching evaluation of the LGMA. In July 2001, five seminars (involving more than 100 people) with policy, LA practitioner, government research, LA representative and research contractor (academics and management consultants) stakeholders were held. A final feasibility report drawing upon the outcome of these discussions was produced in November and can be found at: <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/feaseval.doc> The overarching evaluation will be taken forward

through letting a contract in June/July 2002 and will, hopefully, be supported through an Advisory Group consisting of the LGA, Audit Commission, IDeA and relevant DTLR interests.

### **Links with the research community**

The Unit aims to develop and maintain links with the local and regional government/governance research community. It does this in a number of ways.

First, by encouraging dialogue through the mid-year consultative events, an annual series of lunchtime seminars and the website, which generates requests for information and help with research from within the UK and abroad.

Second, the unit seeks to develop links with all of the main local government representative and regional organisations, including the Local Government Association, the Improvement and Development Agency and LARIA – the Local Authorities Research and Intelligence Association. Members of the unit also maintain close links with the other major funding bodies, such as the Economic and Social Research Council and Joseph Rowntree Foundation – Paul McCafferty is on the Advisory Group for the five year research programme on Democracy and Participation and was on the Commissioning Panel and Wendy Russell Barter is on the Advisory Board for the ESRC's large-scale research programme on Devolution and Constitutional Change. Several members of the unit are members of the Social Research Association (and Wendy Russell Barter serves on its committee), and all are part of the Government Social Research network, where strong links are forged with research colleagues in other government departments on areas of common interest.

Third, through joint funding and management of research projects. A current example includes research to consider the issues around the widespread implementation of electronic voting in the UK. This was commissioned by a number of partners with an interest in modernising electoral processes, developing electronic government and improving public participation. The idea for the research emerged from the SOLACE Electoral Matters Panel. LRGRU agreed to fund and manage the contract. The LGA, Electoral Commission, IDeA and Office of the e-Envoy contributed funding and joined

SOLACE and the AEA on the Steering Group for the project.

Lastly, on some key issues, the unit has set up a research network to facilitate exchange of views and learning. The first of these is the Best Value Research Network which involves all relevant government researchers with an interest in best value plus the LGA, IDeA and Audit Commission. Several meetings of the network have been held to date.

### **Whitehall academic placement scheme**

Mark Sandford, a research fellow in the Constitution Unit, UCL has been awarded a summer placement in the Department, under HM Treasury's Whitehall scheme. He will be working on a research project examining the inclusiveness of Regional Chambers.

### **HM Treasury's evidence-based policy fund**

The Unit has been awarded funding, under the Treasury's evidence-based policy fund, for research into the flow of domestic and European expenditure into the English regions. The project, which is also being co-funded by DEFRA and the DTLR's Urban Policy Unit, will both identify the form and level of expenditure into individual regions, and identify the allocative mechanism that determine the level of that expenditure. A team from Nuffield College, Oxford, under the leadership of Professor Iain McLean, have been awarded the contract. It is anticipated that the research will be completed by April 2003.

### **The Local and Regional Government Research Unit**

Details about all current staff within the unit and the work they are responsible for can be found at the website address:

<http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/index.htm>

Recent changes in staff and responsibilities, however, are the introduction of two new senior research officers – Andrew O'Reilly and Sarah Morgan – and the departure of Adrian Leigh. Victoria Walker has also joined as the Unit's administrative officer.

## **WEBSITE DETAILS OF SOME OTHER RELEVANT GOVERNMENT RESEARCH PROGRAMMES**

### **Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR):**

- <http://www.housing.dtlr.gov.uk/> (Housing)
- <http://www.dtlr.gov.uk/citcomm.htm> (Planning)
- <http://www.dtlr.gov.uk/itwp/index.htm> (Integrated Transport research strategy)
- <http://www.roads.dtlr.gov.uk/> (Roads and Local Transport research programme)

### **Department for Education and Skills (DfES):**

- <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/research/>

### **Department of Health (DoH):**

- <http://www.doh.gov.uk/research/rd2/prpindex.htm>

### **Department of Work and Pensions (DWP):**

- [www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/resprog00.html](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/resprog00.html)

### **Department of Trade and Industry (DTI):**

- [www.dti.gov.uk/er/emar/future.htm](http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/emar/future.htm)

### **Home Office (HO):**

- [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/resprog1.html](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/resprog1.html)

### **Scottish Executive:**

- <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/cru/>

## Local and Regional Government Research Programme Publications

Full details of all the Units publications appear on the Department's website at <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/index.htm>

The list below includes details of all reports published since 1999.

### DELIVERY AND QUALITY OF LOCAL SERVICES

Improving local public services: final evaluation of the Best Value Pilot Programme. S. Martin et al., DTLR, 2001. (Full report available at: <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/bestvalu.htm>)

Beacon Council Scheme Year 2 Theme Research, IDeA/DTLR, 2000. Eleven theme reports. (Full reports and aggregate summary available at: <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/beacon.htm>)

The Beacon Council Scheme 2000/2001: A Handbook on Measurements of user satisfaction in Local Government Service Delivery. MORI, DTLR, 2000. (Available at: <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/beacon.htm>)

Best Value and Audit Commission Performance Indicators for 2000/2001 Volume I – User Satisfaction Performance Indicators: Guidance on Methods of Data Collection. DTLR, 2000 (Available at <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/bestvalu.htm>)

Balancing Creative Tensions: Better Practice in Implementing Best Value. M. Allison and J. Hartley, Local Government Centre, University of Warwick, and Vertex and Oracle, DETR, 2000. (Full report<sup>3</sup> and summary<sup>2</sup> available).

Generating and Sharing Better Practice. M. Allison and J. Hartley. Local Government Centre, University of Warwick, DETR, 2000. (Available at: <http://www.local-regions.dtlr.gov.uk/bvdevel/index.htm>)

Mapping Partnerships in Eleven Local Authorities. Paper 8, DETR/Newchurch Partnership Series. DETR, 2000. (Available at: <http://www.local-regions.dtlr.gov.uk/bestvalue/partnerships>)

Local Authorities Partnerships and Best Value – An Overview of the First Year. Paper 7, DETR/Newchurch Partnership Series. DETR, 1999 (Available at: <http://www.local-regions.dtlr.gov.uk/bestvalue/partnerships>)

DETR/Newchurch Partnership Series<sup>6</sup>:

Paper 6 – Exchange of Good Practice Briefing: Partnership Initiation, Selecting Partners and Organisational Change.

Paper 5 – Service Delivery Partnerships in English LAs: Survey Findings.

Paper 4 – Summary Evaluation of Pilot Partnership Networks.

Paper 3 – Baseline Evaluation of Pilot Partnership Networks.

Paper 2 – LA Partnerships: A Review of Literature.

Paper 1 – Partnership: A working definition.

Best Value Performance Plans: Practice and Procedures – A review of early experiences within eight local authorities. W. Russell Barter, LRGRU, DETR, 1999. (Available at: <http://www.local-regions.dtlr.gov.uk/bestvalue/performance/ppindex.htm>)

Lessons Learnt from Intervention – The Literature Review. KPMG, DETR, 1999. (Full report<sup>3</sup> available).

Lessons Learnt from Intervention – The Case Studies. KPMG, DETR, 1999. (Full report<sup>3</sup> and summary<sup>2</sup> available).

Improving Local Public Services: Interim Evaluation of the Best Value Pilot Programme. Warwick Business School, DETR, 1999. (Full report<sup>3</sup>, summary<sup>2</sup> and Good Practice guidance<sup>2</sup> available).

Organisation-wide approaches to Best Value. (Paper 10: Warwick Business School/DETR Best Value Series), Jean Hartley, Warwick Business School, DETR, 1999. (Available at: <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/bestvalu.htm>)

Achieving Best Value through Quality Management. (Paper 9: Warwick Business School/DETR Best Value Series), Mike Lewis, Warwick Business School, DETR 1999. (Available at: <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/bestvalu.htm>)

Achieving Best Value through Public Engagement. (Paper 8: Warwick Business School/DETR Best Value Series), Steve Martin, Warwick Business School, DETR 1999. (Available at: <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/bestvalu.htm>)

Achieving Best Value through Partnership. (Paper 7: Warwick Business School/DETR Best Value Series), Mike Geddes, Warwick Business School, DETR 1999. (Available at: <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/bestvalu.htm>)

Achieving Best Value Through Competition, Benchmarking and Performance Networks. (Paper 6: Warwick Business School/DETR Best Value Series)

Tony Bovaird, Aston Business School, DETR 1999. (Available at: <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/bestvalu.htm>)

Achieving Best Value Through Performance Review. (Paper 5: Warwick Business School/DETR Best Value Series) Ian Sanderson, Leeds Metropolitan University, DETR 1999 (Available at: <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/bestvalu.htm>)

Local Authority Procurement. D Birch, DTLR 2001 (Full report<sup>3</sup> available at: <http://www.local-regions.dtlr.gov.uk/laprocedure/index.htm>)

The Use of Local Performance Indicators in the Best Value Regime. AMION Consulting, KPMG, Pion Economics, DTLR 2001. Full Report<sup>3</sup>, Summary<sup>3</sup> and Guidance Notes<sup>3</sup> available at: <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/bestvalue/indicators/regime/index.htm>

## LOCAL DEMOCRACY

Political executives and the new ethical framework. C. Skelcher and S. Snape, INLOGOV, University of Birmingham, IDeA, 2001. (Full report<sup>5</sup> available).

1998 British Social Attitudes Survey: Secondary Data Analysis of the Local Government Module. N.I. Chivite-Matthews and J. Teal, DETR 2001. (Available at <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/rsrhpart.htm>)

Revisiting Public Perceptions of Local Government: A Decade of Change. National Centre for Social Research, DTLR, 2000. (Full report<sup>3</sup> and summary<sup>2</sup> available).

It Is Our Money Anyway...: Lessons Learnt From Giving The Public a Voice in Local Authority Spending Decisions. National Centre for Social Research, DTLR, 2000. (Full report<sup>3</sup> and summary<sup>2</sup> available).

New Council Constitutions: Modular Constitutions for English Local Authorities. Inlogov, University of Birmingham, The Stationary Office 2000. (Full report<sup>1</sup> available and at: <http://www.local-regions.dtlr.gov.uk/ncc/modcon/modhtml/index.htm>)

New Council Constitutions: Consultation Guidelines for English Local Authorities. C. Copus and F. Taylor, INLOGOV, and G. Stoker, University of Manchester, The Stationary Office 2000. (Full report<sup>1</sup> available and at: <http://www.local-regions.dtlr.gov.uk/ncc/guidelines/01/index.htm>)

Turnout at Local Elections: Influences on levels of voter registration and electoral participation. Plymouth University and Maxwell Stamp PLC, DETR, 2000. (Full report<sup>3</sup> and summary<sup>2</sup> available at <http://www.local-regions.dtlr.gov.uk/turnout/index.htm>)

New Forms of Political Management: Self evaluation toolkit. S. Snape, Inlogov, University of Birmingham, IDeA, 2000. (Full report<sup>5</sup> available).

New Forms of Political Management. INLOGOV, University of Birmingham and

S. Leach, De Montfort University, IDeA, 2000. (Full report<sup>5</sup> available).

Public Attitudes to Directly Elected Mayors. DTLR 2001. Full report<sup>3</sup> and Summary<sup>3</sup> available at: <http://www.local-regions.dtlr.gov.uk/electedmayor/attitudes/index.htm>

Parish Council Standards Cases: An Estimate of their volume and nature. INLOGOV, University of Birmingham, DTLR 2002. (Full report available at: <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/democ/democ/parrish/index.htm>)

Allegations of Misconduct in English Local Authorities. INLOGOV, University of Birmingham, DTLR 2001. (Full Report and Summary available at: <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/democ/misconduct/index.htm>)

## CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Work-Life Balance: A Survey of Local Authorities. D. Birch and D. Purdy, LRGRU, DETR, 2001. (Full report<sup>3</sup> and summary<sup>2</sup> available and at: <http://www.local.dtlr.gov.uk/research/manage.htm>)

Law Relating to Local Government. C. Crawford, S. Sauvain, A. Coulson, and M. Clarke. DETR, 2000. (Full report<sup>3</sup> and summary<sup>2</sup> available).

Innovation and Best Practice in Local Government: A Good Practice Guide. INLOGOV, DETR, 2000. (Full report<sup>3</sup> and summary<sup>2</sup> available).

Innovation and Best Practice in Local Government: A Research Report. INLOGOV, DETR, 2000. (Full report<sup>3</sup> and summary<sup>2</sup> available).

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