

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	6.
Date:	9 <sup>th</sup> January 2012	Status	Open
Category	2. Decision within the functions of Executive		
Subject:	Report from the Review of Legal Services - Improvement Scrutiny Committee		
Report by:	Councillor Hilary Gilmour – Chair of the Improvement Scrutiny Committee		
Other Officers Involved	Scrutiny Officer		
Director	Chief Executive Officer		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	N/A		

#### **RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS**

STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT - Continually improving our organisation

#### **TARGETS**

Reduce the Council's overall spend in accordance with the Savings Strategy by March 2013.

#### **VALUE FOR MONEY**

With the Council still to find further savings in the next few years, it was considered timely to review specific areas with a view to identifying what savings have been made, what further savings could be found and whether the service or area of spend provides the authority with value for money. The Council is taking this issue seriously and has dedicated a Portfolio Holder, Councillor Duncan McGregor to oversee budgets and savings.

#### **THE REPORT**

This Review area was first identified by the Scrutiny Conference in June 2011 and at its meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2011, the Improvement Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake a review of Legal Services to help identify areas of efficiency, savings and value for money. In its review of Legal Services, the Improvement Scrutiny Committee set out to consider the following issues;

1. Savings identified/made in the last year
2. Further savings that could be made
3. Efficiencies in the particular area/service
4. Value for money of the area/service
5. Whether the authority can generate income from the area/service

The Committee used various methods to complete its review; key Officers from the Legal Services department provided written and verbal responses to Members questions and Elected Members carried out a benchmarking exercise consulting 9 different local authorities from the region.

The results of the benchmarking exercise and Officers responses were considered at length before a final conclusions report was agreed by the Improvement Scrutiny Committee.

The Report was submitted to Scrutiny Management Board on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2011 and approved.

### **ISSUES/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

The review document.

### **IMPLICATIONS**

Financial: None identified  
Legal: None identified  
Human Resources: None identified

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That Executive consider the Improvement Scrutiny Committee recommendations set out in the report of the Improvement Scrutiny Review of Legal Services
2. That a response be provided on the review recommendations in order that an action plan is drawn up to monitor implementation.

### **REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION**

Consideration of reports from Scrutiny Committee.

ATTACHMENTS: N  
FILE REFERENCE:  
SOURCE DOCUMENT: