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# Research & Intelligence News

CLEVELAND REGIONAL  
MANAGEMENT SERVICES  
UNIT

10 JUL 1979

INTRODUCTION

R.I.

This is the first edition of the Research and Intelligence News, which we hope will be published quarterly at the end of July, October, January and April. It is sponsored by the Institute of Local Government Studies on behalf of the Local Authorities Research and Intelligence Association. The intention is to provide a vehicle for publicising activities in the R. & I. world and to act as a means of contact in this field. The success of the venture will depend almost entirely on the extent to which it is supported by the interested parties - mainly by offering material for inclusion.

The present membership of the LARIA Steering Committee is:

Grahame Handley, Berkshire (Chairman)

Norman Jones, Mid Glamorgan (Deputy Chairman)

Bob Black, Strathclyde

John Chapman, GLC

Stuart Creak, South Yorkshire

Chris Firth, Thamesdown

Reg Fox, Cleveland

John Gillespie, Devon

Nigel Grizzard, Bradford

Keith Hudson, Portsmouth

Alan Mossman, Anglian Regional Management Centre

Bryan Orr, DUE

Tim Rhodes, Oxfordshire

Graham Smith, Cheshire

Members of the Steering Committee are individually responsible for the assembly of material relating to different subjects. The following sections are envisaged, and copy

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for these is solicited.

News from R. & I. in geographical areas:

London, East Anglia, East Midlands - Alan Mossman,  
Anglian Regional Management Centre, Asta House,  
156/164 High Road, Chadwell Heath, Romford, Essex  
RM6 6LX

North East - Reg Fox, Director of Research and Intelligence,  
P.O. Box No. 17, 6th Floor, Rede House, 67  
Corporation Road, Middlesbrough, Cleveland, TS1 1LY

Scotland - Bob Black, Research and Intelligence Unit,  
Strathclyde Regional Council, Regional HQ, Malrose  
House, 19 Cadogan Street, Glasgow G2 6HR

West Midlands, Cumbria, North Wales - Graham Smith,  
Research and Intelligence Unit, Cheshire County Council,  
County Hall, Chester

Wales - Norman Jones, Intelligence Research and Development  
Unit, Mid Glamorgan County Council, County Hall,  
Cardiff

Southern - Chris Firth, Corporate Planner, CEO's Office,  
Thamesdown MBC, Civic Offices, Euclid Street, Swin-  
don, Wiltshire

Reports on Academic Research - Alan Mossman.

Short reports of Publications of interest to members of  
LARIA - John Chapman, Head of Intelligence Division,  
Director General's Department, GLC, County Hall,  
Room 306B, London SE1 7PB.

Other contributions - gossip, personalia etc. - should  
be sent to Mary Davies, Institute of Local Government  
Studies, University of Birmingham, J. G. Smith Building,

P.O. Box 363, Birmingham B15 2TT, at least one month before publication date.

#### CENSUS OF EMPLOYMENT 1979 - CANCELLED

##### Press Notice No. 79/261

The Department of Employment has announced that the 1979 census of employment is cancelled with a consequent saving in public expenditure of about one million pounds. Industry will be saved from completing 600,000 forms.

The census counts the number of people in employment. Its main purposes are to act as a check on the monthly and quarterly surveys and to provide detailed local figures. Computer difficulties have meant delay in processing the 1978 figures. Cancellation of the 1979 census will enable the 1978 figures to be expedited and any statistical disadvantage is outweighed by the savings.

Some firms will have already received the forms for this year's census but these need not now be returned. The firms involved will be informed as soon as practicable.

(Grahame Handley)

#### STEERING GROUP

The Steering Group plans to publish with the support of INLOGOV a series of Monographs: one on Survey Techniques and a second one on Corporate Planning are already in preparation. Suggestions and offers of participation in other subject areas are invited.

#### Manpower Studies

A monograph on manpower is under consideration. The topics to be covered include:-

Manpower budgeting. Basic definitions; its position in the corporate planning process; relationship to financial budgets; problems of non-established and casual employment.

Manpower monitoring. Problems of measurement; strategic control of manpower; needs of operational management; Quarterly Joint Manpower Watch.

Manpower Information Systems. Logical data relationships; information retrieval and presentation; data items and sources.

Manpower Planning. Manpower planning as part of service planning; manpower supply and demand; manpower models.

In each of these areas the emphasis will be on practical experience and application in the areas of corporate plan-

ning and management. If you can make a contribution to this publication please contact Martin Blogg in Oxfordshire (0865) 815400.

(Tim Rhodes)

#### Central Research Capability

A survey of this function in local government was undertaken by INLOGOV on behalf of the Steering Committee. Filter questionnaires were sent to all classes of local authority late in 1978. From the replies to this those authorities with a central research capacity were identified and full questionnaires addressed to them. Responses were received from 70 authorities in England, Wales and Scotland represented by 73 units, which for this purpose was defined as one or more officers working in the research field.

Tabulations have been prepared on combinations of the class of authority, the tier of the head of the unit, the department in which it is located and the tier of the officer to whom the head is responsible. One section of the analysis is devoted to the expenditure of such units and others to the skills and techniques used, the topics covered and the clients served.

The position of research in the GLC is presented separately and sections are appended incorporating the comments made by different authorities regarding the survey. The report will be available from INLOGOV in the near future and will be the first in the proposed series of LARIA Monographs.

(Mary Davies)

#### NEWS FROM OTHER GROUPS

##### NLGSLC

The papers taken at the National and Local Government Statistical Liaison Committee meeting on 1 March 1979.

##### 1 DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS

NLGSLC(79)2 - New Series of Local Authority Population Estimates, Mid 1971 to Mid 1977: A note on methodology by OPCS

NLGSLC(79)11- Preparation and Dissemination of Mid 1978 Local Authority Population Estimates

NLGSLC(79)5 - OPCS 1977 Based Sub-National Population Projections: Evaluation of the consultation Procedure on the Internal Migration Assumption. Paper by DOE

##### 2 1981 CENSUS OF POPULATION

NLGSLC(79)1 - 5-Year Migration Question in the 1981 Census. Letter from OPCS

- 3 DISTRIBUTION STATISTICS  
NLGSLC(79)8 - Retail Shop Statistics. Paper by BSO
- 4 LOCAL AUTHORITY RETURNS TO CENTRAL GOVERNMENT  
NLGSLC(79)7 - Consideration of Non-Financial Administrative Housing Forms. Paper by DOE.  
NLGSLC(79)9 - Housing Forms Panel: Progress report for the Year Ending 16 February 1979
- 5 LOCAL AUTHORITY SURVEYS  
NLGSLC(79)4 - Registers of Local Authority Research and Surveys. Paper by LA side
- 6 TRANSPORTATION STATISTICS  
NLGSLC(79)10- Trunk Road Network Accident Database Feasibility Study: Survey of Present Practice. Paper by DTP.
- 7 EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS  
NLGSLC(79)6 - "CAPITAL": Information Note by Department of Employment  
NLGSLC(79)3 - Information Available from the National Survey of Engagements and Vacancies (NSEV). Paper by MSC
- 8 NLGSLC(79)12- Co-ordination between Housing and Social Services provision for the elderly. Paper by DOE

Item 2 showed some divergence of view on the LA side, but the views expressed to OPCS were strongly in favour of the 5-year question with 10% analysis subject to retaining the 1-year question with 100% analysis.

Item 3 an opportunity to stress yet again the urgent need for a full census of distribution enquiry.

Item 7 was a further chance to press DE to work towards providing residence based unemployment data. Requests for data from NSEV for large parts of counties should be made to MSC, Employment Services Division (ESF6), 7 St Martins Lane, London WC2N 2JH.

Copies of papers are available from - R L Cooke, Joint Secretary, NLGSLC, Dept. of the Environment, Marsham Street, London SW1P 3EB.

Next NLGSLC is, provisionally, Wednesday 6 June.  
(John Chapman)

PLESG

Local Authorities may be interested to know of the existence of The Polytechnic Local Economy Study Group. PLESG was formed in April 1977 and its aims are:

- a) To encourage and foster research on processes and problems in the 'local' economy within Polytechnics, recognising that this is an area of concern not only to Economists but also to Geographers, Sociologists, Planners and others:

- b) To meet regularly to discuss academic and other matters relevant to the group as a whole
- c) To encourage the presentation of papers at both the annual APTE and other conferences
- d) To build up links between the Polytechnics and Local Authorities so that local economy research projects may be undertaken which are of mutual value both academically and to the development of the local community
- e) To encourage applications for outside finance and develop links with funding agencies
- f) To maintain a register of ongoing and completed local economy research projects.

Since its formation the Group has sought to extend its involvement with Local Authorities having, as a central objective, a desire to be of use to Local Authorities. This has already resulted in the formation of a number of mutually fruitful links particularly between the Planning and Economic Intelligence Departments of certain Local Authorities and Polytechnic Researchers. The Group is concerned to see that there are in the Polytechnics a large number of researchers who could be of use to Local Authorities but whose presence is not yet fully appreciated.

The Group's activities include meeting three times a year. The meetings take the form of one-day non-residential gatherings which provide the opportunity not only to present and defend a finished paper in the usual fashion, but also as a vehicle for the expression of more preliminary and on-going work. The Group also publish a Newsletter and are currently compiling a Register of Research.

The Study Group's last meeting was held on 25th May 1979 at the North Staffordshire Polytechnic. Over 60 people, including several representatives from local authorities, attended and papers on the following topics were presented:

- 1. Recruitment Technology - The Development of a Theoretical Framework
- 2. Some Problems in Using Official Labour Market Data
- 3. Aspects of the Female Labour Market in Coventry
- 4. The North Staffordshire Economy. An Economy in Decline?

The paper on the Female Labour Market in Coventry had been prepared in conjunction with the Economic Intelligence Unit, Coventry MDC, to assist the Council in understanding this aspect of the difficult economic situation currently found in the City and to provide a basis for evolu-

ing a future course of action.

In view of the central concern of most local authorities with the local economy and the relevance of the research being undertaken by PLESG, arrangements have been made to enable advance notice of future meetings of the Study Group and relevant items from the Group's Newsletter and Register of Research to be reported in this Newsletter. Interested local authorities may in addition apply directly for membership of PLESG by contacting:

Brian Roper Esq.,  
Chairman,  
Polytechnic Local Economy Study Group,  
School of Economics and Accounting,  
Leicester Polytechnic,  
PO Box 143,  
LEICESTER.  
Telephone: Leicester 50181 Ext 2457.  
(Grahame Handley)

op a viewdata system designed specifically for a business's own needs. The logical extension is to design a system for local authority use. It would be possible for a central unit to keep the data bank updated with the latest demographic and social statistics, financial, personnel policies, members' addresses, current events etc. The list is endless.

The advantage of having a centralised system is that updating is instantaneous so all parts of the local authority should be using the same information. The system also allows swift access and cuts out the need to have a multiplicity of reports floating round, each of which are individually filed by different departments.

The whole concept at present may seem slightly too futuristic but if we are prepared to accept the idea of more micro-computers and visual display units in our offices and as they all have 'phones this system may not be too far away.

(Nigel Grizzard)

ACADEMIC RESEARCH

Teletext Systems - their relation to the Local Authority Research Worker

In the last few years great advances have been made in the whole field of Teletext systems. These systems use a television screen and are connected to an information bank whose contents can be called up on to the screen.

At present there are three main systems in use. The BBC Ceefax and the ITV Oracle utilise the spare lines at the top of the television picture, while Prestel uses the telephone system to bring the information on to the television screen.

Ceefax and Oracle can only carry a limited amount of information-about 200 pages can be referenced whilst Prestel has a view data bank of about 60,000 pages. The difference in the systems is that while Ceefax and Oracle are free, provided the user has the right type of receiver, Prestel uses the 'phone network' and the user has to pay for the service through his 'phone bill.

Having given a very simplistic overview how can local authorities use the systems? The first way is in terms of national statistics. It should be possible using Prestel to obtain the latest government statistics on various topics. A natural extension of this would be for the introduction of those comparative local authority statistics we often want but can never locate.

The most interesting use of Teletext systems however is in the individual local authority context. In the recent Financial Times survey (May 9th) on Viewdata there was an advertisement from Phillips offering the ability to devel-

Business Systems Planning - An approach to information provision in local Government.

An inter-departmental team in Devon County Council is now carrying out a quite unique study of the Council's information requirements. The study is unique in the sense that a technique - Business Systems Planning - developed by I.B.M. and found successful in the private sector of industry and commerce, is being applied for the first time to local government in this country. (I.B.M. personnel are assisting and giving advice to the study).

The B.S.P. study in Devon consists of two distinct phases: (a) an Overview Phase lasting nine weeks followed by (b) a Definition Phase of nine months duration. The team is already half way through the Definition Phase.

Essentially the B.S.P. technique rests on an organisation's ability to identify its principal decisions and activities called business processes, together with the data and information used and created by these processes. The following are examples of business processes in a shire county: allocating pupils to schools; acquiring land; preparing revenue budgets; providing sheltered employment; managing waste disposal sites. Something of the order of 140 such processes have been identified in Devon.

Practitioners in each of these decision areas or business processes are interviewed (by the end of Phase 2 some 130 such interviews in all will have been conducted) and information problems and shortcomings identified. The study is directed towards solving these problems in a planned, coherent and controlled fashion.

The major output from the study will take the form of a plan of action based on the need for information support which the study team will identify. The plan will not only organise the required information support into projects (with or without computer support) but will make proposals as to how information should be managed in Devon.

For local authorities in general and shire counties especially, one potentially useful output from the study will be the detailed descriptions of the various business processes with attendant data inputs and outputs. This is among several outcomes which could have widespread general application.

(Chris Firth)

#### RECENT PUBLICATIONS

##### Of interest to R. & I. Officers

##### Derelict Land Reclamation

Summary of local authority returns for 1 April 1976-31 March 1978  
Department of the Environment  
January 1979  
Available from Planning Land Use Policy Division 1, 2 Marsham Street, London SW1 (60p)

##### Directory of Local Authority Surveys 1978

Housing and Population  
Department of the Environment  
Available HMSO (£1.50 nett)

##### Energy Trends

March 1979  
Department of Energy  
Available free from Circulation Section (H), Central Office of Information (COI),  
Hercules Road, London SE1 7DU

##### English house condition survey 1976

Housing Survey Report No 10  
Part 1 Report of the Physical Condition Survey  
Department of the Environment  
Available HMSO (£2 nett)

##### Government Statistics

a brief guide to sources  
1979 edition  
Available free from Central Statistical Office, CO:CSO  
Section, Great George Street, London SW1P 3AQ

##### New Earnings Survey 1978

Department of Employment  
Available HMSO Parts A to F (£3.50 each part)

##### OPCS Monitor 1981 Census GEN 79/1 - 1979 Test Census

Free from Information Branch (Dept M) OPCS, St. Catherine's House 10 Kingsway, London WC2N 6JP

##### Tourism Intelligence Quarterly

Vol. 2, No 3 - October 1978  
British Tourist Authority  
Available from Department C, British Tourist Authority  
64 St James's Street, London, SW1A 1NF (£5 per annum including postage)

##### National Dwelling and Housing Survey

The Department of the Environment has now published its report on Phase I of N D H S (National Dwelling and Housing Survey HMSO ISBN 0 11 751382 1 Price £8.50) which deals largely with the Housing Stress areas, but which contains regional data based on the  $\frac{1}{4}$  national sample.

Phase II of the survey which will increase the sample in the remaining metropolitan areas and in some selected non-metropolitan districts to around 8% is well underway, and results should be available by the autumn.

The minister has also announced a third phase that will further increase the sample to include at least 7,000 addresses for each "needs authority" in the R S G calculation and with the intention that the data should be available for use in the 1981/82 settlement. The survey covers England and Wales.

##### City of Bradford Metropolitan Council

##### District Trends 1979

This booklet looks to the future by setting out the probable needs and problems of the area and its people in the next few years. The areas covered include Prosperity, Population, Personal Development, Leisure, Social Care, Housing and a Ward Analysis. Copies are available from Bob Tarr, Corporate Planning Co-ordination, 1st Floor, City Hall, Bradford.

The following publications relating to Research and Intelligence are available from the Publications Secretary at INLOGOV.

##### RESEARCH AND INTELLIGENCE

##### PAPERS DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE 1978

Ed. E.M. Davics, 1979, 257pp, £4.30

All the papers in this volume were delivered at the plenary and workshop sessions at the 1978 Conference of R & I. The subjects include, Household Surveys, Housing Investment Programmes, Output Measurement, Analysis of Local Economic Development, Information and the E.E.C., and the Rate Support Grant.

RESEARCH AND INTELLIGENCE FOR DEPRIVATION  
PAPERS DELIVERED AT AN INLOGOV SEMINAR DECEMBER 1977

Ed. A.G. Bovaird, 1978, 96pp, £2.00

The papers in this collection were delivered at an INLOGOV seminar in December 1977. They present the approach to deprivation taken by three metropolitan authorities (Strathclyde, Liverpool and Sunderland), and one shire county (Nottinghamshire). Topics cover not just the research techniques used but also an outline of results obtained and a discussion of political and management processes in relation to this controversial research area.

INLOGOV REGISTER OF RESEARCH PROJECTS IN RESEARCH AND INTELLIGENCE UNITS

Ed. A.G. Bovaird, 1977, 120pp, £1.50

This register has been compiled to summarise in one document the corporate projects, both research projects and intelligence projects, being undertaken by R & I Units in local authorities. Sections contained in the register include:

Community Profiles and Household Surveys  
 Employment and Economic Planning  
 Population  
 Land Use Planning and the Environment  
 Transportation  
 Housing  
 Deprivation  
 Social Services  
 Education  
 Recreation and Leisure  
 Financial Planning and Cost Reduction  
 Manpower Planning  
 Central Services including Public Protection

Finally, the last section contains a list of contacts in the research field in local government. Details of over 400 projects.

INLOGOV REGISTER OF RESEARCH PROJECTS IN RESEARCH AND INTELLIGENCE UNITS: MID YEAR UPDATE 1978

Ed. A.G. Bovaird, J. Earwicker, C. Hawkey, 1978, 71pp,  
 £2.00

This Update contains details of research projects undertaken by local authorities since the publication of the original register in 1977. The projects are classified under the same headings as those given above for the original Register.

INLOGOV REGISTER OF RESEARCH PROJECTS IN RESEARCH AND INTELLIGENCE UNITS: SECOND UPDATE 1979

Ed. E.M. Davies, 1979, 130pp, £2.65

This is the second Update of the Register. Completed and on-going projects are included, with names of contacts for those wishing to follow up the work.

THE CENTRAL RESEARCH FUNCTION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

This comprises the material from the survey of R. & I. work in all classes of local authority undertaken in late 1978 and early 1979.

E.M. Davies, 1979 (forthcoming)

RESEARCH AND INTELLIGENCE  
PAPERS DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE 1979

Ed. E.M. Davies, 1979 (forthcoming)

REGIONAL NEWS

Baberg District Council

The council is currently preparing a strategy for recreation and will be using creative thinking techniques for new policy development.

Basildon Council

The research staff are currently conducting a household survey in the District. Questionnaires have been circulated to 10,000 households (20%) to collect basic information about tenure of accommodation, migration, size of household, age, sex, occupation and car ownership.

The Research Unit has also recently completed a survey of local industrialists, to collect information about employment and general economic prospects in the District. The object of this was to ascertain the extent to which the Council could give some positive assistance in order to improve the levels of employment. A report has been produced.

Bromley London Borough

Consideration is being given to producing a computerised land and property data base incorporating analysis of planning applications, map digitisation, etc. contact Mr. Roger Marshall 01-464 3333 XT 3265 Mrs. Sandra Elston 01-464 3333 XT 4287.

The closure of Stockwell College is enabling the authority to close many of its outlying department offices and concentrate most departments in the centre of Brunley Co-ordination of the move is being handled by the research and intelligence section. Contact Steven Birkin 01-464 333 XT 3312

An annual population report is compiled which incorporates

- a analysis of births including maternity bookings over 11 postal areas
- b analysis of children attending borough schools over the same areas
- c analysis of movement of electorate by ward and number of electors at an address
- d comparison of OPCS mid year estimates with local estimates
- e demographic analysis and household composition

Contact Nelson Pallister 01-464 333 XT 3312

Peter Gunn-Wilkinson XT 4315

#### Cheshire County Council

With the assistance of all eight of Cheshire's district councils, and the County Planning Department, Cheshire's R & I Unit has recently completed a survey to determine the level of vacant housing in each district of the county. The survey was carried out on a sample basis and has provided statistics for use in HIPS and population work.

Two reports have recently been published by Cheshire R & I on their 1977 Cheshire Household Survey which was county-wide with an enhanced sample in Macclesfield district:

People & Houses of Cheshire No 6 Cheshire Household Survey 1977 Part 1; Results:- P G Thomas & B D Hall (£2,00 - cash with order)

People & Houses of Cheshire No 7 Cheshire Household Survey 1977 Part 2; Commentary:- B D Hall and P G Thomas (£1,00 - cash with order)

The 1978 Cheshire Household Survey, covering three districts of the county has been completed and reports will be available by the end of the year.

Work has started on the preparation of the 1979 survey, again to cover three districts, but the 1980 survey will be county-wide.

A project on Home Accidents has been carried out for Warrington Borough Council and has just been completed. This was a twelve-month survey of patients arriving at Warrington Infirmary having suffered an accident in the home. The reasons for and the circumstances of the accident have been investigated.

Cheshire County Council have subscribed on a trial basis to the Henley Centre for Forecasting's service "Planning for Social Change". The R & I Unit is assisting in assessing its value to the County Council for the future.

Ian Rawlins, formerly of Cleveland's R & I Unit, has recently left Cheshire's Planning Department for a post in Education research in Botswana. Ian worked jointly with the R & I Unit in Cheshire on population work.

#### Cleveland County Council

By the time this Newsletter appears, the Research and Intelligence Unit's Annual Report for 1978-79 will have been published. It gives brief descriptions of the work the Unit has been engaged upon for the County and four Borough Councils in Cleveland during the year, and copies are sent to a number of other Units. A list of reports published during the year is included as an appendix. The main features of the year's work has been a big increase in work for Education (now accounting for almost 20% of the Unit's time) and an increase in work for Social Services.

Also appearing at much the same time are two other publications, the annual pocket sized card "Cleveland Statistics in Brief" which is very popular as a handy source of reference for our officers and members, as well as education establishments and libraries, and the sixth edition of CRIB (it first appeared near Christmas 1977), the quarterly Cleveland Research and Intelligence Bulletin. This is an informal broad sheet containing short articles, interspersed with diagrams, tables and the odd cartoon, designed to keep members and officers informed about significant aspects of the Unit's work and other information about or important to the area.

#### Clwyd County Council

Clwyd County Council have appointed Dr Simon Jeffs, formerly of the Post Office Research Department to continue work on the Clwyd Corporate Planning computer model.

#### G.L.C.

G.L.C. Research Library On-Line

Faced with ever increasing numbers of requests from customers for literature searches on anything from corrosion of central heating systems to water divining the GLC Research Library has gone 'on-line' in an effort to meet the demand without lowering levels of service. By using the library's computer terminal host computer systems in Harlow, Frascati, Palo Alto and New York can be accessed. These host systems store a number of the major abstracting

and indexing journals in computer readable form. The terminal is in fact used to interrogate the data bases with the user's enquiry, questioning taking the form of an 'on-line' dialogue somewhat similar to a telephone conversation. The host computer will respond with a count of the number of relevant literature references; the user may then choose to have these printed either directly on-line or off-line at the computer centre and mailed to him.

Although there are cases where a traditional 'manual' search through printed publications will be more appropriate, 'on-line' does offer several advantages. The library can access far more data bases than could be purchased in hard copy form; information can be produced literally at the touch of a button; and the computer can search more rapidly, thoroughly, flexibly, and often more cheaply than the manual searcher.

At present the Research Library subscribes to four different on-line systems - DIALOG, DIALTECH, BLAISE, and The Information Bank. DIALOG and DIALTECH offer a variety of technical and commercial data bases; BLAISE covers medicine as well as the computer book catalogues of the British Museum and the Library of Congress; and the Information Bank has a wide selection of general magazines and newspapers, mostly with an American bias. In addition to these commercially available systems the Research Library also has its own ACCOMPLIS local government data base which may be searched by computer but not in this direct on-line fashion. It is hoped that the introduction of ICI's upgraded M.V. ASSASSIN computerised information retrieval package will eventually give the facility as well.

#### Kingston upon Thames London Borough

##### Research and Corporate Planning Unit

In 1978, a much expanded central unit, the Research and Corporate Planning Unit, was established following the comprehensive restructuring of all departments into a directorate system. The RCP Unit is part of the Chief Executive's small department. Marks Gilks, Head of Research and Corporate Planning reports directly to the Chief Executive and the Directors' Management Board.

All eight professional staff are now in post: Mark Gilks, Philip Britton and John Whitfield, Corporate Planners (ex L.B. Islington and Essex C.C. respectively), John Wolfenden (previously with RBK), Project Co-ordinator, Sandra Campbell (ex L. B. Ealing), Paul Swainbank (ex LACSAB), John Cater (ex Liverpool Polytechnic) and Bob Sherwood (ex L.B. Hillingdon) all Research Officers.

The unit's responsibilities are comprehensive and include research and its co-ordination policy analysis, economic and demographic forecasting, information systems develop-

ment and corporate planning.

Current work includes the first year of a three year programme to develop an annual Policy Budget to supplement and replace the annual revenue estimates which were previously in traditional format. Among other projects are those which concern the effect of falling school roll numbers, word processors, services for the elderly, secondary school re-organisation, under-occupancy of housing, manpower studies and inflation monitoring.

#### City of Newcastle upon Tyne

##### Help for the Unemployed

This project aims to build up a collection of comprehensive information on services, facilities and initiatives which affect the unemployed. A written digest of this information has been prepared. Both national and local sources have been tapped so that the report can be used as a reference and a source of new ideas by councillors and officers. Topics covered include M.S.C. programmes, workshops and workers' co-operatives, social centres, community arts, further education and advice agencies.  
Contact: G.N. Norris.

##### Research into Newcastle's High Rise Blocks

A survey of one of the city's high rise blocks indicated that there were in this block very high percentages of elderly and disabled people who were in need of special services such as the provision of a warden. To put this research into perspective and also to discover what other problems, if any, were facing tenants in these blocks further research was carried out in all the city's high rise blocks. Each tenant received a census form covering topics such as household size, age, and disability, in addition a sample of tenants were interviewed in more depth about high rise living. All caretakers were also interviewed. We found that most households were quite content with living in a high rise development, however there were sizeable percentages of elderly and disabled people who faced special problems and were in need of extra services.

Contact: Lesley Askew.

##### Survey of Redundant Workers

This is a survey of approximately 250 workers who were made redundant when a medium sized engineering firm (Tress Engineering) was closed in June, 1978.

This aim of the survey, to be carried out in July, 1979 is to establish the effects of the closure on the men and

their families, the rate at which they are reabsorbed into the labour market and particularly the extent to which skilled engineering craftsmen are lost from the region or the industry.

Addresses of Tress workers at the time of the closure have been obtained through contacts with the unions involved. All the redundant workers will be interviewed in their homes by experienced interviewers using a mixed schedule, including both closed and open-ended questions.  
Contact: Mr. G. M. Norris

#### Scotland

In most Scottish local authorities, basic research work (e.g. population projections) is undertaken by the Physical planning department, and there is no central R and I unit. In Strathclyde and Lothian Regions, where there are policy planning departments, the central research function is under-resourced.

In the West of Scotland, however, the potential role for centralised R and I is about to be greatly increased. Strathclyde Region has decided to revamp its departmental structures. The existing Chief Executive's Office, together with the Department of Administration, Policy Planning, and the policy and research sections of Physical Planning, are to be merged in a new Chief Executive's Department. The Chief Executive will have five Deputies, with the following responsibilities:

1. Strategic issues, regional review, long-range planning, structure plan co-ordination, research and intelligence, economic policy
2. Personal services (education and social work programmes, urban and rural deprivation, community development, etc.)
3. Protective and basic services (industrial promotions, transportation, police, fire, water and other services)
4. and 5. Administrative and other matters.

The strategic issues Deputy is effectively responsible for corporate planning. This central role is consolidated because he also has responsibility for servicing the key committees of Policy and Resources, Finance, Manpower, Physical Planning and Buildings and Property. Clearly, the potential contribution of R and I will be considerable, but much will depend upon the detailing of functions and structures which will take place after the appointment of the Deputies. This is being phased with the appointment of a new Chief Executive (Calderwood of Manchester District) who takes up the post in January 1980.

The forthcoming appointment of a new Chief Executive in Glasgow District is also being accompanied by changes in structures. A new Housing Department is being created

with a decentralised housing management structure and a housing research unit. This unit will be responsible for developing a computerised housing management system and the production of the annual housing Plan. A 6000 series Honeywell computer is being acquired, largely to support the housing initiatives, and a new Computer Services Department is being established.

#### South Yorkshire County Council

##### South Yorkshire Statistics, 1979

In conjunction with other departments of the authority, the R & I Unit has just started the preparation of the 1979 edition of the digest of statistics for the County, which is aimed at officers, members, organisations and interested members of the public. This year's volume will be similar in presentation to last years, and will include sixteen sections ranging from "Electoral and Political" through "Employment and Economic Activity" to "Consumer Protection". R & I Officers who are not on the mailing list, but who would like to receive a copy of the 1979 edition (or back issues) are asked to write to Stuart Creak at County Hall, Barnsley.

##### The Monitoring of Economic Development

In summer 1978, an inter-departmental group was established to consider the requirements for monitoring in the field of economic development. Members of the R & I-unit have participated in the working of the group, which has reported on a number of occasions on the general approach to monitoring undertaken, and the requirements for the collection, analysis and dissemination of information resulting from monitoring activities. Four main areas are being investigated: the location of development policies, County Council activities and projects, County Council advocacy, assumptions and forecasts underlying the Structure Plan economic policies.

##### Waste Disposal Plan

The Unit is currently assisting the Environment Department in preparing an Interim Waste Disposal Plan. Early investigations have indicated possibly serious shortages of landfill capacity in some areas of the County, and an interim strategy to meet this situation is urgently required. There are considerable problems associated both with the availability and reliability of the basic data which make it difficult to arrive at accurate assessments of future disposal needs.

### Arts and Crafts Centres: Feasibility study

Two members of the R & I Unit have been working on a feasibility study of the development of an arts and crafts centre at Home Farm, Wentworth Castle, near Barnsley. The Castle is occupied by the Northern College of Adult Education.

Proposals include converting the farm buildings into studio-workshops, living accommodation for resident artist/craftsmen, an exhibition area, and study bedrooms available for students on residential courses at the Centre during College vacations.

The study is examining the type of centre that could be established and whether the emphasis should be artistic, educational or commercial, or a combination of all three. The establishment, objectives, financing and management of similar schemes is also being examined. Information about similar ventures elsewhere would be very welcome and should be sent to Stuart Creak, County Hall, Barnsley.

### Recreation Demand Study

Since 1976 a series of papers has been produced which examines aspects of the demand for recreation. Recent work has concentrated on horse-riding, questionnaire surveys of both participants and spectators at South Yorkshire's "Pageant of the Horse" event have been carried out. Respondents were asked about their interest in the sport, horse/pony ownership, attendance at riding schools, riding club membership and entry at competitive events. They were also asked to give their opinions of riding facilities and events in South Yorkshire. Although the sample sizes were not large, the results of the surveys have provided some useful insights into riding in South Yorkshire.

### Wansbeck District Council

#### Corporate Planning in Wansbeck D. C.

Wansbeck District Council introduced corporate planning into the authority in Autumn 1977. Prior to this a corporate structure existed, modelled on that suggested in The Bains Report. A corporate approach to problems was achieved quite successfully on an informal level, obviously to a large extent due to the size of the authority. Unlike larger authorities, therefore, the Council's decision to introduce corporate planning was not influenced so much by a lack of co-operation between departments, but by the feeling that there was a need to define its aims and objectives and to see how far these could be achieved in the next five years.

During late 1977 and early 1978 we set out to produce

position statements recording the current activities of each department. These provided the information base from which committee discussion documents were prepared. In the committee documents, which we refer to as 'Needs and Objectives Statements', each committee was given information about all the activities it was responsible for, covering not only current provision but also perceived community need, the gap between the current provision and the perceived need and what the alternative projects were which could fill the gap. Discussion of these documents by committees resulted in the establishment of each committee's aims and objectives and of its overall priorities. It is intended to review and update the Needs and Objectives Statements annually and revise the Position Statements every 3/4 years.

Currently two aspects of the corporate planning process are taking place simultaneously, the budget and public participation exercises. It is intended to revise the authority's budget structure so that it and the corporate plan are compatible. It is also intended that capital and revenue plans to the end of this Council's service will be produced this year, and the Chief Officers are therefore preparing detailed costings of projects outlined as priorities, while the Treasurer is preparing predictions of financial trends.

A document drawing together general information on the Council's activities and outlining what each committee sees as its priorities has been produced. This is primarily intended as a document for the public, although it will also be useful as a working summary for members. Involving the public in the formation of a corporate plan is fairly innovative and the Council hopes by distributing copies of the 'Draft Community Plan' to groups, clubs, organisations in the district, and by holding a series of public meetings, to involve the public directly in the policy making process. It is hoped that it will be possible to describe to the public how the Council works, the problems that the Council has to face, and to involve them in discussing what the solutions are to demand for services versus insufficient resources. It is hoped that this will not only help in the formation of the corporate plan but will also be a valuable public relations exercise which will disperse the 'them and us' attitude. The Council hopes that it will discover new ways of keeping the public informed and interested in local government.

The budget exercise this year will therefore involve members firstly in a priority ranking exercise. It will be necessary to decide between all the activities previously chosen as priorities by committees on a basis of need, cost and availability of resources and in the light of public comment. Once the immediate priorities are established it will be possible to draw up a four year corporate plan and budget with policy options for future years.

Members and officers hope that by the introduction of a process of corporate planning, tailored to the needs of the authority, all participants in the decision making process

will be better informed, the Council's way forward will be clearly signposted and, especially in the face of current governmental cuts, the most effective use of resources will be made.

Bolton H.B.C.'s Education Department, and Mrs. H. Sanson who came from the Geography Department at Huddersfield Polytechnic. A further appointment is expected to be made shortly.

#### PERSONALIA, GENERAL NEWS AND OPINIONS

##### Baberg District Council

##### Personnel Changes

Mr G Day - Admin Officer - to Norfolk County Council, Norwich as Project Co-ordinator.

##### Cleveland County Council

There have been a few notable staff changes so far this year. Tim Mobbs, Assistant Director (Research) has gone to INLOGOV and Frans Vlemmiks, Operational Research Project Leader to Lucas Aerospace. Both were well known outside Cleveland and we wish them well in their new jobs. Ken Dobson has recently joined the Research and Intelligence Unit's General Research Team from Leeds University to work mainly on housing problems, and Alan Tinkler has moved across from Darlington to become Data Co-ordinator in our Statistics Division.

##### Kent County Council

##### County Secretary's R. & I. Unit

Margaret Edwards, who undertook the surveys for our study of the feasibility of education vouchers, has left us to start a family. Jack Greenland, an experienced Work Study Officer, has been seconded in to replace Margaret. He continues a project she began, to assess the effectiveness of joint provision schemes (e.g. sports centres used by children in daytime, by public in evening). As for me, I want to assess the effectiveness of the child guidance service. I know of work in Hampshire, Haringey and Croydon; has anybody else done anything? Finally, just to mention that Kent's annual report on central management services and research is available on request.

##### South Yorkshire County Council

Personnel Changes in the R & I Unit 1978/79 has seen the departure of several members of the Unit. Dr. A. Haws left to join the National Ports Council in London, Dr. J. France has taken up a post with the Grassland Research Institute (A.R.C.) at Maidenhead, and Mrs. S. Rossiter has moved to Oxfordshire C.C.'s R & I Unit. They have been replaced by H. M. Sanderson, who joined the Unit from