



**REPORT TO REGENERATION, ENVIRONMENT,  
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY OVERVIEW  
AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**7 July 2005**

**Agenda  
Item No.**

**7**

**Planning Best Value Review Improvement Plan Monitoring**

**Ward(s)** All

**Portfolios:** Cllr M Longhi  
Environment and Transport

**Summary of report:**

To advise the Regeneration, Environment, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny and Performance Panel of progress made on the implementation of the Best Value Improvement Plan of the Planning Best Value Review. This is the second quarterly monitoring report following the approval of the Review by Cabinet on 1 December 2004. As part of this approval the Panel requested that the progress in the implementation of the Improvement Plan (appendix G) shall be reported to the Panel on an exceptions basis.

**Background papers:**

Best Value Review of Planning Report 1 December 2004

**Reason for scrutiny:**

This report is submitted in order to review and scrutinise the performance of the implementation plan on an exceptions basis.

**Signed:**

**Executive Director:** Keith Stone

**Date:** 28 June 2005

**Resource and legal considerations:**

The actions contained in the Improvement Plan will be completed during 2004/05 and 2005/06 within existing budgets.

**Citizen impact:**

The Improvement Plan is designed to improve planning services in Walsall and to ensure we provide the best possible performance and customer service.

**Environmental impact:**

Amongst other things, the review considered ways of improving the quality of development and impacts on the environment.

**Performance management:**

The service improvements detailed in the Improvement Plan will support improvements in performance in key performance indicators, thereby contributing to continuous improvement in the Beacon Index.

**Equality Implications:**

The improvements support equality of access and treatment for all to enable services to better meet the needs of all citizens, business and other sectors of the community.

**Consultation:**

The Improvement Plan was approved following consultation with staff, applicants/agents, third parties, key stakeholders, other councils who provide the same similar services and the trades unions.

**Vision 2008:**

- 1) Ensure a clean and green borough
- 7) Make it easier to access local services
- 8) Strengthen the local economy
- 10) Listen to what local people want

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**1. Planning Best Value Review Improvement Plan Monitoring**

- 1.1 The Improvement Plan has been updated to reflect progress made to date with all individual actions, copy attached.
- 1.2 With the exception of items 1c/4c and 8b, members will see that good progress has been made in completing many tasks.
- 1.3 1c/4c relate to the development of a mapping link with MIS in order to facilitate electronic communication / consultation. This has experienced some delay due to the 'E-access' product being delayed in its development by our strategic software provider MIS. It is anticipated that this will be fully integrated with existing MIS systems by September 2005.
- 1.4 8b relates to the completion of the restructuring of Planning and Transportation by December 2004. Whilst good progress is now being made, this will not be completed at all levels until October 2005 with a full consultation process commencing with the Trades Unions and staff on 20 July 2005. However, all Service Managers and Group Leaders have now been appointed.