

AT A MEETING  
- of the -  
**RESOURCES AND  
PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY  
AND PERFORMANCE PANEL:  
CPA USE OF RESOURCES  
WORKING GROUP**  
held at the Council House,  
Walsall on **3 October 2005** at  
6.00pm

**PRESENT**

Councillor Griffiths  
Councillor Micklewright  
Councillor Sarohi  
Councillor D Shires

**OFFICERS PRESENT**

Helen Dudson - Service Development & Interim Scrutiny Manager  
Andy Field – Performance Improvement Officer

**1. APOLOGIES**

No apologies for non-attendance were received.

**2. NOMINATION OF LEAD MEMBER**

The nomination of a lead member was discussed and the group felt there was no need to select a lead member as they were working effectively as a group. It was agreed to continue meetings in the current way.

**3. PRESENTATION ON BENCHMARKING**

Andy Field gave a presentation regarding benchmarking, what it includes, the newly written benchmarking strategy for Walsall council and the proposed roll out of the corporate approach across the council. Andy invited members to express their views regarding where they felt they could add value.

Members welcomed the information that services were to be encouraged to be outward focus and compare performance with others where data was available. Members asked what in reality they could get involved in without stepping into the remit of another scrutiny panel.

Helen reminded the group of their strategic role and that they had the opportunity to shape and inform the process currently being developed and suggested several things they could do:

- Review the benchmarking strategy as circulated by Andy and consider whether the strategy is fit for purpose and will support the delivery of efficiency savings.
- Link benchmarking back to service provision and consider the impact on the quality of services provided by the council.
- Consider, at some point in the future, the impact the strategy has on improving services and how well services are embedding benchmarking.

Members expressed an interest in learning more about how the strategy and the work Andy outlined he would be doing was received by services and the outcome of adopting a corporate strategy had on service delivery. It was agreed that Andy be invited back to the February meeting on the work group to update them about progress made.

Members felt that following a specific issue through the benchmarking process would help them judge how useful benchmarking could be and the value it added but expressed concern about not being able to do this due to scrutiny panel remits. Helen suggested that this could be done using performance information that fell within the remit of the panel and Andy suggested that there were also corporate health indicators that could be examined as all services had a roll to play in delivering improvements for those particular indicators. It was agreed that Andy would prepare information using a specific example and report this back to the group when he next attends in February.

Helen confirmed the group were next scheduled to meet on 18 October and suggested that they consider the work currently being conducted to embed efficiency savings into the service planning process as again this was a process currently underdevelopment where members could add value and then monitor the impact and success of the process. Members felt it would help if information could be distributed prior to the meeting and Helen confirmed she would aim to have the appropriate information available to circulate at the full panel meeting on 13 October.

The meeting ended at 7.06pm.