

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
2 November 2005 at 6.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillor Griffiths
Councillor Sarohi
Councillor D Shires

OFFICERS PRESENT

Helen Dudson – Service Development and Interim Scrutiny Manager

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies for non-attendance were received.

2. DISCUSSION OF DRAFT SERVICE PLAN TEMPLATE FOR 2006 - 2009

Helen Dudson outlined, for the approval of members, the purpose of the meeting as being:

- a) To introduce the draft template to members to gain their views on how well the template will help the report of efficiency savings and demonstrate value for money (vfm)
- b) To agree further reporting mechanisms to the group once the template has gone 'live'

The group discussed the template page by page so to seek a better understanding of what information each section was meant to cover and why and also how relevant sections supported corporate strategies or policies.

The importance of clear, concise guidance supporting the template was clear to all and as the group considered each section of the template the following views were expressed.

- Overview of previous performance – members felt that potentially both pages should be used as one supported the other and they gave managers the opportunity to express opinion about achievements whilst also making them explain any reasons for objectives not being delivered.

- Consultation – members felt it would be more effective if the vision pledge column was the first column on the left hand side and so the first column to be completed as everything flows from there (the golden thread). Members also queried what guidance was given about the timeliness of consultation and expressed concern that too often consultation is conducted after a decision has been made and true consultation should present various options.
- 3 year priorities – members supported the idea of requesting services identify objectives for each year as this helped map out the steps needed to reach excellence.
- Efficiencies – members felt the proposed template was logical and contained some good examples but that it could be very challenging for managers to complete and that it was important that it was as clear as it could be to ensure there was no reason for non completion. Also as the purpose of including this section was to embed value for money principles and deliver the Gershon agenda efficiencies, Members wondered if a more explicit link to Gershon was needed to make it clear to all how this section supported the efficiency agenda.

It was resolved:

1. That Helen Dudson feeds back comments on the consultation section to Andy Mellors in Policy unit.
2. That the link to the Gershon agenda be made more explicit in the efficiencies section.
3. That a small selection of completed plans be brought back to the group so they can examine how the template has been completed and whether it supports the delivery of value for money in practice.
4. That the next meeting of the group will consider the corporate value for money strategy.
5. That, in light of difficulties being experienced with the dates for the panel's decision conferences, the meeting planned for 30 November be cancelled and replaced by a decision conference and that this group would reconvene in the New Year.

Helen Dudson thanked members for their input and comments on the service plan template as from an officer perspective she had found it extremely useful.

Meeting closed at 7.22 pm.