

AT A MEETING  
- of the -  
**RESOURCES AND  
PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY  
AND PERFORMANCE PANEL**  
held at the Council House,  
Walsall on **20 December 2005** at  
6.00pm

**PRESENT**

Councillor Sanders	(Chair)
Councillor Sahori	(Vice Chair)
Councillor Griffith	
Councillor Rochelle	
Councillor D Shires	
Councillor Turner	
Councillor Wilkes	
Councillor Young	

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Andy Burns (Assistant Director of Finance)  
Rob Flinter (Head of Corporate Performance Management)  
David Trethewey (Project Director for LAA)

**SCRUTINY SUPPORT**

Helen Dudson, (Service Development & Interim Scrutiny Manager)

**27. APOLOGIES**

None received.

**28. SUBSTITUTIONS**

For the duration of the meeting substitute Councillor Wilkes for Councillor Chambers.

**29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP**

The members of the political groups represented on the Panel indicated there were no whipping arrangements for any of the political parties in respect of items on the agenda. There were no declarations of interest.

### 30. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

#### Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2005, copies having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.

(Annexed)

### 31. PANEL WORK UPDATE

#### CPA Use of Resources

Helen Dudson updated the panel on the work of the work group in relation to the corporate service planning process. Notes of the work group having been previously circulated the panel noted the progress made by the work group.

#### LAA work group

Councillor Sanders welcomed David Trethewey to the meeting and copies of the last meeting of the work group were circulated. David presented the work of the work group to date and the progress made with the LAA to the panel (annexed). The presentation gave an overview of the LAA process and the key issues with scope of the agreement. David Trethewey also informed the panel about the ODPM consultation that had just commenced regarding LSPs and the likely impact this would have on the LAA.

There was discussion regarding the role of LNPs within the LAA and the level of detail of information being shared with LNPs and around the potential stretch targets. David Trethewey confirmed that the list of stretch targets was still being finalised and that whilst it was important it formed a very small part of the actual agreement. He also confirmed that it was important that the decision regarding stretch targets was balanced and that in some instances there were mandatory targets if existing funding streams were used to help deliver the targets. Andy Burns added that in his experience with Local Public Service Agreements (LPSAs) the Government are now more sophisticated in knowing what a 'stretch' is and that they apply a value for money assessment when considering the stretch.

David Trethewey informed the panel that in his opinion the real risk is around timescale compared to how LPSAs were previously agreed. Andy Burns reiterated the point that any funding received from the reward element is one-off and that in reality the more significant gain from the LAA is the joining together of mainstream funding to deliver more effective services.

Councillor Sanders asked how much responsibility would be passed to the LNPs for delivery of the LAA. In response, David Trethewey explained that once the open set of priorities were put together in readiness for commissioning work to deliver the targets and that LNPs can 'bid' to deliver some of the work. The LAA will help the involvement of partners at LNPs mature. Councillor Young

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expressed the opinion that whilst involvement of the LNPs was important that the LAA must benefit the whole borough and that the public and partners influence decisions. This view was supported by Councillor Griffiths who felt the LAA may be too big an issue for LNPs to handle.

Councillor Sanders invited David Trethewey to express his view regarding how scrutiny could help the LAA over the next 3 years. David Trethewey reminded the group that part of the reason for the presentation was to gather the views from the panel so could verbally report back to Cabinet on 21.12.05. It was resolved that David Trethewey would return to the panel at the appropriate time regarding the LSP consultation and that he would inform Cabinet that the panel, having considered all available information, are confident in the project management of the LAA and are interested in the ongoing scrutiny of the LAA.

#### Decision Conference

Andy Burns asked the panel for their initial thoughts regarding the decision conference process that they had completed the previous week just to enable their early thoughts to be captured. The following comments were made:

- A worthwhile process, gave the feeling of being involved.
- Liked the way items were prioritised.
- Officer input in terms of the impact of prioritisation on delivery of services and resources was valuable – overall a good process.
- Informative and challenging.
- All gave input – which was important.
- Disappointed re lack of information.
- Better reports than previous years but still awaiting additional information. The quality of information good in terms of depth. Discussions were apolitical.
- Information presented was excellent; process has improved on last year and prioritisation more attuned to local view.

#### 32. INFORMATION ITEMS

##### Tracker Survey

Helen Dudson informed the panel that she had circulated the cabinet paper regarding Tracker following the request at the last panel for information. The report was noted.

##### Beacon Index Measure 1.3.1

Helen Dudson explained that the information circulated regarding the data for the fear of crime performance indicator had been provided by the Safer Walsall Borough Partnership following the request at the last panel and that it demonstrated the way data for the indicator was collected. The information was noted.

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### Feedback on Training

Councillor Sarohi introduced his briefing note that had been circulated previously regarding a training session he had attended in Stoke. He summarised the main learning from the session as being the importance of all scrutiny being non political and that from discussions with other authority's scrutiny in Walsall is conducted well.

### Performance Review of Scrutiny in Walsall

Helen Dudson informed the panel that she had circulated a briefing note regarding the performance review of scrutiny that is about to commence. The purpose was purely to inform the panel as they would receive updates as the review progressed. The information received was noted.

### CPA Use of Resources report to Audit Committee

Andy Burns present the Audit Commission report concerning the councils Use of Resources score of 3, which had been received by Audit Committee on 5 December. He explained that it had been circulated here for the panels information because it linked into the work they were doing on value for money and that they would receive updates regarding the delivery of the action plan currently being drafted. Councillor Turner felt it was important to recognise that the score of 3 demonstrated improved performance because under CPA 2005 it was a harder test. The information was noted and the panel congratulated the finance team on this success.

## 33. PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORTS

### Q2 Beacon Index Report to Cabinet 30 11 05

The report, having been previously circulated for information, was noted and it was agreed that the panel would feed back their views on the format of the Beacon Index report at their next meeting in February.

### CPA Improvement Plan Monitoring Report to Cabinet 21 12 05

Helen Dudson introduced the CPA Improvement Plan monitoring report that had been tabled at the meeting. As this report had been circulated for information it was noted.

## 34. FORWARD PLAN

### Cabinet Forward Plan

Councillor Sanders informed the panel that the cabinet forward plan had been discussed at the agenda meeting and that all items that may be of interest to the panel appeared to already be scoped into the work programme and that if any members had any issues they wished to raise they could do so at the meeting or

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by contacting Councillor Sanders prior to the next meeting. No issues regarding the cabinet forward plan were raised.

#### Panel Work Programme

Helen Dudson informed the panel that she had circulated up dated copies of the panels work programme purely for member's information. The work programme was noted.

#### 35. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Councillor Sanders informed the panel that it had been necessary to rearrange the budget meeting from early January to 27 January 2006 and apologised for any inconvenience this caused. He confirmed that this meeting would consider Capital and Revenue and would commence at 6p.m. The next normal panel meeting is on 9 February 2006.

#### TERMINATION OF MEETING

There being no further business the meeting terminated at 7.25p.m.

Chair.....

Date.....