



**RESOURCES AND PERFORMANCE
SCRUTINY & PERFORMANCE PANEL
23 SEPTEMBER 2004**

**AGENDA
ITEM:**

BEST VALUE WORKING GROUP

Ward(s)	All
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Portfolio: Cllr John O'Hare – Deputy Leader

Summary of report:

This report summarises the meeting of the working group on 27 August.

Background papers:

None.

Reason for scrutiny:

The working group was established to scrutinise a range of performance review issues with a view to making recommendations to improve service delivery.

Signed:

Executive Director: Carole Evans

Date: 14 September 2004

Citizen impact:

Performance reviews are designed to improve planning services in Walsall and to ensure we provide the best possible performance and customer service.

Performance management:

Service improvements facilitated through performance review will support better service delivery evidenced both in customer satisfaction on performance indicators, some of which are included in the Beacon Index.

Consultation:

This report was agreed with the Chair of the Best Value working group.

Contact Officer:

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1 KEY POINTS FROM MEETING

1.1 Appointment of Chairman and Remit

Cllr Anson was appointed Chairman of the Best Value working group for the municipal year 2004/2005. The remit was agreed as follows:

- To consider and advise the panel on the following matters so that any appropriate recommendations to Cabinet can be made:
 - The overall framework within which best value reviews are undertaken, completed and taken forward;
 - The annual programme of planned best value reviews, how they are selected and prioritised within the plan.
 - The summary of outcomes of best value reviews, recommendations, conclusions and whether these are subsequently implemented.
 - The effectiveness of the best value review process and whether it makes a difference.
 - Improvements in the whole approach to best value reviews
 - Identify any learning points from specific best value reviews which may or could be used to improve the process so that the Council's services improve continuously.
 - Question officers and other stakeholders on the rational and allied aspects of the report and the underlying process and that this activity be undertaken with a view to ensuring the Council's approach to best value reviews is efficient and robust in making any recommendations for changes as required

1.2 Performance Review Process

There was a brief presentation on the performance review process, formally known as Best Value, including the decision making matrix for prioritising the programme. It was noted that the review process had not yet commenced for the current year and had been referred to EMT on 9 September for clarification of the range and priorities for the year.

1.3 Request for Further Information

The working group requested a feasibility study to its next meeting on cross-directorate performance reviews. This would lead to a presentation and workshop on this matter at a future meeting with a view to making recommendations on how to improve the process.

The presentation is to include: comparison of Walsall MBC and other councils approach to cross directorate performance reviews; consideration of potential problems and issues of concern.

1.4 Information Technology Systems for performance management

Members were advised that an ICT system that could record accurately all Council performance related information was being considered and an external consultant would assist in this process. The working group asked whether the possible introduction of this information technology system was within the remit of the working group or the full scrutiny panel. Subsequently it has been confirmed that the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Panel was the appropriate forum.