

Term of Reference

1. To examine the annual efficiency statements sent to the government

Objectives

To assess the performance of the council in achieving the efficiency targets set by the government

Action required by the panel

- a) Consider the 2005/6 and 2006/7 Back and Forward looking statements and the 2007/8 forward looking statement – focus on financial gains
- b) Compare the financial gains achieved against the target set for the council
- c) Compare the financial gains achieved against those attained by our nearest neighbour family group

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2. To consider the council's approach to planning and achievement of efficiency gains ensuring;

- That opportunities are maximised to help the council achieve its strategic objectives
- That government targets set are achieved

Objectives

To ensure that efficiency gains do not adversely affect our customers

To assess the performance of the council in achieving the efficiency targets set by the government

To identify the council's future plans to tackle the efficiency agenda

Action required by the panel

- a) Assess the efficiency statement gains against the various categories against which gains have been declared – Procurement, Transactions, Corporate Services, Productive Time, Cultural and Leisure.
- b) Compare the anticipated gains reported in the Forward Looking 2006/7 statement with the actual gains reported in the 2006/7 backward looking statement. Identify changes and ascertain why they have occurred.
- c) Determine how the efficiency agenda has been planned for and tackled and how it is linked to our strategic objectives
- d) Draw out key areas where further explanation or clarification is necessary
- e) Identify any areas or services where there is an apparent lack of efficiency gains
- f) Identify any apparent good practice in our nearest neighbour's statements and investigate further through contact/interviews
- g) Identify any areas where there is a potential impact on customers and assess the council's performance indicators during the 04 Spending review period
- h) Identify the targets set by the government for the spending review period 2008-2011
- i) Assess the council's strategic readiness to meet these future targets.
- j) Determine where efficiency gains made through savings have been reinvested.

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3. To examine the procedure and methodology for measuring and driving the efficiency agenda.

Objectives

To ensure that a robust and effective process is in place to identify, gather, calculate and report efficiency gains

Action required by the panel

- a) Examine the current procedures and processes in place to deal with the efficiency agenda
- b) Assess their robustness and effectiveness

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4. To report the findings to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Objectives

To undertake the inquiry to programme schedule and to prepare a report which clearly sets out findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Inquiry Panel.

Action required by the panel

- a) Gather evidence set out above through assessment of documentation and interviews with key council officers
- b) Determine which officers need to be interviewed and prepare a list of questions to be put to them.
- c) Compile a comprehensive report, which addresses the terms of reference set for the Inquiry and meets the deadline for completion.