

GERSHON CO-ORDINATION GROUP

Background and Progress to Date

COG agreed in February the general approach to be taken towards delivery of efficiency savings consistent with the 'Gershon' reporting requirements. This included establishment of a corporate 'Gershon Co-ordination Group' to create some real impetus around efficiency programmes, in particular in relation to modernising approaches to service delivery and harnessing ICT.

The group has been formed and is made up of a range of officers from different backgrounds. The group reports to the Chief Officer Group and also feeds into the annual budget process.

The Gershon Co-ordination Group has met twice during the year. The initial meeting of the group provoked discussion around the purpose and role of the group. The group's connection with other existing boards and processes was also considered to draw out the various strands of efficiency work already underway, for example, through:

- Building on Excellence (including BPR reviews and e-Derby projects)
- Corporate Efficiency Reviews
- Base budget reviews and other budget process driven projects
- Major system/structural reviews
- Procurement and purchasing developments

The Gershon co-ordination group provides a route to ensure savings identified in various reviews across the authority are captured both in budget terms and within the authority's Annual Efficiency Statement (AES), e.g. BPR reviews, IEG efficiencies, Building on Excellence projects, Corporate Efficiency Reviews, etc.

Recent examples of work stemming from the Gershon co-ordination group into the budget process are:

- Extracting detail from all unitary authority's forward look Annual Efficiency Statements (AES) for 2005/6 and compiling an indexed list of savings to inform members and Chief Officers during the budget process. This provides a further opportunity to follow up efficiency examples reported by other similar authorities and identify new savings proposals where not already considered by departments.
- A short review of income opportunities through charging and trading was undertaken following identification of this area during the budget process. Details of this review are included in a report to COG on 23 November 2005. The opportunities identified in the report can assist the challenge process following preparation of departmental budget estimates leading up to final budget setting.