

COMPARING OUR PERFORMANCE WITH OTHERS – THE ROLE OF COMPARATOR GROUPS

Each Best Value review will address the “4 C’s” and it will be necessary to use “comparator groups”. There is no single group that will meet all needs and whatever basis for comparison is chosen, it must be fit for the purpose intended. Whilst comparisons with similar shire counties is not always appropriate, this will continue for the Best Value Performance Plan as it is an audit requirement.

Best Value reviews are not under this constraint and the key issue is to be very clear why particular groups of authorities have been selected as a comparator group.

All Best Value Reviews must be clear as to why a specific group of authorities has been selected for comparison and this must be noted in all final reports.

When comparison with other shire counties is appropriate, the following list from the Audit Commission shows Worcestershire’s nearest 20 neighbours in descending order.

1. Warwickshire
2. Gloucestershire
3. Staffordshire
4. Cheshire
5. Cambridgeshire
6. Nottinghamshire
7. Derbyshire
8. Bedfordshire
9. Northamptonshire
10. Wiltshire
11. Hampshire
12. Leicestershire
13. Suffolk
14. Oxfordshire
15. Essex
16. Somerset
17. Northumberland
18. Norfolk
19. Kent
20. Shropshire