

## **EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS**

The County Council's medium term financial planning framework approved in March 2002 and reflecting budget policy, contains the following reference to efficiency improvements:

Efficiency measures will be promoted through sound service delivery planning, staff development and training, productivity improvements and focussed performance measurement.

Efficiency gain will come from a combination of:

- Doing more with the same amount of money.
- Enhancing the quality of service within existing resources.
- Extending the reach of services with current cash limits.
- Harnessing the potential of technology to improve productivity.
- Husbanding resources from better purchasing arrangements.
- Promoting thrift through recycling materials.
- Discontinuing administrative and clerical procedures that are no longer relevant, necessary or fit for the purpose.
- Disposal of surplus or redundant assets.

The Council's Best Value Performance Plan sets out the corporate approach to improving efficiency, quality and effectiveness. Progress is routinely monitored.

The Government accepts that the scope for efficiency improvements will vary year-on-year and between councils and services, but the Government currently expects councils should ensure that over time their proposed aggregate efficiency gains are consistent with the 2% per year target set for local council spending as a whole.

The Council has agreed with the Government to include a target to improve cost effectiveness in its Local Public Service Agreement for the next three years.

In the five years to 31 March 2003 Worcestershire's target efficiency gain using the Government's definition is around £39 million. Gains are forecast to amount to £45 million.