

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ORGANISATION AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ORGANISATION AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 27 MAY 2010 AT COMMITTEE ROOM III, COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE.

Present:

Cllr Nigel Carter, Cllr Tony Deane (Vice Chairman), Cllr Peter Doyle, Cllr Charles Howard, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Jacqui Lay, Cllr Jeff Osborn (Chairman), Cllr Bill Roberts, Cllr Ricky Rogers, Cllr Judy Rooke and Cllr Jonathon Seed

Also Present:

Cllr Allison Bucknell and Cllr Christopher Cochrane

58. **Election of Chairman**

Cllr Jeff Osborn was elected Chairman of the Committee.

59. **Election of Vice-Chairman**

Cllr Tony Deane was elected Vice Chairman of the Committee.

60. **Apologies and Substitutions**

Apologies were received from Cllr Christopher Devine.

61. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

62. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

63. **Council Funding Framework for the Voluntary Community Sector**

A report by the Service Director for Communities, Libraries, Heritage and Arts was presented to the Committee and provided details of the new proposed funding framework for the voluntary and community sector.

Clarification was provided that the framework was at an early stage with a fuller report expected later in the year. During the first year of Unitary it was agreed that funding levels would remain static for voluntary organisation. The framework was now being looked at with regards to funding thereafter.

Currently £25m was spent with the voluntary community sector which excluded the likes of the Order of St John.

Cllr John Thomson, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Communities and Libraries and Sandie Lewis, Head of Strategy VCS Support Unit, attended the meeting to provide further background and to answer questions arising from the report.

Clarification was provided that the focus of the report was on the proposed framework for the allocation of Council funding to the voluntary and community sector and not the budget. Additional information had been requested by the Chairman in advance of the meeting to show how the £25m had been allocated. The Head of Strategy and VCS highlighted that as the figures related to the financial year 2009/10, not all the information was readily available at the time of circulation.

Ensuing discussion took place relating to the allocation of funding with specific note made to Area Boards and the VCS Support Unit. Further information was also requested on 'Buy Wiltshire'.

The 'Buy Wiltshire' service was hosted and part-funded by the Council and included all service based contracts to provide transparency and to encourage local businesses to pre-register for available contracts. The site was promoted by the Council to ensure the voluntary sector was best placed to apply for contracts than at present.

Following a request by members of the Committee, the Service Director for Resources confirmed that details would be provided on the number of successful quotes made through 'Buy Wiltshire' as outlined in the Procurement Strategy.

Clarification was provided that grants up to a maximum of £5k could be applied for through the Area Boards but that this was a separate revenue stream to the grants available through the VCS Support Unit.

The proposed framework encouraged joined up working with the voluntary sector and would provide clarity with one department monitoring funding across the County. The Area Boards were also being encouraged to publicise the grants available through the community area board schemes.

Work also continued with local businesses and the Chamber of Commerce to encourage collaborative working across organisations to maximise available funding. Ideas discussed included the potential for specialist service providers combining resources such as administrative support and office accommodation.

The VCS Support Unit was discussed further with clarification provided that the Unit was funded through the Communities, Heritage and Arts division of the Council. Staff had been seconded from the voluntary sector with a small set of staff from within the Council. Following a request by members of the Committee, the budget cost for the Unit would be clarified and circulated. Confirmation has now been provided that the total cost of the VCS Support Unit is £208,200 revenue.

Work was being undertaken on applications to ensure that requests did not include unjustifiable costs. A database was also being developed which would be accessible by the area boards and FOCUS teams and should avoid potential duplication of grant requests.

The involvement of the NHS in the process enabled the Council to ensure funding provided was from the correct revenue source. The value of service provision was also under consideration with some previously 'sub-contracted' bodies now contracted directly via the Council.

Following submission of the report to Cabinet on Monday, implementation of the recommendations would commence from April 2011. Indicators to monitor the implementation would be submitted to Cabinet in due course with the Committee informed of progress.

Resolved:

- 1) To thank officers and the Cabinet member for attending to respond to questions.**
- 2) To note that Cabinet approved the recommendations in the report.**
- 3) To request that greater publicity of the funding framework should be provided through Area Boards.**
- 4) That the Head of VCS would provide the Committee with further updates on the implementation of the VCS framework.**

- 5) **That the number of successful quotes achieved from ‘Buy Wiltshire’ would be circulated to members of the Committee.**

64. **Delivering Customer Focus Programme**

An update report by the Head of Customer Access was duly presented to the Committee which provided details of the progress made since the previous report in November 2009 to enable the organisation to deliver improved services to customers.

Cllr Alison Bucknell - Portfolio Holder for Customer Care, Jacqui White - Director of Shared Services and Customer Care and John Rogers – Head of Customer Access attended the meeting to answer questions arising from the report.

Clarification was provided that Cabinet had approved the programme in January 2010 and was expected to receive a further update shortly. The Head of Customer Access confirmed that the Committee would be provided with confirmation of the submission date once known.

Ensuing discussion included the need for the implementation of a joint safety, enforcement and treatment service contact number provided 24 hours a day by 2012. Discussions were taking place to ensure this was achieved.

The location of the 20 local contact points within community areas had yet to be decided but would be discussed prior to implementation with those living in the local areas to ensure the best location for the community was achieved. Where possible the location of contact points would remain within existing Council offices. The information received through the Council’s centralised telephone number was also being reviewed to ensure a consistent approach to service provision.

The technology used to deliver ‘virtual face to face’ contact points was still under development although clarification was made that the technology used would provide assistance in reaching the correct member of staff only and would not replace the ability to converse with a member of staff.

The out of hours telephone service specifically in relation to reported planning infringements was discussed as an area of confusion for customers. Acknowledgement was made that the current service provision allowed for customers to connect with designated duty officers. The concerns of the Committee were noted by the Head of Customer Access and Portfolio Holder for Customer Care.

Members of the Committee acknowledged the customer contact figures provided were in relation to calls and e-mails received through Customer Services and that there was potential for these to increase as broadband access improved.

Resolved:

- 1) To note the report and thank the officers and portfolio holder for their contribution.**
- 2) To support progress made on the Delivering Customer Focus Programme subject to the comments made.**
- 3) To receive a timeline for delivering the Customer Focus Programme and to receive a copy of the next six monthly progress report to Cabinet.**
- 4) That the Committee supports the attendance of a Committee member to sit on the Customer Access Board and that nominations for attendance will be sought following the meeting.**

65. Business Management Programme (SAP) - Update report

The Committee received a report in January 2010 which informed Councillors of the development issues and work plan for business improvements needed to ensure the organisation used SAP effectively to achieve maximum performance.

It was resolved that the Committee would receive a further update in May which should include KPI measurements and progress made against the work plan. The Committee also requested that the report provided an introduction to the HR and Procurement aspects of SAP.

The Service Director for Shared Services and Customer Services attended the meeting to present the update report and answer questions arising.

Discussion commenced with clarification that restructuring of the Shared Services team was being undertaken. As a result of the restructure it was agreed that a report to include an introduction to the HR and Procurement aspects of SAP would now be submitted to the Committee in the Autumn.

The impact of the restructure included that the payroll and lifecycle teams were being amalgamated and that harmonisation of job grades was taking place. 2 Officers from the Shared Services team were now embedded within Procurement.

Ensuing discussion included that targets were set within individual indicators. For example invoice payments were measured both in terms of contractual requirements as well as an overriding target to make payment within 10 days where possible. Members requested that target information was in future clearly included within the report.

Work was also being conducted with the Corporate Procurement Unit to reduce the number of paper transactions as a significant proportion were still received on paper.

The decision to centralise Property under one resource allowed for a stronger negotiation point for the Council. A single SAP code for Property would assist in the process. The Shared Service team also continued to help staff with any SAP queries.

Resolved:

- 1) To thank officers for the report.**
- 2) To note the progress made and plans in place within the Shared Services Team subject to the comments made.**
- 3) To receive an updated report on the Shared Services Team developments, including the HR and Procurement aspects of SAP in September 2010.**

66. Harmonisation of Staff Terms and Conditions of Employment (to include LGR Appointments Procedure)

The Committee considered a report in November 2009 which provided details of the scope and outline plans for harmonisation of staff terms and conditions. Resolution was made at the meeting to request an update report following completion of negotiations with unions and once the collective agreement had been drafted. The timescale anticipated was between February and May 2010 and as a result the Committee requested an update report was provided at this meeting.

The Service Director, Human Resources and Organisational Development, and HR Project Manager attended the meeting to present the update report and answer questions arising.

Upon presentation, clarification was made that negotiations continued and that the Pay Harmonisation project awaited the recommendations of the Business Travel strand of the Workplace Transformation project which was anticipated in June 2010. An additional 5,000 school staff was now required for inclusion within existing negotiations and was anticipated to delay completion of union negotiations until at least August 2010 following an anticipated submission to Cabinet in July.

Cllr Ricky Rogers, the Scrutiny representative on the Project Executive Board, highlighted the huge scope of the programme and that the Board was making reasonable progress.

Resolved:

- 1) To thank officers for the report.**
- 2) To note the update provided and request that the Cabinet member note the concerns of the Committee over the delay and continuing uncertainty for staff.**
- 3) To receive an update report following completion of negotiations and once the collective agreement had been drafted in August 2010.**

67. Future ICT Provision - Update

The Committee was asked to note that a meeting had taken place between the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee and the Service Director for ICT and Business Transformation to consider how the Committee could best scrutinise the wind down of the existing contract with Steria and development plans for the new in-house service.

The Cabinet Member for Resources reported at Full Council that work was underway to design the in-house ICT provision and develop an exit plan for the Steria contract and that an ICT transition programme paper will be submitted to Cabinet in due course.

The Portfolio Holder and Service Director for ICT and Business Transformation were in attendance to answer any questions arising from the update and provided the following additional information.

The in-house provision under review related primarily to desk-top maintenance which, under an in-house service, was not anticipated as causing an impact. Application support relating to maintenance and system support was already provided in-house.

Discussion ensued on the benefits of establishing a Task Group to provide scrutiny of the service provision and to provide an input into policy development of the service which was supported by the Portfolio Holder.

Cllr Jon Hubbard and Cllr Nigel Carter expressed their interest in becoming members of the Task Group.

Resolved:

- 1) To establish a Task Group to scrutinise the wind down of the Steria contract and the development of structures for the new in house ICT service.**

- 2) **To seek a further 3 or 4 members in addition to Cllr Jon Hubbard and Cllr Nigel Carter to participate in the Task Group.**

68. **Task Group Update**

The Committee was asked to note the updates on the standing task groups and additional information provided as follows:

Partnerships:

Ongoing work continued with the Community Safety Partnership. Cllr Roy While, as Chairman of the Task Group, would be requested to provide an update for the next meeting once this initial review had been completed.

Budget & Performance:

A meeting was held on 30 April 2010 where discussion included how the information provided within the profile budgets could be best used taking into account the date of which it was compiled.

The Corporate Director also confirmed that a letter had been received from KPMG which advised that the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) had been suspended under the new coalition government.

Major Contracts:

Attention was drawn to the announcement that Jarvis had gone into administration and the need for Corporate Procurement to continue with due diligence work to monitor the situation.

As the Task Group had completed its first full year cycle a report providing a complete review of the work of the Group would be submitted in the Autumn.

The Committee endorsed the request for a sixth councillor to join the Group to ensure effective scrutiny continued.

Resolved:

That a sixth Councillor would be added to the membership of the Task Group.

Workplace Transformation:

The Workplace Transformation team were reviewing the PFI contract with Jarvis to establish the most suitable position for the Council.

The Chairman of the Task Group would be kept fully briefed on events.

Following discussion amongst members of the Task Group the terms of reference had been amended to provide clarity on the role of scrutiny and it was agreed to invite an additional member to the group to represent the South of the County. Cllr Tony Deane volunteered and this was approved by Committee members.

Resolved:

1) To endorse the revised Terms of Reference as provided:

“To scrutinise the delivery of the Workplace Transformation Programme, ensuring it achieves the efficiencies and savings in the running cost of the Council’s offices whilst enabling business transformation to improve provision of services to customers”.

2) To approve Cllr Tony Deane as an additional member of the Task Group.

69. Service Director Update

In addition to the information contained in the Agenda clarification was provided that task groups had now been established as a result of discussions with the Service Directors of Resources and that most of the 17 Major Corporate Programmes were likely to be covered by scrutiny through its various select committees.

The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Scrutiny Manager were due to meet with Martin Donovan in respect of Finance and Procurement and would report the outcome to the next meeting.

70. Forward Work Programme

The draft Programme was considered by the Committee with the following additions:

ICT Task Group
Procurement Strategy

71. Date of next Meeting

15 July 2010.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 1.15 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Sharon Smith, of Democratic & Members' Services, direct line (01225) 718378, e-mail sharonl.smith@wiltshire.gov.uk

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