

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ORGANISATION AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ORGANISATION AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15 JULY 2010 AT COMMITTEE ROOM III, COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE.

Present:

Cllr Trevor Carbin (Reserve), Cllr Tony Deane (Vice Chairman), Cllr Peter Doyle, Cllr Nick Fogg, Cllr Charles Howard, Cllr Jacqui Lay, Cllr Jeff Osborn (Chairman), Cllr Pip Ridout (Reserve), Cllr Bill Roberts, Cllr Ricky Rogers, Cllr Judy Rooke and Cllr Jonathon Seed

Also Present:

Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr Bill Moss, Cllr John Noeken, Cllr Fleur de Rhe-Philippe and Cllr Anthony Trotman

74. **Apologies and Substitutions**

Apologies were received from Cllr Nigel Carter, Cllr Jon Hubbard and Cllr Christopher Devine.

Cllr Trevor Carbin substituted for Cllr Jon Hubbard. Cllr Pip Ridout substituted for Cllr Christopher Devine.

75. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

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

76. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

77. **Chairman's Announcement**

Cllr Tony Deane, Cllr Mike Hewitt and the Scrutiny Manager attended a Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) annual conference in London on 1 July which included an awards ceremony that recognised the good scrutiny work undertaken across the Country. In line with the Chief Executive's policy on

raising the profile of Wiltshire Council members of the Committee were asked to consider a case that could be entered for the next Conference. Suggestions should be given to the Vice Chairman.

78. **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

79. **Department of Resources (DoR) Departmental Delivery Plan**

The Committee considered the draft Corporate Plan at its meeting in March where it was recognised that further detail would emerge from the Departmental Delivery Plans and Business Plan. The Corporate Plan was approved by Full Council at its meeting in May.

The DOR Delivery Plan circulated took forward the ambitions and objectives of the Council which the Committee would use to keep abreast of areas that may require further scrutiny.

Many of the key work areas identified within the plan had already been considered at Task Group level or had been included within the Committee's Forward Work Programme. These included:

- Workplace Transformation
- Future ICT Provision
- SAP development
- Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)
- Member Support
- Customer Focus
- Pay Harmonisation
- Agency and Contract Staff

The Corporate Business Plan was currently under development and was expected to be approved by Cabinet in September. Following the release of the coalition government's budgetary review in October it was anticipated that a further review would take place thereafter.

The Departmental Delivery Plan had been circulated to all Service Directors and their teams who were now expected to prepare individual draft Service Plans based on its content.

The Service Director – Performance confirmed that the final top 20 services would be identified as the Delivery Plan developed and following the budgetary review in October which was likely to affect the service priority order further. The Cabinet Member for Resources would advise the Committee as soon as these were identified.

Ensuing discussion included that the restructure and centralisation of services within DOR had artificially inflated the first year leaver rate which also included temporary and contract staff leavers. The Committee also questioned the validity of the information provided, including budgetary information, since it was informed that the Delivery Plan was still not a finalised document.

Officers had considered whether the plan should be delayed due to the anticipated changes expected but had taken a view that there was value in having a plan which brought together priorities and services. Officers recognised that the plan would require review, that a document was needed to outline the department's aims although they were unable to categorically state the top 20 services referred to within the plan provided.

Taking the above information into account a proposal was made and seconded that no further scrutiny of the plan would take place until a final version was available. Upon vote this was carried.

Resolved:

That the Committee would receive the updated Delivery Plan in September or as soon as available.

80. Framework Contract for the Provision of Agency Staff

Cllr Jonathon Seed, scrutiny representative on the Agency and Contract Staff Project Board, provided the Committee with an update on the recent activity of the Board as follows.

The joint collaborative working project which was being developed with Bath and North East Somerset (BaNES) and North Somerset Councils would no longer continue due to capacity and knowledge transfer issues within their Procurement units. A national contract was in development of which all authorities were now seeking to join upon its release in early 2011. This new approach would ensure a long term solution to the recruitment of agency staff.

In the interim Wiltshire Council would be joining the pre-tendered framework managed by Comensura with either Dorset County Council or the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation to maximise on cost saving opportunities. This would run for 12 months whilst the national contract was being developed.

A meeting had been arranged with Comensura for 21 July to discuss the frameworks with a decision made on the framework of choice made thereafter for implementation and roll out of the service from September onwards.

The Cabinet member was aware of the previous expenditure on agency staff and safeguards had now been introduced to ensure visibility and accountability across the Council on agency spend.

The Committee would receive a further update on the Framework contract at its next meeting in September.

Resolved:

- 1) To thank Cllr Jonathon Seed for his update.**
- 2) To note the progress made and that work was ongoing.**
- 3) To receive an update on the Framework Contract in September 2010.**

81. People Strategy - Implementation

The People's Strategy was identified as an area of work for consideration by the Committee following a fact-finding meeting with the Service Director – HR and Organisation Development. The Strategy outlined the key objectives and plans to ensure that the authority had an appropriate workforce to meet the needs of the business and the major change programmes taking place.

The Strategic HR Manager – HR and Organisational Development - attended the meeting to present the report which provided an update on the implementation of the strategy and to answer questions arising from it.

Clarification was provided that the initial strategy had been submitted to Wiltshire County Council Cabinet in July 2008 and that the revised strategy incorporated the priorities within the DOR Business Plan and areas that were working well.

The strategy also included further information on the roll-out of staff training which was scheduled to commence in Autumn 2010. The HR Manager was unable to clarify which specific groups in relation to manual workers were involved within the training process but confirmed that clarification would be sought following the meeting.

The current leadership programme commenced last year with a programme entitled 'Management Matters' running at present to establish the training needs required. No performance indicators had yet been set as the programme was at an early stage of development.

A budget of £800k had been agreed for the leadership programme. Regular updates would be provided by the Cabinet member for Resources to ensure that the programme was fulfilling requirements. Examples of improved management could be seen through improvements in front line services where a 'service' culture had been developed. This followed the implementation of 'cultural workshops' where values were emphasised as part of the Customer Focus programme.

The Committee felt that improved management leadership was vital to the progression of the organisation as a whole and should be a key priority for HR. However, the Committee also queried the necessity of the £800k budget within the current economic climate and whether part of the funding should be diverted to front line services.

Clarification was provided that the 'total rewards' approach reflected the complete package that staff received which included, salary, pension and sickness schemes.

Recruitment issues still remained in some areas which was the result of some occupational groups falling within a more competitive market. In the past some departments had offered market supplements in order to secure recruitment to vacant posts. However, no market supplements had been requested over the past 18 months and those in existence were reviewed on an annual basis to ensure the supplement remained relevant.

The supplements had been applied to several positions within the planning departments across the County although it was understood that the area of planning was currently under review given the need to merge the 5 existing systems together.

The Cabinet member for Resources confirmed that a written response would be provided to the Committee on when this review was expected to reach fruition.

The workforce planning framework was being developed in line with the local government workforce strategy and would take into consideration the current economic climate. It was hoped for roll out within the next six months. A pilot scheme was currently taking place.

Ensuing discussion also included the need to retain skilled staff, the impact on IT services during the transfer of support from Steria, succession planning and recruitment difficulties were also explored.

Clarification was provided that the IT team continued to ensure that workloads remained manageable with no impact on the work of the Workplace Transformation Programme where considerable work had been undertaken over the previous months. The Committee was encouraged by the work the IT team had undertaken and requested that this was noted in the minutes. The Cabinet member for Resources would ensure the message was passed on and that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman remained fully updated on events.

Resolved:

- 1) To thank the officer and cabinet member for the report and update.**
- 2) To support the progress on the implementation of the People Strategy but to note that an update should be provided on the**

action plan and workplace framework in light of the current economic circumstances at the end of October 2010.

- 3) That the HR Manager – HR and Organisational Development would provide clarify on the groups consulted relating to manual worker training.**
- 4) That the Cabinet member for Resources would inform the Committee when the planning review was expected to reach fruition.**

82. Service Director Meeting - Update

The Chairman and Vice Chairman met with the Service Director for Finance and Procurement on 15 June 2010 to establish how services within the Department were delivered and funded and the pressures that existed.

The briefing note provided outlined the outcomes of the meeting which focused on the key priorities for the department for 2010/11 following the coalition government's budget announcement on 22 June and forthcoming spending review in the autumn.

The implementation of a new Revenues and Benefits system was highlighted as a priority for the Council where there were currently 3 systems utilised across the 4 Council hubs. The tendering process had commenced and it was envisaged that the new system would be in place within 2 years. The system would be installed one hub area at a time to minimise the risk.

A Project Board had been established to manage the implementation of the system and the Committee was requested to appoint a scrutiny representative to overview the work undertaken. Cllr Pip Ridout was duly appointed.

Resolved:

That Cllr Pip Ridout would be the appointed scrutiny representative on the Project Board.

83. Task Groups Update

Partnerships

The Task Group had a meeting with the Chairman of Community Safety – Confidence Group, and Tim Mason – Interim Project Manager, at its last meeting on 21 June 2010 where discussion included deliverables and how these were measured.

The Task Group would be inviting representatives from Wiltshire Police to the next meeting to discuss their role in Community Safety Partnership.

Budget & Performance

An extraordinary meeting was arranged for members of the Task Group to discuss the Revenue and Capital budget outturn reports for 2009-2010 where clarification was provided that the budget was in line with the authority's anticipated spend for the year.

With the anticipated budget cuts arising from the coalition government review, continued discussion would take place between officers and councillors to ensure all spend was carefully managed.

Major Contracts

The next meeting of the Task Group was scheduled to take place in October where a review of the Sodexo contract would take place.

Workplace Transformation

Task Group members commented that a successful site visit was undertaken to Bourne Hill and two other Council owned buildings in the area and that this gave a flavour of the necessity for the Workplace Transformation Programme (WTP).

The next meeting of the Group was scheduled for Tuesday 20 July where the review of Leisure Facilities – replacement, refurbishment and devolvement programme would be discussed. The Task Group would also attempt to get a handle on the budgetary components of the Programme at its meeting in October.

Members Support

The first meeting of the Group was held on 15 June where a scoping exercise was undertaken to determine the work programme and future witness attendance.

The next meeting was scheduled to take place on 16 June but may need to be rearranged due to attendance levels. Steve Milton (Head of Community Governance) and John Quinton (Head of Democratic Services) were expected to attend to provide clarity between Community and Democratic Services departments.

S106

Cllr Tony Trotman (Chairman of the S106 Task Group) attended the meeting to present the following update.

The Task Group had met on 10 May, 1 June and 14 June. As a result of these meetings the Group recognised that there were potential budget implications in relation to unspent S106 monies and noted the budgetary implications the lack of monitoring could have.

A S106 Officer had now been employed whose role would include the formation of an electronic data base to detail all agreements made both pre and post Unitary authority.

With the ongoing work taking place regarding developer contributions the Group felt it was essential that the Task Group continue its work and the Committee was asked to endorse the recommendations made within the report to continue the Task Group.

Members of the Group were satisfied adequate resources were available at present but would request to review the situation in the Autumn.

Resolved:

- 1) **To note the content of the S106 Report with the following comments:**
 - **That there was a need to improve the relationship between Development Control, Legal and Finance to ensure better management and monitoring of S106 agreements.**
 - **That the appointment of the new Section 106 Officer had made positive strides towards the development of a central electronic database but that the focus to date had been towards agreements post April 2009.**
 - **That the Group had concerns that recording historic agreements (pre Wiltshire Council) would be more resource intensive and a higher priority because of the 5 year timeline to use funds.**
- 2) **To support the continuation of the S106 Task Group.**
- 3) **That the Cabinet Member should be informed of the Committee's concerns above.**

84. **Forward Work Programme**

The Committee was asked to note the forward work programme and to note the information provided on the Library Services Review.

Additional information was also provided that scrutiny had not been involved in the Review, that statements had been issued to all area boards from the Service Director - Communities, Libraries, Heritage and Arts with details of the

review and that a projected £500,000 savings target was anticipated over the next two years.

A report by the Service Director – Communities, Libraries, Heritage and Arts on the Library Services Review was to be submitted to Cabinet in October. The Service Director would be invited to attend a future scrutiny meeting to present the report prior to its submission to Cabinet.

Resolved:

That the Service Director – Communities, Libraries, Heritage and Arts would be invited to attend a future meeting of the Select Committee to present the report on the Library Services Review.

85. **Date of next Meeting**

16 September 2010.

86. **Urgent Items**

No urgent items were considered.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.30 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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