

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ORGANISATION AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ORGANISATION AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 JANUARY 2011 AT COMMITTEE ROOM III, COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE.

Present:

Cllr Tony Deane (Vice Chairman), Cllr Christopher Devine, Cllr Peter Doyle,
Cllr Charles Howard, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Jacqui Lay, Cllr Jeff Osborn (Chairman),
Cllr Pip Ridout (Reserve), Cllr Bill Roberts, Cllr Ricky Rogers and Cllr Judy Rooke

Also Present:

Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr Christopher Cochrane and Cllr Fleur de Rhe-Philippe

115. **Apologies and Substitutions**

Apologies were received from Cllr Nigel Carter, Cllr Nick Fogg and Cllr Jonathon Seed.

Cllr Pip Ridout substituted for Cllr Jonathon Seed.

116. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 November 2010 were approved and signed as a correct record.

117. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

118. **Chairman's Announcement**

Cabinet was to consider the Revenue Budget, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Capital Programme for 2011/12, Treasury Management Strategy 2011/12 and Business Plan at it's meeting to be held on 8 February 2011.

The Committee was reminded to retain the paperwork circulated as the papers would be required for the Special Scrutiny Committee meeting to be held on 10 February 2011.

A scrutiny development day entitled 'Overview & Scrutiny – Collecting Evidence through Questioning' had been arranged for 3 February 2011. The event would be hosted by de Montfort University and would take place in the Conference Centre at County Hall.

119. **Public Participation**

There were no public participation at the meeting.

120. **HR Update**

The Service Director, HR and Organisational Development, was in attendance to provide the Committee with an update on HR related matters and to answer questions arising following the Chief Executive statement dated 14 January which outlined the need for the Council to make a further 12% savings.

The Service Director confirmed that although discussions were taking place no decisions could be made until the Business Plan and budget proposals were known which were to be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 8 February.

Continued discussions with Trade Unions were also pending following the release of these documents. Once the budget settlement had been confirmed negotiations would reconvene and the Committee updated accordingly.

In relation to the Management Review it was reported that over the past 2 years management costs had been significantly reduced. This included the reduction of four Chief Executive posts into one following the commencement of the unitary Council, the Council's restructuring process and the recent management review. The proposed overall £32m savings were still expected to be achieved.

The Executive Management Board with member support from the Staffing Policy Committee directed negotiations and forward planning.

Ensuing discussion included whether the proposed 5 layers of management to Chief Executive level remained and that details of the total salary cost for Service Director and Corporate Director should be provided to allow the Committee to ensure value for money was achieved.

The Service Director would circulate the information requested following the meeting but clarified that in order to ensure the Council remained a forward thinking organisation, salaries would always need to remain competitive. Further clarity was provided that senior management salary reviews involved external organisations and that resulting salary ranges were agreed taking into consideration the voluntary and public sectors to ensure fairness of pay for the level of responsibility.

In relation to numbers affected by the Management Review, clarity was provided that, since publication of the HR Update report the following changes had taken place:

- The number of applicants who had requested voluntary redundancy had risen to 158.
- The number of applicants accepted for voluntary redundancy was 144, 80 of which had already left the organisation.

Due to the high number of applicants requesting voluntary redundancy, compulsory redundancies were not expected at this stage.

Following sign off of the 2011/12 budget further details would be provided to the Committee on potential redundancies within financial years. It was anticipated that further details could be provided following a consultation period which was anticipated to be February/beginning of March.

The Committee was concerned that details of those departing the organisation had not been widely communicated and that more could be done to ensure Councillors (including Parish and Town Councillors) and officers were kept informed to ensure business continuity. Accordingly, the Service Director for HR and Organisational Development would request that the Communications team relay this message across the organisation. The HR Tool Kit would also be amended to repeat the message made.

Clarification was provided by the Portfolio Holder for Customer Care that in relation to the Policy Schedules provided in the report, healthy debate took place through the Staffing Policy Committee prior to any agreement made and that proposed changes were first considered by trade unions and CLT.

Specific note was made to Market Plussions contained within the policy schedule update indicating that the policy had been put on hold. Clarification was provided that this was being reviewed and was to be submitted to CLT shortly to receive further direction. The Service Director would ensure that the Chairman and Vice Chairman were kept informed of developments.

The Committee wished to acknowledge the hard work undertaken by the HR and Organisational Development team and recognised that staff had been kept well informed of developments. This was confirmed by Cllr Ricky Rogers as the scrutiny representative on the Staffing Management Executive Project Board.

Resolved:

- 1) To thank the Portfolio Holder and officers for the information provided.**

- 2) **To request that the Portfolio Holder note the comments made by the Committee.**
- 3) **To request that the Committee is kept informed of further HR updates to include details of those leaving the organisation through redundancy.**

121. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved:

In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting for the business specified in Minute Number 122 because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

122. **Procurement & Commissioning Project Board**

The Corporate Director Resources, Head of Procurement and Procurement Manager were in attendance to provide a confidential presentation on the work of the Procurement and Commissioning Board.

The presentation provided details of ideas to date which would, upon fruition, ensure value for money on service provision whilst reducing costs to the Council. The Board's terms of reference would ensure that all decisions that had potential to affect the public would always be made by members.

An update had been reported to the Corporate Leadership Team on 8 December where details of the anticipated cost savings were given.

It was noted that the Workplace Transformation Programme was running alongside the Service Review Programme.

Overall £9m savings were expected for 2011/12 and would be confirmed within the Financial Plan.

Following questions received in relation to how contracts would affect the local area, confirmation was provided that all tenders were required to clearly outline within the submissions made what benefit would be achieved for the local area.

It was acknowledged that the work being undertaken by the Procurement and Commissioning Project Board was strongly linked to the work being undertaken by the Major Contract Task Groups within Scrutiny. The Chairman confirmed that a paper was to be considered by the Liaison Board at its next meeting on 10 February to determine revisions to how this area was scrutinised.

Resolved:

- 1) **To thank the officers for the presentation.**
- 2) **That discussions would continue with the Corporate Director for Resources over future scrutiny arrangements and a report prepared for the next Liaison Board.**

123. **Admission of the Press and Public**

Following exemption of the Press and Public in relation to Item 122 above, the meeting reverted to an open session.

124. **Library Review Rapid Scrutiny Exercise**

A Rapid Scrutiny Exercise on the Library Services Review was undertaken on 18 January 2011 following a resolution made by the Committee at its meeting in September.

A report on the outcome of the Exercise, together with the Executive Summary of the Cabinet report for 25 January, was considered by the Committee.

Ensuing discussion included that the review would have benefited from scrutiny involvement at a much earlier stage and that the consultation should have been better communicated to ensure the public were aware of potential reductions to the service. Presentations to the Area Boards had not clearly indicated the potential reductions although recognition was given that since the consultation period a second tier of savings had been announced which had resulted in a requirement for further cost savings.

Ten libraries within Wiltshire would need to transfer to a voluntary service in order to remain open. There was also the capacity, beyond core hours, for volunteers to provide an extended opening hours service for those libraries staffed by the Council.

Although savings were required over the next two years there was confidence that communities were open to the idea of voluntary working.

The Chairman requested that the Committee endorse the recommendations of the Rapid Scrutiny Exercise.

Resolved:

- 1) **That the following additions are added to the Cabinet Report to clarify the identified 'savings':**
 - i) **full details of where savings will be achieved; and**

- ii) **A timeline listing when savings need to be realised;**
- 2) **That Cabinet agrees that communities who have expressed an interest in running their 'level 2 library' and are working towards that end are not prevented from doing so, and are treated flexibly, if unable to meet the September 2011 timescale, which the members felt to be ambitious;**
- 3) **In respect of the communications/consultation plan to emerge following Cabinet approval, that:**
 - i) **Overview & Scrutiny is invited to review this document before it is actioned; and**
 - ii) **The plan includes consultation with Area Boards, Town/Parish Councils and GROW and clearly demonstrates how the authority will ensure recruitment of sufficient and suitable volunteer numbers.**

125. **SAP Post Implementation Review**

The Committee at its previous meeting held in November resolved to advise the Cabinet Member and Audit Committee of the Committee's views on the post implementation review of the SAP system by KPMG.

An extract of the minutes from the Audit Committee was duly presented to the Select Committee for consideration and clarification provided that a seminar was to be held on SAP for scrutiny and audit committee members. Accordingly this item would remain on the Forward Work Programme for further consideration.

Resolved:

- 1) **To note the information provided.**
- 2) **To ensure SAP Post Implementation Review remained on the Committee's Forward Work Programme.**

126. **Budget and Performance Update**

The Chairman provided clarification that the publication of the monitoring reports would relate to the budget process itself and were expected to be considered by Cabinet on 8 February. Councillors were asked to consider the papers upon publication.

Members of the Committee were also requested to ensure the date of the Joint Scrutiny Budget meeting on 10 February was noted and that all non-executive members were invited to attend to comment on the budget recommendations prior to Full Council on 22 February.

127. **Task Group Updates**

ICT Task Group

A report was provided on the work of the Task Group which included a recommendation to extend the lifespan of the Group to cover the implementation of the new generation of information technology and software.

The Task Group had considered the developments in the programme for the handover of the help desk to the in-house team and had satisfied itself that the budget provision had not been exceeded; that the manpower planning was as advanced as possible in the circumstances and that the training programme for the new team had been satisfactorily delivered. In this latter respect, Councillor Hubbard had been privy to a training session and had conveyed to the Task Group a very favourable impression as to its efficacy.

Resolved:

- 1) **To extend the lifespan of the Task Group to cover the implementation of the new generation of information technology and software (e.g. Windows 7, VOIP) until the completion of the Workplace Transformation Programme at County Hall and Browfort.**
- 2) **To endorse the amended Terms of Reference as follows:**

The Task Group to scrutinise:

- i) **In-house ICT provision, including legacy softwares;**
- ii) **the proposed equipment and ways of working, and the proposal for trial by councillors and officers.**

Major Contracts Task Group

Resolved:

To note the update provided.

Partnerships Task Group

The Group would be looking to submit its final report to the Committee at its next meeting in March.

Resolved:

To note the update provided.

S106 Task Group

The Committee noted that a report had been submitted to the Cabinet Capital Assets Committee on 10 January where clarification was received that the Corporate Director Resources would now lead on ensuring that the S106 database was completed by May 2011.

Resolved:

- 1) To note the update provided.**
- 2) To note that the Task Group would continue to review progress made to complete the S106 database by May 2011.**

Workplace Transformation Task Group

An update on the outcome of meetings held on both 30 November 2010 and 7 January 2011 respectively was provided with the Agenda.

Specific attention was drawn to the information provided by the WTP Director and contained within the report which clarified that Councils were able to identify 'primary forums' or similar to coordinate and consider consultations and make recommendations to Cabinet or Council.

Such an approach had been adopted in Melksham where the Area Board had resolved to make itself and its meetings available as the formal consultation body on campus development matters between Wiltshire Council and the Melksham Community Area.

Resolved:

- 1) To note the update of the Workplace Transformation Task Group.**
- 2) To note the approach adopted by Melksham Area Board to be the formal consultation body on campus development matters between Wiltshire Council and the Melksham Community Area.**

128. Scrutiny Representation on Project Boards

Customer Focus Project Board

In addition to the update provided, the Committee was asked to note that the Customer Focus Project Board was now likely to be merged with the Shaping the Future Project Board who were responsible for developing the culture of the organisation. The Customer Focus Project Board had met on 19 January to discuss this further and would be requested to provide further details for consideration by the Committee.

Following consideration of the report to be provided a scrutiny representative was likely to be appointed as a representative of the new Board. Cllr Jacqui Lay expressed an interest as the representative.

Resolved:

That the Customer Focus Project Board would be requested to provide a report to the Committee with details of the potential merge of the Customer Focus and Shaping the Future Project Boards in March 2011.

Agency Contract Project Board

Resolved:

To note the update provided.

Staffing Management Executive Project Board

Resolved:

To note the update provided.

Revenue and Benefits Project Board

Clarification was provided that the Board had held its first meeting on 11 January where agreement had been reached on the platform to be used.

The Scrutiny representative would continue to update the Committee by exception.

Resolved:

To note the update provided.

129. **Forward Work Programme**

The Forward Work Programme would be updated with work arising from the meeting.

130. **Date of next Meeting**

24 March 2011.

131. **Urgent Items**

None.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 1.30 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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