

CORPORATE SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

16 SEPTEMBER 2010, 6.00pm

Panel Members Present Councillor M Longhi (Chair)
Councillor M Nazir (Vice-Chair)
Councillor M Flower
Councillor L Jeavons
Councillor J Rochelle
Councillor B Sanders
Councillor I Shires

Officers Present	Rory Borealis -	Executive Director (Resources)
	Darren Caveney -	Head of Communications
	Lisa Hemus -	Manager Employee Services, Human Resources Development
	Matt Lowe -	Business Analyst
	Paul Milmore -	Head of Business Solutions
	Martin Saddler -	Head of Shared Services & Procurement
	Steph Simcox -	Service Accounting & Financial Training Manager
	Nikki Ehlen –	Scrutiny Officer

Portfolio Holders Present Councillor Towe – Finance and personnel

14/10 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors R Burley, and D Turner.

15/10 SUBSTITUTIONS

There were no substitutions for the duration of the meeting.

16/10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest or party whip.

17/10 CHANGE IN THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

Pursuant to Part 4.1, paragraph 14 (C) of the Councils Constitution the Chair reported that item 10 would be received prior to item 5.

18/10 PRIVATE SESSION - EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the following item will require the exclusion of the public and press under section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 or schedule 12A of the Act.

19/10 PAYROLL SERVICE OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Officers presented the report.

RESOLVED

That the Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel recommend that option 3 (in-house development with invest to save proposals) is pursued, with the proviso that the investment needed should be assessed as appropriate against other need for investment and savings across the Council.

Exempt information under paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act, 1972 (as amended)

The meeting returned to public session.

20/10 MINUTES

The meeting returned to public session.

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2010, copies having previously circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.

21/10 COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE

The panel were informed that this report would provide the panel with information on the progress made by the communications unit, following the original value for money review in April 2009.

The success of social media was discussed and it was noted that this form of communication was low cost. The use of social media enabled the Council to engage with different groups of residents. Dan Slee was commended for his work on social media for the council.

The use of computers within libraries was discussed and it was highlighted that there was an opportunity to market the Councils services through the homepage. The Head of Communications informed members that officers were looking at an enhancement of the intranet.

The future of open data and other types of information that could be published

was explored. The Executive Director (Resources) suggested that freedom of information requests could be published as the Council received a lot of repeat requests. Publishing the responses would allow people to access the information more easily and also free up officer time.

The panel were informed that the number of press releases had increased due to demand by service areas and Cabinet members. This was due to this form of marketing being low cost. A representative from the local press was asked for his opinion on the number of press releases produced and distributed to the local press. In response, he stated that it was welcomed as they often relied on the Council's press releases, due to resource constraints. Members stated that press releases should not be used as a political tool and a balanced message should be communicated. Members suggested that the council website needed further work to make it more effective in its communication.

Councillor Sanders suggested that stickers on bins were an effective method of communication, (*Councillor Sanders declared an interest as a previous Cabinet Member*) as residents were guaranteed to see the communication.

Members acknowledged that not everyone was able to access social media and that it was important not to exclude this group when communicating to residents.

RESOLVED THAT; -

The Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel will consider a report on communications in 12 months. This should include monitoring information on people who may not access social media.

21/10 WORKING SMARTER

Members considered the report on the St Matthews pilot of the working smarter programme. Officers tabled a briefing note, milestone map and working smarter poster (tabled).

Members questioned how partners were applying the principles of working smarter as certain issues were duplicated across different agencies.

Officers suggested that change would be based upon the area partnerships. The portfolio holder for finance and personnel suggested that area committees needed to have decision makers in attendance to make a difference.

Officers explained that, in the St Matthews pilot, a significant amount of savings had been achieved by using social worker time more effectively. Taking people out of unnecessary care home placements by adapting their existing property had also contributed to the savings. The portfolio holder for finance and personnel suggested that the finance team were comfortable that the savings could be achieved.

The Chair asked members to consider establishing a working group at the next meeting to focus on the service re-design programme and specifically the 'new operating model for support services'. The Chair suggested that this may be established at its next meeting.

23/10 Quarterly Financial Monitoring

The panel considered the quarter one financial monitoring report for Corporate services. This report demonstrated that there were no substantial pressures causing an overspend.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the date of the next meeting was 15 November 2010.

The meeting terminated at 7.55 p.m.

Signed:

Date: