

## **CORPORATE SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL**

FRIDAY 10 DECEMBER 2010 AT THE COUNCIL HOUSE, WALSHALL

**Panel Members Present** Councillor M. Longhi (Chair)  
Councillor M. Nazir (Vice Chair)  
Councillor R. Burley  
Councillor M. Flower  
Councillor B. Sanders  
Councillor R. Jeavons  
Councillor R. Martin (Sub for Councillor J. Rochelle)  
Councillor I. Shires  
Councillor D. Turner

**Portfolio Holders Present** Councillor M. Bird – Leader  
Councillor M. Arif – Business Support Services  
Councillor C. Towe – Finance and Personnel

**Scrutiny Chairs Present** Councillor Beeley (Environment)

**Officers Present** Rory Borealis – Executive Director (Resources)  
Steph Simcox – Service Accounting and Financial Training Manager  
Neil Picken – Senior Constitutional Services Officer

### **38/10 APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Rochelle.

### **39/10 SUBSTITUTIONS**

Councillor Martin substituted for Councillor J Rochelle for this meeting only.

### **40/10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP**

There were no declaration of interest or party whip.

### **41/10 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANELS**

The Panel considered the report, tabled at the meeting, which set out the recommendations of the following Scrutiny and Performance Panels:-

- Children and Young People
- Community Services
- Environment

- Social Care and Inclusion (including contributions made by Members of the Health Scrutiny and Performance Panel).
- Regeneration

There then followed a discussion on the Social Care and Inclusion budget. In particular, reference was made to the proposed move from the fairer charging policy to a benefits based system. Members were advised that between 3 to 4 hundred people would be re-assessed. A minimum income guarantee would be in place to ensure that that all citizens and families have a basic assessed level of income prior to being charged.

In relation to aids and adaptations, it was noted that the budget had been increased to support people remaining in their homes rather than be placed into nursing care homes.

### **Resolved**

- 1) **That the proposed 2011/12 budget for services within the remit of the Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel be noted;**
- 2) **That the recommendations of the remaining Scrutiny and Performance Panels be noted;**

## **42/10 DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET PROPOSALS 2011/12 – COUNCIL WIDE POSITION**

The Panel considered the first draft revenue budget options for 2011/12, as submitted to Cabinet on 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2010.

Discussion ensued on the computer systems within the council. Members noted that there was a need to invest in the infrastructure to achieve savings and improve efficiencies. Officers were continually striving to ensure that services and goods were procured at the best possible price.

It was asked whether the executive saving within Children's Services to negotiate a reduction in cost of education services with Serco would affect provision of education. Members were assured that front line education services would not be affected. The issue was that the contract did not reflect the changing nature of support to schools as a result of the government policy to enable all schools to become academies outside of local authority control. The contract price needed to be altered accordingly through negotiation. There were also concerns raised in respect of Serco's performance and it was felt that profits should reflect performance levels.

In respect of the budget process it was stated that it was now much more open and transparent which was welcomed by all.

**Resolved**

**That the draft revenue budget proposals as presented to Cabinet on 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2010 be noted.**

**43/10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was noted as 28 January, 2011.

*The meeting closed at 6.35 p.m.*

Signed:

Date: