

CORPORATE SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

Thursday 8 April 2010 at 6.00pm

Panel Members Present Councillor Longhi (Chair)
Councillor Douglas-Maul
Councillor Rochelle
Councillor Turner
Councillor Yasin

Portfolio Holders Present Cllr Arif- Business Support Services
Cllr Towe- Finance and Personnel

Officers Present Rory Borealis- Executive Director (Resources)
Paul Milmore – Head of Business Solutions
Nikki Ehlen - Scrutiny Officer

66/09 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for the duration of this meeting.

67/09 SUBSTITUTIONS

There were no substitutions for the duration of this meeting.

68/09 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest or party whip identified at this meeting

69/09 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2010, copies having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.

70/09 WORKING SMARTER

The Portfolio Holders for Finance and Personnel and Business Support Services introduced the working smarter programme, detailing the aims of the programme as lowering operating costs and increasing customer value and satisfaction. The panel were informed that in the current financial climate the working smarter programme was crucial to ensure that services were improved and efficiencies were achieved. This would ensure that funds were used in the best way and better services were delivered. To do this it was important that all members of staff were involved and committed to the programme, as this was integral to its success.

Members were informed that as the Council had grown and responded to meet the demands of the Government and local people, its structure had become

disjointed and this often meant that processes were no longer as efficient as they could be. The objective of the management team was to create conditions in which staff could deliver more streamlined services, which have a greater impact. Members were assured that a staff suggestion scheme had been re-launched to encourage staff to come forward with ideas that could contribute to working smarter.

The Head of Business Solutions asked members to consider the working smarter presentation slides (tabled). The process that had been followed to date was described and it was explained that managers had started to look at services from a corporate view, rather than at service level. The primary focus of working smarter was providing services that customers wanted. Members agreed that the 'whole system' approach was the correct approach to take, but challenged how this would translate when considering those services provided alongside partners. Officers stated that the host of a service was not the critical issue this was how services were integrated.

The Portfolio Holder for Business Support Services confirmed that, along with the Executive Director for Resources, he was responsible for ensuring the success of the programme.

The Head of Business Solutions described recent activity and provided feedback on its outcomes. In terms of future activity the panel were informed that over the next 2/3 months the management team hoped to have an organisational model which was most appropriate for the future this would be maintained by creating an environment, which would allow the organisation to be most efficient. The Head of Business Solutions explained that in the next 3 months the management team would have a clearer idea of how change would be achieved.

Members agreed that outsourcing Council services to profit led organisations was evidence that the Council was not efficient and that the working smarter programme was long over due.

Officers were asked to bring proposals on working smarter to the panel to provide members with the opportunity to influence design. Members agreed that they were supportive of the working smarter programme. It was agreed that the Council should pursue increased efficiency whatever the financial climate.

Resolved

That the Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel is supportive of the working smarter programme and is kept informed and consulted on key proposals of the programme in the 2010/11 municipal year.

71/09 WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN

Councillor Turner requested a copy of the cabinet paper 17/10 'New Depot, Brownhills' was sent to all ward members in Brownhills.

That:

- 1. the forward plan issued on 8 March 2010 be noted, and;**
- 2. a copy of the 'New Depot, Brownhills' is sent to all ward members in Brownhills.**

72/09 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting would be set at annual adjourned Council on 26 May 2010.

The meeting terminated at 7.10pm.

Signed (Chair):

Date: