

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
18TH MAY 2010

PRESENT: The Chair (Councillor Jukes)
The Vice-chair (Councillor Burr)
Councillors Campbell, Duffy, Goss, M. Hunt, K. Jones,
S. Jones, Newton, Radford, Stork and Walker

The Deputy Director of Programmes and Resources attended as Lead Director for the Committee.

Items were considered at this meeting in a different order to that listed on the agenda, as follows: item 9, item 8, item 6, item 5, followed by remaining items in agenda order.

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23rd February 2010 were confirmed as a correct record and signed.

2. DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Disclosures of personal interest were made as follows:

- (i) by Councillors K. Jones, Jukes and Stork, as members of Charnwood Neighbourhood Housing Board. Following advice in respect of the matter, they would not take part in scrutiny of matters relating to Charnwood Neighbourhood Housing, leaving the meeting during any such discussions;
- (ii) by Councillor Stork, as a member of one of the groups referred to in item 9 (Climate Change Strategy Action Plan – Performance);
- (iii) by Councillor Lewis, as Company Secretary of Human Rights and Equalities Charnwood.

3. DECLARATIONS – THE PARTY WHIP

No declarations of the existence of the Party Whip were made.

4. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

A quarterly report of the Director of Governance and Procurement was submitted providing performance information for 2009/10 year end/quarter 4 (item 5 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Head of Performance and Audit attended the meeting to assist the Committee.

The Director of Development, the Director of Housing and Health and the Director of Leisure and Environment and Head of Environmental Services also attended to assist the Committee in respect of Indicators reported as Red (significantly off-target).

RESOLVED that the performance information for 2009/10 year end/quarter 4 be noted.

Reason

The information in the report is necessary to the Committee's role of monitoring the Council's performance in delivering the Council's objectives.

5. EQUALITY STANDARD (FRAMEWORK) FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT – PROGRESS

A report of the Director of Leisure and Environment was submitted to update the Committee on actions currently being undertaken with regard to the Equality Standard across the Council (item 6 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Lead Member for Equalities, Councillor Lewis, attended to assist the Committee. He was assisted by the Director of Leisure and Environment. The Director of Leisure and Environment noted a view expressed by the Committee that staff members acting as Equalities Champions/an Equalities Officer Group would be useful.

RESOLVED

1. that the actions being taken with regard to the Equality Standard across the Council be noted;
2. that a further report outlining progress in respect of the Equality Standard be submitted to the Committee's meeting on 22nd March 2011.

Reasons

1. Although concern was expressed that there had been some delay in progressing beyond Level 2 of the Equality Standard, having considered the information, the Committee had no actions that it wished to include as part of its decision.
2. The Committee wished to continue to monitor progress as work outlined in the report progressed and outcomes were available, including in respect of Equality Impact Assessments and analysis of workforce profiles.

6. FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS – COMPLIANCE WITH FOOD HYGIENE LAW (NI 184)

A report of Director of Housing and Health was submitted outlining NI 184 “food establishments in the area which were broadly compliant with food hygiene law”, information on the enforcement actions being taken for non-compliant establishments and publicity for those businesses which were compliant (item 7 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Director of Housing and Health and the Head of Environmental Health attended to assist the Committee.

RESOLVED that the information relating to compliance with food hygiene law and the work of the Food Safety Team be noted.

Reason

Having considered the information, the Committee had no areas of concern or actions that it wished to include as part of its decision.

7. RENT ARREARS

Having declared interests, Councillors K. Jones, Jukes and Stork left the meeting during the consideration of this matter. This item was chaired by Councillor Burr.

A report of the Director of Housing and Health was submitted providing an update on the position with Rent Arrears at the end of the financial year 2009/10 (item 8 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Director of Housing and Health attended to assist the Committee, together with Charnwood Neighbourhood Housing’s Director of Housing Operations.

RESOLVED

1. that the position with Rent Arrears be noted;
2. that a further position report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee (17th August 2010), to include improved profiling information.

Reasons

1. Having considered the report, the Committee had no areas of concern or actions that it wished to include as part of its decision.
2. It was noted that a reduction in Rent Arrears had been achieved. However, the Committee wished to continue to monitor the position. While the

Committee wished to ensure action was being taken in respect of Rent Arrears, it also recognised the need to take into account the vulnerabilities involved in many cases. Inclusion of profiling information in the further report would assist the Committee in better understanding those vulnerabilities.

8. CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY ACTION PLAN - PROGRESS

An annual report of the Director of Housing and Health was submitted setting out progress in implementing the Council's Climate Change Strategy 2005-10 (item 9 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Director of Housing and Health, the Head of Environmental Health and the Sustainable Development Officer attended to assist the Committee.

In response to a view that the issue of air quality needed to be addressed as part of the Climate Change Strategy given the relationship between the two, the Director of Housing and Health referred to the Scrutiny Commission's consideration of the new Climate Change Strategy 2010-13 at its next meeting. Issues for inclusion in that new Strategy could be picked up as part of that process.

RESOLVED that progress on implementing the Council's Climate Change Strategy 2005-10 be noted.

Reason

Having considered the information, the Committee had no areas of concern or actions that it wished to include as part of its decision.

9. HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES

A quarterly report of the Interim Chief Executive was submitted to update the Committee on the position with a number of Human Resources issues (item 10 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Deputy Director of Programmes and Resources assisted the Committee with this matter. Further to the report, he provided an explanation of the 2009/10 Grounds Maintenance overspend on agency staff. In response to a request, he stated that it should be possible to include information on job applications received by gender/ethnic group in future Human Resources Issues reports.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Reason

The information in the report is useful to the Committee's role of monitoring the Council's performance. Having considered the report, the Committee had no areas of concern or actions that it wished to include as part of its decision.

10. WORK PROGRAMME

A report of the Deputy Director of Programmes and Resources was submitted to assist the Committee in considering its work programme for forthcoming meetings (item 11 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

RESOLVED

1. that the Council's performance in respect of Fly Tipping and Graffiti be monitored by the Committee via the quarterly Performance Indicator reports it receives, rather than via separate reports;
2. that the further report on Free Swimming due to be considered at this meeting be rescheduled to the Committee's meeting on 30th November 2010;
3. that the issue Leisure and Culture Best Value Improvement Plan be deleted from the work programme;
4. that following approval by Council on 26th April 2010 of the new Treasury Management Strategy Statement, quarterly Treasury Management reports be considered by this Committee in 2010/11 as follows:

To end Quarter 1 (30 June 2010) and Out-turn 2009/10 – 17th August 2010;
To end Quarter 2 (30 September 2010) – 30th November 2010;
To end Quarter 3 (31 December 2010) – 22nd March 2011;
5. that Borrowing under Prudential Guidelines reports remain as currently programmed (Out-turn 2009/10 – 17th August 2010 (amended from 18th May 2010 as this was incorrectly programmed) and Mid-year Report – 30th November 2010), but as separate reports from the above Treasury Management Reports;
6. that the issue Older Persons' Housing Strategy Action Plan – Monitoring Progress be added to the work programme, to be considered in six months time (30th November 2010) and on a six monthly basis thereafter;
7. that the issue Oaks Business Centre, Sileby – Vacant Units be added to the work programme for consideration at the next meeting (17th August 2010);
8. that the Scrutiny Commission be informed that the Committee wishes to proceed on the basis of the following work programme, which incorporates all decisions made at this meeting:

Cabinet Lead Members should be invited where Chair/Vice-chair consider appropriate.

Quarterly/Annual/Ongoing Reports

ISSUE	MEETING
Performance Indicators	Quarterly. 17th August 2010. Directors (or appropriate substitutes) to attend in respect of Indicators reported as Red (significantly off target).
Human Resource Issues	Quarterly. 17th August 2010.
Treasury Management	To end Quarter 1 2010/11 and Out-turn 2009/10 - 17th August 2010. To end Quarter 2 2010/11 – 30th November 2010. To end Quarter 3 2010/11 – 22nd March 2010.
Borrowing under Prudential Guidelines	Annual Report (2009/10 Outturn) 17th August 2010. Mid Year Report 30th November 2010.
Capital Monitoring including Out-turn	Ongoing. 17th August 2010, 30th November 2010 and 22nd March 2011.
Revenue Monitoring (General Fund and HRA) including Out-turn	Ongoing. 30th November 2010 and 22nd March 2011.
Older Persons' Housing Strategy – Progress on Action Plan	Every Six Months. First report – 30th November 2010.
Climate Change Strategy Action Plan – Progress	Annually May 2011.

One-off Reports

Oaks Business Centre, Sileby – Vacant Units	17th August 2010.
Rent Arrears - Update	17th August 2010. Further position report following consideration on 24th November 2009 and 18th May 2010. Director of Housing and Health and representative of CNH to attend.
Review of Arrangements for Managing Projects and Programmes – Outcome	17th August 2010.
Free of Charge Swimming for Under 16 and Over 60 Year Olds – Impact	30th November 2010. Further position report following consideration on 23rd February 2010.

Equality Framework for Local Government – Progress	22nd March 2011. Further position report following consideration on 18th May 2010.
Non-contact Technology	Brief report on what it involves/how it might be employed by Council. <i>To be programmed.</i>

Reasons

1. The Committee had considered separate reports on this matter in November 2009 and February 2010 and, having considered the information submitted, had no areas of concern it wished to include as part of its decision. Therefore, considering performance in this area as part of the quarterly Performance Indicator report would be sufficient and would enable the Committee to focus on issues where performance was of more concern.
2. The Committee had considered a report on the matter at its last meeting on 23rd February 2010 and there was no additional information to report for this meeting.
3. The issue had been listed on the work programme for some time, having been originally included by the former Performance and Management Scrutiny Committee. The issue was no longer relevant.
- 4 & 5. The Head of Financial Services had advised that, following approval of the new Treasury Management Strategy Statement, there was a requirement to submit quarterly Treasury Management reports to this Committee and it was appropriate to include those on the work programme to assist an achievable scrutiny workload. Given the new requirement, it was necessary to separate Treasury Management and Borrowing under Prudential Guidelines reports accordingly on the work programme.
6. The Scrutiny Commission, at its meeting on 13th April 2010, had considered progress with implementation of the Council's Older Persons' Housing Strategy and had asked that the Performance Scrutiny Committee monitor progress on the Action Plan in six months time, and on a six monthly basis thereafter.
7. The Committee was concerned about vacant units at the Centre and wished to consider how that position might be improved.
8. The Committee considered its programme and amended it to provide a useful and achievable scrutiny workload over scheduled meetings in the future. That would also enable planning for future meetings of the Committee, reports to be prepared and attendances to be arranged.

Notes:

1. No reference may be made to these minutes at the Council meeting on 28th June 2010 unless notice to that effect is given to the Head of Democratic Services by five members of the Council no later than five working days following the publication of the minutes.
2. These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record of the Committee's decisions (at the next meeting of the Committee).