

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 21 May 2007

Present: Councillor Dennis Edgerley (Chair), Councillors Laura Lennox, Kenneth Ball, Alan Cain, Mrs Marie Gray, Miss Margaret Iddon, Margaret Lees, Greg Morgan, Edward Smith and Mrs Iris Smith

07.OS.40 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Harold Heaton and Geoffrey Russell.

07.OS.41 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

None of the Members declared any interests in relation to matters under consideration at the meeting.

07.OS.42 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 27 March 2007 be received as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

07.OS.43 EXECUTIVE CABINET - 24 MAY 2007

No reports on the agenda for the Executive Cabinet meeting held on 27 March 2007 were considered for discussion.

07.OS.44 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee received the Council's Forward Plan setting out details of the key executive decisions expected to be taken between 1 May 2007 to 31 August 2007.

Members expressed concern as to whether the column relating to "Executive Decisions can be taken" was meaningful.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

07.OS.45 CORPORATE FOURTH QUARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT, 2006/07 - MONITORING REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31 MARCH 2007

The Director of Policy and Performance (Assistant Chief Executive) submitted the fourth quarter performance monitoring report including the authority's performance in relation to the Corporate Strategy and the Council's Best Value Performance Indicators for 2006/07.

The report indicated the full list of Best Value Performance Indicators that were relevant to this Council and which are collected in accordance with definitions issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government. The report impacted on all of the Corporate Priorities as the areas of performance covered by the report related to all four of the Council's priorities.

Overall the performance of key projects year-end was excellent, with the majority of projects performing as planned. The report indicated that good progress had been made within the last quarter, with a number of projects completed and delivering real

outcomes. In all, 73% of those corporate strategy indicators which can be measured at this stage in delivery of the corporate strategy were achieving target.

The report showed that the organisation was continuing to deliver excellent performance in terms of outcomes and with the authority moving into the next municipal year the Council would be focussing on target setting and continued effective performance management to ensure that it continued to improve and excellence continued.

During the course of considering the report, Members raised queries and requested further information relating to the following issues:

Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment

- Refuse and Recycling Collection
Linked to satisfaction with the Refuse and Recycling Collection – missed collections, performance assisted collections (quality of service and missed collections), complaints regarding refuse and recycling collection received (via the Contact Centre and directly to contractors) enquiries received regarding refuse collection in the Contact Centre.
- Pollution Control Improvements
A detailed breakdown of the indicator – definition, number of improvements, dates and timescales for delivery, further information regarding the drop in performance. Has performance as reported in previous years actually reached the levels reported?
- Under Completed Key Projects (Pilot innovative ways of reassuring our communities) which have completed in the final quarter between January and March 2007 a report to the Committee requested on what is planned and what has been done on the alleygate schemes following better funding and revised acceptance criteria introduced to remove obstacles to projects.
- Under Completed Key Projects (Reconfigure current service delivery arrangements to improve the provision of streetscene service) a member requested clarification on the efficiencies introduced by re-tendering the Graffiti Removal and Public Toilet Cleaning and Maintenance Contracts.

Returning Officer

- Linked to the percentage of people satisfied with opportunities to participate in local decision making.

What action do we take to keep the electoral register up to date? What action do we take when people fail to return an electoral registration form? Do we work from a zero base on the electoral register?

Development and Regeneration

- Number of affordable housing units – general input around what action is being taken to drive up performance.
- Vacant Town Centre Floor Space – more detailed breakdown of vacant floor space in various areas of the Town Centre. More details about the actions being taken to drive up performance.
- Local Plan Milestones – What were the stages which were missed? Are there likely to be further delays in the Municipal Year?

RESOLVED – 1) That the report be noted.

2) That the Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment and the Returning Officer (Chief Executive) submit a report to the Committee at its meeting on Monday, 25 June 2007 on the specific issues outlined above.

3) That the Director of Development and Regeneration submit a report to the Committee at its meeting on Thursday, 2 August 2007 on the specific issues outlined above.

4) That the Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment respond to Members requests for a report regarding alleygate schemes and clarification regarding efficiencies introduced by re-tendering the graffiti removal and public toilet cleaning and maintenance contracts.

07.OS.46 BUSINESS PLAN MONITORING STATEMENT - POLICY AND PERFORMANCE DIRECTORATE

The Director of Policy and Performance (Assistant Chief Executive) submitted the Business Plan Monitoring Statement relating to her Directorate, identifying the progress made against the key actions and performance indicators for the period 1 January to 31 March 2007.

The report indicated the activities of the Directorate and in particular the key messages such as the success of taking forward a number of key projects contained within the Corporate Strategy. Good progress had been made with the further strengthening of the Directorate's approach to performance management with the aim of driving forward real improvements.

The Directorate played a key role in relation to improving community cohesion within the Borough as well as the work relating to preparation for a future CPA re-inspection and raising the profile of the Council.

Other key areas of work in this final quarter of the year the report related to the communications and marketing.

Overall the Directorate had made significant progress on developing and strengthening the approach to data quality, business planning and equality and diversity, all areas, which will have a positive impact on any future CPA re-assessment.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

07.OS.47 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee was presented with the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for the ensuing Municipal Year.

The programme included the envisaged timescale for the ongoing scrutiny inquiries and the planned details of the periodic monitoring of past inquiries.

Members raised a few issues including what progress had been made on Job Evaluation.

RESOLVED – That the work programme be noted and that this Committee receives at its next meeting on 25 June 2007 a report on the progress made to date on job evaluation, with the report outlining the tasks completed, the outstanding issues to be addressed and the potential risks such as equal pay claims, salary reduction and other costs.

Chair