

Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 7 June 2007

Present: Councillor Greg Morgan (Chair) (Chair) and Councillors Magda Cullens, Michael Devaney, Anthony Gee, Miss Margaret Iddon, Kevin Joyce and Rosemary Russell

07.ECS.13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Nora Ball, Doreen Dickinson, Catherine Hoyle, Roy Lees, Adrian Lowe, Marion Lowe, Michael Muncaster and Shaun Smith.

07.ECS.14 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

No Members declared any interest in relation to matters under consideration at the meeting.

07.ECS.15 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 22 March 2007 be confirmed as a correct record.

07.ECS.16 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No member of the public requested to speak at the meeting.

07.ECS.17 BUSINESS PLAN MONITORING STATEMENTS - PERIOD 1 JANUARY TO 31 MARCH 2007

The Panel received the fourth quarter Business Plan Monitoring Statement for the period December 2006 to April 2007 relating to the undermentioned Directorates whose service and function all fall within the remit and area of responsibility of the Panel.

- Leisure and Culture
- Development and Regeneration
- Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment

The Panel received the Business Plan for the Leisure and Cultural Services Directorate. The Director informed the Panel that the only area of his service that had not reached the performance target was that of processing of invoices within 30 working days. It was pointed out that this was an issue which every directorate was currently coming to terms with and action taken to improve the service.

However, the Committee expressed concern that this issue had been at this level of performance for several months and that immediate action was now required to improve performance as it was considered to be an important indicator reflecting on the Council's payments to suppliers etc.

The Director of Development and Regeneration presented the Panel with her Business Plan for her Directorate. All key projects set out in the Business Plan were on track.

Members congratulated the Director on the tremendous improvements that had been made to service delivery to customers, reflected in an increase in customer

satisfaction from 61% to 76%. The Planning Services Team was keen to build on this success and were prepared to implement a 3 year action plan to help to continue the success.

The Panel received the Business Plan relating to the Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment Directorate. The Director indicated the performance variation for the number of missed collections per 100,000 collections of household waste had improved but was still slightly below target. Various initiatives had been taken up with the contractor to drive up collection performance and reduce missed collections.

Other areas of poor performance related to racist and offensive graffiti removal within 2 working days, invoices processed within 30 working days and sickness absence days with the Director pointing out that the Corporate target was 9.00 working days. Action plans had been compiled to address these issues.

RESOLVED – 1) That the report be noted.

2) That the Director of Finance be requested to submit a report to the next meeting of the Panel on the processing of invoices within 30 working days, providing an analysis of where and reasons for the delays which are causing the current fall in the performance target and whether the system is working across the authority.

3) That the Director of Human Resources be requested to inform the Panel at its next meeting on the management of sickness absence across the authority, indicating how the figures are arrived at and the split in the figures between short term and long term sickness.

07.ECS.18 NEIGHBOURHOOD WORKING - INQUIRY

The Director of Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment reported on the current position with regard to the Panel's ongoing inquiry into neighbourhood working, indicating that a visit was planned provisionally for 27 June 2007 to Bolton where neighbourhood working was being conducted in the Great Lever area of the authority.

A final witness hearing was due to take place with the Chair of the Panel and the Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Executive Leader and Executive Member for Streetscene, Neighbourhoods and Environment.

A draft report of the Inquiry's findings had been completed but required input from the findings from the above meetings.

Chair