

Corporate and Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel - Efficiency Gains Sub-Group

Wednesday, 28 November 2007

Present: Councillor Mrs Stella Walsh (Chair) and Councillors Mike Devaney, Kevin Joyce, June Molyneaux and Geoffrey Russell

Also in attendance: Gary Hall (Assistant Chief Executive (Business Transformation)) James Douglas (Business Improvement Manager) and Ruth Hawes (Assistant Democratic Services Officer)

25. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Henry Caunce, Michael Davies, David Dickinson, Keith Iddon, Thomas McGowan and Michael Muncaster.

26. DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest by Members relating to the items on the agenda.

27. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate and Customer Overview and Scrutiny Panel - Efficiency Gains Sub-Group held on 6 November 2007 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

28. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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

29. QUESTION SETTING FOR THE FEEDBACK SESSION WITH THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION)

Members considered the draft questions enclosed with the agenda, made several amendments and allocated questions to each Member for the feedback session with the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Transformation) at the next item.

30. FEEDBACK FROM ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION)

The Chair welcomed Gary Hall to the meeting and thanked him attending the meeting. The feed back session comprised questions and answers collated into a schedule enabling comparison with those responses given by other Directors.

31. CONSIDERING EVIDENCE

The Audit Commission site visit to the Council on 23 November had been a success, with positive feedback having been received. A report had been prepared outlining the background information requested by the Audit Commission, this would be forwarded to Members for their information.

Officers explained that information had been requested from the Audit Commission nearest neighbours and the two District Councils who had achieved 4 in the Use of Resources assessment. The response so far had been disappointing and the website that displayed Annual Efficiency Statements had not released the information it had been due to. It was AGREED that officers present the report in January, in the hope that further information will have been received.

Officers reported that performance indicator information for each Directorate was considered to enable any areas where performance has reduced. 74% of performance indicators have improved over last 3 yrs and the Council is above the average 65% for Local Authorities.

There was a change in the reporting mechanism for performance as the current Best Value Performance Indicators would no longer be used. There were 200 indicators currently out for consultation, with one specifically relating to efficiency. Background information on this would be forwarded to Members.

There was an opportunity for Members to retain performance indicators locally, for example sickness absence. This would be considered further at the January meeting.

32. FEEDBACK FROM IDENTIFIED WITNESSES

The Sub-Group agreed to invite additional officers to give feedback on efficiencies including the Corporate Procurement and Partnerships Manager, Customer Access Officer, External Auditor and Assistant Chief Executive (Business Transformation) (to give feedback on the Neighbourhoods Directorate).

It was AGREED that the Democratic Services Officer email the questions for Directors to Sub-Group Members requesting any comments by Friday 16 November. The questions would then be forwarded to those Directors due to give feedback on 13 and 17 December.

Members requested some background on procurement for the meeting in January.

33. INQUIRY DOCUMENTATION AND ACTION PLAN

The Sub-Group considered the Inquiry documentation and AGREED the additions to the Information and Witness checklists.

34. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- 13 December 2007
- 17 December 2007
- 30 January 2008

Chair