

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

13 October 2005

Present: Councillor J Walker (Chair) and Councillors E Bell, Mrs P Case, M Davies, P Goldsworthy, T McGowan, R Parr, M Perks and Mrs S Walsh

05.OS.50 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs Wilson.

05.OS.51 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

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

05.OS.52 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 6 September 2005 be confirmed as a correct record for signature by the Chairman, subject to Minute 05.OS.44 being amended to reflect the following Minute 05.EC.100 of the Executive Cabinet.

“That all draft policy and strategy documents be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for scrutiny before they are agreed for consultation purposes.”

05.OS.53 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BUSINESS PLAN MONITORING STATEMENTS APRIL- JULY 2005

The Committee received the first quarter updates of the Business Plan for the period April – July 2005 for Corporate and Policy Services, Human Resources, Legal Services and Financial Services.

The Committee raised specific issues relating to efficiency savings under Gershon performance indicators in relation to the percentage of residents who feel that the Borough is a ‘fairly safe’ or ‘very safe’ place to live and sickness absence performance.

The updated reports highlighted:

- The areas where problems were being experienced in achieving and progress made on service improvements.
- Performance monitoring information for all Best Value Performance Indicators and other local indicators and whether they were on target for 2005/06.

It was AGREED:

- 1. That the Business Plan for the first quarter be noted.**
- 2. That the Director of Legal Services present the Business Plan relating to Legal Services to the next meeting of the Committee on 17 November 2005.**
- 3. That the Corporate Procurement Officer and Councillor Ball, the Executive Member for Effective Service Delivery and Procurement be invited to attend the meeting of the Committee on 19 January 2006 to discuss the Council’s procurement policy, following consideration by the Executive**

Cabinet in December 2005 on the progress against the milestones contained in the National Local Government Procurement Strategy.

The Committee **AGREED** to note the report.

05.OS.54 PROGRESS ASSESSMENT REPORT

The Committee received a report of the Chief Executive incorporating a copy of the "Progress Assessment Report" from the Audit Commission received in July 2005 which gave details of the progress made on issues identified in the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment 2004.

The Committee **AGREED** to note the report.

05.OS.55 CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2004 - 2007 (V.7) UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Group Director A on the current position in respect of the delivery of the Corporate Improvement Plan 2004 – 2007, with an updated version of the Plan attached.

The report indicated from the Plan that good progress had been achieved across a broad range of areas and that many of the planned actions had now been completed.

The current work was based on revising the format and presentation of the Plan which was designed to take account of such factors as deletion of the key action that had been achieved and the inclusion of new key action that had been identified.

The revised Plan would be presented to the Executive Cabinet on 3 November then to this Committee on 17 November 2005 for consideration.

The Committee **AGREED** that updates of the Corporate Improvement Plan would be submitted to the Committee on a regular basis in the future.

05.OS.56 REVENUE BUDGET 2005/06 - MONITORING

The Committee received from the Director of Finance the current financial position of the Council, compared against the budgets and efficiency saving targets it had set itself for 2005/06 for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account.

The Committee noted the loss of revenue from Local Land Charge fees and the effects of this on the budget.

The Committee welcomed the opportunity to comment on the revenue monitoring report.

It was AGREED:

- 1. That the report be noted and the Budget Monitoring reports be submitted to the Committee on a regular basis.**
- 2. That the Director of Finance submits to a future meeting of the Committee comparison figures of neighbouring authorities on the loss of income of Local Land Charge fees.**

05.OS.57 CAPITAL BUDGET 2005/06 - MONITORING

The Committee received from the Director of Finance a report on the proposed additional schemes that had been made to the 2005/06 Capital Programme and the split of the programmes into categories based on the stage of approval of the schemes.

The Committee noted the drop in Council house sales and how this had an impact on the programme and the requirement to borrow.

It was AGREED that the report be noted.

05.OS.58 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee received the Council's current Forward Plan which set out details of the key decisions which the Executive Cabinet, individual Executive Members or officers were expected to take during the four month period commencing from 1 October 2005.

The Committee noted that a number of items were scheduled to have been dealt with at the end of September and the Chairman intimated that he would wish to question the Executive Member.

Reference was made to the consultations on the merging of the Primary Care Trusts in Lancashire and whether the Council had been consulted. Since the meeting it had been ascertained that a response had been submitted by the Chief Executive before the 30 September deadline.

It was AGREED that the Plan be noted.

05.OS.59 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS

The Committee receive and noted the update reports from the Associate Chairs on the recent activities of their respective Panels.

05.OS.60 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (ENCLOSED)

The Committee received and noted the work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its three associated Panels for the remainder of 2005/06, which illustrated the status of current inquiries, ongoing items and issues currently being monitored.

Chair