

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Special Meeting)

Thursday, 16 February 2006

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

06.OS.11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Davies and Mrs Wilson.

06.OS.12 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

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

06.OS.13 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2005/06 - MONITORING REPORT

The Head of Corporate and Policy Services submitted a monitoring report on the Service Unit's performance against the respective Key Performance Indicators and Best Value Performance Indicators for the 2005/06 third quarter period ending on 31 December 2005.

The report identified, in respect of each service area, whether the performance was (i) achieving or exceeding its target for 2005/06, (ii) within a tolerance level, or (iii) significantly worse than planned or worse than the previous year. The data also indicated whether performance was improving, worsening or remaining static during the quarterly reporting periods and included explanatory comments from the officers on appropriate selected areas.

The Committee noted that errors in the printing process had resulted in a few incorrect 'direction of travel' icons being illustrated in the data, and reasons for the areas where performance was not meeting the requisite targets.

A number of Members expressed their perceived dissatisfaction with the collections of litter and the removal of graffiti throughout the Borough. It was accepted that there was a need for a review of the means by which the public's awareness of street cleanliness issues and the potential penalties for deposited litter could be promoted more effectively.

It was **AGREED** to note the report.

06.OS.14 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANELS

The Committee received a report from each of the three Overview and Scrutiny Panels presenting the comments made at each of their meetings regarding the spending on Environmental Services, Revenues and Benefits and Planning Services.

Each of the services had been identified to be looked at in more detail because they appeared as upper quartile costs in the Value for Money (VFM) Self Assessment undertaken by the Audit Commission. The purpose of the Scrutiny of each of the services was to explore in more detail why the services were showing in the upper quartile in cost terms, to establish if the Council's policy objectives were being met

and to determine whether value for money was being achieved from the Audit Commission's benchmark findings.

Each of the reports submitted by the Environment, Customer and Community Overview and scrutiny Panels set out the answers to the questions given by the Executive Member responsible for that service.

Each Panel came to a conclusion with a number of recommendations for this Committee to consider and submit to the Executive Cabinet as part of the 2006/2007 budget consultation exercise.

In relation to the proposal for transferring the management of the Council's Community Centres to not-for-profit Voluntary Management Committees as reported in the draft General Fund Revenue Budget document, it was requested that the timescale for implementation for the Astley area be made sooner than later.

The Committee **AGREED** that the following recommendations be approved and be submitted to the Executive Cabinet as part of the Councils 2006/07 budget consultation exercise.

1. That the Executive Cabinet be requested to pursue the provision of more detailed comparative data from the Audit Commissions' 'family tree' authorities, particularly in relation to the output, cost and quality of services, in order to enable a more reasonable value for money assessment of the whole of the Council's Environmental Health Service, Revenues and Benefits Service and Planning Service.
2. What steps will the Executive Cabinet take to achieve a better understanding of the perception gap in the measurement of residents satisfaction with standards of cleanliness within the Street Cleaning Contract.
3. The Executive Cabinet is requested to examine the quality of design of litter bins and the capability of the contractors Cleanaway to emptying the litter bins whilst on collection rounds.
4. The Executive Cabinet is requested to ensure that high profile cases on enforcement are publicised.
5. The Executive Cabinet is requested to ensure the enforcement of the management of the Cleanaway contract and that they clean up whilst waste collecting.
6. The Executive Cabinet is requested to introduce policy targets for the Neighbourhood Wardens relating to their street scene duties.
7. The Executive Cabinet is requested to examine the need for improved co-ordination of services to bring efficiency. Particular attention should be paid to problem areas and neighbourhoods as well as a wider promotion of the hot line number.
8. What steps will the Executive Cabinet take to ensure that the high-quality service the public is receiving from the Revenues and Benefits service is maintained when the service moves into the Contact Centre?
9. The Executive Cabinet is requested to undertaken a consistent and measured review of all services via the Procurement Strategy for the delivery of value for money services.

10. That action be taken to introduce effective performance indicators for planning enforcement work.

06.OS.15 TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2006/07

The Committee received the draft timetable of meetings for the Municipal Year 2006/07 proposing the dates for meetings of the Council, Executive Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny Committee/Panels, the various Committees, Area Form Pilots and Liaison Groups.

In relation to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee it was pointed out that it was proposed that meetings would be held two days prior to the Executive Cabinet to enable the Committee to scrutinise the reports to be considered by the Executive Cabinet and to enable the comments of the Committee to be reported to and taken into account by the Executive Cabinet.

Chair