

## **SCRUTINY BOARD (CENTRAL AND CORPORATE)**

**MONDAY, 1ST NOVEMBER, 2010**

**PRESENT:** Councillor P Grahame in the Chair

Councillors S Bentley, D Blackburn,  
B Chastney, M Hamilton, A Lowe, J Hardy,  
K Groves, J L Carter and R Wood

### **40 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **41 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Gabriel and Taggart.

### **42 Minutes - 15 September and 4 October 2010**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meetings held on 15 September and 4 October 2010 be confirmed as correct records.

### **43 Performance Management Arrangements**

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development referred to the recent letter of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP, which informed of changes to Local Authority Performance Arrangements linked to the Local Area Agreements and National Indicator Set.

The Chair welcomed Steve Clough, Head of Corporate Policy and Performance to the meeting. Members attention was brought to the following issues:

- In relation to performance management, local authorities were being encouraged to choose their own priorities based on local needs and knowledge.
- The Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) had been withdrawn but it remained important to retain a clear focus on what the Council's priorities were and how to monitor performance and demonstrate success and achievements.
- Local Government Association (LGA) proposals on Performance Management.
- The role that Scrutiny Boards held in supporting Performance Management.

In response to Members comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- Peer reviews and working with other authorities – the LGA proposals put forward arrangements for peer working.
- Regulation and inspection would continue in Children’s Services and Adult’s Services via Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).
- Demonstrating value for money across all services was flagged as a potential priority issue to focus on.
- Performance management would be reflected in the Council Business Plan with clear targets and aspirations outlined.
- Performance indicators needed to be focussed on outcomes that were meaningful to local people. It was recognised that there were difficulties producing indicators that measured value for money but issues such as cost units for work could be shown and used comparatively against other service provision.
- Central Government would have less influence over Performance Management arrangements, particularly with the decommissioning of the Audit Commission.
- The need to ensure clear priorities and to ensure Performance Management arrangements are useful to Scrutiny Boards.
- Partnership working – areas of joint concern with other providers such as the Police and Health Service partners.
- Recognised difficulties in providing comparisons with other authorities due to differing priorities.
- Proposals to publicise performance arrangements. Information was awaited on how regularly performance information should be published.

The Chair thanked Steve Clough for his attendance.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

#### **44 Approach to New Equality and Diversity Scheme 2011-14**

The report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement) outlined proposals for the approach to develop the Council’s equality priorities and how to meet new legislative requirements. It considered how progress would be measured and how the Council could continue to improve and further embed the equality agenda. It also provided an overview of the Equality Framework for Local Government and proposed that the equality priorities and organisational approach to embedding equality and its performance management be articulated within the new Equality and Diversity Scheme 2011-14.

The Chair welcomed Lelir Yeung, Head of Equality and Anne McMaster, Strategic Equality Manager to the meeting.

Members attention was brought to the following issues:

- Legislative changes and the Equality Act 2010
- How to embed equality into decision making
- Legal challenges that had been made in respect of equality issues
- Development of the Equality and Diversity Scheme and incorporating equality issues into the Vision for Leeds and other Council plans and strategies
- Compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

In response to Members comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- Training on equality issues for Elected Members and senior officers particularly in their role as decision makers.
- Equality impacts on staff who had considered severance packages under the Early Leavers Initiative – it was reported that work was taking place to ensure that equality impact assessments were carried out. This also applied where restructuring and job evaluation was taking place.
- The ALMOs had signed up to the Equality Framework and had specialist support from a dedicated member of the Equality Team.
- Members requested information on whether legal aid had been made available in cases of the legal challenges on equality issues and how equality issues had been addressed within delegated decisions.

The Chair thanked Lelir Yeung and Anne McMaster for their attendance.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) That the report be noted
- (2) That the proposed approach to the development of the new Equality and Diversity Scheme be approved.

(Councillors Chastney and Lowe declared personal interests in this item due to their respective positions on the boards of the West North West Homes ALMO and Aire Valley Homes)

## **45 Work Programme**

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development outlined the Board's forthcoming Work Programme and also included the Forward Plan of Key Decisions and recent Executive Board minutes.

The Board was informed of forthcoming items for the Agenda and discussed potential future items of business, this included the following:

- ICT
- Leeds City Region Governance Arrangements

It was also agreed to invite the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to a future meeting.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted and work programme be amended accordingly.

**46 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Monday, 6 December 2010 at 10.00 a.m. (Pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.30 am.)