

SCRUTINY BOARD (CENTRAL AND CORPORATE)

MONDAY, 4TH APRIL, 2011

PRESENT: Councillor P Grahame in the Chair

Councillors S Bentley, D Blackburn,
B Chastney, J Hardy, K Groves, R Wood
and A Gabriel

82 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the final meeting of the 2010/11 Municipal Year. She thanked Members for their contributions over the previous year and for their excellent contributions to the successful recommendations that had been implemented following the Board's work.

83 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

84 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors L Carter, A Lowe and M Hamilton.

85 Minutes - 7 March 2011

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2011 be confirmed as a correct record.

86 Matters arising from the minutes

Minute No. 77 Scrutiny of the Budget and Performance Reports

Information on Staff Appraisals would be circulated to the Board.

87 Scrutiny Board Working Group Update

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development reminded the Board of the working group that had been established to look at the reporting of missed bin collection and how this was dealt with through the contact centre and Streetscene and reported back to the customer.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Paul Broughton, Chief Customer Services Officer
- Sue Upton, Head of Waste Management

- Julie Snowdon, Customer Services Development Manager

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

- Use of tasking sheets and links to performance related pay.
- Use of tracking systems on refuse collection vehicles – not all systems had real time available information to be able to provide immediate responses.
- Concern regarding the length of time sometimes taken to register complaints. This was an issue that was currently under consideration and it was reported that the system needed to be simplified and a single point of contact be provided.
- As part of the project to investigate current problems and improve service provision, a working group would be established with representatives from Customer Services and front line service operators.
- Information between the Contact Centre and Streetscene was continually monitored. The Executive Member was provided with quarterly updates.
- Contact Centre opening times and use of the out of hours service.
- Micro-chipped bins – the Council did purchase micro-chipped bins but information was not currently collected from these. They could be used to provide collection records.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the report and discussion be noted.
- (2) That the Project Group report back to Scrutiny on possible solutions to the known customer services problems in order for these solutions to be discussed by Members

88 Work Programme and Discussion with Councillor Wakefield, Leader of the Council

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development issued Members with a copy of the Council's Forward Plan and Executive Board minutes. As this was the last meeting of the Municipal Year, the Work Programme was not attached. Councillor Keith Wakefield, Leader of the Council had been invited to the meeting to discuss potential areas for scrutiny involvement.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Wakefield to the meeting. He reported that the Council would have to find further savings over the forthcoming year and that this could prove to be more difficult than in the previous year. Constructive ideas had been received from Scrutiny and scrutiny of the budget was particularly welcomed. Further issues highlighted included the following:

- Challenges faced following the loss of experienced staff through the Early Leavers Initiative.
- How to maintain levels of service across the City.
- Work with partners including the Police, Health Partners and Voluntary Sector.
- The role of Scrutiny in ensuring we became a better and more efficient council.

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

- The need to identify areas where waste could be avoided and how to spend more efficiently. The purchase and re-use of office furniture and equipment was discussed along with improved ways of procuring goods and services.
- Staff appraisals.
- Possibility of sharing back office functions with partners such as the Police and Health Service.
- Purchase of vehicles – joint arrangements across council departments and with external partners.
- Improvement and replacement of IT systems.
- The introduction of a 'One Council' approach and seamless working across all departments and with external partners with all taking responsibility for delivery of public services.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the report and discussion be noted.
- (2) That the Forward Plan and Executive Board minutes be noted.

89 Annual Report 2010/11

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented a draft of the Board's contribution to the composite Scrutiny Boards' Annual Report. The draft contained an introduction from the Chair and details of the work carried out by the Board during the 2010/11 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED – That the Board's contribution to the composite Annual report for 2010/11 be approved.