

SCRUTINY BOARD (STRATEGY AND RESOURCES)

MONDAY, 20TH MARCH, 2017

PRESENT: Councillor K Groves in the Chair

Councillors S Bentley, P Harrand,
H Hayden, J McKenna, S McKenna,
D Nagle, A Sobel, E Tunnicliffe, T Wilford
and R Wood

74 Late Items

There were no formal late items; however the following supplementary information was presented at the meeting:

- Item 6 – Draft minutes from the meeting held on 20 February 2017

The above draft minutes replaced the details included in the previously published agenda papers, which had included the minutes from the January meeting in error.

75 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests.

76 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

There were no apologies for absence or notifications of substitute attendance recorded at the meeting.

77 Minutes - 20 February 2017

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2017 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. There were no specific matters arising.

78 Chair's Update

The Chair of the Scrutiny Board provided a brief summary of activity since the previous meeting, including initial discussions with the new Director of Resources and Housing – due to come into effect from 1 April 2017.

The Chair confirmed the new Director of Resources and Housing was likely to attend the April meeting of the Scrutiny Board.

RESOLVD – That the Chair's update provided at the meeting be noted.

79 Effective Procurement

The Chief Officer – Projects, Programmes and Procurement Unit (PPPU) submitted a report that provided an overall update on the ongoing work within the unit and specifically included:

- An update on PPPU's access to council feeder systems following the intervention of the Scrutiny Board
- Improvements to the council's financial management system (FMS) to reduce off contract spend
- Ongoing work to reduce non-contract spend
- An analysis of the use of Waivers of the Contracts Procedure Rules (CPRs) April 2016 to February 2017.
- Participation in the Core Business Systems Review (CBSR)

The following were in attendance for consideration of the information provided to the Scrutiny Board:

- Cllr James Lewis – Executive Member for Strategy and Resources
- Jo McCann – Portfolio Manager – Projects, Programmes and Procurement Unit
- Dominic Bailey – Senior Portfolio Officer – Projects, Programmes and Procurement Unit
- Doug Meeson – Chief Officer – Financial Services

The Portfolio Manager gave a brief introduction to the report and information provided.

Members of the Board highlighted a number of matters and raised a number of queries, including:

- Good progress being made in identifying, retrieving and reporting the data presented.
- Positive progress in limited 'off contract spending', while recognising there was still more work to do.
- Issues associated with training and development of staff involved in procurement and use of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- Continued member involvement and engagement.
- Progress of the core business systems review – particularly the 'Procure to Pay' workstream; the associated benefits and changes in working practices that would result.

The Chair thanked those present for their contribution to the discussion and confirmed that the Board should be provided with estimated savings / efficiencies likely to be generated through the 'Procure to Pay' workstream.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the information presented be noted.
- (2) That the Scrutiny Board welcomes and supports efforts to consider lower-value external payments and the level of compliance with relevant aspects of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- (3) That the Chief Officer, Financial Services, provide the Board with more details of the savings likely to be generated through the 'Procure to Pay' workstream.

80 Implementation of the Council's Fees and Charges Policy

The Chief Officer – Financial Services submitted a report that considered how far the new Fees and Charges Policy had been implemented to date and what further action is required in order to ensure the Council continues to optimise income generation.

The following were in attendance for consideration of the information provided to the Scrutiny Board:

- Cllr James Lewis – Executive Member for Strategy and Resources
- Doug Meeson – Chief Officer – Financial Services

The Chief Officer, Financial Services, gave a brief introduction to the report that had been requested by the Scrutiny Board and outlined how the new Fees and Charges Policy had contributed to the Council's budget setting process.

The Scrutiny Board considered the information presented and raised a number of comments, including:

- The number of proposed areas where charges had not been implemented, including the private landlord registration scheme.
- The level of subsidies in some service area – for example, sports centres.
- Potential implementation of a car levy scheme across the City, similar to that operated in Nottingham (In response, the Executive Board member highlighted that only those areas where the Council was providing an identifiable service had been considered within the Fees and Charges framework).
- The importance to monitor the impact of newly implemented service charges, including any unintended consequences.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the current implementation of the new Fees and Charges Policy be noted.
- (b) That moving forward and in preparation for the next budget setting cycle for 2018/19, the following areas are developed further:

- Ensuring all potential income-generating, non-statutory services are identified within the ‘subsidised services statement.’
- Ensuring that the estimated costs associated with any statutory elements of traded and potentially traded services are calculated and excluded from the subsidised services statement.
- Developing and implementing a standard business case template for those services that require a subsidy, whilst ensuring that the level of detail required is commensurate with the scale of activity/subsidy.

NB. Councillor David Nagle left the meeting at 11:10am, following conclusion of this item.

81 Work Schedule (March 2017)

The Principal Scrutiny Adviser presented the Scrutiny Board’s work schedule for the remainder of the 2016/17 municipal year.

The Board specifically discussed the Human Resources themed element of the April 2017 meeting, and identified the following matters for consideration as part of that meeting:

- Succession Planning.
- Training and Development.
- The Council’s Graduate and Apprenticeships schemes.
- The Council’s policy on redeployment and redundancy.
- The Council’s current structure and number of posts – including structure / budgeted posts, the level staff reductions in recent years and the current level of vacancies.
- Details of the Council’s Annual Staff Survey – including trends and key messages.
- Details of the relationship between the Council and Schools in relation to human resource matters.

RESOLVED – That the Board’s outline work schedule, as presented and discussed at the meeting, be agreed.

82 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 24 April 2017 at 10:00am (pre-meeting for all members of the Scrutiny Board at 9:30am).

The meeting closed at 11:20 am.