

SCRUTINY BOARD (RESOURCES AND COUNCIL SERVICES)

MONDAY, 26TH JANUARY, 2015

PRESENT: Councillor P Grahame in the Chair

Councillors S Bentley, J L Carter,
N Dawson, R Grahame, J Jarosz, A Khan,
A Lowe, C Macniven and R Wood

58 Late Items

There were no late items.

59 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

60 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Cummins and T Wilford.

Councillor R Grahame substituted for J Cummins.

61 Minutes - 22 December 2014

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 December 2014 be confirmed as a correct record.

62 Executive Board Minutes - 17 December 2014

RESOLVED – That the Executive Board minutes of 17 December 2014 be noted.

63 Request for Scrutiny

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report providing detail of a request for Scrutiny submitted by Councillor Alan Lamb. The request related to the transfer of the former Fir Tree Primary School to the Khalsa Education Trust.

Councillor Alan Lamb was in attendance to put his request before the Board.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That the Board agree to the request and to schedule the work for its February meeting
- (ii) That the inquiry would focus on lessons learnt for the future

- (iii) That representatives be invited from City Development, Children's Services, Legal Services, Khalsa and the Education Funding Agency

64 Plans to Develop an Integrated Peoples' Commissioning Service

The Chief Officer Strategy and Commissioning submitted a report briefly setting out plans to develop an integrated peoples commissioning service.

The following were in attendance to respond to Members' questions:

- Councillor Peter Gruen, Executive Member (Neighbourhoods, Planning and Personnel)
- Bridget Emery, Chief Officer Strategy and Commissioning

In summary the main areas of discussion were:

- Confirmation of the Board's support for this initiative and its wish to act as a 'critical friend' at key stages of the projects development and implementation.
- The driving forces for the introduction of this initiative.
- The respective roles of a centralised commission unit and directorates.
- The need to harness the expertise of the Third Sector in commissioning.
- The need for strong and effective contract letting and management.
- The likely Executive lead responsibilities.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That a further report back be provided in April addressing contract management and phrase three timescales.
- (ii) That this Scrutiny Board as 'critical friend' a key stages of the project.

65 Community Lettings

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report updating the Board on the letting arrangements established since the Board last considered this issue.

The following were in attendance to respond to Members' questions

- Councillor Peter Gruen, Executive Member (Neighbourhoods, Planning and Personnel)
- Rory Barke, Area Leader.

In summary the main areas of discussion were:

- The lack of progress in establishing a more efficient and customer focused lettings process and associated pricing arrangements as previously discussed.

- The role of Community Committees within the letting and charging process.
- The need to ensure Caretakers were sufficiently trained in managing any new letting responsibilities.
- The move to on line payments and telephone bookings.
- The need to ensure that those organisations who receive free bookings understand that such arrangements equate to financial support from the Council.

RESOLVED –

- (i) That a progress update be brought back in March 2015
- (ii) That the Board be advised on those organisations receiving free lets
- (iii) That detail be provided on the staff groups involved in the lettings process.

66 Work Schedule

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented the draft work schedule for the forthcoming municipal year.

The following work areas were noted:

February

- Fir Tree request
- CAB

March

- Investors In people update and employee survey
- Community Lettings
- Employee Interests

April

- Integrated Peoples' Commissioning Services – Contract Management.

In addition, performance information would be supplied to the Board in relation to the Contact Centre and also information regarding debt collectors.

RESOLVED – That the Board's work schedule be updated to reflect the above work areas identified during today's meeting.

67 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 23 February 2015 at 10.00 am (Pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.30 am)

(The meeting concluded at 11.15 am).