

SCRUTINY BOARD (CENTRAL AND CORPORATE)

MONDAY, 5TH JULY, 2010

PRESENT: Councillor P Grahame in the Chair

Councillors S Bentley, D Blackburn,
M Hamilton, J Lewis, A Lowe, N Taggart,
J Hardy and K Groves

9 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

10 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors J L Carter and B Chastney.

11 Minutes of the Meetings held on 27 May and 7 June 2010

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meetings held on 27 May and 7 June 2010 be confirmed as correct records.

12 Questions to the Executive Board Member - Central and Corporate

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development informed the Board of the quarterly invitation to Councillor Wakefield, Leader of the Council and Executive Board Member – Central and Corporate. Also appended to the report were the following documents:

- Financial Performance Outturn 2009/10
- Performance Report Year End 2009/10

The Chair welcomed Councillor Wakefield to the meeting along with the following officers:

- Helena Phillips – Chief Officer, Resources & Strategy
- Alan Quesne – Head of Customer Service Development
- Doug Meeson – Chief Officer (Financial Management)
- Lee Hemsworth – Chief Business Transformation Officer

Councillor Wakefield addressed the meeting and was questioned on how the Council would deal with potential budget cuts. He reported that the Council faced unprecedented cuts on top of those already in place and there were also other areas of challenge due to growth areas such as Adult's and Children's Social Services.

Members discussed the Financial Performance Outturn and Performance Year End report and in response to further comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- Impact of Academy proposals on the Local Education Authority – it was reported that there were sizeable financial incentives for schools to take advantage of moving to academy status. The Council could still sell support services to any schools that became academies and did so to the South Leeds Academy.
- Impact of any potential pay offer to employees earning under £21,000 – it was reported that the proposed budget had initially assumed that there would not be a pay award.
- Corporate Contact Centre performance – Members discussed issues regarding the Integrated Voice Recognition system and performance indicators. It was reported that the indicators did not necessarily reflect the quality of the service provided and it was suggested that Members visit the Centre.
- The continued provision of non-statutory services – there were several areas of service provision that were discretionary and some of these could hypothetically be supported by introducing charges for service provision to continue.
- Banking and financial reserves – interest was earned on the Council's reserves, but at this time generated small amounts due to low interest rates.. Cash reserves are also used short term instead of borrowing to fund the capital programme..
- Services provided by West Yorkshire Joint Services – Members discussed potential areas of work that could be integrated and provided at a West Yorkshire level. There was a need to discuss integrated services across West Yorkshire and it was suggested that this be scheduled into the Board's work programme
- Following the discontinuation of the Scrutiny Board (City & Regional Partnerships) it was agreed that the Governance arrangements of the Leeds City Region be discussed by this Scrutiny Board.
- Further issues discussed included Council costs to the pension fund, use of consultants and staff appraisals.

The Chair thanked those present for their attendance.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Council's Financial Performance Outturn 2009/10 be noted.
- (b) That the Performance Report Year End 2009/10 report be noted.

13 Scrutiny of Various Procurement issues

This item was deferred to the next meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Central and Corporate).

14 Scrutiny Board (Central & Corporate) Work Programme, Executive Board Minutes and Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development outlined the Board's Work Programme and also included the current Forward Plan of Key Decisions and latest Executive Board Minutes.

The Head Of Scrutiny and Member Development recalled issues discussed earlier in the meeting and reported that the Work Programme would be updated accordingly.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Forward Plan and Executive Board Minutes be noted.
- (b) That the Work Programme be updated in line with discussion held at today's meeting.

15 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 6 September 2010 at 10.00 a.m. (pre-meeting for all at 9.30 a.m.)

The meeting concluded at 11.25 a.m.