

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY, 2007

PRESENT: Councillor G Driver in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, J Bale,
P Grahame, B Lancaster and T Leadley

Apologies Councillor R Pryke

75 Late Items

The Chair indicated that in accordance with his powers under Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, he had agreed to allow Councillor Illingworth to circulate an e-mail dated 5th February 2007 on the subject of Information Management within the Council, and to also speak briefly on this item (Agenda Item 6, Minute No.77 refers).

76 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

77 Development of Information Management in Leeds - Update

Further to Minute No 47, 6th November 2006, and Minute No 55, 4th December 2006, the Committee considered a joint report submitted by the Director of Legal and Democratic Services and the Chief Officer, Executive Support, updating Members on progress in implementing the recommendations contained in the Inquiry Report dated 27th April 2006 of the former Scrutiny Board (Transforming Services) relating to Information Management within the Council.

Mark Turnbull, Legal and Democratic Services and Lee Hemsworth, Chief Executive's Department, attended the meeting and responded to Members' queries and comments.

Later,in a follow-up to his concerns previously expressed to the Committee in November 2006 regarding access to information held by the Council,Councillor Illingworth addressed the Committee.He confirmed that in his view the officers report did indeed indicate that acceptable progress had been made in this area.

In brief summary, the main areas of discussion were:-

- The Committee noted that the development of an appropriate, corporate approach to information management was being developed by the Council as part of a wider strategic agenda around Information and Knowledge

Management. The report outlined four strategic drivers highlighted as important reasons for developing this agenda. These four drivers were:

- To support better decision-making
 - To promote efficiency and effectiveness
 - To meet legislative and regulatory requirements
 - To provide corporate ‘memory’
- Whilst these strategic drivers were important considerations for the Council in determining the need for an Information and Knowledge Management agenda within the organisation, the final report of the former Scrutiny Board (Transforming Services) also rightly argued that in the first instance the Council needed to invest in its Information Governance structure at all levels within the organisation.

In this regard, the report noted the priorities for development over an 18 month period were focussed on developing this required governance. These priorities were:

- To develop and undertake Information Audits across functional areas adopting ISO 15489 methodology
- To develop corporate metadata standards utilising the national e-GMS standards
- To develop and implement a corporate Document Image Processing (DIP) solution.

The Committee felt that there was an important distinction to be drawn between Information Governance, which was about having proper systems in place to control access to information and deal appropriately and responsively to requests for information, and Information Management, which concerned the best and most appropriate methods of storing, cross-referencing and retrieving information;

- The Committee accepted that the development of a corporate approach to information management was a complex and long term project. There had been good progress made in a number of areas and that work undertaken to date provided a sound foundation on which to build.
- The Committee acknowledged that the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee had within its terms of reference the remit to review the adequacy of the Council’s Corporate Governance. It was also noted that this Committee was due an update report on Information and Knowledge Management. The Committee indicated that it would wish to consider the outcome of that meeting in order to reassure itself that progress continued to be made.
- The Committee also acknowledged that there were capacity issues which were being addressed as part of the Council Change programme. The Committee felt that such a huge agenda should be adequately resourced, and recommended that the appropriate Director be given an

explicit remit for this function, and also recommended that a Lead Member was identified to take up the political mantle of Information and Knowledge Management .

The Committee queried the need to engage consultants in this area, feeling that the work could be adequately performed in-house, with appropriate resources being made available, and utilising the knowledge and experience of the Council and its partner organisations.

- With regard to how the Council manages Freedom of Information requests, the Committee was satisfied that overall the Council had a robust system for both dealing with requests made to the Council and supporting colleagues in their practitioner role. However, it was felt that currently there were too many inconsistencies in practice across different Departments.
- The Committee noted that for some requests, there were potentially six different access regimes to be considered, some of which the Information Commissioner had jurisdiction over and others for which he did not. This was confusing for both Members and officers. It was requested therefore that the Director of Legal Services issue a briefing note on how each of these six regimes are managed and the relationship between them;
- The Committee discussed the recommendation made last year by Scrutiny Board (Transforming Services) that the Director of Legal and Democratic Services make appropriate representations to the Secretary of State that the new code for employees should require, at the very least, Directors, who were now taking decisions under delegated powers, to disclose their interests. The Committee was advised that the consultation on the new proposed officer code of conduct had now closed, and that it would appear that the DCLG might now wait until the consultation on the changes to the Members' Code and Standards Board changes are finalised. The proposed new code stated that employees would have to comply with their authority's requirements for registering or declaring interests, so this may be left to the Council to decide.

The Committee reiterated that at the very least Directors, and those officers who have delegated powers from Directors, disclose their interests.

- As part of their recommendation monitoring role, the Committee made the following comments with regard to progress on meeting the recommendations made by Scrutiny Board (Transforming Services) in April 2006:-

Recommendation 1

That the Head of Information and Knowledge Management seek the views of the following Officers and Management Groups on their role in supporting the Vision and delivery of the information management agenda as described and that the outcome of these discussions be reported to the appropriate Scrutiny Board at an early meeting in the new municipal year:

- ***the Chief Officer (HR)***
- ***the Chief Officer (ICT)***
- ***the Council-wide Performance Management Group***
- ***the Corporate Governance Officers Group***

Progress on this is satisfactory and ongoing

Recommendation 2

That the capacity issues outlined in the evidence presented to the Board and the costs and potential savings of the Vision for information management be considered further by the Council's Corporate Management Team and that the Head of Information and Knowledge Management report back to the appropriate Scrutiny Board at an early meeting in the new municipal year.

Further information on this is required

Recommendation 3

That the Director of Legal and Democratic Services explore whether improvements could be made to the Council's procedures which would enable the FOI and DPA rights to be used in a more proactive way to engage with clients and develop trust in the Council as an organisation.

Progress on this is satisfactory and ongoing

Recommendation 4

That the Head of Information and Knowledge Management submit to the appropriate Scrutiny Board later in the new municipal year a progress report on implementing the Vision for the development of information management within the Council.

This recommendation is fulfilled by the Committee's consideration of today's report.

Recommendation 5

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Monday, 5th March, 2007

That the Director of Legal and Democratic Services make appropriate representations to the Secretary of State that the new code for employees should require at the very least, Directors, who were now taking decisions under delegated powers to disclose their interests.

See earlier bullet-point on this subject.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be noted, and the officers and Councillor Illingworth be thanked for their input;
- (b) That the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development produce a draft summary report of the Committee's deliberations for submission to the March meeting of the Committee.

78 Performance Monitoring - Quarter 3 Highlight Report

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report relating to the Quarter 3 performance highlight reports submitted to the Council's officer Corporate Priority Boards, and drawing their attention to particular significant performance indicators.

Steve Clough, Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement, Chief Executive's Department, attended the meeting and responded to Members' queries and comments. In brief summary, the main areas of discussion related to the following topics:-

- Street lighting repairs;
- The number of families placed into temporary accommodation. It was felt that this should be referred to the Scrutiny Board (Neighbourhoods and Housing) for further consideration*;
- Fuel poverty, and the effects of recent energy price rises;
- Numbers of rough sleepers;
- Management 360° feedback indicator – Members to be supplied with more detailed information;
- BV-201 – The number of adults and older people receiving direct payments per 100,000 population – this was being looked at by the Scrutiny Board (Health and Adult Social Care);

RESOLVED – That the report be noted, and Scrutiny Board Chairs consider whether there are any issues, other than the ones highlighted above (including *above), which they would wish their Boards to consider further.

79 Work Programme

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted the Committee's current work programme, updated to reflect decisions taken at previous meetings, together with a relevant extract of the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions and a copy of the minutes of the Executive Board meeting held on 24th January 2007.

RESOLVED – That, subject to any changes necessary as a result of today's meeting, the Committee's work programme be approved and accepted.

80 Dates and Times of Future Meetings

Monday 5th March 2007

Monday 2nd April 2007

Both at 10.00 am (Pre-meetings at 9.30 am)