

SCRUTINY BOARD (RESOURCES AND COUNCIL SERVICES)

MONDAY, 18TH FEBRUARY, 2013

PRESENT: Councillor P Grahame in the Chair

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

78 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the February meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Resources and Council Services)

79 Late Items

In accordance with her powers under Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chair agreed to accept a late report, agenda item 10, Inquiry on Welfare Reform – Draft Final Report and Recommendations, which was not available at the time of agenda despatch (Minute No. 86 refers)

80 Declarations of Interest

In accordance with paragraphs 19-20 of the Members Code of Conduct, the following declaration was made by Councillor Ron Grahame in relation to Agenda item 7, Executive Board minutes – 9th January 2013, in his capacity as a Director of East North East Homes ALMO. (Minute No.83 refers)

81 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

There were no apologies for absence

82 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED -That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21st January 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

83 Executive Board Minutes - 9th January 2013

RESOLVED -That the minutes of the Executive Board held on 9th January 2013 be noted.

84 Contact Centre

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development presented a brief report by way of background to a discussion on the review of performance of the Contact Centre.

The following were in attendance:

Councillor Peter Gruen - Executive Member Neighbourhoods and Support Services

Paul Broughton, Chief Customer Access
Wendy Allinson, Lead Officer welfare Reforms

In brief summary, the main issues of discussion were;

- The enhanced service provided as a result of budgetary provision secured via recommendations made by this Scrutiny Board.
- The recognition that the Contact Centre was a key strategic service
- The service challenges facing the Contact Centre
- Overall performance improvements over the past three to four years including performance on responding to emails
Call line identification and the frustrations caused by the current arrangements

It was agreed that the issue of call line identification would be pursued initially with the Chief Officer ICT in terms of the technical issues and then if appropriate with the business centre in terms of corporate policy.

RESOLVED

- (i) To receive the update on Contact Centre performance
- (ii) To request that the Chief Officer ICT attend the Scrutiny Board in March to discuss call line identification.

85 Employees' Declaration of Interest

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a recommendation tracking report detailing two recommendations made by Scrutiny in October 2011 in relation to Employees' Declarations of Interest.

The following officer was in attendance

Dave Almond – Head of Human Resources

In brief summary, the main issues of discussion were;

- The acknowledgment that recommendation one of the report had been implemented

- That in relation to recommendation two, that the Council work towards publishing interests of employees in “high risk” posts, the Board noted that all high risk posts had been identified and contacted to declare their interests as required by the Code of Conduct. The Board further noted that 90% of post holders had declared their interests and the remaining 10% were being actively progressed within Directorates.
- That a report would be presented to the Corporate Leadership Team in March 2013 outlining the practical arrangements that would need to be put in place to publish such a list and still comply with data protection legislation.

The Board requested a summary of the outstanding declarations by Directorate and grade.

RESOLVED

- (i) To note the implementation of recommendation one and progress towards meeting recommendation two
- (ii) That a summary of the outstanding declarations by Directorate and Grade be requested
- (iii) That the Scrutiny Board considers the option of inviting a Director who has not achieved a 100% response rate by 31 March 2013 to a future Scrutiny Board

86 Welfare Reform - Draft Final Report

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented the conclusions and recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Board’s inquiry into Welfare Reform.

The following were in attendance:

Councillor Peter Gruen - Executive Member Neighbourhoods and Support Services

Paul Broughton, Chief Customer Access

Wendy Allinson, Lead Officer welfare Reforms

The following comments/amendments to the draft final report and recommendations were agreed as follows:

- An amendment to recommendation eight to reflect the need to ensure consistency when considering the recovery of costs from customers affected by the Council Tax Support changes
- An amendment to recommendation 14 to reflect that the appropriate Scrutiny Board would monitor the approach taken to manage under-occupancy.

RESOLVED

- (i) That the Scrutiny Board's final report and recommendations, as amended, be approved
- (iii) That a formal response to the recommendations be requested.

87 Work Schedule

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a copy of the Board's work schedule.

RESOLVED –

- (i) To note the Board's work schedule.
- (ii) To add the following items; March - Council Business Plan and call line identification
April - Asset Management/budget plus.

88 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note the date of the next meeting as Monday 18th March 2013 at 10am

(All meetings to take place in the Civic Hall, Leeds, commencing at 10.00am)

(The meeting concluded at 11.30 am)