

## **SCRUTINY BOARD (RESOURCES AND COUNCIL SERVICES)**

**MONDAY, 29TH JULY, 2013**

**PRESENT:** Councillor P Grahame in the Chair

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

### **13 Late Items**

There were no late items.

### **14 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

### **15 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **16 Minutes - 24th June 2013**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th June 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

### **17 Executive Board Minutes - 19th June 2013**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Executive Board held on 19th June 2013 be noted.

### **18 Recommendation Tracking - Scrutiny Inquiry on Welfare Reform**

The Chief Officer (Statutory Housing) and the Chief Officer (Welfare and benefits) provided a joint report setting out the progress made in relation to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Board Inquiry on Welfare Reform Benefit Changes.

The following officers were in attendance and responded to Board Members questions and comments:

- Steve Carey – Chief Revenues and Benefits Officer
- Lorraine Wright – Service Manager – Relationship Management
- Dave Levitt – Recovery Manager – Revenues and Benefits.

The Leader of Council, Councillor Keith Wakefield also attended the meeting to discuss High Cost Lenders.

In summary, the main areas of discussion were:

- The successful progress on implementing the Board's recommendations.
- The revised rent arrears recovery procedures.
- Current statistics in relation to those who had made some form of payment arrangement and those facing summons.
- The current position regarding the reclassification of properties.
- The pressures on the Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) budget and the ability to use underspends from the Local Welfare Scheme to support the DHP budget.
- Opportunities to work across sectors including utility firms to help with customers with debt management and advice.
- The impact of High Cost Lenders and the Council's action plan to tackle this issue.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (i) To note progress on the implementation of the recommendations made by this Scrutiny Board following its Inquiry into Welfare Reform Benefit Changes.
- (ii) To recommend that any underspends in the Local Welfare Scheme budget be used to offset any overspends in the Discretionary Housing Payments Budget.
- (iii) That this Scrutiny Board undertakes further work in relation to High Cost Lenders.

#### **19 Civic Enterprise Leeds**

The Chief Officer (Civic Enterprise) submitted a report which provided a summary of the principles around the establishment of a stand-alone unit called Civic Enterprise Leeds.

The following officer was in attendance and responded to Board Members' questions and comments:

- Julie Meakin – Chief Officer (Civic Enterprise).

In brief summary, the main areas of discussion were:

- The principles behind the establishment of Civic Enterprise Leeds, the concept of an enabling corporate centre and the budget pressures faced by the Council.
- The opportunities to develop services with a range of markets.
- Support for services who want to commercialise what they do.
- The value for money of services currently provided.
- The possible impact on SMEs and other businesses operating in similar market places.

The Board requested that the Chief Officer (Civic Enterprise) discuss the principles of the Unit with appropriate business colleagues in the City.

**RESOLVED** – To note the establishment of Civic Enterprise Leeds and to request a progress report in July 2014.

## **20 Transforming Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules**

The Chief Officer PPPU and Procurement submitted a report which provided draft Contract Procedure Rules for Member comment.

The following officer was in attendance and responded to Board Members questions and comments:

- Philippa Toner - Senior Executive Manager - Public Private Partnership Unit and Procurement.

The report submitted asked a number of specific questions of Members in relation to decision making within the Contract Procedure Rules. Following discussion the Board made the following recommendations;

- In relation to Framework agreements that the Key decision was taken at the time that the decision to procure was taken and also at each subsequent call off.
- That any decision to extend a contract be treated as a Key, Significant Operational or Administrative decision in accordance with Article 13 thresholds.
- That all waiver of Contract Procedure Rules are treated, as a minimum, as a Significant Operational Decision.
- In addition, the Board welcomed the proposal that the main decision to be taken was whether or not to undertake procurement and also the development of a procurement calendar. Members reiterated the need to ensure that calendars programmed sufficient time for Call In and the possibility of reference back.

**RESOLVED** –

- (i) To make the above recommendations in relation to decision making.
- (ii) To request an update on the operation of the Contract Procedure Rules in July 2014.

## **21 Work Schedule**

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

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

**22 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Monday, 30th September at 10.00 a.m. (Pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.30 a.m.)

(The meeting concluded at 12 Noon).