

SCRUTINY BOARD (RESOURCES AND COUNCIL SERVICES)

MONDAY, 18TH MARCH, 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

89 Chair's Opening Remarks

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

90 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Councillor Ron Grahame declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Agenda item 8, 2012/13 Quarter 3 Performance Report, as a member of the GMB Union. (Minute No. 94 refers)

91 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

There were no apologies for absence.

92 Minutes - 18th February 2013

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 18th February be confirmed as a correct record.

93 Executive Board Minutes - 15th February 2013

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the Executive Board held on 15th 2013 be noted.

94 2012/13 Quarter 3 Performance Report

The Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Access and Performance) and Director of Resources submitted a report which provided a summary of performance against the strategic priorities for the Council relevant to the Resources and Council Services Scrutiny Board.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Peter Gruen – Executive Member Neighbourhoods, Planning and Support Services
- Doug Meeson – Chief Officer, Financial Management
- Heather Pinches – Executive Officer (Performance Management).

In brief summary, the key areas of discussion were;

- Health and Wellbeing and the use of reasonable job adjustments to facilitate an employee's return to work after a period of sickness absence.
- The availability of ICT equipment for peripatetic workers to help reduce the need to duplicate administrative tasks.
- The QA process used to ensure that (appropriate and relevant) local communities were consulted about major changes that may affect their lives and the development of co-production.

RESOLVED –

- (a) To note performance against the strategic priorities for the council relevant to the resources and Council Services Scrutiny Board
- (b) For the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development to obtain the additional information requested in relation to ICT provision for peripatetic staff in Youth Services and 'failed reports' in relation to consultation.

95 People Plan reporting - January 2013

The Chief Officer (HR) presented to the Board a revised People Plan reporting format reflecting the changes requested by the Scrutiny Board, focusing on five areas of importance; staffing, agency, overtime attendance and appraisals.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Peter Gruen - Executive Member Neighbourhoods and Support Services
- Daniel Hartley - Deputy Chief Officer HR
- Joss Ivory – Head of HR, City Development.

In brief summary, the main areas of discussion were:

- The improved manner in which the data had been presented to members.
- The need for greater clarity regarding overtime spend and overtime hours.
- The need for greater clarity regarding agency spend and agency hours.
- The procedures in place to ensure agency spend is monitored and approved.
- The need for greater clarity regarding full year appraisal performance and mid-year appraisal performance.
- The recognition that whilst many directorates were performing well, there remained the need for the Scrutiny Board to identify trends and to question directly those Directorates that were slipping in performance.

RESOLVED -

- (a) To confirm that the revised reporting format as presented be the template for quarterly reporting in the new municipal year.
- (b) To note the position as at 31st January 2013 regarding People Plan progress on the five key areas.
- (c) That the Chair of the Scrutiny Board writes an appropriate letter acknowledging the service improvements achieved by Directorates.
- (d) That the Board note that a progress report on Overtime will be provided at the April meeting.

96 Equality and Diversity in the Workforce

The Chief Officer (HR) submitted a report setting out workforce data in relation to the diversity of the Council workforce (excluding schools). The report also gave comment on what the presented data might indicate and actions currently being taken.

The following officers were in attendance:

- Daniel Hartley - Deputy Chief Officer HR
- Catherine Marchant – Head of Human Resources, Children’s Services.

In brief summary, the main areas of discussion were:

- The acknowledgement that the profile of the workforce drew out three key themes for further work, that is young people, the development of the workforce at senior management level and culture change.
- The actions currently being delivered and actions which could be undertaken to address the above.
- The impact of the Early Leavers Initiative on the workforce.
- The gender inequality within the workforce.
- The use of positive action to address some of the identified issues.

The Board recommended that officers undertake further work in terms of workforce projections.

RESOLVED -

- (a) To note the information from the census and workforce profile
- (b) To note the approach to equality and the activities in place to improve the diversity of the workforce.

97 Income, Charging and Trading

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which provided Members with a brief background to the Budget Plus Programme and the ten activity strands. The Chief Officer, Financial Management, as lead officer, presented a project brief detailing the work of strand five (Income, Charging and Trading.)

In brief summary, the key points of discussion were:

- The desired deliverables of the project as detailed in appendix 1 of the submitted report.
- That the role and practice of internal recharges will also be part of this project.
- Whether fines are included in the income totals and the danger of over relying on fines as a means of generating income.
- The need to develop new income generation streams whilst acknowledging the associated costs of establishing such streams.
- The Council's letting policy in relation to council owned buildings. It was agreed that regular reports on this strand would be given to this Scrutiny Board in order for Members to offer challenge.

RESOLVED – To note the desired deliverables of the project and to receive regular progress reports.

(Cllr Lowe left the meeting at 11.30am during the consideration of this item.)

98 Work Schedule

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

RESOLVED –

- (a) To note the Board's work schedule.
- (b) To add the following items to the April meeting; Lettings policy, Council Business Plan and an update on Officer Interests.
- (c) That the following items be put on a 'pending list' to be considered in the new municipal year; Community Right to Challenge (Update) and HR recruitment processes.

99 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED - To note the date of the next meeting as Friday 22nd March at 4.30pm with a Pre-Meeting for Board Members at 4.00pm.

(The meeting concluded at 11.55 am.)