

SCRUTINY BOARD (RESOURCES AND COUNCIL SERVICES)

MONDAY, 24TH JUNE, 2013

PRESENT: Councillor P Grahame in the Chair

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

1 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the municipal year. The Chair also welcomed Councillor Asghar Khan to his first meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Resources and Council Services). The Scrutiny Board thanked Councillor Ron Grahame for his contribution to this Board over the past two years.

2 Late Items

There were no late items.

3 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

4 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J L Carter.

5 Minutes - 10th May 2013

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 10th May 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

6 Executive Board Minutes - 9th May 2013

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Executive Board held on 9th May 2013 be noted.

7 Co-opted Members

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development sought the Board's formal consideration for the appointment of Co-opted Members.

The Board was informed that they could appoint the following:

- Up to five non-voting co-opted members for a term of office that does not go beyond the next Annual Meeting of Council; and/or
- Up to two non-voting co-opted members for a term of office that relates to the duration of a particular and specific scrutiny inquiry.

RESOLVED – To appoint co-opted members on an ad-hoc basis for any inquiries where it was deemed appropriate.

8 Financial Performance - Outturn Financial Year Ended 31st March 2013

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which introduced the Council's Financial Performance for the year ending 31st March 2013.

Doug Meeson, Chief Officer (Financial Management) attended the meeting.

In summary, the main areas of discussion were:

- The makeup of the £6.7m General Fund underspend.
- Debt management.
- Risks associated with the assumed budgeted income from NHS Leeds.
- Risks associated with insurance claims.
- Vacant posts within Directorates.
- Income generation within Directorates.
- A request for additional information to be reported back to the Scrutiny Board.

RESOLVED – To note the contents of the report and that the additional information requested be provided.

9 2012-13 Quarter 4 Performance Report

The Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Access and Performance) and Deputy Chief Executive submitted a joint 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 information was appended to the report:

- Appendix 1a – Performance Reports for the 5 Cross Council Priorities which are based on the Council values
- Appendix 1b – Resources Directorate Priorities and Indicators
- Appendix 1c – Customer Access and Performance Directorate Priorities and Indicators
- Appendix 1d – Other Directorate Priorities and Indicators relevant to the Board.

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

- Doug Meeson, Chief Officer (Financial Management)
- Mariana Pexton, Chief Officer (Corporate Support).

In brief summary, the main areas of discussion were:

- Progress on headcount reduction compared to vacancies.
- The above target absence figures for 2012/13 and the need for a 2013/14 target.
- Examples of consultation with local communities on key decisions and the dramatic improvement in performance in quarter 4 within the Resource Directorate.
- Appraisal performance and the data used to report performance.
- The levels of training given to appraising managers.
- The performance of Children's Services around the Treating people fairly value.
- Performance around processing Housing benefit changes for existing claimants.
- A request for additional information to be reported back to the Scrutiny Board.

RESOLVED – To note the Quarter 4 performance report and to request that the additional information requested be provided.

10 Sources of Work for the Scrutiny Board

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which provided information and guidance on potential sources of work to be developed within the Board's Work Programme for 2013/14.

Appended to the report was a copy of the Best Council Plan and the "Leeds: The Big Picture" report providing analysis of the data produced from the 2011 Census.

The Chair invited all Board Members to have an input in relation to their own preferred areas of work for the Scrutiny Board.

In summary, the following sources of work were put forward for consideration/discussion:

- Progress on Community Right to challenge.
- Progress on the Budget Plus Income generation review.
- Preparation for, and impacts of, Universal credit.
- Integration of face to face services.
- HR recruitment practices.
- Management of vacancies.
- The management of insurance claims and insurance policies.
- Progress on the review of community centre lettings.
- Translation services.
- Grants to third parties.
- General monitoring of the people score card "Big 5".

RESOLVED –

- (a) To confirm the areas of Scrutiny for the forthcoming municipal year.
- (b) To authorise the Chair, in conjunction with officers, to draw up a detailed work schedule.

11 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.

12 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday, 29th July 2013 at 10.00 am (Pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.30 am)

(The meeting concluded at 11.30 am).