

The Resources, Performance and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee met at the Shire Hall, Warwick on the 16 September 2008.

Present:

Members of the Committee:

Councillor David Booth (Chair of Committee)
“ John Haynes (Deputy Chair)
“ John Appleton
“ George Atkinson
“ Les Caborn
“ Tom Cavanagh
“ Chris Davis
“ Raj Randev
“ Dave Shilton
“ Ian Smith
“ Sid Tooth (replacing Brian Moss)
“ John Vereker

Other Councillors

Councillor Peter Fowler, Cabinet Member for Partnerships and Localities.
“ Heather Timms, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services.

Officers:

Performance and Development Directorate

David Carter, Strategic Director of Performance and Development,
Pete Keeley, Member Services,
Paul Williams, Scrutiny Officer,

Resources Directorate

Dave Clarke, Strategic Director of Resources.
Steve Smith, Head of Property.
Phil Evans, Facilities Manager.

1. General

(1) Apologies.

None.

(2) Members' Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

Councillor David Booth declared a personal interest as a relative was employed in ICT in central government

(3) Minutes of the meeting held on the 10 June 2008 and Matters Arising.

(1) Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Resources, Performance and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee's 10 June meeting be approved and be signed by the Chair.

(2) Matters Arising

(a) Minute 5 - Items for future meetings

Phil Evans indicated that with regard to the replacement of bottled water, a poll of staff had shown that, of the options available, staff preferred tap water dispensed through water coolers. There were certain technical issues to be resolved and a full report would be submitted to the Committee's next meeting.

(b) Minute 6 LAA – Consideration of Performance and Progress

In response to comments from Councillor John Appleton, David Carter confirmed that the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group would consider the action being taken by each Overview and Scrutiny Committee to scrutinize the Council's performance at its next meeting.

Members were advised that Chris Elliot, Chief Executive of the Warwick District Council would be invited to the next meeting to talk about the performance of the Safer Communities block.

In response to comments from Councillor John Haynes, David Carter indicated that he would update the Committee on any action being taken by the Children, Young People and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee relating to Healthy Schools issues.

Tonino Ciuffini, Head of ICT outlined the action that had been taken to upgrade the Council's ICT network. He indicated that a full report about the ICT Risk to business would be submitted to the November meeting.

(c) Minute 10(1) - Post Office Closures

Members requested that, if the Post Office had not responded to the Council's representations, a letter should be sent to them making a

specific request for a response on Council's concerns about the accuracy of the data used by the Post Office.

2. Public Question Time (Standing Order 34)

There were no questions from the Public.

3. Items for Future Meetings and Forward Plan Items Relevant to the Work of the Committee.

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director of Performance and Development.

The report detailed provisional items for future meetings of the Committee. It also detailed decisions to be taken by the Cabinet in the next six months which were relevant to the work of the Committee, as taken from the Forward Planning System.

Members noted that the report about absence management and musculo-skeletal and stress related conditions and a report about Bottled Water would be submitted to the next Meeting

The Committee noted the remaining the items.

4. Public Access Works to Shire Hall

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director of Resources which was submitted in response to a request from the Committee for further details of the increased costs of the Shire Hall public access scheme.

Following advise about the processes that had been followed under the Councils Contract Standing Orders, it was Resolved:

That no further action is required.

5. Corporate Asset Management Plan Performance Indicator Report.

The Committee considered a report from the Strategic Director of Resources which recommended the Committee to approve the Asset Management Plan Property Performance Indicators, subject to any necessary amendments the Head of Property might deem necessary in consultation with the Resources Portfolio Holder.

Steve Smith, Head of Property presented the report.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

- The resources allocated for the property maintenance had an impacted on the performance achieved. In particular resources originally allocated for

property maintenance had to be diverted to meet the essential work required in connection with asbestos removal.

- A report on reducing energy costs was to be submitted to the Cabinet in October
- Future reports about energy consumption should separate out the performance of school buildings from other property. If possible this information should be included in the report to Cabinet if time permits.

The Committee agreed:

- (1) to recommend the Cabinet that it:-
 - (i) Agrees that the Property Performance Indicator information is to be considered when undertaking Property and Service Level reviews.
 - (ii) Agrees the 2008/09 Performance Indicator Targets.
 - (iii) Notes the 2007/08 Asset Management Plan Performance Indicator Report at Appendix A to the report.
 - (iv) Agrees that in the event of any late amendments being necessary, they be made by the Head of Property in consultation with the Resources Portfolio Holder.
- (2) That future reports on this matter show the performance of school property separately from other property.

6. 2007/8 Environmental/Print Savings.

The Committee considered the joint report of the Strategic Director of Performance and Development and Resources, which provided further information on environmental/print savings required as apart of the 2007/08 budget.

David Carter presented the report.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

- The reasons for increases in the photocopying in the Adult, Health and Community Services and the Children, Young People and Families Directorates should be reported to a future meeting.
- Regard must be had to the possible impact on delivery/collection times and possible greater reliance on photocopying than printing through the offices of both Directorates being located at The Saltisford.
- With regard to the costs of the Children, Young People and Families Directorate, a large amount of material that needed to be circulated to schools/teachers.

The Committee agreed that:

- (1) Cabinet and SDLT be asked at the earliest opportunity to direct that all printing is put through "design2print".
- (2) The Environment and Economy Directorate be asked to explain why expenditure on printing and publications has increased over 2005/6 to 2007/8 and how it had enhanced their business.
- (3) The Children, Young People and Families Directorate be asked to explain the £0.4m increased costs shown in the table in paragraph 2.1 of the report.

7. Use of Consultants

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director of Resources which provided an analysis of the type and cost of the consultants used by the County Council.

Dave Clarke introduced the report

The following points were noted during the discussion:

- There is a need to speak to individual directorates to see why consultants engaged.
- With regard to the use of ICT consultants, Tonino Ciuffini reported that consultants were used when specific skills were required to keep pace with developments such as with Lotus Notes development and when there were periods of high demand.
- There was joint working across directorates on ICT issues.
- It was not uncommon for ICT staff that had been trained by the Council to take up employment with other organisations because of salary differences. Depending on the length of time since training, some costs were recoverable by the council.
- Members requested information about the number of ex-employees who were later engaged as consultants
- The Children, Young People and Families Directorate be asked to come to a future meeting to explain the reasons for the use of "educational specialists".

8. Any Other Items

(1) Update on Leeman Brothers

Dave Clarke Strategic Director of Resources gave Members a brief update on the financial crisis at the Leeman Brothers bank and indicated that there would be little impact on the Pension Fund owing to the way the Fund was managed.

He would report any significant developments to the Members.

(2) Joint Scrutiny

As a result of an earlier presentation by Jim Graham and Councillor Alan Farnell about the operation of the Public Services Board, the Chair requested a report on the process for joint scrutiny and also the identification of a joint scrutiny project that could be taken forward quickly.

The Committee rose at 12.31 p.m.

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Chair