

The Resources, Performance and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee met at the Shire Hall, Warwick on the 10 March 2009.

Present:

Members of the Committee:

Councillor David Booth (Chair of Committee)
“ John Appleton
“ Les Caborn
“ Tom Cavanagh
“ Chris Davis
“ John Haynes
“ Brian Moss
“ Raj Randev
“ Ian Smith
“ John Vereker

Other Councillors

Councillor Alan Cockburn, Cabinet Member for Resources
Councillor Peter Fowler, Cabinet Member for Partnerships and Localities

Officers:

Performance and Development Directorate

Pete Keeley, Member Services
Paul Williams, Scrutiny Officer

Resources Directorate

Oliver Winters, Head of Finance
Virginia Rennie, Group Accountant

1. General

(1) An Apology

was received from Councillor George Atkinson.

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

None.

(3) Minutes of the meeting held on the 12 February and Matters Arising.

Councillor Raj Randev indicated that Dave Clarke had agreed to send him details of S106 monies that were slow in being paid to the Council as opposed to Councillor Randev supplying the information.

It was then Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Resources, Performance and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee's 12 February meeting be approved as amended and be signed by the Chair.

There were no matters arising.

2. Public Question Time (Standing Order 34)

There were no questions from members of 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 the report.

4. Medium Term Financial Plan 2009/10 to 2011/12

The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is a partner document to the Corporate Business Plan. It reflects, in financial terms, the national context, the corporate vision and the delivery strategies for the corporate and directorate priorities of the Council for the next three years.

The Committee was asked for its comments on the MTFP prior to it being presented to Cabinet on 19 March and Council on 24th March for approval.

Oliver Winters, Head of Finance introduced the report.

Members discussed several aspects of the MTFP. The Following points were noted during the discussion:

Resourcing Our Priorities

- It was suggested that in future, the Plan should include a pie chart showing all capital new starts, including those funded by government and third party grants, not just those funded by borrowing.
- Of the required £30m capital financing, £22m is interest.
- With regard to Bridging the Funding Gap, the Committee requested further information on how it was intended to undertake the review of grants and

funding to the voluntary and community sector. Consideration should be given to the review including all sources of funding for the sector.

Savings and Efficiency Planning

- Members acknowledged the need to make savings but recognised the need to maintain funding of priority projects through differential efficiency targets.
- Members requested a report on how it was intended to operate differential targets across the county under the Corporate Business Plan.

Capital Strategy and Capital Programme Allocations

- In response to concerns about the funding of the capital programme, Oliver Winters indicated that he would arrange a seminar for the Committee dealing with various aspects of financing the capital programme including debt charges, interest rates and future development needs.
- Members noted that the reviews of the base capital programme and the capital strategy, which the Council agreed as part of the budget decision, would be undertaken during the Summer in time for the commencement of the process for setting the 2010/11 budget.
- The Committee requested further information on the reviews at the appropriate time.
- The Cabinet had previously considered a report about the impact of the property downturn on the reduced value the Council could achieve from the sale of its land assets. The current moratorium on sales will be kept under review and be re-examined if the value continued to decrease or began to increase again.
- It was suggested that when a decision is being taken to include a project in the capital programme the revenue implications and affordability should be made clearer.

Financial Risk Management

- The Cabinet be reminded to take into account the financial implications of rising energy costs and the availability of energy.

Partnership Working

- Members requested that the need for improved speed in the delivery of partnership aims should be promoted from the highest level, such as through the Warwickshire Association of Chief Executives, with the County Council taking the lead if necessary.
- Meetings were being held with the Leaders of the district/borough Councils to discuss progress with shared services.

- A lot of positive partnership work was being undertaken and discussions were being held currently to speed up the process. Savings had been achieved through the new registration service and One Stop Shops. The committee saw potential for improved value for money through partnership working and felt that such improvements should be pursued.
- The Committee requested a short report on progress with achieving enhanced two tier working and the action plan for further work over the medium term for further scrutiny.

In conclusion it was agreed that the Cabinet be recommended as follows:

(1) Resourcing Our Priorities

That consideration should be given to the review of grants and funding to the voluntary and community sector including all sources of funding for the sector.

(2) Capital Strategy and Capital Programme Allocations

That, when a decision is being taken to include a project in the capital programme the revenue implications and affordability should be made clearer.

(3) Financial Risk Management

That the Cabinet be reminded to take into account the financial implications of rising energy costs and the availability of energy.

(4) Partnership Working

That the need for improved speed in the delivery of partnership aims should be promoted from the highest level, such as through the Warwickshire Association of Chief Executives, with the County Council taking the lead if necessary.

5. Any Other Items

There were no urgent items

The Committee rose at 11.35 a.m.

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Chair