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SUPPORT SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE: THURSDAY 21 JANUARY 2010
TIME: 10.00 AM
PLACE: COUNCIL HOUSE (NEXT TO THE CIVIC CENTRE)

Committee Members–

Councillor James, Chair
Councillor Lowry, Vice Chair
Councillors Berrow, Dann, Sam Leaves, Lock, Stark, Stevens and Thompson

Substitutes–:

Any Member other than a Member of the Cabinet may act as a substitute member provided that they do not have a personal and prejudicial interest in the matter under review.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

Members and Officers are requested to sign the attendance list at the meeting.

BARRY KEEL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SUPPORT SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

PART I (PUBLIC PANEL)

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

To receive apologies for non-attendance by panel members and to note the attendance of substitutes in accordance with the Constitution.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members will be asked to make declarations of interest in respect of items on this agenda.

3. MINUTES

(Pages 1 - 4)

To confirm the minutes of the last Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 26 November 2009.

4. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

To receive reports on business which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

5. FEEDBACK FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

To receive a briefing on the contract award process as referred by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

6. INTRODUCTION TO NEW OFFICERS:

6.1. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

The committee will meet the recently appointed Assistant Director for Democracy and Governance.

6.2. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

The committee will meet the recently appointed Assistant Director for Human Resources.

6.3. HEAD OF FINANCE

The committee will meet the recently appointed Head of Finance.

6.4. HEAD OF VALUE FOR MONEY

The committee will meet the recently appointed Head of Value for Money.

7. **CIP 14 - VALUE FOR MONEY - SUSTAINABILITY**

To receive a presentation on the sustainability element of Corporate Improvement Priority 14.

8. **REVIEW OF LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BACK OFFICE FUNCTION**

To receive a presentation on the role and key issues of the Local Strategic Partnership back office function.

9. **COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY (TO FOLLOW)**

To receive an update on the Internal Communications Strategy.

10. **STAFF SURVEY** **(Pages 5 - 12)**

To receive information on positive changes made as a direct result of the last staff survey.

11. **FEEDBACK FROM WORKING GROUPS**

To receive feedback on the progress of working groups since the Panel last met.

12. **TRACKING RESOLUTIONS** **(Pages 13 - 14)**

To monitor progress on previous resolutions.

13. **WORK PROGRAMME** **(Pages 15 - 16)**

To receive the panel's work programme for 2009/2010.

14. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

To consider passing a resolution under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it (they) involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) ... of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

PART II (PRIVATE PANEL)

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO NOTE that under the law, the Panel is entitled to consider certain items in private. Members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting when such items are discussed.

Nil.

Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday 26 November 2009

PRESENT:

Councillor James, in the Chair.

Councillor Lowry, Vice Chair.

Councillors Berrow, Dann, Sam Leaves, Lock, Stark and Thompson.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Stevens

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.15 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

35. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in accordance with the code of conduct.

36. MINUTES

Resolved that the minutes of the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel which took place on the 29 October 2009 be confirmed as a correct record.

37. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

38. FEEDBACK FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Chair reported that there was no feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

39. SUBSTITUTIONS

The Panel received a report which highlighted that Councillor Stark had been selected as the nominated substitute for two panels. The report also requested that a substitute for the Labour group was nominated.

Resolved that Councillors Berrow and Lowry be appointed as nominated substitutes for the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

(Councillor Stark left the meeting during this item)

40. QUARTERLY REPORT

Resolved to approve the report.

41. INTRODUCTION TO ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Panel heard an outline of the work that the Assistant Chief Executive would undertake in relation to Communications, Policy, Performance, Partnerships and Customer focus.

In answer to questions from members of the panel it was reported that;

- (i) there was work ongoing to improve the lines of communication between the public and the authority which included the main council telephone number;

- (ii) it was important that services need to be right at the point of delivery as this would result in customer satisfaction and reduce the amount of contacts and rework required;
- (iii) joint working was happening at both a strategic and local level, services were co-locating and there were plans to integrate commissioning;
- (iv) the inclusion of customer feedback in the bi-monthly budget and performance report, could assist in service design.

The Panel thanked the Assistant Chief Executive for his time.

42. **ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY**

The Panel received a presentation from the Head of Corporate Property on the Accommodation Strategy. It was reported that the strategy will attempt to –

- (i) reshape the Council providing increased customer service and focus;
- (ii) deliver on Gershon efficiency savings and value for money targets;
- (iii) allow the authority to become more sustainable;
- (iv) increase productivity;
- (v) allow better use of council resources.

In response to questions from members of the panel, members were informed that –

- (vi) there was work ongoing with the Police, PCT and University regarding co-locating;
- (vii) although service level agreements would standardise the process it could formalise the process too much and lead to less goodwill;
- (viii) there would be a payback period of less than five years for investment which would subsequently turn into a year on year saving;
- (ix) the proposed spend on Accommodation was £1,200,000 assuming that the council continues to occupy the civic centre;
- (x) Councillor Sam Leaves was nominated by Councillor Lowry and seconded by Councillor Thompson to act as a champion for the project and to provide assistance to Councillor Bowyer should he require it.

Resolved to review strategic next steps with regard to the accommodation, ICT and People strategy at the next meeting of the Panel.

43. **TRACKING RESOLUTIONS**

Resolved -

(1) that with regard to minute 33 (1) and (2) Councillors Lowry and Stark form an ad-hoc informal working group to provide the panel with a needs analysis for a scrutiny resources task & finish group and to look at whether or not items on other panels work programmes are statutory;

(2) to note and remove the completed resolutions from the tracking document.

44. **WORK PROGRAMME**

Resolved to –

1. add a review of the business case for the accommodation strategy to the Panels work programme for January;
2. add a review of the Local Strategic Partnership back office function to the work programme for January.

45. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.

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Actions from Support Services OSP November 2009

Objectives identified in CIP 13 – Supporting Staff to Perform Better - directly address Corporate priorities identified from the staff survey around:

- **Managing Change Better**
- **Ensuring fairness at work**
- **Enhancing key areas of management skill (listening, motivation and feedback).**
- **Communicating better**

The latest update on CIP13, which can be made available to Scrutiny, provides information on progress. In addition, the following illustrates specific improvements implemented to date around the areas with the poorest scores. In addition, individual departments have separately developed action plans to address specific issues in their areas.

Actions from Support Services OSP November 2009

Description - Overall group followed by individual statements which reflected a negative score.	Action Taken to date
<p>Your Job (Overall -5): Employees felt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Council could make better use of their skills and abilities and did not always feel they had enough information to do their job well. ○ They did not get a sense of personal achievement from their work and felt that morale was low where they worked and job security was poor. ○ They were dissatisfied with their physical working conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Job Evaluation exercise explored and clarified job roles. As at 31st October 2009 65% role profiles were written. 100% role profiles should be completed by 31st December 2009. ○ The Council has commenced a skills audit and this will ultimately capture skills, qualifications and technical competencies for roles and compare against actual to establish learning needs and identify transferable skills which will enable to Council to make better use of employee skills and abilities. ○ A knowledge room is being developed which will improve access to information for all staff including managers. ○ Appraisals provide a powerful opportunity for a manager to explore with an employee their personal achievements. Managers have recently undertaken training on conducting appraisals which has been received favourably. This training programme focused on giving and receiving feedback - both positive and negative. There is now a strong focus on embedding appraisals and it is anticipated that 100% appraisals should be completed by the end of January. ○ Whilst maintenance issues are being picked up, the Council is reviewing its' accommodation strategy. Once implemented this will address issues around physical working conditions.

Actions from Support Services OSP November 2009

<p>Your Manager (Overall -5):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employees did not necessarily feel that their manager recognised when they did their job well or inspire them to be more effective on communicates their thoughts and feelings upwards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In addition to appraisals, Hannah Metson has drafted a simple reward scheme, which is due to be shared with members shortly and this provides managers with an opportunity to recognise and reward employees who deliver excellent customer service. ○ The Competency framework contains a competency around effective leadership, and managers will be appraised against this competency and will be expected to evidence motivation of employees. ○ Richard Longford has drafted and is now consulting on an internal communications strategy which will include a section on actions to embed this strategy. This will be shared with members shortly. ○ In addition, the competency framework contains standards around communications which will support embedding of good communications.
<p>Senior Management (Overall -6): Employees felt that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Senior Managers were not always open in their communication and did not have an awareness of the issues affecting them. ○ Senior managers should be more visible, provide better leadership and manage change more effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The competency framework includes a competency around adapting to change and at the higher levels this competency focuses on effective change management. ○ The Communications Strategy and Communications Competency should assist to make expectations clear for Senior managers and measure delivery.

Actions from Support Services OSP November 2009

Communication (Overall -3):

- Employees are dissatisfied with the information received from management on what is going on in the organisation and feel unable to challenge the way things are done.
- See earlier comments around Communications Competency and development of communications strategy which will focus on embedding communications.
- The competency framework supports challenge - where appropriately done - and the reward programme being developed by Hannah Metson will support innovative and value for money ideas.

Actions from Support Services OSP November 2009

Learning and Development (Overall -6):

Employees did not feel that:

- The requirements for their new role were fully explained or that they were afforded support to enable them to become effective in their job quickly.
- Their development needs were identified appropriately and did not feel there were sufficient opportunities for them to receive training and to improve their skills in their current job.
- The training they received was relevant to their job role.

- The Council has reviewed and implemented its' revised induction programme for both staff and managers. Initial feedback is positive however results are being closely monitored and will be reported to managers and members in due course.
- The competency framework dedicates two areas to employee development (Self development for staff and Managing Others for managers). Employees who join the organisation are asked for feedback on their induction at the end of their probation and again results will be closely monitored.
- PCC has revised its' appraisal process and the development section of the appraisals form and the learning and events module of HR SAP is being further developed to improve processes.
- The Council is about to sign up to the Skills Pledge and commit to all employees being developed to NVQ level 2 or equivalent and is currently exploring priorities for this authority, taking business need into consideration. Whilst the Council has not agreed firm timescales for achievement of this ambitious goal, this shows a strong commitment to developing staff.
- The Council is about to launch its' E-Learning programme to managers and will emphasise that developing people is NOT about going on courses, but may be around new activities, e-learning, coaching, research etc., This tool will enable the council to identify transferable skills.
- The Council is working in close partnership with the CFE and other training providers to discuss learning needs for the Council and explore potential funding opportunities for training which could be taken up by PCC.

Actions from Support Services OSP November 2009

<p>Pay and Reward (Overall -1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employees did not regard the organisation as a good employer in relation to the general terms and conditions of employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Job Evaluation exercise has been concluded to ensure that its' pay and grading structure is fair and conducts regular bench-marking to compare against other employers.
<p>Working together to provide a good service (Overall -5):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employees felt that co-operation was not always good between teams and that their service did not always obtain feedback on how satisfied internal and external customers were with the service they received. ○ Where feedback was gathered employees did not feel that this was always acted upon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The competency framework includes a competency on customer focus and team-working. ○ The Council has developed and has implemented two one day training programmes around Customer Services - one for managers and one for employees. The content of the programme for managers has been reviewed and explores external surveys and feedback from customer.
<p>Equality and Diversity (Overall -2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employees felt that they were not valued for what they could offer or treated fairly and with respect and were worried that if they reported bullying and harassment they would be treated in a negative way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Council's mandatory Equalities Awareness programme is ongoing and aims to cover all staff including managers. ○ The Bullying and Harassment policy has recently been reviewed and the recent appraisals programme explored how to give feedback in an appropriate way. ○ Procedures are in place to flag where an employee has witnessed bullying and harassment. ○ The competency framework contains a competency dedicated to Equalities and staff are appraised against and must satisfy the standards included.

Actions from Support Services OSP November 2009

Perceptions of this Council (Overall -7):

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Employees were not proud to work for the Council and indicated they would not tell people that this is a good place to work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The Competency Framework contains a competency which aims to encourage employees to be supportive of the work of the organisation.○ It is anticipated that the above actions coupled with the drive and demonstrated commitment to achieve excellence will improve morale and employee perceptions of the Council. |
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SUPPORT SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

TRACKING RESOLUTIONS

Grey = Completed (once completed resolutions have been noted by the panel they will be removed from this document)

Panel Date	Minute number	Resolution	Officer	Progress	Target date	Comments
01/10/09	18 (2)	to request a list of key performance measures for CIP 13 along with the actual performance and target for each measure.	Gill Martin, Head of HR	Complete. Attached to agenda under tracking resolutions item	26/11/09	
01/10/09	18 (3)	to request information on positive changes that have been made as a direct result of the last staff survey	Eve Skuse, Assistant Head of HR and Organisational Development		26/11/09	
01/10/09	18 (4)	to request an example of the complete process for new appraisals in one service area, this should include actions taken after the appraisal	Eve Skuse, Assistant Head of HR and Organisational Development		Feb 2010	
01/10/09	18 (5)	to request a copy of the communications strategy	Eve Skuse, Assistant Head of HR and Organisational Development		26/11/09	
01/10/09	24(2)	invite the Assistant Chief Executive to the next meeting of this panel	Gemma Pearce, Democratic Support Officer	the Assistant Chief Executive has confirmed that he will attend the meeting on 26/11/09.		
01/10/09	24(3)	invite the Assistant Director for Democracy and Governance to the first meeting of this panel following their appointment.	Ross Jago, Democratic Support Officer			
29/10/09	29 (2)	to request that the Head of Performance, Policy and Partnerships report back to the panel as soon as practicable to brief members on the outcome of the activities.	Giles Perritt, Head of Performance, Policy and Partnerships		TBC	
29/10/09	31 (1)	to invite the Customer Services, Performance and Partnerships and the Policy and Performance Officer back to the future meeting of this panel to provide members with an update on how consultation responses are used and what feedback is given to the people who take part in the consultation	Councillor Ricketts, Cabinet Member / Jo Atkey, Policy and Performance Officer		18/03/09	

Panel Date	Minute number	Resolution	Officer	Progress	Target date	Comments
29/10/09	31 (2)	to invite the Customer Services, Performance and Partnerships and the Policy and Performance Officer back to the future meeting of this panel to provide members with a response to the request for a relevant Councillor to be one of the first people to be consulted in any consultation that impacts on their area of responsibility or ward.	Councillor Ricketts, Cabinet Member / Jo Atkey, Policy and Performance Officer		18/03/09	
29/10/09	33(1)	that a working group undertake to look into the current resource provision	Working Group Members		21/01/09	
29/10/09	33 (2)	that a working group undertake to look into the content of panel's work programmes, including details around whether items were statutory considerations or not.	Working Group Members		21/01/09	
26/11/09	44 (1)	A review of the business case for the accommodation strategy				
26/11/09	44 (2)	A review of the Local Strategic Partnership back office function				
26/11/09	42	To review strategic next steps with regard to the accommodation, ICT and People strategy			21/01/09	



Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2009/10

Topics	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Accommodation Strategy				26							
People Strategy			1								
ICT Strategy			29								
Local Strategic Partnership (Support) (as referred by Management Board)											
Budget and Performance Issues (as referred by Management Board)			29			21		18	7		
Corporate Plan - CIP 2 (involving residents)	6		29					18			
Corporate Plan – CIP 13 (staff performance)	6		1								
Corporate Plan – CIP 14 (value for money)	6					21					
Quarterly Scrutiny Report			1	26				18			
Review of Local Strategic Partnership back office function						21					
Review of the Accommodation Strategy business case								18			
Contract award for supply of temporary staff								18			
Role Profiles (referred by Management Board)			1								
Task & Finish Groups											
Monitoring of CityBus Ltd Shareholding Project (led by Growth and Prosperity OSP)			1 / 29								
Provision of Scrutiny Resources (subject to approval)			29								

* New date

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