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SUPPORT SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE: THURSDAY 18 MARCH 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

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 - 6)

To confirm the minutes of the last Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 21 January 2010.

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 matters as referred by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

6. ACCOMMODATION BUSINESS PLAN

To receive an update on the business plan for the Accommodation Strategy from the Head of Corporate property

7. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

To receive an update Internal and External communications strategies from the Head of Corporate Communications.

8. UPDATE ON CONSULTATION EVENTS

The panel will receive an update on the outcomes of recent consultation events from the Policy and Performance Officer.

9. QUARTERLY REPORT (Pages 7 - 12)

To consider the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel's quarterly report.

10. UPDATE ON APPRAISAL PROCESS

The Assistant Director will provide the panel with an update on the appraisals process.

11. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 13 - 14)

To consider the panels work programme.

12. TRACKING RESOLUTIONS (Pages 15 - 16)

To monitor progress on previous resolutions.

13. EXEMPT BUSINESS

There are no items of exempt business.

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Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday 21 January 2010

PRESENT:

Councillor James, in the Chair.

Councillor Lowry, Vice Chair.

Councillors Berrow, Dann, Sam Leaves, Lock, Stevens, Browne (Substitute for Councillor Stark), Thompson.

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 1.00 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.

46. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

47. MINUTES

Resolved that the minutes of the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel which took place on the 26 November 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.

48. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

49. FEEDBACK FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Panel received a verbal report on the contract award process from the Product Portfolio Manager. It was reported that –

- (i) All goods and services across the organisation were procured in accordance with EU and UK Procurement Law, PCC Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations;
- (ii) the council took advantage of opportunities for collaborative procurement and was part of the Devon Procurement Partnership;
- (iii) the contract management process ensured that the council received agreed service levels at the negotiated price and quality. Members of the strategic procurement team supported local managers in this process and managed a small number of central contracts.

In response to questions from the panel it was reported that –

- (iv) with regard to the contract award for temporary staff referred by Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, there had not yet been an invitation to tender;
- (v) Value for money was a central component of the evaluation criteria of any project, it would include an evaluation of market rates, contractor fees and process costs. It would also take account of how the council interfaces with any contractor and the efficiency of the ordering process;
- (vi) the vetting and barring scheme formed part of the evaluation criteria, contractors own policies would be assessed and health and safety technical statements were required;

- (vii) any justification for temporary staff would come from the lead department. The contract award for temporary staff was a 2nd generation contract, it was up to Human resources to evaluate any current contract as the lead department;
- (viii) the cost of an in-house temporary staffing agency was more when pension and sickness liability was considered Using an outside contractor was a cost effective solution to minimising the risk to the council.

Members commented that they would have liked more information before the meeting in order to ask pertinent questions of the Officer. The Chair reinforced that Members of the Panel are invited to come along to planning meetings where the information that panel members felt they required could be requested ahead of the business meeting.

50. INTRODUCTION TO NEW OFFICERS

- (i) **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE**
The Panel expressed disappointment that the Assistant Director for Democracy and Governance had given apologies due to a clash with induction training. Members commented that this item had been on the work programme for some time and that attendance at the Panel should have taken precedence over the induction training.

Members commented that requests for attendance at a scrutiny panel should take priority and a review of the status of scrutiny request should be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

Resolved that a further meeting of the Panel be held in order to meet with the Assistant Director for Democracy and Governance.

- (ii) **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES**
The Panel heard an outline of the work that the Assistant Director of Human Resources would undertake over the coming months. In response to questions from members of the panel it was reported that –
 - (i) The biggest challenge in the first three months would be coming to terms with the councils financial situation;
 - (ii) any reduction in workforce would impact on the city and through a process of planning, succession management, up skilling and talent management any impact could be lessened;
 - (iii) the Assistant Director had eight years experience in Human Resources within the public sector;
 - (iv) carbon control was an issue to be looked at, it included how employees influence their communities and would be part of a wider communications programme.
- (iii) **HEAD OF FINANCE**
The Panel heard an outline of the work that the Head of Finance would undertake over the coming months. It was reported that –
 - (i) That the Head of Finance had private sector experience in the UK, US and Japanese management models.
 - (ii) communication is a key issue, the Head of Finance has good support from the Cabinet Member and believes he is able to communicate effectively with all Members whatever there financial knowledge or experience is.

(iv) **HEAD OF VALUE FOR MONEY**

The Panel heard an outline of the work that the Head of Value for Money and Efficiencies would undertake over the coming months. It was reported that –

- (i) There would be a focus on delivering services in an effective and efficient way, providing value for money for customers;
- (ii) the new Head of VFM and efficiencies would welcome any feedback from members and would positively engage with anybody with constructive feedback.

51. CIP 14 - VALUE FOR MONEY - SUSTAINABILITY

The Panel received a presentation from the Sustainable Development Coordinator on the sustainability element of CIP 14. It was reported that –

- (i) There had been a change from voluntary to mandatory carbon management targets in the last two years;
- (ii) the Climate Change Act set out leadership, governance and accounting responsibilities;
- (iii) the Council would be treated as any other large business in regards to carbon management;
- (iv) there was a Climate Change Commission and partners in Plymouth were working well;
- (v) partnership working was essential to achieve targets and carbon accounts will become a legal requirement;
- (vi) Plymouth had achieved a good reputation for innovation in regard to climate change;

In response to questions from members of the panel, it was reported that –

- (vii) There are strict requirements in the local development framework regarding efficiency;
- (viii) the lights in the civic centre are controlled by an automated system, there had been technical issues, the department would take reports of any lights being left on;
- (ix) a reward system was under consideration to encourage staff to be more environmental conscious;
- (x) there could be a fine for not registering a carbon reduction commitment on time;
- (xi) there was a reward system if carbon targets are met;
- (xii) there was work to be done on the use of current resources, items of furniture which went to central stores could be used elsewhere rather than purchasing new equipment;
- (xiii) sustainability needed to be embedded into decision making; there is a role for members of the panel to raise the issue with colleagues;

- (xiv) there was a programme of events being devised to get the message out to the public.

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

The panel received a presentation from the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Manager on the LSP back office function. It was reported that –

- (i) The LSP back office had overseen a number of funding streams;
- (ii) key activities included a review of the LSP, helping to deliver third sector support infrastructure, defining a process to deliver multi agency plans to tackle city priorities and LSP performance management;
- (iii) the LSP back office is responsible for establishing a clear development plan for the 2020 vision, strengthening the governance and accountability of the LSP and managing the transition to Locality working for theme groups and other LSP bodies.

In response to questions from the panel it was reported that-

- (iv) The LSP had delayed work on communications plans and activities until strong delivery plans were developed;
- (v) any future review of the LSP could include input from councillors;
- (vi) performance against some LAA targets has been improved thanks to partnership working;
- (vii) funding levels had changed on a yearly basis, it would be more difficult to secure funding in the future and reward grant would be dependent on hitting LAA targets.

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

The panel noted the briefing paper on the Internal Communication Plan.

Resolved that both the Internal and External Communication plans are placed on the work programme for a future meeting.

54. **STAFF SURVEY**

The panel received a briefing on the positive changes made since the last staff survey. In response to questions from members of the panel the Assistant Director for Human Resources reported that –

- (i) The competency frame work is vital and was being rolled out;
- (ii) the appraisal process was going well and 80% would be complete by the end of January;
- (iii) work is required on the internal perception of the council, employees perception of the council effects that of the public;
- (iv) Human Resources had used public sector bench marks as a minimum and had used private sector standards as stretch targets;
- (v) cooperation between teams could be increased, aspects of the accommodation strategy would address this issue;
- (vi) the accountability of managers needed to be more consistent across the authority,

criticism of managers in the staff survey would be managed by further training and up skilling;

- (vii) Appraisals would identify any problems with managers and it was not necessary to wait for the next staff survey.

Resolved to organise a visit to floor 5 of the civic centre where aspects of the accommodation strategy are being piloted.

55. **FEEDBACK FROM WORKING GROUPS**

There was no feedback from working groups.

56. **TRACKING RESOLUTIONS**

Tracking resolutions were noted by members of the Panel.

57. **WORK PROGRAMME**

Resolved that as some members of the panel had left the meeting the discussion on the future work programme be deferred to the next meeting of the panel.

58. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.

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CITY OF PLYMOUTH

Subject: Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel Quarterly Report
Committee: Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Date: 9 March 2010
CMT Member: Adam Broome (Director for Corporate Support)
 Ian Gallin (Assistant Chief Executive)
Author: Paul Chapman (Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel
 Lead Officer)
Contact: paul.chapman@plymouth.gov.uk
Ref: SS-OSPQtr3-SRA
Part: Part I

Executive Summary:

This report sets out a review of the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the period 12 December 2009 – 9 March 2010.

Corporate Plan 2009-2012:

The Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel provides strategic scrutiny of the following Corporate Improvement Priorities and key areas:

- CIP2 - Informing and involving residents
- CIP13 - Supporting Council staff to perform better
- CIP14 - Providing better value for money
- The strategic and operational activities of the Chief Executives and Corporate Support Departments

**Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:
Including finance, human, IT and land**

None

Other Implications: e.g. Section 17 Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management, Equalities Impact Assessment, etc.

None

Recommendations & Reasons for recommended action:

That the report is noted

Alternative options considered and reasons for recommended action:

N/A

Background papers:

Support Services Overview and Scrutiny minutes and forward plan

Sign off: To be Noted

CITY OF PLYMOUTH

Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel Quarterly Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This second quarterly report sets out a review of the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the period 12th December 2009 to 9th March 2010.

2. Scope of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel

- 2.1.1 The Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel is primarily concerned with the strategic scrutiny of the following Corporate Improvement Priorities and key areas:
- CIP2 - Informing and involving residents
 - CIP13 - Supporting Council staff to perform better
 - CIP14 - Providing better value for money
 - The strategic and operational activities of the Chief Executives and Corporate Support Departments
- 2.2 The detailed terms of reference for the panel are at Appendix 1 for ease of reference.
- 2.3 The panel consists of the following members and officers

Title	Name	Attendances (1 Meeting)
Councillor (Chair)	D.James	1
Councillor (Vice Chair)	M.Lowry	1
Councillor	P.Berrow	1
Councillor	S.Dann	1
Councillor	S.Leaves	1
Councillor	J.Lock	1
Councillor	D.Stark	0
Councillor	B.Stevens	1
Councillor	J.Thompson	1
Councillor	T Browne (Substitute for Councillor Stark)	1
Lead Officer	Paul Chapman	1
Democratic Support	Ross Jago	1

- 2.4 The Panel, through effective strategic and operational scrutiny, supports the following cabinet members and CMT officers:

Title	Name
Cabinet Member (Finance, Property, People and Governance)	Ian Bowyer
Cabinet Member (Customer Services, Performance and Partnerships)	Steven Ricketts
Director for Corporate Support	Adam Broome
Assistant Chief Executive	Ian Gallin

2.5 The panel has a budget of £2,000 to support the scrutiny work.

3. Key achievements to date

3.1 The panel has now met on 1 occasion since the last quarterly report. The meeting was well structured, managed efficiently and well attended by panel members. A positive contribution has been made to support an effective strategic and operational overview, in particular the following achievements have been made:

- The panel continues to manage and resolve it's tracking resolutions promptly.
- The panel continues to review the scope, remit and key performance measures of the three CIP's that it is responsible for scrutinising through ongoing review and scrutiny of progress against milestones and key performance measures.
- The panel has received reports on and scrutinised the following work areas:
 - The contract award process – presented by the Product Portfolio Manager.
 - Value for Money – Sustainability presented by the Sustainability Unit Manager.
 - Staff Survey presented by the Assistant Director for HR and OD.
 - LSP back office function – presented by the LSP Manager.
 - A briefing paper on the internal communication plan.
- The Panel resolved that:
 - Both the Internal and External Communications plans are placed on the work programme for further scrutiny.
 - The ICT, People and Accommodation strategies needed further scrutiny to ensure they were complementary to each other.
- Each of the following officers were introduced to the panel and gave an overview of their background and future work programmes:
 - Assistant Director for Democracy and Governance.
 - Assistant Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development.
 - Head of Finance.
 - Head of Value for Money and Efficiency.

4. On the Horizon

4.1 Having received an overview of the CIP's, scrutinised the various support plans/strategies and received inputs on the People, Accommodation and ICT Strategies the panel has set out the following objectives in the workplan:

- To review resources to support scrutiny (as referred by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board).
- To review Members' Induction process.
- To receive a further update on the appraisal process.
- To further scrutinise the links between Accommodation, ICT and people strategy and how they will work together.
- A review of the overall Communications Plans for the Council (Internal and External).
- Review of the VFM programme.

5. Recommendation

5.1 That the progress of the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny panel is noted by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

Paul Chapman
Lead Officer Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel
9 March 2010

Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Terms of Reference

- To review new and existing policies and consider how they may be improved and developed;
- To monitor the budget and performance of the Cabinet Member, Department and partners to ensure that the priorities for the area are being delivered upon;
- To monitor performance against the relevant Corporate Improvement Priorities;
- To review Policies within the Budget and Policy Framework;
- To consider Equality Impact Assessments against new and existing policies;
- To investigate local issues to find out how the council and its partners can improve to meet the needs of local people;
- To make recommendations about service delivery to the Cabinet (via the Board)
- To review and scrutinise the performance of partner organisations
- To set up Ad-Hoc Working Groups as and when required;
- To produce quarterly progress reports to go to the management board

Policy Areas

- Business Transformation
- Finance
- ICT
- Human Resources and Organisational Development
- Democracy and Governance
- Assistant Chief Executive
- Policy and Performance
- Communications

Cabinet Members

- Finance, Property, People and Governance
- Customer Services, Performance and Partnerships

Directorate

- Chief Executive's
- Corporate Support

Corporate Improvement Priorities (CIPs)

- Involving residents (CIP 2)
- Staff performance (CIP 13)
- Value for money (CIP 14)

LSP Link

- LSP Support

Membership

The Chair of the Panel shall serve on the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board. The Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel will be chaired by a Member of the majority political group with the vice-chair from the opposition political group. All Members of the panel will adhere to the general rules of Overview and Scrutiny.

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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 (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	
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		18/03/10	
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		18/03/10	
29/10/09	33(1)	that a working group undertake to look into the current resource provision	Working Group Members		21/01/10	
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		21/01/10	

Panel Date	Minute number	Resolution	Officer	Progress	Target date	Comments
26/11/09	44 (1)	A review of the business case for the accommodation strategy			Subject to business plan being produced	
26/11/09	42	To review strategic next steps with regard to the accommodation, ICT and People strategy			18/03/10	