

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

Subject: Bi-annual Scrutiny Report

Committee: Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 24 November 2011

Cabinet Member: -

CMT Member: Adam Broome (Director for Corporate Support)
Ian Gallin (Assistant Chief Executive)

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Ref: SS-OSP 11/12

Key Decision: No

Part: 1

Executive Summary:

This report sets out a review of the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the period June 2011 to October 2011.

Corporate Plan 2011-2014:

The Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel provide strategic scrutiny of the following City and Council Priorities and key areas:

- Value for Communities
-

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

None

Other Implications: e.g. Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management and Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion:

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 OSP Terms of Reference (Appendix one)
Support Services OSP minutes

Sign off: N/A

Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel Bi-Annual report 2011-2012

1. Introduction

1.1 This report describes the work of the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel during the period June 2011 – October 2011. This includes the following meetings:

- a) 23 June 2011
- b) 21 July 2011
- c) 15 September 2011
- d) 27 October 2011

2. Scope of the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel

2.1 The Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel is primarily concerned with the strategic scrutiny of the following City and Council Priorities and key areas:

- “Value for Communities” (Achieve efficiency through transforming our service delivery and support arrangements, and our approach to customers)

2.2 The Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel is primarily concerned with scrutinising the strategic and operational activities of the following council directorates:

- Chief Executives Directorate
- Corporate Support Directorate

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

Councillor Ian Bowyer, Cabinet Member for Finance, Property and People
Councillor Richard Ball, Cabinet Member for Customer Services
Councillor Steven Ricketts, Cabinet Member for Performance, Transformation and Governance
Adam Broome, Director for Corporate Support
Ian Gallin, Assistant Chief Executive

2.3 The panel has a budget of £2,000 to support its scrutiny work.

3. Membership of the Panel

3.1 The membership of the panel and members attendance for the period June 2011 – October 2011 is contained in table 1:

Table 1:

June – September 2011	Name	Attendance (4 meetings)
Councillor (Chair)	James	3
Councillor (Vice Chair)	Lowry	2
Councillor	Berrow	4
Councillor	Casey	4
Councillor	Delbridge	2
Councillor	Evans	4
Councillor	Lock	2
Councillor	Murphy	4
Councillor	Rennie	2
Councillor	Reynolds	0
Councillor	Stark	4
Councillor	Stevens	3
Co-opted representative	Janet Isaac	3
Lead Officer	Paul Chapman	4
Democratic Support	Ross Johnston	4

3.2 Table 2 shows the members who have substituted on the Support Services OSP in the period June 2011 – October 2011:

Table 2:

June – September 2011	Name	Attendance (4 meetings)
Councillor	Mrs Aspinall	2
Councillor	Browne	1
Councillor	Mrs Dolan	1
Councillor	Penberthy	1
Councillor	Thompson	1
Councillor	Wildy	2

4. Key achievements

4.1 The panel believes it has made a positive and constructive contribution to support the strategic and operational overview of the Chief Executive's and Corporate Support Directorates, in particular the following achievements should be noted:

- The Panel agreed to appoint Janet Isaac from the University of Plymouth as a co-opted representative to the panel for the municipal year.
- The panel continued to scrutinise the Value for Money programme and recommended to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board that departmental delivery plans are shared with

the relevant scrutiny panels so that value for money in each service area can be monitored to identify where efficiencies have been achieved.

- Further scrutiny of Value for Money at the meeting on 15 September 2011 led to members questioning the incentives for staff to recognise and deliver value for money benefits and therefore agreed that Paul Chapman, Lead Officer would report back to a future meeting on providing staff incentive programmes or reward and recognition schemes to assist in the delivery of value for money.
- The Panel continued to monitor the progress of the Corporate Accommodation Strategy through Phase one and into Phase two and identified the relocation of the Register Office to Pounds House as a vital part in the delivery of Phase two. Further reviews of this project were agreed that would focus primarily on scrutinising the future use of Pounds House, the accessibility into Pounds House and the consultation with users of the Register Office and Coroners Service.
- Following further reviews of the relocation of the Register Office to Pounds House it was agreed by members that they would review bus destination and origin figures on bus journeys to and from Pounds House and a Traffic Impact Assessment, Equality Impact Assessment and traffic modelling on the impact of users of Outland Road and Peverell Park Road.
- In order to assist with the scrutiny into the relocation of the Register Office to Pounds House it was agreed that the author of the Equalities Impact Assessment and a representative of Hydrock Byways and Highways would be invited to attend a future meeting of the panel.
- Panel members comprehensively undertook to review strategic workforce issues within the Human Resources department including:
 - Staff Terms and Conditions
 - Senior Management Restructure
 - Redeployment PolicyFollowing this review it was agreed that members would scrutinise further HR issues at a future meeting.
- Following the transfer of many of Plymouth's schools to Academy status the panel scrutinised the implications of the transfers and agreed that further scrutiny of this issue should be undertaken. The panel also recommended that Cabinet undertake urgent discussions with Cornwall Council, Devon County Council and Torbay Council to minimise the difficulties that the exodus of local authority maintained schools to become Academies is causing Plymouth and its neighbouring authorities.
- Further scrutiny into the transfer of school academies brought about a resolution that a meeting be set up between Cllr David James, Chair (SS OSP), Cllr Mark Lowry, Vice-Chair (SS OSP), Paul Chapman, Lead Officer (SS OSP), Cllr Nicky Wildy, Chair (CYP OSP), Cllr David Stark, Vice-Chair (CYP OSP), Claire Oatway, Lead Officer (CYP OSP), Colin Moore, Assistant Director for Lifelong Learning and Mark Grimley, Assistant Director for Human Resources and Organisational Development to discuss School Academy Transfers and decide upon how each scrutiny panel would review the topic and in what format.

This meeting took place on 17 October 2011 and it was agreed that the Support Services OSP would continue to monitor and review issues that affect the council's ability to support schools from a resource perspective (e.g. Staff and finance) and the Children and Young People OSP would maintain looking at statutory issues that effect children. It was agreed that:

1. A briefing report would be provided to panel members by the Children and Young People's lead Officer.

2. Paul Chapman and Claire Oatway, Lead Officers, would review the panels' Terms of Reference and ensure that they were clear on each panels' remit.

- Following the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 29 June 2011 reviewing the Council's Forward Plan it was suggested that the Support Services OSP should undertake pre-decision scrutiny of the Local Carbon Framework. On 15 September 2011 the panel scrutinised the framework and agreed that they supported the report's recommendation to undertake 'Phase 2' of the Local Carbon Frameworks development as a programme of engagement and consultation prior to the production of the final Local Carbon Framework report in late 2011.

5. On the horizon

5.1 Having received an overview of the Corporate Support Directorate and reviewed the City and Council priorities at its first meeting of the municipal year the panel updated its work programme which sets out the following issues to be scrutinised in second half of the municipal year:

- Relocation of the Register Office to Pounds House (Accommodation Strategy)
- Embedding Value for Money ethos across the council
- Staff Sickness Review
- Appraisal Review
- Management of Agency Staff
- Performance and Finance Report
- Social Networking and Communications

5.2 Panel members are encouraged at each meeting to identify additional areas of council business to scrutinise under the agenda item 'work programme'.

6. Recommendations

6.1 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

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 and people
- Customer services
- Transformation, performance and governance

Directorate

- Chief Executive's
- Corporate Support

Corporate Priorities

- Monitor performance against the relevant corporate priorities

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.