

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

9th March, 2005

Members Present:- Councillor Charley (Substitute for Councillor Sawdon)
Councillor Clifford
Councillor Mrs. Johnson
Councillor Mutton
Councillor Patton
Councillor Ridge (Chair)

Cabinet Members Present:- Councillor Blundell (Cabinet Member (Children's Services))
Councillor Foster (Cabinet Member (City Services))

Other Scrutiny Board Members Present:- Councillor Mrs. Harper
Councillor Ms Hunter
Councillor McNicholas
Councillor Townshend

Employees Present:- P. Barnett (Legal and Democratic Services Directorate)
A. Brown (City Services Directorate)
J. Hill (Education and Libraries Directorate)
C. Hinde (Director of Legal and Democratic Services)
D. Jones (Finance and ICT Directorate)
T. Jones (Finance and ICT Directorate)
S. Pickering (Director of City Services)
J. Russell (City Development Directorate)
K. Segar (City Development Directorate)
A. Townsend (Legal and Democratic Services Directorate)
C. West (Education and Libraries Directorate)

125. Plas Dol-y-Moch Outdoor Education Centre – Letting of Build Contract for Refurbishment Works and the Supply of Temporary Accommodation

Further to Minute 108(2)/04, the Committee considered a joint report, which had previously been considered by the Cabinet (their Minute 162/04 refers), and which had been called-in by Councillors Clifford, Mutton and Batten. The report sought authority to let a build contract for the refurbishment works to be carried out at Plas Dol-y-Moch and the supply of temporary accommodation to service the Centre during the period of the works.

The development at Plas Dol-y-Moch Outdoor Education Centre located in Maentwrog, North Wales, formed part of the Coventry City Council LEA New Opportunities Fund Physical Education and Sport Capital Programme portfolio which had recently secured a funding allocation of £4.529m aimed at raising standards of Physical Education and School Sport across the City. One of the criteria of the overall spending package of the portfolio fund was that a minimum of 10% was directed towards improving or targeting outdoor education provision.

The employees gave a detailed explanation of the tendering process which had been followed, it was noted that since the contract had been awarded the successful tenderer had since indicated that they would not be in a position to undertake the contract and as a result negotiations were now under way with the second lowest tenderer. The Members questioned the Cabinet Member and employees present on aspects of the report and presentation, in particular changes to the specification, allowances for asbestos removal, the approach taken with the contingency fund and the use of firms local to the centre.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the Committee concur with the decisions of the Cabinet.
- (2) That this issue would not be referred on to Scrutiny Board (2) (Children's Services, Supported Community Services and Health and Housing).
- (3) That this Committee be provided with a progress report on the refurbishment works during the course of the project.

126. **Highway Maintenance Strategy**

Further to Minute 108(1)/04, the Committee considered a report of the Director of City Services which had previously been considered by the Cabinet (their Minute 156/04 refers) and had been called-in by Councillors McNicholas, Batten and Townshend. The report sought approval for the adoption of the highway maintenance strategy appended to the report.

The Members questioned the Cabinet Member and employees present on aspects of the report, in particular the quoted length of principal and non-principal roads, there was concern that recent press statements had indicated that £0.5m of grants had been lost due to the understatement of highway length. The employees briefly explained the process that was undertaken to calculate the highway length which was subject to clear guidelines and took in both gains and losses of roads for an annual return. They confirmed that the figure submitted was correct and that the City Council had not lost out on any grant funding. It was noted that a GIS survey had been carried out which had indicated the road length was higher than that submitted, however this system did not take account of unadopted roads nor strictly apply the guidelines for measurement. The Cabinet Member indicated that he was satisfied that in compiling the report all relevant officers had been consulted, he highlighted that the Directorates were currently in the process of being reorganised and this would bring all relevant areas under one roof.

The Committee noted that the highway maintenance strategy was already included in the work programme for Scrutiny Board (3) (Urban Regeneration and Regional Planning, Adult Education, Libraries and Leisure and City Services).

RESOLVED that the Committee concur with the decisions of the Cabinet.

127. **Call-ins Stage 1**

The Committee noted that no call-ins had been received.

128. **Canley Regeneration Scheme – Update on Financial Implications**

Further to Minute 66/04, the Committee considered and noted a joint report which provided an update on the financial aspects of the Canley Regeneration project. The employees highlighted that it was not envisaged that there would be a need to fund the timing differences highlighted in the cashflow by the use of Prudential borrowing and that the individual project would be managed as they came on stream and monitored to minimise timing differences and ensure overall value for money for the City Council.

129. **Report Back on Conference - Official Opening Celebrations of Cork 2005 European Capital of Culture**

The Committee considered and noted a report of the Lord Mayor that set out the background to a visit by the Lord Mayor at the opening ceremony celebrations for the European Capital of Culture 2005.

130. **Outstanding Issues**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services that identified those issues on which further reports had been requested in order that Members could monitor progress.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and that item 7, report on Tree Spraying Activity and Tree Inspection be rescheduled to 23rd March, 2005.