

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

14th September, 2005

- Members Present:- Councillor Asif (Substitute for Councillor Sawdon)
Councillor Mrs. Dixon
Councillor Duggins
Councillor Field
Councillor Mutton
Councillor Patton
Councillor Ridge
Councillor Williams
- Co-opted Member Present:- Councillor Clifford
- Cabinet Members Present:- Councillor Arrowsmith (Cabinet Member (Urban Regeneration and Regional Planning))
Councillor Foster (Cabinet Member (City Services))
- Employees Present:- N. Clewes (City Development Directorate)
S. Ford (City Services Directorate)
M. Green (City Services Directorate)
C. Hinde (Director of Legal and Democratic Services)
C. Steele (Legal and Democratic Services Directorate)
A. Townsend (Legal and Democratic Services Directorate)
- Apologies:- Councillor Sawdon

60. Call-in Stage 1

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services reported on the following call-in that had been received:-

Neighbourhood Management

The report had been called in by Councillors Clifford, Duggins and Harrison.

The reason for the call-in was "To better understand the difference between the three areas in size ie. 5 wards, 6 wards and 7 wards. Also to better understand how it is proposed to manage the four wards whose boundaries are not coterminous with the OCU boundaries".

The Committee noted that the deadlines for call-ins for Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions made during the week commencing 5th September, 2005, was 9 am on Friday, 16th September, 2005. Any further call-ins received after this meeting and before that deadline would be considered for validity by the Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee in consultation with the Director of Legal and Democratic Services (Paragraph 4.5.25.4 of the City Council's Constitution refers).

RESOLVED that the call-in detailed above be considered in detail by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee at their meeting on 28th September, 2005, and that the Cabinet Member (Finance and Equalities) be requested to attend.

61. Strategic Partnering Agreement – Coventry Care Partnership Limited

The Committee considered and noted a joint report which sought authority to participate in the Strategic Partnering Agreement between Coventry Care Partnerships Limited (Coventry LIFT Co) and the public authorities responsible for delivering health and social care services in the City (Coventry Teaching Primary Care Trust and Coventry and Warwickshire Ambulance Trust). The report was due to be considered by the Cabinet at their meeting on 20th September, 2005.

The NHS LIFT Initiative was launched nationally in 2001 to deliver a step change in primary and social care by developing and supplying new and refurbished health and social care facilities through a public/private partnership procurement model. The LIFT model of procurement had also been adopted by the Department of Education and Skills as the delivery model for building schools for the future, the programme to replace and refurbish all secondary schools in the country.

Coventry was awarded LIFT status in 2002 and the Coventry LIFT Company was established in December 2004 and trades under the name of 'Coventry Care Partnerships Limited'. The role of Coventry Care Partnerships in respect of the local health and social care estate is to contribute to the formulation of local strategies and delivery of plans, to provide innovative and effective, efficient services and buildings to meet local health and social care requirements through partnering.

When the Cabinet first considered its participation in LIFT in 2002 it was recommended to participate in LIFT and engage at a level that approved the Strategic Service Development Plan, but stopped short of becoming a participant in the Strategic Partnering Agreement because of uncertainties, at that time, as to what this may involve. When Coventry Care Partnerships Limited was set up, a Strategic Partnering Agreement was established between the Company and the Primary Care and Ambulance Trust, the agreement incorporated a mechanism for other public bodies, such as the City Council, to participate in the agreement at a future date. The report proposed that the Council enter into the Strategic Partnering Agreement, so formalising its role.

Members questioned the Officer on aspects of the report, in particular the two stage approval process and costs to the City Council at each stage, the reasons for choosing to sign up to the agreement now, Members emphasised the importance of robust audit trails for City Council expenditure.

62. Response to the Hampton Review and the Creation of the Consumer and Trading Standards Agency (CTFA)

The Committee considered a report of the Director of City Services which set out the background to the Hampton Review and also a draft response to the consultation by the Department of Trade and Industry on the proposed Consumer and Trading Standards Agency (CTSA). The report was due to be considered by the Cabinet at their meeting on 20th September, 2005. and then by the Council on 1st November, 2005.

The proposed CTSA would have a number of functions and powers in order to help achieve the key aims of the Hampton Review, specifically reducing the burden of regulation on businesses and the co-ordination of regulatory activities.

Members questioned the Cabinet Member and officers on aspects of the report, in particular the issue of "local discretion and choice", how failure would be measured, implications for Consumer Direct and the potential loss of a local focus. There was concern that the Hampton recommendations did not necessarily achieve what the review was intended to, that although a single regulatory body was proposed some areas were missed and that an additional tier of bureaucracy was being created which could cause difficulties for business who would be required to deal with several bodies.

RESOLVED that the Committee note the report and request that the comments made be forwarded to the Cabinet when they consider the report on 20th September, 2005 .

63. Review of Organisational Structure 2005

The Committee considered and noted a report of the Chief Executive which detailed responses received as a result of the consultation on the Review of Organisational Structure 2005 which had been reported to Cabinet on 7th June, 2005. The Chief Executive gave a brief background to the consultation process, it was noted that the number of responses to the proposals was not great, the key points raised were contained in the report.

With regard to the relocation of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Group from the Legal and Democratic Services Directorate to the Corporate Policy Area, it was noted that this was one of a range of initiatives to strengthen the Council and gave the Scrutiny process improved links to the Policy Development area. The Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee had been consulted on the proposal and had indicated that he wished to see the Scrutiny function separate from other policy areas, this had been achieved and was illustrated Organisational Chart included at Appendix B to the report.

Members questioned the Chief Executive about aspects of the report, in particular the ability to support the Scrutiny function in times of sickness, the involvement of the Trades Unions in the process and the need to improve the Corporate Parenting function. Members generally supported the proposals and hoped that it would allow Scrutiny to become involved in policy development at an earlier stage.

64. **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:-

- (1) **that with regard to Item 1 headed "Coombe Abbey – Loan Funding", the Director of City Development be requested to attend the next meeting for this matter.**
- (2) **that with regard to Item 3 headed "University Square – Traffic Regulation Order", the date for further consideration be amended to early October, 2005.**

65. **Work Programme 2005/06**

The Committee considered and noted the work programme for the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee for the year 2005/06. With regard to the issue headed "West Midlands Fire Authority – Reduction in Night Time Fire Appliances" it was noted that the Senior Fire Authority Officers were now more willing to attend a meeting, Officers would work to arrange this session.