

**SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE**

7th February, 2007

- Members Present:- Councillor Bains  
Councillor Crookes (Substitute for Councillor Asif)  
Councillor Duggins  
Councillor Lee  
Councillor Mutton  
Councillor Ridge (Deputy Chair)  
Councillor Sawdon (Chair)  
Councillor Williams
- Co-opted Member Present:- Councillor Clifford
- Cabinet Member Present:- Councillor Taylor (Cabinet Member (Policy, Leadership and Governance))
- Employees Present:- P. Barnett (Chief Executive's Directorate)  
S. Brake (Community Services Directorate)  
G. Carey (Legal and Democratic Services Directorate)  
C. Hinde (Director of Legal and Democratic Services)  
R. Hughes (Head of Corporate Policy)  
D. O'Sullivan (Chief Executive's Directorate)  
C. Steele (Chief Executive's Directorate)  
A. Townsend (Legal and Democratic Services Directorate)
- Apologies:- Councillor Asif

**164. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd January, 2007, were signed as a true record.

**165. Call-Ins Stage 1**

The Committee noted that no call-ins had been received yet this week. The deadline for call-ins of Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions made during the week commencing 29th January, 2007, was 9.00 a.m. on Friday 9th February, 2007. Any 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 5.4.5.25.4 of the City Council's Constitution refers).

**166. Cabinet Member Strategic Plan – Policy Leadership and Governance**

With reference to Minute 32/06, the Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive that provided a half year review of the progress made on the Cabinet Member Strategic Plans and went on to consider in detail the review of the progress made on the

Cabinet Member (Policy, Leadership and Governance) for the period 2006/2007 – 2008/09; the report included a short response to the issues raised by this Committee during their consideration of the Cabinet Member Plan at their meeting on 9th August, 2006.

The Cabinet Member (Policy, Leadership and Governance) gave a brief presentation on progress with the Strategic Plan and responded to eight questions which had previously been identified by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee covering the issues of the corporate restructure, scrutiny, the annual CPA score, budgets, publicising the city, the UK School Games, international strategy and city regions.

### Corporate Restructure

The Cabinet Member indicated that he believed the success of the corporate restructure would be measured in terms of improved services and value for money, progress on the development of the city centre and more efficient forward planning, procurement and commissioning. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that in the short term there would be an increased workload for Human Resources whilst the implementation of the restructuring proposals were implemented. Appointments to senior posts would be phased; the Chief Executive would be project managing the changes. Members requested that a report be submitted to this Committee in twelve months identifying the aims of the restructuring proposals and assessing they had been achieved.

### Scrutiny

With regard to the question relating to scrutiny the Cabinet Member indicated that scrutiny had now become part of his portfolio; he acknowledged that Scrutiny was working better than it had been although felt that there was still room for improvement. The corporate restructure would increase the level of resources available to Scrutiny; the Assistant Chief Executive would be the lead support for the Scrutiny process. The Cabinet Member felt that Scrutiny should be more involved in policy development, budget setting, value for money and evaluation work. The Committee agreed with this to Scrutiny and indicated that they had attempted to work in this manner in several instances although often issues were not brought before this Committee/Scrutiny Boards at a sufficiently early stage to allow them to make a contribution to the process. It was suggested that there was also work to do with the Executive to broaden their understanding as to how Scrutiny could work for them.

### Annual CPA Score

The Cabinet Member (Policy, Leadership and Governance) briefly explained how efforts would be targeted to ensure that the Council became a four star authority in February 2009. It was noted that the CPA score was not an end in itself, and that there needed to be improvements overall, better value for money and user satisfaction were felt to be key to success.

### Promoting the City

The Committee noted that £200,000 had been agreed in the 2006/2007 budget although it had not been specifically allocated. The interim best value review

conclusions had been that leadership and co-ordination relating to the promotion of the city should be retained within the Council.

### Summary of Costs

The Cabinet Member reported that a similar campaign to that which had taken place in 2006 was planned for 2007 and a formal launch would take place shortly. The use of the [visitcoventry.co.uk](http://visitcoventry.co.uk) website for events listings was being encouraged and a what's on guide being produced jointly with CV One.

### Party Conference Stands

The Cabinet Member indicated that he believed the stands at the party conferences had been very successful. Coverage had included an article and picture in the Coventry Evening Telegraph, a feature on B.B.C. Newsround and footage of the stand had been used as background on news bulletins. The stands had been visited by Ministers and Shadow Ministers and prize draws had taken place in order to collect business cards from attendees and these would be used to develop a database for lobbying purposes.

### UK School Games

The Cabinet Member confirmed that the City Council's input to the Youth School Games was capped at £50,000 and that any additional support by the City Council would be provided in kind. The Millennium Commission were funding the event with in the order of £1m allocated; the Youth Sports Trust were managing the event and they bore the financial risk. It was expected that 1,500 athletes would be competing in eight sports at venues including the Ricoh Arena, Coventry Sports Centre, Alan Higgs Centre and Warwick University. Regular planning meetings were taking place with stakeholders in the run up to the event.

### International Strategy

The Committee noted that partners and directorates were currently being consulted on revisions to the international strategy. It was likely that the focus would be on access to EU funding. Dedicated staffing would be located in the City Development Directorate and the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council would be reviewing staffing levels following the implementation of the new strategy.

### City region

The Cabinet Member explained that the city region was currently being developed as a voluntary partnership. The focus was on delivering growth and prosperity to the region; the outcome of the comprehensive spending review was awaited for more detail about government intentions in this area.

The Committee went on to consider the contents of the presentation. In particular the progress on the Best Value Review Promoting Coventry which the Committee were concerned had ceased work. The compliments and complaints statistics which the Committee felt were unclear and the Emergency Planning Committee, in particular training of the Committee and the role of the Lord Mayor.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (1) That a report be submitted to this Committee in February, 2008, identifying the aims of the restructuring proposals and assessing to what extent they have been achieved.**
- (2) That the Cabinet Member be requested to investigate the situation with the Best Value Promoting Coventry and report back to this Committee.**
- (3) That the Cabinet Member be requested to provide clearer figures on the compliments and complaints statistics.**
- (4) That the issue with the Emergency Planning Committee be raised with the appropriate officers and they report back to this Committee.**

**167. Report on the Work of Scrutiny Boards - Scrutiny Board (1) – Culture, Leisure and Libraries, Finance, Procurement and Value for Money, Human Resources, Corporate and Customer Services, and Audit Issues**

Further to Minute 76/06, Councillor Williams, the Chair of Scrutiny Board (1) (Culture, Leisure and Libraries, Finance and Procurement and Value for Money, Human Resources, Corporate and Customer services, and Audit Issues) gave a brief update on the work of the Scrutiny Board which had included work on the medium term financial strategy, value for money and the scope of Section 106 Planning agreements. The Board's Audit Sub-Group had now met twice and was starting to establish itself.

**168. Report on the Work of Scrutiny Boards – Scrutiny Board (2) – Children Services**

Councillor Lee, the Chair of Scrutiny Board (2) (Children Services) gave a brief update on the work of the Scrutiny Board which had included consideration of the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Strategy, children and young people effected by domestic violence and abuse, anti-social behaviour/respect agenda, corporate parenting and the Cabinet Member's plan. Review Groups had been established to look at building schools for the future and city academies; there was some debate as to whether these two groups should be amalgamated or they should remain separate. There was concern that much work had already been done by the Academy Review Group and that this would be lost if the two groups were to merge.

The Committee went on to consider a supplementary note regarding a proposed teenage pregnancy and parenthood event to celebrate and raise awareness of the various efforts being made in Coventry to reduce teenage pregnancy and disseminate two recent pieces of research by Coventry University in this field. It was proposed that the event would take place at the Techno Centre in May, 2007 and it was intended that the event would be funded mainly through a conference attendance fee and sponsorship although attendance by local practitioners would be free. The Board had been requested to underwrite the cost of the event although planning was proceeding on the basis that the event would be ultimately self-financing.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (1) That the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the Academies Review Group and Building Schools for the Future Review Group remain separate.**
- (2) That the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee approve the expenditure of up to £5,000 to support and underwrite the teenage pregnancy and parenthood event if required.**

**169. Report on the Work of Scrutiny Boards – Scrutiny Board (3) (Urban Regeneration and Regional Planning and City Services)**

Further to Minute 78/06, Councillor Ridge, the Chair of Scrutiny Board (3) (Urban Regeneration and Regional Planning and City Services) gave a brief update on the work of the Scrutiny Board which had included High Street/City Centre Street Cleansing, the Commercial Property Portfolio Review, the Traffic Management Act, Waste Strategy and a review that had recently been established to investigate any potential improvements that could be made to the customer services aspect of the Planning Service. Current work programmes issues were the new IKEA store and transport and travel arrangements for major non-football events at the Ricoh Arena.

**170. Report Back on the Work of Scrutiny Boards – Scrutiny Board (4) (Community Services and Housing, Neighbourhoods, Equalities and Health)**

Further to Minute 77/06, Councillor Clifford, Chair of Scrutiny Board (4) (Community Services and Housing, Neighbourhoods, Equalities and Health) gave a brief update on the work of the Scrutiny Board which had included a review of the care of older people in acute settings, the publication of an evaluation report on a review of services to support mothers in Coventry and Warwickshire who wish to breast feed, neighbourhood working, the future of ambulance services in Coventry, an Audit Commission inspection of strategic housing services, a question and answer session with the Joint Director of Public Health, the consideration of the outcome of the Coventry and Warwickshire acute Services Review and an evidence session on the local health economy.

**171. Outstanding Issues**

The Committee considered and noted 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.

**172. Work Programme 2006/2007**

The Committee considered the Work Programme for the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee for the 2006/2007 municipal year and that the Street Lighting PFI would now be scrutinised by Scrutiny Board (3) rather than this Committee as had previously been intended.

173. **Response to the Department for Communities and Local Government's Consultation on Amendments to the Model Code of Conduct for Local Authority Members**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services that sought the views of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on a proposed response to the consultation which would be considered by the Council at their meeting on 27th February, 2007.

The Committee went on to consider the proposed response in detail and suggested the following amendments:-

- That a response be added in relation to paragraph 2 of the consultation document, supporting the addition in the Code of a provision specifically prescribing bullying and requesting that bullying be clearly defined.
- That the response to Paragraph 12 of the consultation document be amended to reflect the Committee's view that the words "friends" and "family" in the Code should be replaced by the words "personal association".
- That a response be added in relation to Paragraphs 14 to 16 of the consultation document supporting the proposed changes to the Code.
- That the response to Paragraph 19 of the consultation document be revised to reflect the Committee's view that the proposed text of the Code be supported.

**RESOLVED that the view outlined above be forwarded to the Cabinet at their meeting on 13th February, 2007 and Council at their meeting on 27th February, 2007.**