

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

30th January, 2008

Quarterly Report on the Work of Scrutiny Board (1) – October to December 2007

This note shows the work done by the Board during the period October to December 2007.

1. **Cabinet Member Plans** - The Board has met informally to plan the lines of questioning to be used at the meetings arranged with the Cabinet Members (Finance, Procurement and Value for Money) and (Customer and Workforce Services) to discuss the reviews of their Plans (on 30th January and 6th February respectively).
2. **Housing Benefits** - the Board has continued to monitor the progress on the Improvement Plan.
3. **Joint Meeting of Scrutiny Board 1 and the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee, 9th October, 2007** – Members will recall that this meeting considered reports on Coventry Direct and ICT Services and the Serco contract realignment prior to the Cabinet; and that they asked the Cabinet to monitor closely the future ICT programme and to ensure that the Management Board insists that all Directorates give their maximum co-operation to this programme.
4. **Sickness absence** – the Board is continuing to concentrate on this issue in two ways:-
 - By considering the quarterly sickness absence monitoring reports.
 - By concentrating on those service areas where absence is particularly high, rather than on whole Directorates. The Board has now had two meetings, one with the Director of City Services (as mentioned in my last report to the Committee, in October 2007), and the other with the Director of Communiity Services.

Further meetings are planned with the Director of City Development and the Director of Children, Learning and Young People.

5. **Progress Reports** – the Board has received progress reports on the following:
 - Community Cohesion Strategy
 - Equality Strategy Action Plan
 - Legal Services Partnering Arrangement
 - Ricoh Arena finance

6. **Task and Finish Group** - at the request of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee, the Board has established a Task and Finish Group (chaired by Councillor Lee) to define guidelines for the bailiff service involved in the enforcement of Council Tax liability orders, in relation to their work with vulnerable people.

Initial planning work is currently being done, in preparation for a meeting of the Group in early February.

7. **Audit Sub-Group** - the Group held its third meeting in this municipal year at the end of November, considering reports on the work of the Council's Internal Audit Team and the Corporate Risk Register, together with a report setting out an action plan (with dates) in response to the External Auditors' ICT Healthcheck report..

In addition, the Group has done some initial work informally on measuring its effectiveness. This will be followed up at its next meeting (at the end of January)

Councillor Andrew Williams – Chair, Scrutiny Board 1