

## **SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE**

**19 November 2008**

### Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Members

Present: Councillor Andrews (Substitute for Councillor Crookes)  
Councillor Charley  
Councillor Duggins  
Councillor Kelly (Substitute for Councillor Clifford)  
Councillor Maton  
Councillor Mutton  
Councillor Ridge (Chair)  
Councillor Smith (Substitute for Councillor Arrowsmith)

### Other Members

Present: Councillor Blundell (Cabinet Member (Children, Learning and  
Young People))  
Councillor Field

Employees Present: D. Knaggs (Children, Learning and Young People Directorate)  
J. Parry (Chief Executive's Directorate)  
A. Pepper (Children, Learning and Young People Directorate)  
C. Sinclair (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)  
C. Steele (Chief Executive's Directorate)  
A. West (Chief Executive's Directorate)

Apologies: Councillor Arrowsmith  
Councillor Clifford  
Councillor Crookes

### 90. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### 91. **Call-In Stage 2 – Improving Services for Young People**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People that had previously been considered by the Cabinet (their Minute 97/08 refers).

The report outlined the organisational framework for the revised service for young people which had been developed following a consultation on proposals that responded to the findings of the Value for Money Review of Services for Young People and had sought Cabinet's approval for taking forward specific proposals to improve services for young people and achieve the savings identified in the Value for Money Review. A paper containing background information had been circulated to members of the Committee prior to the meeting.

There had been two call-ins by Councillors Kelly, J. Mutton and Duggins and by Councillors Field, Nellist and Windsor.

The Committee questioned the Cabinet Member and officers on aspects of the report in particular:

- What groups of young people, other than the Youth Council, had been consulted
- How the Youth Service would fit in with the extended school provision
- How much contact there had been between youth workers and young people
- What consultation had been undertaken with members
- How the service was going to be improved
- How the proposals would contribute to the development of services for young people
- How they would improve cross-sectional and departmental co-operation

Officers explained that PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC) had consulted a range of people at the first stage; the second and third stage involved meetings with a range of stakeholders including the Youth Council. Officers reported that the Youth Council had been the only organisation representing young people that had been consulted. However, further consultation with a wider range of young people was planned at the implementation stage.

Officers reported that the Youth Service would contribute to the extended school core offer: it already worked with every secondary school through the delivery of health programmes and through the initiatives and support of the Democracy Project. Another significant contribution was with the current '*National Challenge*' schools, where programmes focussed on achievement and inclusion and where a number of youth work programmes had become embedded. It was expected that the proposed actions would support and enhance current working with schools. The activities within the extended schools core offer would largely be programmed for weekdays: this would create the opportunity for the Youth Service to release resources from weekday provision to ensure that there is appropriate coverage over weekends, when reports of crime and anti-social behaviour tended to increase.

Following discussion, the Committee expressed concerns that Scrutiny Board 2's involvement had not been sought thus far and asked that, as this work is taken forward, the Board be kept fully involved. The Cabinet Member (Children, Learning and Young People) gave an undertaking that this would happen and the Committee indicated that it would be keeping a watching brief to ensure that this undertaking is followed through.

**RESOLVED that the Committee concur with Cabinet's decisions but with the proviso that Scrutiny Board 2 be kept fully involved in the implementation of those decisions.**

92. **West Midlands Spatial Strategy – Phase 2 Revision (Preferred Option and NLP Study)**

The Committee received a presentation on the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) Preferred Option and NLP (Nathanial Lichfield & Partners) Study.

The RSS was the top tier of the Development Plan, comprising the statutory documents which collectively set out the spatial and planning policies for the area (the relevant parts of the RSS and the Local Development Framework).

The Committee noted the presentation and asked that when Cabinet and Council considered it formally on 2 December 2008, officers ensured that clear and detailed maps of Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull, showing the distribution of dwellings for each area were available for Members to view at the meetings.

93. **Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

94. **Work Programme 2008/09**

The Committee noted the Work Programme.

95. **Meeting Evaluation**

The Committee discussed the meeting to evaluate its effectiveness.

96. **Other Urgent Items of Public Business**

There were no other items of public business.

## SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2008

### Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Members

Present: - Councillor Andrews (Substitute for Councillor Charley)  
Councillor Arrowsmith  
Councillor Clifford  
Councillor Duggins  
Councillor Maton  
Councillor Mutton  
Councillor Ridge (Chair)  
Councillor Smith (Substitute for Councillor Crookes)

### Cabinet Member

Present: - Councillor Sawdon (Culture, Leisure and Libraries) (for item 3)

### Employees Present: -

S. Brake (Community Services Directorate)  
L. Bull (Community Services Directorate)  
U. Patel (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)  
C. Steele (Chief Executive's Directorate)  
J. Teahan (Community Services Directorate)  
A. West (Chief Executive's Directorate)

### Apologies: -

Councillor Charley  
Councillor Crookes (Deputy Chair)

### 97. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### 98. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> October and 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 were signed as true records.

### 99. **Consideration of Call Ins – Stage 1**

The Committee noted that the deadline for call-ins for Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions made during the week commencing 24<sup>th</sup> November, 2008, was 9.00 a.m. on Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2008. 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 Customer and Workforce Services (Paragraph 4.5.25.4 of the City Council's Constitution refers).

### 100. **Use of Technology and Fees and Charges**

The Committee considered a report back on the effects of Fees and Charges and the use of ICT within Cultural Services. The report dealt with the Fees and

Charges element of this.

As part of the consideration of the Cultural Services inspection report, the Committee asked for an update on the effects of the changes to fees and charges and the use of ICT within Culture, Leisure and Libraries.

As a starting point the level of income received at Period 7 this year was compared with the same amount last year. This indicated that in overall terms £542,000 had been received in 2008/09 so far compared with £503,000 at the same time last year. However, several of these income streams were not directly related to fees and charges.

There were other factors that needed to be considered besides fees and charges that could influence the income levels such as the weather, timing of holidays and seasonal variations. This made it difficult to formulate pure comparisons during the year due to slightly offsetting timescales as to when income appeared within the accounts.

Service areas were asked to look in more detail at their income taking account of the current level of income compared with the same time last year where income was prone to fees and charges changes. They were asked to consider complaints and any operational issues that had arisen and any loss of activity/participation. The main effect for each area was detailed within the briefing note.

The briefing note indicated that libraries received a considerable number of complaints at the time of the introduction of the new charges. These were in relation to adult book fines, talking book charges, DVDs, CDs, photocopying and faxes. Appendix 1 of the briefing note showed a breakdown from the libraries on the differences in income received at the end of the Financial Period 7 and at the same time last year.

Appendix 2 of the briefing note dealt with parks. The Committee acknowledged that all parks income was affected to one degree or another by weather conditions as they were outdoor activities and were affected by seasonal variations. Weather conditions still remained the most important single factor in deciding whether or not people used the facilities. For this reason it would be very difficult to draw out significant trends and apportion these accurately to either an increase in the cost to the user or the prevailing weather conditions. Furthermore, it should be noted that two Easters in the last financial year would have also impacted participation figures.

The Committee noted that charges in relation to Arts and Heritage were now part of the Coventry Heritage and Arts Trust and subject to market conditions and as such were outside the scope of this analysis.

The Committee questioned the Cabinet Member and officers present on aspects of the report, particularly in relation to how many people accessed the services, whether they were from Coventry and the extent of joint working being undertaken to encourage young people to access services.

**RESOLVED that a further briefing note be submitted in six months time incorporating information on how many people used the services, where**

**they were from and the income generated. Similar information on the Coventry Arts Trust and the Motor Museum also be included in the briefing note.**

#### 101. **ICT within Culture Leisure and Libraries**

The Committee considered a report back which dealt with the ICT element of the effects of Fees and Charges and the use of ICT within Cultural Services. The Committee were informed of the following different systems and databases:

Peoplelink was a database available via the internet managed by the Libraries and Information Services as part of their information role and was supported by organisations from across the city and beyond.

Community Information provided information to help people solve problems in their everyday lives. For example, where to go for debt counselling, what leisure opportunities were available to them, what benefits were available etc. Community information was varied, continually changing and useful at the point that it was needed.

PeopleLink was developed as a responsive and flexible service to meet these needs i.e., to provide a:

- user friendly information and signposting service to make links between people and appropriate local organisations/services and other information held within and outside libraries.
- system which could easily be updated/maintained and expanded.
- responsive and flexible computerised database to meet the range of needs/enquiries through keyword, area, language and access search capabilities.

Peoplelink Community Information Service had been widely available on [www.opin.org.uk](http://www.opin.org.uk) since 2000 and there were currently 1061 organisations on the Peoplelink database of local organisations and services in Coventry or who served Coventry. Peoplelink/OPIN would be relaunched on a new web platform in early 2009 which would further its accessibility. It would also link into the new Coventry PCT Health Hub website.

The People's Network was the public part of the roll-out of Government's National Grid for learning which also provided access to computers in schools and ICT training for teachers and library staff. There was a current decline in usage; however, this could be attributable mainly to a number of libraries having faulty computers which were in the process of being replaced.

TALIS software package provided Library Management Information Systems to both the public and academic libraries and Coventry benefited from the partnership which by providing pilot testing of new products achieves significant discount on new packages and software releases. It would also provide the platform for the web version of Peoplelink.

The self service system available in some libraries was a radio frequency ID based system (FRID) which would allow a much simpler self serve option and would allow for other facilities such as book sorting and stock control.

The Committee noted that investigation into developing a cultural portal for city cultural activity and marketing continued and work was progressing well.

Coventry Active was a data base that was available via the internet for providers to indicate what they provided and for people to search for activities and events.

The report also detailed the introduction and overall aims of the hand-held technology being used in the parks project. The efficiencies to be gained by utilising mobile technology in terms of services being provided were becoming more apparent. The Parks Service intention was to develop a system for effectively recording and monitoring electronic data which would utilise hand held technology. The report detailed what the project aims were and how they would be achieved.

Due to a number of reasons, the roll out of hand-helds had been delayed due to technical expertise having left the City Council. There had also been technical difficulties, which had meant that officers were unable to progress the management functionality of the reporting facility of the various quality performance reports. The Committee noted that the problems were gradually being resolved.

The use of this technology would also feed into the joint review of Grounds Maintenance with Culture, Leisure and Libraries, City Services and Coventry Direct.

The Committee questioned the Cabinet Member and officers present on aspects of the report, particularly in relation to accessing the portals, especially the planning portal and the use of handhelds and remote working and who managed the different services etc. In addition, there was an issue with the wider usage of IT, remote working and the different systems not being compatible.

It was reported that initial work on this undertaken by the Head of ICT indicated that because of the complexity of the different services provided, i.e. social care and fly tipping, this did not allow for a 'one-system fits all' technology to be installed. However, it was pleasing to hear that the services were heading in right direction.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That a further briefing note detailing progress on the use of ICT within Cultural Services be submitted to Committee in six months time.**
- (2) That the Head of ICT be requested to provide information on the different systems being piloted by Culture, Leisure and Libraries such as remote working, hand-held and portable technology.**

102. **Outstanding Issues**

There were currently no outstanding issues.

103. **Work Programme 2008/09**

The Committee considered and noted their Work Programme for the 2008/09 Municipal Year.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) **That the Revenue and Capital Pre-Budget report be deleted from January 2009 as it was due to be considered at the meeting scheduled for December 2008.**
- (2) **That VFM report be deleted from December 2008 as the Committee's comments had already been forwarded to the Cabinet Member (Finance & Value for Money) for consideration.**

104. **Meeting Evaluation**

The Committee briefly discussed the meeting to evaluate its effectiveness. Members commented that the meeting was fine.

105. **Other Urgent Items of Public Business**

There were no other items of public business.



## **SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE**

**10<sup>th</sup> December, 2008**

### Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Members

Present: Councillor Arrowsmith  
Councillor Clifford  
Councillor Crookes  
Councillor Duggins  
Councillor Mutton  
Councillor Ridge (Chair)

Employees Present: P. Barnett (Chief Executive's Directorate)  
J. McLellan (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)  
A. West (Chief Executive's Directorate)

Apologies: Councillor Charley  
Councillor Maton

#### **106. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **107. Consideration of Call Ins – Stage 1**

The Committee noted that the deadline for call-ins for Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions made during the week commencing 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2008, was 9.00 a.m. on Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> December 2008. 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 Customer and Workforce Services (Paragraph 4.5.25.4 of the City Council's Constitution refers).

#### **108. Local Area Agreement and Corporate Plan Half Year Report**

The Board considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which was also to be considered by the Cabinet at their meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2008. The report provided a review of the progress made against the Local Area Agreement Performance Indicators and the Management Objectives set out in the Corporate Plan.

Coventry's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) was agreed by the Council and Coventry Partnership in March 2008 and the Local Area Agreement (LAA) signed off by Government in June. They set out the vision and priorities for Coventry. In September, the Council adopted its Corporate Plan 2008-11, aligning its corporate objectives with the SCS and building the LAA indicators into its performance management framework. A new report format had been developed to help focus on significant issues and any action required and this was attached at Appendix 1.

Each LAA Indicator had its own report card, one sheet of paper showing performance graphically, compared to target and previous performance where this was available. Where appropriate, this was supported by further graphics illustrating progress in relation to key target groups or geographical areas and any relevant comparative data.

These would be developed over time as more information became available. The data was supported by a short analysis of "what we've achieved" (an explanation of progress to date) and "what next" (an explanation of future action required).

Each SCS Theme had a theme summary which showed a red or green progress rating for each of the LAA indicators in that theme, together with a summary of progress and key issues to be addressed for the theme as a whole.

Finally, there was an overall summary of progress against the LAA, highlighting both significant progress and areas requiring action by lead organisations and partners.

The City Council agreed its new Corporate Plan in September 2008, aligning its corporate objectives with the priorities in the SCS. As part of this process, the supporting performance indicators were significantly revised to include measures from the new national indicator set and a number of gaps were identified where other measures needed to be developed. Some smaller amendments were made to the management objectives and accompanying indicators to reflect performance priorities that had emerged during the last year.

As the Corporate Plan was only two months old and there was further work to be done to establish some of the indicators, a full review was not being carried out at this point. However, the summary of progress based on the LAA indicators would provide a partial overview of progress against the Council's corporate objectives. A full report on the Council's management objectives was attached at Appendix 2.

The report also reviewed the progress being made in delivering the priorities set out in the Local Area Agreement and the management objectives of the Corporate Plan. This information would be used to identify further action that needed to be taken to improve performance and services to the people of Coventry and provide performance information to assist in the budget setting process.

The issues identified in the performance report, potentially had implications for all of the Council's functions and activities. Any specific implications for services from this half-year progress report were detailed in the appendices.

Progress on the Local Area Agreement was also reported to the Local Public Service Board on the 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2008.

The Committee considered the report and the arrangements for monitoring the progress made.

**RESOLVED that the Cabinet be informed that the information contained in the report would influence the Scrutiny Boards' Work Programmes and that further information on areas of concern would be considered by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee.**

#### 109. **Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

110. **Work Programme 2008/09**

The Committee considered the Work Programme.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (1) **That the meetings of the Committee scheduled for the 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2008 be cancelled.**
- (2) **That the officers be requested to speak to the report author to ascertain the reason why the "pre-budget report" was being submitted to the Committee after it had been considered by the Cabinet.**

111. **Meeting Evaluation**

The Committee discussed the meeting to evaluate its effectiveness and commented that the meeting was very good and that the LAA report was excellent.

112. **Other Urgent Items of Public Business**

There were no other items of public business.

## **SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE**

17<sup>th</sup> December, 2008

### Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Members

Present: Councillor Arrowsmith  
Councillor Clifford  
Councillor Crookes  
Councillor Maton  
Councillor Mutton  
Councillor Ridge (Chair)  
Councillor Smith (Substitute for Councillor Charley)

Employees Present: C. Forde (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)  
B. Hastie (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)  
J. McLellan (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)  
J. Parry (Chief Executive's Directorate)  
C. Steele (Chief Executive's Directorate)  
A. West (Chief Executive's Directorate)

Apologies: Councillor Charley  
Councillor Duggins

### 113. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### 114. **Consideration of Call Ins – Stage 1**

The Committee noted that the deadline for call-ins for Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions made during the week commencing 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2008, was 9.00 a.m. on Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> December 2008. 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 Customer and Workforce Services (Paragraph 4.5.25.4 of the City Council's Constitution refers).

### 115. **Pre-Budget Report**

The Committee considered in detail a report of the Management Board which had previously been considered by the Cabinet at their meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2008. The report provided an update on the work undertaken in preparation for the 2009/10 and future years' Revenue Budget and Capital Programme.

The Committee noted:-

- (1) that the Cabinet had considered the latest position on the medium term financial projection for revenue and capital, as set out in the report and had noted the progress made to date in preparing the 2009/10 revenue and capital programmes.

- (2) that the Cabinet had agreed that the content of the report would be used as the basis of the City Council's public budget consultation and that savings detailed in Appendix 1 to the report were being progressed and were being dealt with through the appropriate managerial and political processes outside the budget-setting report.

**RESOLVED that the Cabinet be informed that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee were not happy that the report had been considered by them prior to consideration by Scrutiny.**

**116. Proposed Changes to Member Code of Conduct**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Finance and Legal Services which had previously been considered by the Standards Committee and was also to be considered by the Cabinet and City Council. Appended to the report was a proposed response to the Department for Communities and Local Government in relation to its consultation paper entitled "Communities in Control: Real People, Real Power – Codes of Conduct for Local Authority Members and Employees".

A briefing note was tabled at the meeting which detailed the Standards Committee's comments to the proposed response.

**RESOLVED that the Committee concur with the decisions of the Standards Committee and that the Cabinet be informed accordingly.**

**117. Model Code of Conduct for Employees**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Finance and Legal Services which had previously been considered by the Standards Committee and was also to be considered by the Cabinet and City Council. Appended to the report was a proposed response to the Department for Communities and Local Government in relation to its consultation paper entitled "Communities in Control: Real People, Real Power – Codes of Conduct for Local Authority Members and Employees".

A briefing note was tabled at the meeting which detailed the Standards Committee's comments to the proposed response.

**RESOLVED that the Committee concur with the decisions of the Standards Committee and that the Cabinet be informed accordingly.**

**118. Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

119. **Work Programme 2008/09**

The Committee considered and noted the Work Programme.

120. **Meeting Evaluation**

The Committee discussed the meeting to evaluate its effectiveness and commented that the meeting had been productive.

121. **Other Urgent Items of Public Business**

There were no other items of public business.