

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

22 July 2009

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Members

Present: - Councillor Andrews (substitute for Councillor Charley)
Councillor Arrowsmith
Councillor Bailey (substitute for Councillor Crookes)
Councillor Mrs Bigham (substitute for Councillor Clifford)
Councillor Duggins
Councillor Lakha (substitute for Councillor Maton)
Councillor J. Mutton
Councillor Ridge (Chair)

Cabinet Members

Present: - Councillor Noonan (Cabinet Member, City Services)

Employees Present: -

M. Coult (Chief Executive's Directorate)
D. Ford (Chief Executive's Directorate)
C. Knight (City Services Directorate)
J. Parry (Assistant Chief Executive)
C. Sinclair (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
C. Steele (Chief Executive's Directorate)
A. West (Chief Executive's Directorate)
M. Yardley (City Development Directorate)

Apologies:

Councillor Charley
Councillor Clifford
Councillor Crookes
Councillor Maton

Public Business

23. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

24. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2009 were agreed as a true record

25. **Consideration of Call-ins – Stage 1**

There were no call-ins.

26. **Local Area Agreement Performance Report**

The Committee considered a briefing note which provided information on the progress being made in delivering the priorities set out in the Local Area Agreement (LAA).

Attached to the briefing note was a shortened version of the report agreed at the Council meeting on 29 June 2009 which gave an overall summary for each LAA theme and a more detailed summary for each including the rate of progress and the management objectives associated with the LAA showing whether or not targets were likely to be met.

There were some areas where the rate of progress was slower than intended or where targets were not likely to be met and the Committee considered which areas should be given further scrutiny and, following discussion, agreed that the following issues be considered for inclusion in the appropriate Scrutiny Board work programmes:

- Actions being taken to improve collection rates for Council Tax
- Fish deaths in Swanswell and Cheylesmore pools in hot weather
- Take-up rates of Chlamydia screening
- Recycling – particularly the number of bins per household
- Obesity in primary school aged children

RESOLVED that the areas identified above be referred to the appropriate Scrutiny Board for possible inclusion into their work programme.

27. Transformation Partnership Progress Report

The Committee noted a report which detailed progress on the Value for Money Partnership and included the work that had been undertaken to develop the Transformation Programme.

The Value for Money Programme had now been subsumed by the broader Transformation Programme (launched in June 2009). A number of reviews, begun as part of the VfM Programme, had now become part of the Transformation Programme and were subject to regular reports to the Transformation Programme Board, which were also submitted informally to the Cabinet Member and Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee.

The Committee considered the summary of progress on reviews and, in respect of the VAT review which sought to identify opportunities for the Council to claim overpaid VAT, noted that since publication of the report, a further £70k had now been received. This was in addition to the £436k already received.

RESOLVED that progress made since the last report in March 2009 be noted.

28. Scrutiny Development 2009/2010 - Action Plan

The Committee considered a briefing note which set out the proposed Scrutiny Development Action Plan for 2009/10.

At its meeting on 16 April 2009, the Committee had identified some issues included on the 2008/09 Plan where action was still needed and these were included in the 2009/2010 Plan together with one new issue relating to the Call-in Procedure.

The Committee questioned officers on aspects of the Action Plan. In relation to the section entitled 'Encouraging more people to get involved in Scrutiny' assurances

were sought and given that use of information already held to shape scrutiny work would protect confidentiality.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Development Action Plan 2009/10 be approved.

29. Report Back on Conference/Seminar - LGA Annual Conference & Exhibition 2009

The Committee received and noted a report of Councillor Mutton and Councillor Mrs Lucas on the above conference, which had been held between 30 June and 2 July 2009 at Harrogate International Centre.

30. Scrutiny Board Work Programmes

The Committee considered proposed work programmes for the Scrutiny Boards for the 2009/2010 Municipal Year.

The Council's Constitution placed the responsibility on each Scrutiny Board to set its own work programme. However, the Constitution also required the Committee to consider the work programme of the Boards to ensure that their time was used efficiently and that the potential for duplication of effort was minimised.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Board Work Programmes be noted and that all Boards be urged to scope the topics included in their work programme.

31. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues.

32. Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Work Programme 2009/2010

The Committee noted the 2009/2010 work programme.

33. Meeting Evaluation

The Board discussed and evaluated the meeting. Comments given by members would be used to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of future meetings.

34. Any Other Public Business

Ironmonger Square

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive on the above matter which was scheduled to be considered by the Cabinet at their meeting on 28 July 2009. The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee were being asked for their approval that the decisions which the Cabinet would be asked to make on 28 July were urgent and that therefore call-in did not apply.

The report set out details of the revised scheme for Ironmonger Square. Cabinet had approved the original scheme in November 2007. When work started, the supporting structure, which formed part of Primark's basement, was found to have deteriorated significantly since the original structural assessment in 2003. The

initial cost estimate for strengthening the structure using conventional techniques was £1.5m. Specialist consultants had since reduced the costs by adopting innovative repair methods and this had released sufficient budget to enable a revised scheme to be developed which retained many features of the original proposal.

Following discussion, the Committee expressed some concern that the reasons for urgency were not fully explained in the report. Having been given more details about this, the Committee agreed that the decisions needed to be taken urgently. The Committee then sought an undertaking from the Cabinet Member (City Services) that a further report, setting out the details of urgency be submitted to the Cabinet at its meeting on 28 July.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That it be conveyed to Cabinet that the Committee agree the reasons for urgency and therefore call-in would not apply.**
- (b) That a further report, setting out in full the reasons for urgency be submitted to Cabinet on 28 July 2009.**