

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

6 January 2010

Members Present: Councillor Arrowsmith
Councillor Clifford
Councillor Crookes
Councillor Duggins
Councillor Maton
Councillor Mutton
Councillor Ms. Reece
Councillor Ridge (Chair)

Employees Present: M. Burn (Finance & Legal Services Directorate)
J. Parry (Chief Executive's Directorate)
C. Sinclair (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
C. Steele (Chief Executive's Directorate)
L. Welton (Finance & Legal Services Directorate)
A. West (Chief Executive's Directorate)

Public Business

96. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

97. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th December 2009, were agreed as a true record.

98. Consideration of Call-ins – Stage 1

There were no call-ins.

99. e-Procurement

Further to Minute 79/09, the Committee received a presentation on e-Procurement which set out the key elements of buying and sourcing goods and services electronically. A document containing the presentation slides was tabled at the meeting.

The Committee were given details on the electronic ordering process, the use of procurement cards (a credit card with enhanced security features), how the Council used e-Auctioning and the functionality of the electronic tendering process.

Members questioned officers on aspects of the e-procurement processes and following a question on the amount of expenditure stated in the tabled document, the Committee requested a detailed breakdown of the figures to be circulated to them after the meeting.

The Committee discussed at length the tendering process during which they sought

assurance that the 'quality' aspect of procurement was taken into account as part of the tender process in order that decisions made were not solely driven by cost once the mandatory criteria had been met. The Committee felt that it was particularly important that due weight be given to suppliers with specialist expertise in order that those suppliers who could provide a better service were not driven out by lower-cost alternatives. In response, officers reported that it was essential that the specification for services was clear from the outset. Therefore there was an emphasis on encouraging the relevant personnel to undertake detailed work on specification prior to proceeding through to the electronic tendering stage.

The Committee also sought assurance that drivers undertaking community transport duties were required to undergo appropriate background checks. In response, officers reported this was the case and that the service now employed a Monitoring Officer to ensure compliance. Discussion then turned to the contract for Home to School Transport following which, the Committee requested that the 'Children, Young People, Learning and Leisure' Scrutiny Board (Scrutiny Board 2) examine the contract, including monitoring arrangements, to ensure that it was satisfactory.

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted and examination of the Home to School Transport contract be referred to the 'Children, Young People, Learning and Leisure Scrutiny Board.

100. Comprehensive Area Assessment: 2009 Results

The Committee considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which contained the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) 2009 results. The report had been presented to Cabinet at their meeting on 15th December 2009.

The CAA was the new framework for the independent assessment of local public services in England. Its aims were to provide a "catalyst for improvement, independent assurance for local people, evidence for central government on progress against national priorities and improving local services and a joined-up approach to inspection".

The CAA was made up of two elements:

- An area assessment which looked at how well local public services were delivering better results for local people across the whole area, focussing on agreed local priorities and how likely they were to improve in the future.
- An organisational assessment combining the external auditor's assessment of value for money in the use of resources with a joint inspectorate assessment of service improvement.

A document summarising the City Council's organisational assessment scores together with a brief overview of the area assessments 'flag' system was tabled at the meeting.

Members questioned officers on aspects of the assessment methodology and assessment scores for Coventry noting that those areas which had been flagged for improvement had been identified in the relevant Scrutiny Board work programmes.

RESOLVED the report be noted.

101. Scrutiny Chairs' Progress Report

The Committee considered and noted briefing reports by the Chairs of the Scrutiny Boards which detailed the progress made by each of the Boards against their agreed work programme.

102. Reports Back on the Work of Outside Bodies

The Committee considered the following reports from City Council's representatives on outside bodies which detailed the work of the bodies over the previous 12 months and included representative's attendance records.

- (1) West Midlands Fire & Rescue Authority (Councillor Gazey)

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint representatives to the West Midlands Fire & Rescue Authority.

- (2) Henley College (Chris Hinde)

Following consideration of the report, the Committee asked that officers investigate the basis of the current appointment indicating that, to be fully accountable, the representative should be either a Councillor or Council employee.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint a representative to the governing body of Henley College.

- (3) Coventry Law Centre Limited (Councillor Mrs Bigham)

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint representatives to the Coventry Law Centre Limited.

- (4) Coventry Venture Capital Limited (Councillor Foster)

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint a Director to the Board of Coventry Venture Capital Limited.

- (5) West Midlands Superannuation Committee (Councillor Mrs Johnson)

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint representatives to the West Midlands Superannuation Committee.

- (6) Coventry Association for International Friendship (Councillor Lakha)

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint a representative to the Coventry Association for International Friendship.

- (7) Birmingham International Airport (Councillor Taylor)

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint a representative on the Board of Directors of Birmingham International Airport.

- (8) New Deal for Communities (Councillor Ridley)

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint representatives to the New Deal for Communities Partnership Board.

- (9) West Midlands Joint Committee (Councillor Taylor)

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint representatives to the West Midlands Joint Committee.

- (10) Regional Flood Defence Committee (Councillor Gazey)

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint a representative to the Regional Flood Defence Committee.

- (11) Local Government Association Urban Commission (Councillor Gazey)

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint a representative to the Local Government Association Urban Commission.

- (12) Whitefriars Housing Group (Councillor Skinner)

RESOLVED:

(1) That the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint representatives to Whitefriars Housing Group.

(2) That Whitefriars Chief Executive, Howard Farrand, be invited to a future meeting to inform members of recent organisational changes.

- (13) Coventry Learning Disabilities Partnership Board (Councillor Mrs Johnson)

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint representatives to the Coventry Learning Disabilities Partnership Board.

- (14) Enterprise Coventry Partnership Board (Councillor Ridley)

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint representatives to the Enterprising Coventry Partnership Board.

- (15) West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority (Councillor Williams)

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint representatives to the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority.

- (16) Voluntary Action Coventry (Councillor Williams)

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint a representative to Voluntary Action Coventry.

- (17) Local Government Association – General Assembly (Councillor Taylor)

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommend that the City Council continue to appoint representatives to the Local Government Association General Assembly.

103. **Report Back from Conferences**

The Committee noted a report of the Lord Mayor, Councillor Harrison, on his civic visit to Belgrade, Serbia from 2nd to 6th October 2009.

104. **Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

105. **Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Work Programme 2009/2010**

The Committee considered and noted their Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2009/10.

In addition, Councillor Mutton raised the matter of the proposed reorganisation of policing in Coventry, and following a brief discussion, the Committee requested that further information be provided to all members of the Council about the implication of the organisational proposals.

106. **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.