

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

9th August 2011

Scrutiny Co-ordination

Committee Members Present: Councillor Blundell
Councillor Mrs Dixon (Substitute for Councillor Foster)
Councillor Gannon (Substitute for Councillor Ruane)
Councillor Lakha
Councillor Lancaster
Councillor Mrs Lucas (Chair)
Councillor McNicholas (Deputy Chair)
Councillor M. Mutton
Councillor Sawdon
Councillor Taylor
Councillor Welsh

Economy, Regeneration and
Transport Scrutiny Board
(Scrutiny Board 3) Members
Present (By Invitation):

Councillor Maton

Other Members Present:

Councillor Bailey
Councillor Kelly (Cabinet Member (Education))
Councillor Mutton
Councillor Skinner

Employees Present:

C. Forde, Finance & Legal Services Directorate
J. Goodyer, Children, Learning & Young People Directorate
C. Green, Director of Children, Learning & Young People
G. Holmes, Chief Executive's Directorate
J. Moynihan, Chief Executive's Directorate
J. Parry (Assistant Chief Executive)
H. Peacocke, Customer & Workforce Services Directorate
M. Reeves (Chief Executive)
M. Salmon (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
C. Steele (Chief Executive's Directorate)
C. Wainwright (Children, Learning & Young People Directorate)

Apologies:

Councillor Foster
Councillor Ruane

Public Business

35. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

36. Minutes

(a) The minutes of the meeting held on 15th June 2011 were signed as a true record subject to an amendment to Minute 22/10 headed 'Report Back on the Work of Outside Body – Belgrade Theatre Trust 2010-2011', that 'Councillor Abbott' be replaced with 'Councillor Welsh'.

(b) There were no matters arising.

37. Local Enterprise Partnership

The Committee received a briefing from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Mutton, and the Chief Executive, Martin Reeves, on the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership. Members of the Economy, Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Board (Scrutiny Board 3) were invited to attend the meeting for this agenda item.

The Board was constituted in January, 2011 and had met on three occasions, the most recent meeting being on 9th March, 2011. The Government had formally approved the Board membership which comprised seven private sector representatives, five representatives from the public sector and two from the local universities. The detailed membership was outlined and a copy circulated at the meeting. Denys Shortt, Chief Executive, DCS Europe was Chair of the Board and Councillor John Mutton the Vice-Chair. The City Council's other representative was Councillor Linda Bigham, Cabinet Member (City Development), the appointment of Councillor Mutton and Councillor Bigham having been made by Council. An Executive Delivery Board had also been established to ensure that the Board's decisions were translated into deliverable actions and to monitor and oversee progress. This Board was led by a small senior team which included Coventry City Council Chief Executive, Martin Reeves. A Delivery Team was currently being developed to provide staff resources to undertake actions and deliver projects on behalf of the Board.

The Partnership had received a £200,000 start-up fund and had been proactive in its first few months of existence with its progress being noted by Central Government and the media.

The Committee discussed the Local Enterprise Partnership's key activities, achievements and proposals that included:

- (a) the first draft of the five year strategy being presented to the Partnership Board
- (b) the development of a 100 day plan setting out short term actions
- (c) adoption of a local economic assessment for Coventry and Warwickshire
- (d) endorsement of the Regional Growth Fund bids
- (e) the announcement of a High Value Manufacturing Technology Innovation Centre
- (f) creation of a dedicated website
- (g) early engagement of companies of strategic importance in the sub-region asking for their top five priorities for action
- (h) the establishment of a number of Focus/Theme Groups to explore particular priorities/areas for interest and to develop recommendations for the Board
- (i) delivery of an estimated total of 10,000–14,000 jobs across Enterprise Zone over 10–15 years
- (j) proposal for approximately 4,000 'fast burner' jobs on Whitley side of Enterprise Zone
- (k) Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership selected to host the first national Local Enterprise Partnership summit, held at the Ricoh Arena on 7th March, 2011

- (l) the amalgamation of existing groups with the Partnership as appropriate, to avoid duplication
- (m) confirmation that the City Centre and Friargate Schemes were priorities that would proceed, if the Partnership were unsuccessful in their bid.
- (n) work being undertaken to establish an additional Theme Group for Business and Advice.

The Committee welcome the Partnership proposals and thanked the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council for their informative briefing. Members agreed that future governance arrangements for issues relating to the Local Enterprise Partnership would be considered by Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee – accountability, credibility, integrity and protection and Economy, Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Board (Scrutiny Board 3) – regeneration and job creation.

RESOLVED that future governance arrangements for issues relating to the Local Enterprise Partnership would be considered as follows:

- (i) Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee – accountability, credibility, integrity and protection**
- (ii) Economy, Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Board (Scrutiny Board 3) – regeneration and job creation.**

38. Consideration of Call-in - Stage 1 – Secondary School Transport

The Committee received a briefing note of the Chief Executive's Scrutiny Team detailing the determination of validity of a Call-in that had been received relating to Secondary School Transport Policy Consultation, following consideration of the report at Cabinet on 19th July 2011 when they decided to agree the following recommendation:-

to approve the removal of the discretionary sections of the secondary transport policy relating to the provision of transport for pupils attending faith and single sex schools with effect from September 2012 for new applicants only. Those who qualify under the current policy in July 2012 will continue to qualify on this basis unless circumstances change e.g. house move.

Subsequently, the following Call-in relating to this decision was received from Councillors Blundell, Mrs Dixon and Mrs Johnson:-

- 1) To further examine the reasoning behind rejecting the result of the consultation in relation to the proposals to remove discretionary sections of the secondary transport policy relating to pupils attending faith and single sex schools with effect from September 2012 for new applicants.
- 2) Also examine the basis of a suggestion made during Cabinet discussion of the report that an agreement could be reached with schools affected for a whole or partial reimbursement of the cost for Bus Passes that would previously have been provided by the Local Authority.

The Call-in had been deemed invalid by the Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on advice from the Assistant Director (Democratic Services), in conjunction with the Council Solicitor/Assistant Director (Legal Services), the Call-in reason having met the requirements of the Council's Constitution Scrutiny Rules on the Call-in Procedure and the criteria decided by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee. The reasons for her decision were:

- 1) In relation to the first part of the call-in the reasons for the decision, which are based essentially on financial and legal considerations, are clear in the report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People. Therefore the first reason for the call-in is not valid.
- 2) The second point of the call-in refers to a suggestion made at Cabinet that an agreement could be reached with schools affected for a whole or partial reimbursement of the cost of bus passes. This did not form part of the Cabinet's decision and therefore is not valid.

The Members who submitted the call-in were informed of the Chair's decisions and the reasons for them.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee noted the decision taken by the Chair of Scrutiny Co-ordination in her determination of the appropriateness of the Call-in, in accordance with paragraph 4.5.25.4 of the Council's Constitution in line with the criteria decided by the Committee, on advice by the Assistant Director (Democratic Services), in conjunction with the Council Solicitor, that the Call-in be deemed invalid.

(NOTE: Councillor Sawdon requested that a vote be taken on whether the briefing note setting out the reasons for deeming the Call-in inappropriate should be accepted. Following a show of hands it was decided that the Briefing Note be accepted.)

39. Consideration of Call-in - Stage 2 - Abc Review of Day Care in Sure Start Children's Centres

The Committee received a report of the Director (Children, Learning and Young People) that had been considered by Cabinet (their Minute 21/11 refers) and was Called-in by Councillors Blundell, Mrs Dixon and Mrs Johnson.

The report indicated that the abc review of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres had been commissioned in order to create a more operationally and financially efficient day care offer, whilst maintaining high quality delivery and improved access for the most vulnerable children and families. The overall remodelling of the service delivery of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres had been driven not only by the need to operate more efficiently, but also by national and local policy direction and local need. A number of options for the future delivery of the service had come out of the review, including: to continue to deliver the service in house but reducing the offer from full day care to part time sessional care for children aged 2 years and over; to transfer the service, or part of it, to another provider in the Private, Voluntary or Independent sector; to stop delivering the service altogether; and a combination of the options.

The net costs of the Service was currently £1,585,978, funded through the Early Intervention Grant. Hillfields Children's Centre received no direct funding from the grant but was still part of the review as the costs associated with the service were comparable to the other centres, £149,045. A target saving had been set for this review of £0.5m in 2011/12, rising to £1.0m in 2012/13. These savings would be realised through short term, one off

efficiency savings of £500k in 2011/12 and £1m in 2012/13 through £940k of staff savings and £60k in reduced running costs.

The report recommended the delivery of the service be continued in house with a reduced offer from full day care to part time sessional care for children aged 2 years and over. The preferred model of service delivery and the full rationale for selecting this as the preferred option was detailed in the report. It was proposed to undertake consultation on this option between August to October 2011, to include full participation and engagement with parents and any other interested parties in the consultation process and to give consideration to all comments and options resulting from the consultation.

The Cabinet had agreed to:

- 1) To approve a consultation in respect of changes to day care in Sure Start Children's Centres.
- 2) To approve the preferred model of service delivery as set out in this report (Option1)
- 3) To agree that the Project Team progresses to the detailed design stage of the abc Review of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres within Fundamental Service Review Methodology framework.
- 4) To agree that a further report is brought to Cabinet in October 2011 to seek approval for the implementation plan.
- 5) That Scrutiny Board (2) be requested to participate in the consultation process by seeking the views of parents and any other interested parties.

The reason for the call-in was:-

- 1) To further understand what form and who will be consulted in respect of changes to day care in Sure Start Children's Centres.
- 2) To further understand the reasons why one model of service delivery is being agreed in principle at the start of the consultation, whilst other service models could be suggested during the consultation and should be afforded equal weight.

The call-in had been deemed valid by the Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on advice from the Assistant Director (Democratic Services) and in conjunction with the Council Solicitor/Assistant Director (Legal Services), the Call-in reason having met the requirements of the Council's Constitution Scrutiny Rules on the Call-in Procedure and the criteria decided by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee.

Councillors Blundell and Mrs Dixon spoke in support of the call-in.

The Cabinet Member (Education) made the following comments to the Committee:-

- £1.8m subsidy had been provided by the Authority to support the service.
- The Authority needed to ensure value for money in its provision and that it was targeting the appropriate groups.
- There was a change in the provision of day care policy nationally that it should focus on the vulnerable. Principles have been prepared and guidance is expected in the Autumn 2011.

- There was a planned timetable for consultation that included a schedule for consulting every Children's Centre – 18 meetings arranged between 15th August and 18th September 2011.
- The consultation would be wide, not exhaustive and would include full participation and engagement with parents and any other interested parties.
- The preferred option was the model on which consultation would be based, with the purpose of offering one option being to provide a starting point for discussion.
- A survey had been drafted on which parents would be consulted, prior to it being finalised for use for the consultation.
- The consultation was genuine and would not limit the content of responses.
- Parents would be provided with full details of the options including advantages and disadvantages.
- Consideration will be given to all comments and options resulting from the consultation.

The Committee were informed by the Chair of Children, Learning and Leisure Scrutiny Board (Scrutiny Board 2), that the Board had considered the report at their meeting in July 2011 and had decided that in order for them to be part of the Consultation, Members and Ward Councillors be invited to the Consultation Meetings at Children's Centres to seek the views of parents and other interested parties with the aim of getting a comprehensive range of views from those likely to be affected. A report on the outcomes of the consultation would then be brought to the Board in September 2011, to enable them to make recommendations to the Cabinet, taking into account the consultation outcomes.

The Committee considered the Call-in, the comments of the Chair of Scrutiny Board 2, and the response by the Cabinet Member (Education) and, following a show of hands, decided to concur with the Cabinet decision.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee concurs with the decision of Cabinet:-

- 1) To approve a consultation in respect of changes to day care in Sure Start Children's Centres.**
- 2) To approve the preferred model of service delivery as set out in this report (Option1)**
- 3) To agree that the Project Team progresses to the detailed design stage of the abc Review of day care in Sure Start Children's Centres within Fundamental Service Review Methodology framework.**
- 4) To agree that a further report is brought to Cabinet in October 2011 to seek approval for the implementation plan.**
- 5) That Scrutiny Board (2) be requested to participate in the consultation process by seeking the views of parents and any other interested parties.**

40. Cabinet/Cabinet Member Items of Urgent Public Business – Voluntary Redundancy Scheme

The Committee noted that the Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Customer and Workforce Services and the Director of Finance and Legal Services headed 'Voluntary Redundancy Scheme', a copy of which had been circulated to Members, at their meeting on 19th July 2011 and the Deputy Chair of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee, as the nominee of

the Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee, had attended the Cabinet meeting and agreed that the decision was urgent and that Call-in should not apply. In accordance with paragraph 4.5.27.4 of the City Council Constitution, the report was presented to the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee in order for them to understand the reasons for urgency which was to enable formal consultation with employees and unions to commence before the end of the school term.

41. Special Urgency for Key Decisions – Public Sports and Leisure Provision

The Committee noted that the Cabinet considered public and private reports of the Director of City Services and Development headed 'Public Sports and Leisure Provision' at their meeting on 19th July 2011, these reports related to a key decision that had not previously been published on the Forward Plan. In accordance with paragraph 4.2.16.1 of the City Council's Constitution, the Deputy Chair, as the nominee of the Chair, of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee attended the meeting and agreed that due to the reasons for urgency, the taking of this key decision could not be reasonably deferred to allow publication of the item on the next Forward Plan. In accordance with paragraph 4.2.16.2 of the Council's Constitution, the report was presented to the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee to inform them of the reasons for urgency. Call-in still applied to these reports.

42. Petition – The Right of Appeal – Water Fluoridation

The Committee noted that under the Petitions Procedure Rules, the City Council had received an appeal relating to a Petition on Water Fluoridation that had been considered at the meeting of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board on 22nd June 2011. In accordance with paragraph 4.9.10 of the City Council's Constitution, the petition organiser, considering that the Council had not responded to the petition properly, had requested that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee reviewed the steps that the Council had taken in response to the petition. The background information on the issue was currently being prepared for presentation to the Committee for consideration at a future meeting.

43. Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Work Programme 2011/2012

The Committee noted the Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2010/11.

44. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues.

45. Meeting Evaluation

The Committee were satisfied with the content and structure of the meeting, they indicated that it had been very informative and had been well Chaired.