

## SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

31<sup>st</sup> August 2011

### Scrutiny Co-ordination

Committee Members Present: Councillor Blundell  
Councillor Foster  
Councillor Lakha  
Councillor Mrs Lucas (Chair)  
Councillor M. Mutton  
Councillor Ruane  
Councillor Skinner (Substitute for Councillor Sawdon)  
Councillor Taylor  
Councillor Walsh (Substitute for Councillor McNicholas)  
Councillor Welsh

Employees Present: S. Bennett (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)  
M. Coult (Chief Executive's Directorate)  
J. Parry (Assistant Chief Executive)  
S. Symonds (Customer and Workforce Services)  
A. West (Chief Executive's Directorate)

Apologies: Councillor Lancaster  
Councillor McNicholas  
Councillor Sawdon

### Public Business

#### 46. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Foster declared a personal interest in Minutes 49 and 50 below relating to "Transformation Programme – Year Three Reviews" and "Transformation Programme – Partnership Progress Report 2011" insofar as he is a Director of a local ICT company. Councillor Foster stated that the company had not or would not be involved in tenders for work with the Council. He remained in the meeting for consideration of this matter.

#### 47. Minutes

- (a) The minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> August, 2011 were signed as a true record.
- (b) There were no matters arising.

#### 48. Cabinet/Cabinet Member Item of Urgent Business

The Committee noted that the Cabinet had considered the following two reports (copies of which had been circulated) at their meetings on the dates indicated:-

- a) **NUCKLE (Phase 1) – Submission of Best and Final Bid to Department for Transport – Cabinet – 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2011**
- b) **NUCKLE (PHASE 1) – s.151 – Officer Declaration for Best and Final Bid to**

## **Department for Transport – Cabinet – 30<sup>th</sup> August, 2011**

The Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee, Councillor Mrs Lucas, had attended the Cabinet meeting on both occasions and had agreed that the decisions were urgent and that Call-in should not apply. In accordance with paragraph 4.5.27.4 of the City Council Constitution, the reports were presented to the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee in order for them to understand the reasons for urgency, which were to enable the submission of the bid to the Department for Transport by the required deadline.

### **49. Transformation Programme – Year Three Reviews**

The Committee noted a report of the Director of Finance and Legal Services and the Assistant Chief Executive, which had been approved by the Cabinet (their Minute 9/11 refers) and which detailed an abc programme of year three reviews. These reviews would continue the fundamental service reviews already undertaken or in progress and would be designed to deliver service improvement and cost reduction to help the Council meet its medium term financial plans.

A Value for Money Partnership with PricewaterhouseCoopers was established in October 2007, to achieve the following agreed outcomes for the Council:

- Specific service improvements to meet the changing needs of its customers and the future demands for its services;
- Sustainable efficiencies and cost reductions to meet the financial challenges it faces;
- Ensure members and officers benefit from external challenge and experience from outside the authority; and
- Give staff the opportunity to learn new skills.

The Partnership developed into the Council's Transformation Programme, which was launched in June 2009, responding to the new challenges faced by the whole of the public sector.

Since 2009, a large number of reviews had been undertaken to improve services and reduce costs, including the return and redesign of ICT services and the creation of the administration and business service. Consideration had been given to those services that had not yet been subject to fundamental service review and developed a proposed programme for 2010-11.

The proposed programme covered the areas of Statutory/Non-Statutory Services; Children's Centres, Fostering and Adoption and Children's Social Care Casework; Insurance and Risk Management; Sustainability and Low Carbon Economy; Strategic Procurement and Commissioning; Customer Management – Front Office Transformation; Income Generation; Urban Traffic Management and Control; and Optimal Care and Relationship with NHS.

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee questioned officers on aspects of the report, and in particular, registered their concern in relation to progress on the Optimal Care and Relationship with NHS review.

### **50. Transformation Programme – Partnership Progress Report 2011**

The Committee considered a Transformation Programme Progress report of the Assistant Chief Executive, which had also been considered by the Cabinet (their Minute 27/11

refers), and which detailed achievements over the last twelve months and outlined plans for year three of the Programme. The report also detailed how the Programme would contribute to the significant challenges facing the City Council.

The abc Programme was launched in 2009 and recognised that new approaches to the way the City Council works were required to continue to improve services and reduce costs. It anticipated that, in future, the Council would operate with a smaller workforce, based in fewer locations, and would harness the power of technology to work more flexibly and efficiently. The General Fund Budget report for 2011-12 reported that the 2010 Spending Review signalled a dramatic reduction in the level of public sector spending over the next four years, one consequence of which was the significant change in direction driven by the Council's abc Programme of service transformation projects.

To support the delivery of the Programme's objectives, a methodology for fundamental service reviews had been developed and a five year programme of such reviews was set in motion. The methodology was designed to deliver service improvement and cost reduction and, in doing so, asked fundamental questions about a service's purpose, objectives, current performance and design. The report provided a summary of progress to date on reviews in progress during 2010-11; current fee commitments to PricewaterhouseCoppers (PwC) for leading on the project management of reviews and also on the delivery of service expertise; together with target savings from current fundamental service reviews in progress. It was noted that the Council was now able to undertake more of the "Review" and "Implementation" of projects with its own staff and would seek support from PwC only for specific service or project management expertise.

The abc Programme anticipated that all services would be reviewed over a five year period and the report detailed the medium term financial challenge and the way that the abc Programme was contributing to the delivery of a balanced budget.

The Committee questioned officers on aspects of the report, particularly in relation to:-

- The Catering Review
- The Corporate Transport Review
- How improvements to the Contact Centre were measured
- The role of PwC in the Reviews (The Committee noted that Audit Committee were looking at this issue in depth)

**RESOLVED that the progress report be noted and:-**

- 1) That the next quarterly progress report provide further details on the Catering and Corporate Transport Reviews.**
- 2) That a visit be arranged for Members of the Committee to view the re-design of the office accommodation on the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor of Civic Centre 4, which has arisen as a result of the Operational Property Review.**
- 3) That PricewaterhouseCoppers be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee.**

## **51. Annual Performance Report 2010/11**

The Committee considered a briefing note of the Chief Executive, appended to which was the overall summary of the Coventry Local Area Agreement – End of Year Performance Report 2010/11. The summary was submitted to support the Committee in reviewing the work programmes of the Scrutiny Boards and in ensuring that any issues arising from the annual performance were being addressed appropriately by Scrutiny.

The Council's annual performance report provided a review of performance against the priorities identified by the Council and its partners in the Local Area Agreement and against the Council's own management objectives. The Annual Performance report was considered by the City Council at its meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> June, 2011 (their Minute 25/11 refers) and was also the subject of a seminar for all Councillors on 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2011. The Council adopted a new three year plan in June 2011 and performance against the newly identified priorities would be reported to the Committee later in the year.

The Committee questioned officers on aspects of the briefing report, noting that the Work Programmes for the Scrutiny Boards addressed a number of the performance issues arising from the end of year performance report. The Committee also recognised that, due to the heavy workloads, the Boards were having to prioritise issues.

**RESOLVED that the Annual Performance Report be noted, and that all Councillors be sent a reminder about the Seminar on Teenage Pregnancy to be held in September, 2011.**

## **52. Council Forward Plan**

The Committee noted the City Council's Forward Plan for the period 1<sup>st</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2011.

## **53. Scrutiny Work Programmes 2011/2012**

The Committee noted the Work Programmes for the Municipal Year 2011/12. Further to Minute 51 above, the Committee recognised that the Scrutiny Boards had heavy workloads and were having to prioritise issues.

## **54. Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

## **55. Meeting Evaluation**

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

## **56. Any Other Items of Public Business**

There were no other items of public business.

Meeting finished at 11.30 a.m.