

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

5th October, 2011

Scrutiny Co-ordination

Committee Members Present: Councillor Bains (Substitute for Councillor Ruane for the matter referred to in Minute 59/11 only)
Councillor Dixon (Substitute for Councillor Blundell)
Councillor Johnson (Substitute for Councillor Foster)
Councillor Lakha
Councillor Lancaster
Councillor Mrs Lucas (Chair)
Councillor McNicholas (Deputy Chair)
Councillor M. Mutton
Councillor Ruane
Councillor Sawdon
Councillor Welsh

Cabinet Member Present: Councillor Duggins (Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources))

Employees Present: H. Abraham (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
C. Dear (Chief Executive's Directorate)
C. Goodwin (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
J. McLellan (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
J. Parry (Assistant Chief Executive)
H. Peacocke (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
C. Steele (Chief Executive's Directorate)
J. Venn (Chief Executive's Directorate)
A. West (Chief Executive's Directorate)

Apologies: Councillor Blundell
Councillor Foster

Public Business

57. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Welsh informed the Committee that he had chaired the meeting of Scrutiny Board 5 when the Water Fluoridation Report had been considered. He remained in the meeting during the consideration of the item to answer questions but did not take part in the decision (Minute 59/11 below refers).

58. Minutes

- (a) The minutes of the meeting held on 31st August, 2011 were signed as a true record.
- (b) There were no matters arising.

59. Overview and Scrutiny Management – Petition – The Right of Appeal – Water Fluoridation Petition

The Committee considered a briefing note by the Assistant Director (Scrutiny), which detailed a request from the Petition Organiser, Mrs. Joy Warren, for a review of the steps that the Council took in response to her petition relating to water fluoridation. He also presented a procedure note for the Committee to follow in dealing with this request.

The briefing note set out the steps that the Council had taken to deal with the Petition and the reasons why Mrs. Warren was requesting a review of the way that the Council had dealt with the petition. Appended to the briefing note was the full request from the Petition Organiser for the review.

The Chair welcomed Mrs. Warren to the meeting and invited her to present the reasons for the request for a review. Mrs. Warren was granted permission by the Chair to make an audio recording of the proceedings for this item. She then presented the reasons for her request, as set out in the report.

The Council's Petitions Officer, outlined to the Committee the steps the Council had taken to respond to Mrs. Warren's petition.

The Committee considered and discussed the briefing note in detail together with what the Petitions Scheme says on each issue, how the petition was dealt with and the issues raised by the Petition Spokesperson.

RESOLVED that, after due consideration of the report and the matters raised at the meeting, the Committee decided:-

- (1) In summary, the facts set out in the report showed that the Petition was dealt with properly, and in line with the process set out in the Council's Petitions Scheme.**
- (2) The notification letter was not sent promptly to the petition organiser following the meeting. However, when this was done, the timescale for submitting a request for a review was extended accordingly. This had no effect on the way the petition was dealt with and while the opportunity to request a review was delayed by a month, the opportunity was provided and taken up.**
- (3) That procedures should be reviewed to ensure that the Petition Organiser was notified of the decision on a petition within two working days and to publish the decision on the City Council's website.**
- (4) That the other issues raised by the petitioner which related to the Petition Scheme in general, rather than this review, should be referred to the Petitions Officer for consideration in any review of the Scheme.**
- (5) That guidelines should be prepared for Committees and other meetings considering petitions outlining the steps to be followed when responding to petitions.**
- (6) That as there was no provision in the Petitions Scheme for validating requests for a review which currently meant that all requests must be**

considered by a meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee, it was recommended that the Constitution Working Group be asked to review section 10 of the Petitions Scheme and recommend to the Council a process for validating any future requests for a review which allows the Chair, with appropriate advice, to decide if the information supplied in the request for a review justifies consideration by a meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee.

60. Reporting Progress Towards the Council's Vision and Objectives

The Committee considered a Briefing Note and received a presentation by Carol Dear and Jenni Venn of the Chief Executive's Directorate which sought advice on the future presentation of performance information, related to the vision and objectives of the new Council Plan, to Scrutiny and the public.

RESOLVED that the Members of the Committee be requested to forward any comments they may have to Carol Dear and Jenni Venn.

61. Local Government Association Annual Conference

The Committee received and noted a report by Councillor Mrs. Ann Lucas which detailed the benefits of attending the Local Government Association 2011.

62. SCRUCO Work Programme 2011/2012

The Committee noted the Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2010/11 and that the Local Enterprise Partnership would be included in the work programme and a seminar would be arranged for all Members of the Council to consider Public Health as part of the abc programme.

63. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues.

64. 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.

65. Any Other Items of Public Business

There were no other items of public business.

Meeting finished at 11.45 a.m.