

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

4th January 2012

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Members

Present:

Councillor Blundell
Councillor Foster
Councillor Lakha
Councillor Lancaster
Councillor Mrs Lucas (Chair)
Councillor McNicholas (Deputy Chair)
Councillor M. Mutton
Councillor Ruane
Councillor Sawdon
Councillor Taylor
Councillor Welsh

Employees Present:

M. Coult (Chief Executive's Directorate)
G. Holmes (Chief Executive's Directorate)
M. O'Brien (Customer & Workforce Services Directorate)
J. Parry (Assistant Chief Executive)
M. Salmon (Customer & Workforce Services Directorate)
C. Steele (Chief Executive's Directorate)
A. West (Children, Learning & Young People Directorate)

Apology:

Councillor Duggins (Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance & Resources))

Public Business

86. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Lancaster declared a personal interest in the matter the subject of minute 87/11 below headed "Transformation Programme – Partnership Progress Report" in so far as it related to her employment at a Community Care Association. In accordance with Paragraph 5.1.9 of the City Council's Constitution, she disclosed the interest and remained in the meeting for consideration of the matter.

87. Transformation Programme – Partnership Progress Report

The Committee received a report of the Assistant Chief Executive, that was being considered by Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources) at his meeting on 18th January 2012, that provided a further update on the progress made in delivering the Council's abc Transformation Programme, in accordance with the agreed reporting practice.

Following the establishment of the Value for Money (VfM) Partnership with PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) in October 2007, the Council's abc Transformation Programme was launched in June 2009, responding to the new challenges faced by the whole of the public sector.

The Programme of fundamental service reviews was now well established, and the third year of reviews was in progress. Previous progress reports to Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee had provided information on completed reviews. In the last few months, however, there had been a number of reviews completed. A summary of the performance of those Recently Completed Reviews, together with the Reviews in Progress and New Reviews, were set out in the report. A table set out the current forecasts of PwC fees and a diagram showed the target savings for projects in progress and the current cumulative forecast of fees and savings over the five year period 2009-10 to 2013-14 for reviews in years 1 and 2 of the Programme. (It excludes year three reviews, since final fee levels remain to be agreed for some of these reviews). As savings delivered by reviews were on-going, whereas PwC fees were one-off, as time passed the cumulative savings were far exceeding the costs.

An appendix to the report set out the impact on City Council posts (full time equivalents) of fundamental service reviews for those reviews where new service design was sufficiently advanced to enable estimates to be made. For some reviews, new posts had been created as well as posts deleted as a result of the new ways of working that had been developed for services. These reflect the revisions to staffing structures to enable the new ways of working to be implemented. Overall, 239 posts had been reduced, however the same number of people had not left the Council's employ as a direct result of the abc Programme – vacancy management had been put in place, and the Security of Employment Agreement had been applied to manage post reductions. The Business Services review had posts become vacant that were not filled over a period of months in advance of full implementation to help manage the anticipated reduction in administration posts.

Members questioned officers on aspects of the report and discussed:

- the current position on grey transport
- the actual costs of post reductions, staff numbers and redeployment
- timescales for projects
- the Proud of our People Scheme
- new initiatives
- project risk
- commissioning and procurement,
- political input into Reviews,
- annual reviews of directorates fees and charges
- cultural change – Warwick University Staff Survey
- income generation – the progression of business cases

The Committee agreed that future progress reports should include the cost savings of reduced posts, that the Economic and Regeneration and transport Scrutiny Board (Scrutiny Board 3) request a report on 'grey transport' following which the matter be reported to Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee, and that officers investigate whether all City Council departmental fees and charges are reviewed annually.

88. Young People, Crime and Unemployment

The Committee received a briefing note of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator, Chief Executive's Directorate, that provided Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee with a brief on the work taking place across the City to support young people (16-25 years) who were not in education, employment or training (NEET), or at risk of becoming so, and also to prevent them from becoming affected by or involved in criminal and anti-social behaviour.

The Chairs of the Children, Young People, Learning and Culture Scrutiny Board (Scrutiny Board 2) and the Economy, Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Board (Scrutiny Board 3) and the Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Board (Scrutiny Board 4) were concerned about the impact of the current economic climate, the rising number of young people NEET in the City and also the increase, as identified through the Community Safety Partnerships Strategic Assessment, in young people involved as both victims and perpetrators of crime. The Chairs requested further information on what services were on offer to these young people and how this work was being co-ordinated.

A meeting was held with representation from the Community Safety Partnership, Youth Offending Service, Jobs Strategy and the Probation Service to share information with the Chairs. Further information about the work of Coventry Partnership and from the 14-19(25) Team in Education and Learning Services within Children, Learning and Young People Directorate was received. The Chairs attended the Coventry Partnership Annual Conference – Coventry working in Partnership to lead the way forward for Young People 16+. Following the workshops it was requested that consideration be made for young people with learning difficulties to be given Travel Training as part of the curriculum from year 10/11 as this helped individuals to travel to and from a place of employment, as well as being a confidence building experience. It was also recognised that there was a need to actively seek employers to give these young people a chance.

An appendix to the report provided an overview of activity, prepared by the 14-19 (25) Team and a further appendix detailed supplementary information from providers.

The Committee questioned officers on aspects of the report, in particular they highlighted the need to ensure that the 'drop out rates' of young people from employment, education or training are monitored and the need for young people to be correctly matched into the relevant course or employment and for their placement to be monitored. The Committee commented that Mentors were a good support mechanism for individuals. They recognised the good partnership working already established, encouraged by the Coventry Partnership, and confirmed the importance of linking with agencies to ensure a complete picture was achieved. Members noted overcoming barriers to learning was essential and that the Children, Young People, Learning and Culture Scrutiny Board (Scrutiny Board 2) were involved in the work being undertaken on this issue. The Committee identified an issue that they referred to Cabinet Member (Education) relating to the quality of teaching in schools, in that it was essential that schools were accountable for their results/pupils attainment and should be working to achieve improved results through high standards of teaching and that this be monitored through the Cabinet Member. Members were informed that the number of young people NEET was monitored by Connexions and that this information was available in the Council's Half-Year Performance Report. Members requested that this document, together with the information recently circulated to the Economy, Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Board (Scrutiny Board 3) on the Making Progress Project which supported Young Offenders, be circulated to them.

Resolved that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee:

- 1) Noted the content of the appendices to the briefing note.**
- 2) Referred the issue relating to the quality of teaching in schools, to Cabinet Member (Education).**
- 3) Agreed that an update report on this area of work be submitted to the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee in six months' time, to monitor progress.**

89. **Report Back on Attendance at Conference/Seminar - Civic Visit to Dresden**

The Committee noted a report of the Lord Mayor, Councillor Mulhall, which provided details of the Civic Visit to Dresden in Germany that he had attended on 9th – 11th November 2011, and the outcomes of the visit.

The visit was aimed at strengthening connections between the cities of Dresden and Coventry. The link between the two cities was based on the civic links of the two administrations and relationships between the Frauenkirche (Dresden Cathedral) and Coventry Cathedral. 2009 saw the 50th anniversary of this relationship. The presence of a Civic Representative from the City enhanced Coventry's image at the Exhibition, as it would eventually be displayed in Coventry. During the visit, the Lord Mayor attended a range of meetings, visits and an Exhibition, the details of which were set out in the report.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee endorsed the report of the Lord Mayor's Civic Visit to Dresden, Germany, and the positive outcomes of the event.

90. **Report Back on Attendance at Conference/Seminar - Civic Visit to Kiel**

The Committee noted a report of the Lord Mayor, Councillor Mulhall, which provided details of the Civic Visit to Kiel in Germany that he attended on 17th – 20th June 2011, and the the outcomes of the visit.

The purpose of the visit was to attend and take part in a programme of events hosted by Kiel City Council to mark the formal opening of Kieler Woche Celebrations (summer festival). This is an annual invitation because Kiel is a twin city of Coventry. The delegation was also invited to attend and participate in the International City Forum entitled 'Is Local Democracy in Crisis?'. The visit and participation in the Forum allowed an exchange of information and best practice in the fields of culture business and best practice in local government, with practitioners from 14 European cities and other institutions. The conference was a learning opportunity and this year had a focus on promoting and safeguarding local democracy. During the visit, the Lord Mayor attended numerous events such as the International City Forum, Kiel Week Opening Ceremony and the International market. Attendance raised the profile and represented the City Council and Coventry at a European and International level.

I also want to remind Members that even if they go to a conference/seminar with an officer who then writes the report, they need to have some input into the report and take some ownership of it.

The Chair took the opportunity to remind Members of the Committee that even if they go to a conference/ seminar with an officer who then writes the report, they need to have some input into the report and take some ownership of it.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee endorsed the report of the Lord Mayor's Civic Visit to Keil, Germany, and the positive outcomes of the event.

91. **Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Work Programme 2011/2012**

The Committee noted the Work Programme for 2011/2012 and that the 'if required' meeting scheduled for 18th January 2012 will be required for consideration of the Call-in relating to 'abc Review of Day Care Care in Sure Start Children's Centres – Consultation Responses'.

92. **Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

93. **Meeting Evaluation**

The Committee had no specific comments to make on the effectiveness of the meeting.

(Meeting closed at 12.10 p.m.)