

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) held
at 10.00 am on Monday, 3 March 2014

Present:

Members: Councillor R Sandy (Chair)
 Councillor R Lakha
 Councillor C Miks
 Councillor J Mutton (Substitute for Councillor Akhtar)
 Councillor T Sawdon
 Councillor H S Sehmi
 Councillor T Skipper
 Councillor S Thomas

Employees:

N Clews, Place Directorate
L Commane, Resources Directorate
J Murphy, Resources Directorate
S Symonds, Resources Directorate
A West, Resources Directorate

Apologies: Councillors N Akhtar, K Foster and D Gannon

Public Business

46. Declarations of Interest

47. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2014 were signed as a true record. Further to minute 39 headed ' Agency Workers and Interim Managers – 6 Month Performance Report' the report had been welcomed by the Audit and Procurement Committee at its meeting on 10 February 2014. In regard to minute 40 headed 'Customer Journey – Vision and Strategy', the Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources) endorsed the recommendations of the Scrutiny Board that had been submitted to his meeting on 20 January 2014.

48. Report Back from CIPFA Conference July 2013

The Board received a report of the Executive Director, Resources, which gave feedback following attendance at the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Annual Conference 2013. At its meeting on 18 June 2013, Cabinet had approved the attendance of Councillor Gannon, a Conservative nominee (Councillor Blundell), the Director of Finance and Legal Services (Chris West) and one additional officer from the Finance and Legal Services Directorate (Barrie Hastie).

It had been clear from the report that officers had found the experience invaluable in providing an opportunity to consider some of the wider strategic policy issues, which had proved instrumental in helping to shape key strategic thinking at officer

level as plans for the ABC programme, City Deal, the Friargate development and various other economic growth initiatives were developed locally.

However, the Board noted that the report had not included any comment from the Members who had attended. They were concerned to know the specific benefits of Member attendance at the conference and asked to receive comments from Councillors Gannon and Blundell.

RESOLVED that a note outlining the benefits of Member attendance at the 2013 CIPFA conference be circulated to Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1)

49. **Strategic Property Review and Council Move to Friargate**

The Board received a short presentation from officers on the strategic property review and the Council move to Friargate. This was then followed by a workshop-style session whereby the meeting split into two breakout groups to consider a range of questions within three specific headings:

- Regeneration objectives – jobs; growth and city centre regeneration
- Internal transformation – council-wide; savings delivery; how we all work (officers and members)
- Customer – what we provide; how we provide it

The aim of the group work had been to generate positive recommendations to assist in driving the Kickstart agenda forward and following lively discussions the groups fed back to the plenary session.

There were several common themes arising from the discussions, which arrived at the following success criteria:

1) Regeneration

- Increased footfall to Friargate via the city centre demonstrating a better and more vibrant customer offer with Friargate as a catalyst for regeneration
- Companies based at Friargate would be from outside the city (new jobs created)
- Greater numbers of local people remain in Coventry (positive impact on schools and housing)

2) Internal Transformation

- Senior management model positive behaviours that cascade throughout the organisation – break down the barriers between departments
- All officers and services capable of change for the better
- A paper-light organisation

3) Customer

- Customers can access all services on-line (systems are fit for purpose and people are enabled to do more for themselves)

- Streamlined property portfolio with co-location of services
- Customer satisfaction improvement year on year

RESOLVED that the outcomes of the discussion were recommended as key indicators of the success of the Kickstart project as it moves through its various stages.

50. **Work Programme 2013-14**

The Board agreed that the substantive item for discussion at the April meeting would be “Capital Programme for 2014/15.

51. **Outstanding Issues Report**

All outstanding issues had been included in the Work Programme. Minute 50 above refers.

52. **Any other items of Public Business**

There were no additional items of public business.

53. **Meeting Evaluation**

The Board evaluated the meeting and commended the workshop model as a valuable tool for steering major projects and issues. It was agreed that it would be helpful to both officers and Members to hold a workshop for all Members to consider that Strategic Property Review and Council Move to Friargate.

RESOLVED that a briefing note be sent to the Leader of the Council outlining the benefits of the workshop model for an all-Member discussion.

(Meeting closed at 11.48 am)