

CORPORATE SERVICES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 9 January 2007 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chairman), Lowe (Vice-Chairman), Bradshaw, Blackmore, Edge, C Inch, Loftus, Norddahl and Wainwright

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Nolan

Absence declared on Council business: Councillor M Dennett

Officers present: G. Ferguson, B. Dodd, J. Hughes, R. Mackenzie, S. Riley, J. Tradewell and A. Villiers

Also in attendance: (none)

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

		<i>Action</i>
CS27	MINUTES	
	<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 31st October 2006, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.</p>	
CS28	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
	<p>It was noted that no public questions were received.</p>	
CS29	MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE BOARD	
	<p>The Minutes of the Executive Board and the Executive Board Sub-Committee, relating to the work of the Corporate Services Policy & Performance Board since its last meeting were submitted for information.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.</p>	
CS30	PARTNERSHIPS	
	<p>The Board received a progress report on the work completed to date in relation to partnership activity within the Council.</p>	

The Board had previously considered a report which outlined information which would be included in the Register of Partnerships. The Register was still in its formative stages and would develop to be a more comprehensive record of partnership working over time.

It was possible that the register may never be fully comprehensive of all partnership activity going on, but it was important that all the key partnerships were included i.e. those that were crucial to the delivery of the Council's priorities. As new partnerships were established, it was important that they would also be included in the Register.

In addition to the Register, a governance of partnership's checklist had been established (which was now available on the Council's intranet). This focused attention on the key areas to be addressed when the Council was considering partnership working. Initial feedback from officers was that they found it useful and were happy to have some straightforward guidance when considering new partnership arrangements.

It was also reported that the definition of a partnership was yet to be defined. It was proposed that the suggested definition below (taken from the Audit Commission) would be used to capture the key partnerships with which the Council was involved:

Partnership – a joint working arrangement where the partners:

- are otherwise independent bodies;
- agree to co-operate to achieve a common goal;
- and to achieve it, create an organisational structure or process, an agreed programme, and shared information, risks and rewards.

RESOLVED: That the Board make the following recommendations to the Executive Board:

- (1) the definition of partnership as set out above be agreed;
- (2) a register of all partnerships of which the Council is a member is created and kept by the Council's Solicitor including the information as outlined in the report;
- (3) all new partnerships created or joined by the Council were notified to the Council Solicitor by the Officer with

Council Solicitor

responsibility for the partnership;

- (4) the governance of partnership checklist is formally endorsed;
- (5) the issues set out in the checklist are properly considered and addressed before a decision is taken to form or enter into a new partnership;
- (6) annual progress reports are presented by each partnership in the register to the appropriate PPB;
- (7) the Corporate Services PPB reviews the partnership register and partnership arrangements on an annual basis to make sure that they are working effectively; and
- (8) as the process with regard to partnerships is developed, additional reports be brought to the Board.

CS31 SERVICE PLANNING

The Board was advised that the service planning process for the next three years was currently underway. In order to enable the Board to influence the future direction of those services for which it was responsible, it received presentations from representatives from the following departments which provided a brief outline of plans for their areas over the next three years, including details of issues likely to emerge and budget and resource pressures;

- (i) Legal and Member Services;
- (ii) Financial Services;
- (iii) ICT Services;
- (iv) Exchequer and Customer Services;
- (v) Policy and Performance Department; and
- (vi) Property Services.

Within Legal and Member Services it was reported that the significant issues emerging included: the Council Solicitor post would be vacant from early March, budget implications, Gambling Act 2005, Electoral Administration Act 2006, Changes to Standards Procedures and the Local Government Bill.

Whilst within Financial Services the key issues included: the External Audit Commission Report, Budget, Gershon Targets, Major Capital Programme Schemes, Publication of Accounts and Comprehensive Spending Review.

The Committee were advised the key issues emerging from Property Services were Major Capital Programme Schemes, Energy Targets, Building Schools for the Future Programme 2008, Procurement issues, and alley gate workload.

Within IT the following issues would be significant: Building Skills for the Future Programme, the restructure of the department which had taken place, work with several new systems including the Revenues and Benefits System, CRM System, Trent etc. including upgrading existing systems i.e. Citrix, Windows XP and improvements to the IT Help Desk.

It was noted that within Policy and Performance the significant issues emerging would be Local Government Bill, Local Area Agreements, Performance Management Framework Changes, Efficiency Savings, Changes to NRF Grants and improvements to the Internet/Intranet.

Arising from the discussion, the Board expressed concern that their previous recommendation that an Energy Officer be appointed had not been progressed.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Service Planning process be noted; and
- (2) a meeting of the Board would be held to consider the Budget 2007/08.

Strategic Director
Corporate and
Policy

CS32 CORPORATE EQUALITY PLAN

Since the approval of a Corporate Equality Plan for the Council, significant new legislation in relation to both disability equality, and gender equality had been produced. The new legislation required the Council to adopt a Disability/Equality Scheme (December 2006) and a Gender Equality Scheme (April 2007).

Rather than adopt separate schemes for each aspect of social identity, a revised Corporate Equality Scheme had been produced and endorsed by the Executive Board in December. The revised scheme was the single Equality Scheme encompassing the separate statutory requirements for the Council to produce race, disability and gender equality schemes.

The revised scheme would be subject to public consultation. A copy of the revised Corporate Equality Plan was submitted to the Board for consideration.

Members commented that costings were not included within the Corporate Equality Plan and it was suggested that future plans contain costings.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the revised Corporate Equality Plan be noted; and
- (2) future Corporate Equality Plans should outline the costings for progressing from Stage 2 to Stage 4.

CS33 AREA FORUM TOPIC GROUP

The Board considered an update report on the progress of the Area Forum Topic Group. To date, the Group had:

- (i) consulted with representatives from the Police, Fire Service, various organisations who had been involved with Area Forums, Officers and Members;
- (ii) commissioned a Halton 2000 Panel Questionnaire;
- (iii) study visits to Knowsley and Thameside Councils were also proposed; and
- (iv) an item would be placed on the agenda of all Area Forum meetings for discussion and feedback.

It was anticipated that the initial findings of the Working Group would be circulated to all Members in February/March and a report brought to a future meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CS34 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS TO HALF-YEAR 30 SEPTEMBER 2006

The Board considered a report which outlined the progress of the Performance Management 2nd Quarter against Service Plan Objectives, Milestones and Performance Targets affecting the service etc for the following areas:

- Personnel Services;

- Financial Services;
- Exchequer and Customer Services;
- ICT Services;
- Policy and Performance;
- Legal and Member Services;
- Property Services; and
- Stadium and Hospitality

The Board received a oral report from Simon Riley, Operational Director – ICT, which highlighted IT objectives, the recent delivery of Major Projects i.e. Trent, Corona, SX3, ICS, improvements to the IT Helpdesk and the restructure and review of IT Services. The significant key issues emerging in the future included the rollout of Windows XP, upgrade of Citrix, upgrade of IT Helpdesk, and networking issues.

Arising from the discussion, it was agreed that each Member of the Board would receive a paper copy of the individual performance management report relating to the Board's activities. Members would continue to receive the Performance Management Reports electronically as soon as they were available via the information bulletin and a paper copy would be placed in the Members Room.

RESOLVED: That the 2nd Quarter year end Performance Management Report be received.

Meeting ended at 9.00 p.m.