

BUSINESS EFFICIENCY BOARD

At a meeting of the Business Efficiency Board held on Wednesday, 10 January 2007 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Cole (Chairman), Lloyd Jones (Vice-Chairman), Bradshaw, Hignett, Findon, Lowe, Osborne and Rowe

Apologies for Absence: Councillor C Inch

Absence declared on Council business:(none)

Officers present: I. Leivesley and C. Halpin

Also in attendance: (none)

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

BEB21 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2006, having been printed and circulated, were signed as a correct record with an amendment to the attendance list to include Councillor Massey (in accordance with Standing Order 33).

BEB22 ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT MID YEAR UPDATE

The Board received a Mid Year Update on the progress made against the Council's efficiency target. As an excellent Authority, Halton was not required to provide this to Government, however, it was felt that it was good practice to measure whether the Council's Gershon targets were being achieved.

The update showed the efficiency gains achieved in the first six months of the year against the 2006/07 efficiency target, as well as forecasting efficiency gains and the cashable element for 2006/7. Ongoing efficiency gains and the cashable element from previous years was also shown, as well the cumulative gains and cashable element.

It was noted that the Council had achieved efficiency

Action

gains of more than £1.5m in the first six months, with gains of almost £2.9m forecast for the whole year, which would exceed the target of £2.5m. In addition the cashable element of the gains was forecast to be over £1.6m, representing 68.8% of the gains, which would exceed the target of 50%.

Furthermore an estimated total of £5.7m efficiency gains overall was expected; on incorporating the ongoing efficiency gains of over £2.8m from previous years and the efficiency gains expected at the end of this financial year. Consequently the Council's target of £7.5m by 2007/8 was well on the way to being achieved.

The Board requested that service performance be cross-referenced against efficiency savings in order to ensure that the savings were not adversely affecting performance.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

BEB23 DRAFT EFFICIENCY STRATEGY

The Board was presented with the Council's Draft Efficiency Strategy, which detailed:

- the need to have a strategy;
- efficiency and value for money;
- what we do already;
- what more do we need to do and why;
- what we were actually going to do;
- who will do it;
- how will we know when we have done it;
- conclusions; and
- proposed actions.

The Board requested that a clearer explanation of 'value for money' to be included in the Strategy and that where possible to use more user-friendly language.

RESOLVED: That the comments made, as detailed above, on the Draft Efficiency Strategy be noted.

BEB24 STATUS REPORT ON COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT 2006 AND 2007

The Board received a report which provided a position statement on the Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) 2006, as it applied to the Council and which provided an overview of anticipated performance against the provisional framework for CPA 2007.

The report set out each of the elements of the CPA 2006; Corporate Assessment, Use of Resources Assessment, Level 1 Service Assessments and Level 2 Service Assessments and how this would be analysed.

In addition the elements of the anticipated performance in the CPA 2007 assessment, key issues and new indicators were also detailed within the report.

RESOLVED: That the position be noted.

BEB25 COUNCIL SPEND ANALYSIS

The Board received a report on the spend analysis undertaken by the Procurement and Commissioning Unit, which had been requested at the last meeting of the Board.

The top 50 areas of spend across the Council were detailed in the appendix to the report. It was noted that raw data had been used to produce the analysis therefore it was inevitable that some spend would be incorrectly classified. However, representatives from each Directorate had been asked to examine the data to check the classification. Although the majority of these classifications would not to any great extent and it would be these areas that where need to be examined to ensure optimal procurement practices were in place.

From this information the Procurement and Commissioning Unit would identify a number of work streams starting with the highest areas of expenditure to examine them to ensure that the Council was utilising the most effective methods of procurement.

As this work was ongoing the Board requested a further report be submitted to a future meeting.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and a further report be submitted to a future meeting.

Strategic Director
- Corporate and
Policy

Meeting ended at 7.45 p.m.