

TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday 25 January 2012

Present:- Councillor Mrs Shenton – in the Chair
Councillors Mrs Bates, Mrs Beech, Mrs Burke, Fear, Slater, Snell, Taylor,
Miss Walklate, Waring, Wilkes

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS 2012/13

At its meeting on 18 January 2012, the Committee had requested that the following additional information be provided in writing:

- A breakdown of the full time equivalent posts job savings.
- A list of the outstanding items from the budget service reviews in 2010.
- Information regarding the need to top up the insurance fund.

Officers had distributed a briefing note regarding the above prior to the meeting. The number of full time and part time jobs that had been taken out of the budget over the last 6 years equated to a total of 78 posts which was equal to 65 full time posts. Members thanked officers for this information and recommended that this detail always be provided in future reports.

There had been 49 actions which formed the basis for efficiencies and savings for both the 2011/12 and 2012/13 financial years of which 43 were now complete. The question was as to whether the Council considered opensource software when consolidating IT contracts; it was confirmed that all areas were investigated including opensource.

The insurance fund was used to fund administration and premiums whilst the costs for settling claims were met from a separate fund. The fund balance had been reducing for a number of years owing to several factors such as the increasing costs of premiums and normal inflationary increases in administrative costs. Income to the fund came from the General Fund Budget and this contribution had not been increased over the last four years. The fund would continue to be monitored during 2012/13.

Resolved:- (a) That the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee attend the Cabinet meeting on 1 February 2012 to feed back comments regarding the Revenue and Capital Budgets 2012/13.

(b) That in the future more detail as highlighted above be included in the original report.

3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REVIEW UPDATE

The Committee received a presentation from the Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships regarding the ongoing performance management review.

The proposed outcomes of the review were as follows:

- To establish a performance management framework which is systematic, effective, easy to understand and use.
- To ensure that this framework assists in the delivery of positive results in key areas of Borough life – economy, health and quality of life.
- That the framework highlights areas of under performance and helps to shape the Council in providing services and work effectively in partnership with others.

A working group had been set up to help deliver these outcomes and was currently developing outcome measures, success measures and considering value for money and personal performance management. A more detailed report would be presented to the Committee at its meeting on 28 February 2012.

Resolved: That the progress of the working group be noted

4. REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN DELIVERY OF THE SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2011-2013

A report was submitted updating the Committee on the delivery of the Sustainable Procurement Strategy and Action Plan which had been approved by Cabinet in July 2011.

The procurement review was split into three sections, 'strategic', 'routine', 'operational' and 'tactical'. Strategic work had commenced across a range of areas such as accommodation, printing and the ongoing development of document and records management.

Work was also continuing with the V4 organisation (funded by the IEP). V4 had submitted the first draft of the Health Check and Opportunity Summary report which once amended and reviewed by EMT would form part of a final report to IEP WM before being presented to the Staffordshire CO's Group.

Work had also commenced in rolling out a programme of procurement briefings for Council staff.

Work with the 'My Tenders' web portal was also ongoing which linked to 'Contracts Finder' (the central governments preferred platform for advertising below EU threshold contract opportunities). Work was also ongoing with Communications to introduce a 'contract opportunities page' to the Council's website.

The question was raised as to whether the granting of tenders was based on financial factors only or whether social factors could also be taken into consideration. Officers confirmed that tenders were awarded based on a 2 stage criteria, the first stage of which was mainly financial but the second stage of which could include social considerations.

Members requested that a copy of the slides from the procurement briefings be provided to the Committee and that the Business Improvement Manager attend a future meeting of this Committee.

Resolved:- (a) That the contents of the report be noted.

(b) That the Business Improvement Manager attend a future meeting of the Committee to provide a further update.

(c) That a copy of the procurement briefing slides be distributed to Members of the Committee.

5. FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT TO END OF QUARTER TWO (SEPTEMBER) 2011

A report was submitted regarding the Financial and Performance Review for the 2011/12 Second Quarter which had been considered by Cabinet in November 2011.

A query was raised as to why the target for CA2 had been reduced. Officers stated that they would look into this and report back to the next meeting.

Resolved:- That the contents of the report be noted.

6. FUTURE COMMISSIONING FOR THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY (THIRD) SECTOR

A report was submitted to update the Committee on recommendations agreed by Cabinet on 18 January 2012.

Various stakeholders included in the ongoing Third Sector Commissioning Framework internal engagement process had highlighted the ongoing need for a range of services which included the provision of debt benefits and consumer information and advice, rough sleeper outreach, domestic violence support, young persons homelessness advice and infrastructure support services.

It was suggested that funding for two services be discontinued; funding levels permitting, and that two new services be established and monies found for the return of a previously run service. It was also recognised that this was not a good time to go out to the market place to commission but that there was a need for continuity of service. It was confirmed that risk assessments and equality impact assessments were carried out as part of the commissioning process.

Resolved:- That the report be noted.

7. FORWARD PLAN FOR THE PERIOD COVERING JANUARY - APRIL, 2012

The Committee discussed its current work plan and considered the items listed in the forward plan for January 2012 to April 2012.

Resolved:- That the information be received.

**MRS E SHENTON
Chair**