

CORPORATE SERVICES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board on Tuesday, 8 January 2008 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Gilligan (Chairman), A. Lowe (Vice-Chairman), Bradshaw, Bryant, Edge, C Inch, Loftus, Nolan, Norddahl and Wainwright

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Dennett

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Reaney, G. Ferguson, R. Dart, B. Dodd, J. Hughes, R. Mackenzie, C. Patino, S. Riley and A. Villiers

Also in attendance: None

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

CS30 MINUTES

The Minutes from the meeting held on 6th November 2007 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CS31 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was noted that no public questions were received.

CS32 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

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.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.

CS33 JOB EVALUATION

The Board received a progress report on the implementation of the National Job Evaluation Scheme. A Joint Union/Management Workgroup had been established which met on a weekly basis to determine various

agreements in connection with the pay and grading review, such as the new pay structure, the Appeals procedure and pay protection.

Agreement had been reached on all these matters and the Trade Unions had consulted with both their regional and national offices regarding the outcomes of the evaluations and had balloted their membership to agree to the adoption of the new pay structure, the joint appeals process and the pay protection and other arrangements.

Unison and GMB had received a positive 'yes' vote of 78% and 73% accordingly to adopt the new pay structures. A Pay and Grading Framework Agreement had been drafted which would be signed by all parties.

The next stage of the process was to inform all staff and their managers of the outcomes of the review and it was intended that this would be done by issuing letters for all affected employees to the managers, to be handed to their staff. It was expected that this would be carried out during mid-January 2008.

These letters would also be accompanied by an information pack telling staff the full details of the pay agreement, how their job was assessed, what they should do if they wish to exercise their right of appeal etc.

It was reported that Non-teaching jobs in schools had been dealt with in a slightly difference way. A number of generic job descriptions for administrative and technical jobs, together with mid-day assistants, kitchen assistants/cooks etc. had been evaluated and would be recommended to schools for adoption. Schools would be strongly advised to adopt these grades, or if they have jobs which did not fit generic job descriptions, then to request that a separate valuation be completed.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CS34 RUNCORN TOWN HALL REFURBISHMENT
(PRESENTATION)

The Board received a presentation from John Hughes (Property Services) on the progress of the Runcorn Town Hall Refurbishment Project.

The presentation outlined the main objectives of the project, the extent of the works, the factors affecting the design, the overall programme, and the budget and progress

to date. The newly refurbished building would include a number of environmental/sustainability factors such as roof insulation, Brise Soleil, lighting controls/energy saving lights, heating controls and photovoltaic panels. The result of these environmental/sustainability factors would be energy efficiency savings to the Council.

The works were expected to be completed by June 2008 and the building fully operational by July 2008.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

CS35 DRAFT SERVICE PLANS 2008-2011

The Board was advised that the three year Departmental Service Plans were currently being reviewed and rolled-forward. The Service Plans would be submitted to the Executive Board for approval on 21st February 2008 at the same time as the draft Budget. This would ensure that decisions on service planning were linked to resource allocation.

The Board received a presentation from individual Operational Directors describing the key factors affecting their service and their main objectives for the coming three years for the following areas:

- Financial Services;
- Exchequer and Customer Services;
- IT Services;
- Policy and Performance;
- Property Services
- Hospitality and Stadium Services; and
- Legal, Organisational and Development and Human Resources.

Detailed draft service plans would be made available electronically in early January for comment by individual Members. Comments should be made to the relevant Operational Director by the end of January 2008.

Arising from the discussion, it was agreed that a meeting of the Board would be held in late January or early February to comment on the draft Budget proposals prior to them being submitted to Executive Board.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the presentations on individual departments service plans be noted; and

(2) Members pass any detailed comments that they may have on individual draft service plans to the relevant Operational Director by 31st January 2008.

CS36 WORK PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT

The Board received an update on the progress of the following programme topics:

(i) Learning from complaints – work was progressing in accordance with the project plan. The topic group meeting took place on 27th September 2007 and a further meeting would take place in January for all Members;

(ii) Development of web-based service delivery – the lead member and lead officer had met and developed a proposed focus for this work;

(iii) Disabled access to Council buildings and services – a summary of the findings of a tour of facilities was outlined by Members; and

(iv) Performance Management – there had been two meetings of the Topic Group, and work was proceeding in accordance with the Project Plan. A consultation with Chairs took place on 4th December 2007.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

CS37 CORPORATE SERVICES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD WORK PROGRAMME 2008/9

The Board considered a report which was the first step in developing a work programme of topics for the Board to examine in 2008/09.

The following topics were suggested as initial ideas to be included in the work programme for 2008/09:

Customer focus

A follow-on from the 2007/08 topic on complaints which was highlighting the wider issue of the need to sharpen further the Council's customer focus in dealing with the public.

Flexible Working Practices

To take stock of, and explore ways to take forward, the Council's efforts to introduce more flexible and family

friendly working practices and achieve complementary improvements in productivity, job satisfaction and cost effectiveness.

Market And Industrial Units

To review the Council's business of owning and managing market and industrial units within Halton and make recommendations for its future direction.

Access To Services

To examine the way people currently access Council services and might prefer to access them in the future: explore the impact and opportunities for better service access provided by changing technology and media and pay special attention to people who were hard to reach and failing to access services they want and need.

Transfer Of Redundant Community Assets

The Governing is encouraging local authorities to consider transferring redundant assets (especially land and buildings) to the community and voluntary sector where appropriate. This review would look at the emerging policy, examine the associated risks for both the Council and community, and propose a set of criteria or principles against which individual proposals for asset-transfer could be judged.

RESOLVED: That:

(1) The Board develop and informally consult on a shortlist of its own and others 2008/09 topic suggestions ahead of the Board's meeting on 26th February, bearing in mind the Council's Topic Selection Criteria; and

(2) at its meeting on 26th February, the Board decide on a work programme of 2 – 4 topics to be examined in 2008/09.

Strategic Director
Corporate and
Policy

Meeting ended at 8.10 p.m.