

To: Executive Board – 30 November 2004

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Finance Scrutiny Committee – 27 October 2004

55. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SECOND QUARTER MONITORING REPORT

The Performance Management Officer submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) that sickness absence figures, along with an explanation as to why they were not available in time to be submitted to this meeting, be submitted to the Committee's next meeting;
- (2) that the Chief Executive be informed of the Committee's grave concern that sickness absence figures were not available;
- (3) that the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group be asked to consider arrangements for monitoring performance indicators relating to complaints;
- (4) that the Community Scrutiny Committee be asked to monitor performance indicators relating to equalities standards;
- (5) that the Committee consider performance indicators relating to E-government when it considers the Procurement Strategy;
- (6) that a report be submitted to the Committee's meeting to be held on 8th December 2004 concerning those performance indicators which the District Auditor identified calculation errors;
- (7) to ask the Performance Management Team to suggest categories of local performance indicators, taking account of the views of the Committee;
- (8) to RECOMMEND the Executive Board that local performance indicators should be identified by means of local working, for example through Area Committees.

(NOTE: This relates to item 9 on the agenda.)

57. REVENUES AND BENEFITS MONITORING REPORT

The Revenues and Benefits Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Paul Warters told the Committee that the backlog of work in Council Tax was now approximately 300 pieces of work.

Resolved:-

- (1) to note the report;
- (2) to congratulate the staff for the improvement;
- (3) noting that the introduction of performance management had been a major factor in the improvement in the operation of Revenues and Benefits, to suggest to the Executive Board that this be replicated elsewhere in the Council;
- (4) that the Executive Board be INFORMED that the Committee is concerned that it might not be possible to achieve the target set for the collection of Council Tax.

60. BUDGET CONSULTATION

The Finance and Asset Management Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) to note the report;
- (2) to RECOMMEND the Executive Board that the Committee considers that, in future years, consultation should be carried out with stakeholders earlier in the process, possibly in June or July.

Housing Scrutiny Committee – 29 October 2004

44. WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN

The Committee agreed to:-

- (a) note the Work Programme with the inclusion of the forthcoming review topics;
- (b) call-in for pre-scrutiny the Estate Shops Strategy;
- (c) INFORM the Executive Board that in order to build good relationships between the Executive Board, Housing Scrutiny Committee and the HRA Management Board, it was important to have a Forward Plan that was as far in advance as possible;

- (d) note the current Forward Plan subject to recommendation (c) above.

46. VOIDS

The Committee agreed to RECOMMEND the Executive Board to: -

- (1) investigate how more could be done to raise people's perception of Council housing from a negative to a positive one;
- (2) encourage Area Committees to be involved in the process.

48. ENDING THE CURRENT USE OF HOMELESSNESS HOSTELS

The Strategic Director, Housing, Health and Community, submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended) on the ending of the current use of HRA Homelessness Hostels, which the Chair agreed to certify as urgent business.

The Committee agreed to RECOMMEND the Executive Board: -

- (a) in principle, subject to receiving a further report once the options were finalised, to authorise the Acting Housing Services Business Manager to end the use of properties as temporary accommodation and develop a programme of disposal for the properties on the basis of the options discussed in the report;
- (b) that the disposal programme should be carried out to maximize the receipts to the Council;
- (c) that any receipts should be ring fenced for use in bringing the existing Council owned stock up to the Decent Homes Standard;
- (d) that an investigation should be made into what legal avenues were available to ensure later owners of the properties were fit and appropriate;
- (e) to consult the relevant Area Committees on the disposal of these properties.

NOTE: A revised report on this matter will be submitted to the Executive Board on 10 January 2005 following consultation with the relevant Area Committees. It is suggested that the above recommendation is noted at this stage so that the recommendations of the Housing Advisory Board, Scrutiny Committee and Area Committees can be considered together.

46. LEISURE STRATEGY

The Leisure and Parks Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Tony Stephens introduced the report and took the meeting through the proposals to establish a consultation process and timetable for the development of the White Paper approach towards achieving a Leisure Strategy. The Chair then said that he wished to make a number of comments as follows:

- establish proper level of swimming pool facility to avoid over provision
- consider East Oxford games hall in service levels
- provide further information on health and fitness needs and requirements
- implications for ice rink
- details of capital involvement
- potential for utilising University College and private school facilities
- more information on local links and sports development

In general, the Chair said that further overall clarification was required to explain some of the issues raised including what recommendations should be made and in relation to the overall approach.

Councillor Roaf said more detail on actual costs involved was required. The Vice Chair also raised a number of points including:

- inclusion of detail relating to national agenda for health
- analysis of demographic and 'fashion' changes to include popular sports
- clarification on timetable to allow scrutiny comments before Executive Board
- suggested establishment of small working group

Mr. Stephens said that the report marked the first stage in a process to assess local needs, which had not happened for some time, and existing levels of provision in order to set targets and priorities for the delivery of future services. Many of the issues raised by Members would be addressed as the strategy was further developed such as the utilisation of college and privately operated facilities and the establishment of clearer details on financing. Altering the existing timetable could be looked at but would be difficult to achieve due to the Business Unit's current work commitments but the scrutiny process was obviously part of the overall consultation programme. Mr. Stephens agreed that he would try to bring a further draft report to the Committee's December meeting.

Resolved to note the report and ask the Executive Board to take account of the Committee's comments.