

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CORPORATE RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THE EARL BALDWIN SUITE, DUKE HOUSE, CLENSMORE STREET,
KIDDERMINSTER

THURSDAY, 10TH SEPTEMBER 2009 (6.00PM)

Present:

Councillors: G W Ballinger (Chairman), Mrs J Greener (Vice-Chairman), J Aston, A J Buckley, Mrs H E Dyke, Mrs P V Hayward, C D Nicholls, M W Partridge, M A Salter, K J Stokes, J Thomas, N J Thomas, and S J Williams

Observers

Councillors: N J Desmond, and Mrs A T Hingley.

CR.30 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: J Baker, J-P Campion, and J Holden.

CR.31 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor Mrs P V Hayward was a substitute for Councillor Baker. Councillor S J Williams was a substitute for Councillor Holden.

CR.32 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

CR.33 Minutes

The Vice Chair asked that recommendation 2 of CR19 be amended to read ' The Committee wished to pass on thanks and congratulations to all staff on an excellent year for low levels of sickness'

Decision: That subject to the amendment to recommendation 2 of minute CR19 minutes of the meeting held on 9th July 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CR.34 Domestic Waste Collection and Recycling Review Panel

Pauline Hayward, Vice Chair of the Domestic Waste Collection and Recycling Review Panel outlined the content of the report and highlighted the recommendations made by the Panel.

The Chairman thanked the Review Panel for their work.

During discussion the following points were raised by members of the Committee:

- a) There was concern that the current recycling levels were at 29%, and Wyre Forest was now at the bottom of the league for recycling, whilst only two years ago the Council was at the top.
- b) That the report did not tie up with recent publicity regarding recycling in Wyre Forest.

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- c) Why wasn't the Council using bio degradable recycling bags?
- d) Should the fleet of refuse lorries be used more efficiently?
- e) Should weekly collection be considered?

Councillor Desmond, as Cabinet Member for Resources addressed the Committee and explained that there was a need to look at the detail behind the figure of 29% recycling, and that in terms of kerb collection that the Council was comparable with its peers within the district. Moreover, many of the surrounding districts boosted their recycling figures through the collection of green waste and food.

The Environmental Services Manager, Steve Brant addressed the Committee and explained that if there was a comparison of dry waste, the Council would be the best in the County and the Region, however other authorities augmented their collection levels through green waste collection. Moreover other authorities within the County had learnt from the Wyre Forest experience and had built upon the Districts early successes. Members were further apprised of the Joint Municipal Waste Strategy, and that the plan to adopt the vision contained with Strategy would be incrementally adopted across the County. Members were reminded that the District led the way in dry waste collection.

Further debate ensued on the need to be proactive in this area, rather than reactive and that consideration should be given to green and food waste collection.

Members concluded that the proposed recommendations were sensible and well measured.

Agreed to recommend to Cabinet

- 1 The Council works towards the utilisation of the new "Envirosort" facilities currently being developed by the County Council, with a view to increasing the range of materials available for recycling.**
- 2 The Council adopts the revised Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Worcestershire as far as it is able to so.**
- 3 In line with recommendation 1 the Council implements a wheeled bin collection for recycling materials, where possible, and special arrangements be made for problem collections.**
- 4 In relation to the cost of collection, an alternate weekly service be implemented for recycling/residual waste, whilst acknowledging the need to retain existing special arrangements.**
- 5 Due to prohibitive cost restraints, the Council is unable to give support to the implementation of a food waste service at this time.**
- 6 In light of recommendation 5, the County Council be urged to review their decision to remove funding for sink waste disposal units.**
- 7 The Council implements a 'paid for' Wheeled Bin Garden Waste Service on a trial basis, and dependant upon initial interest, develops proposals**

to offer the service to either 5,000 or 10,000 households, on a cost recovery basis.

- 8 An Implementation Plan, including details of communication of proposals to the public be developed as a matter of urgency, and reported to future meetings of the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee;**
- 9 Fully costed proposals in relation to the options listed above be included within the budget considerations for 2010/11 and beyond.**

18:34 Councillors Desmond and Hayward left the meeting.

CR.35 Equality and Diversity Update

The Chairman welcomed Lucy Bennett, the Equality and Diversity Officer to the meeting. The Equality and Diversity Officer outlined the content of the report and advised of the Council's responsibility to meet legal requirements contained within the Equality Framework for Local Government (ELFG). Members were advised of the 'Being Different Together Project' and of the work being progressed for the delivery of the Council's Single Equality Scheme.

Members were further advised that there were three levels to the framework and the Council was aiming for Level 2, 'Achieving', and that without carrying out the assessment the Council could be subject to judicial review.

In response to questions regarding engaging with harder to reach sectors of the community, Members were advised that work was being undertaken in this area, in particular to contact Gay and Lesbian Groups within the District.

18:50 Councillor Stokes left the meeting.

Agreed:

- 1 To note the work on delivering the Single Equalities Scheme to date and to receive further progress updates on a quarterly basis.**
- 2 To ensure we implement and adhere to our Single Equalities Scheme in view of assessments under Equality Framework for Local Government and Comprehensive Area Agreements.**
- 3 To continue to work closely with Worcestershire County Council for the needs of all our communities.**
- 4 That the Committee receives future updates on the progress of the project.**

CR.36 Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG)

The Equality and Diversity Officer outlined the content of the report and explained that the Equality Framework for Local Government came into effect April 2009 and replaced the Equality Framework for Local Government. Members were advised that the Council would be assessed against the Framework in March 2010.

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In response to questions regarding the level of award that was achievable, Members were advised that attaining Level 2 was achievable and was comparable with peers within the District. Moreover funding had been secured to assist with the development of the project. Members were also advised that Equality and Diversity Training would be made available for all Members.

Agreed: To note the work that is being delivered to meet the statutory Equality Framework and to receive further progress reports on a quarterly basis.

CR.37 Exception Reporting from Corporate Performance Clinic

The Policy and Performance Officer gave a verbal update on the report made to the Corporate Performance Clinic. Members' attention was drawn to the reporting on Start Up Grants, attendance at the Town and Civic Halls, Sickness Levels, IT procurement and the Home Working Policy. Members were also advised of the Value for Money Gains that had been made across the whole Council. Members were further advised that the Council had improved performance and exceeded our target for the percentage of invoices paid on time.

In response to the points raised regarding sickness levels and targets, Members were advised that in light of the potential Swine Flu epidemic it was important to set realistic targets that were achievable. Members noted that it was important for Officers to attend the clinic where possible.

Agreed: That the Exception Reporting be noted.

CR.38 Budget Review Panel – Terms of Reference

The Chairman drew Members' attention to the Terms of Reference, in particular that the membership would comprise of six members that could be rotated.

The Director of Resources advised Members that the review would be divided into three distinct stages, Service Prioritisation, Policy Development and Consideration of Financial Strategy.

Agreed: That the Budget Review Panel Terms of Reference of be noted.

CR.39 Feedback from Cabinet

The Committee noted that the recommendations from the Corporate Resources committee of 9th July, regarding the Annual Report 2008/09 and the Directorate Business Plans 2009/2010 had been received and approved by Cabinet.

Agreed: That the feedback from Cabinet be noted.

CR.40 Work Programme

The Committee noted the content of the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee Work Programme, and asked that the Corporate Plan Aims be incorporated. Further that the Corporate Development and Improvement Manager was now responsible for the Business Continuity Plan.

Agreed: That the content of the Work Programme be noted.

CR.41 Press Involvement

No items were identified for scrutiny that might require publicity.

CR.42 Exempt Information

Decision: Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of “Exempt Information” as defined in paragraphs 2, 6 and 7 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

The following proceedings were considered after the press and public had been excluded from the meeting. A summary of the minutes relating to these items has been made as “exempt Information” would be disclosed if the minutes were published in full.

CR.43 Minutes

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 9th July 2009 were confirmed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

CR.44 Single Site

The Committee received a verbal update from the Director of Legal and Corporate Services on the progress of the Single Site.

The meeting ended at 19:36.