

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CORPORATE RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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

THURSDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY 2010 (6.00PM)

Present:

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

Observers:

Councillors J-P Campion, P Dyke and J A Shaw.

CR.105 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Aston, N J Desmond and J Holden.

CR.106 Appointment of Substitutes

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

CR.107 Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

CR.108 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 14th January 2010 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CR.109 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

CR.110 Business Continuity Plan (Emergency Planning)

The Committee received a presentation on Emergency Planning from Richard Leech – Emergency Planning Officer, Worcestershire County Council.

The Emergency Planning Officer gave a slide presentation, the contents of which are attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes.

In response to a Member's question, it was confirmed that the Council would take the lead if an emergency were to happen. If a major incident were to occur, the police would also get involved.

Members were informed that the 3rd sector related to people such as the Red Cross. It was possible that Parish Councils could also be involved if a small rest centre needed to be opened.

Agreed: The information be noted.

CR.111 Draft Workforce Plan 2010-2012

The Committee received a briefing report from the Human Resources Officer which presented to members the draft Workforce Plan 2010-2012.

Members considered the draft Workforce Plan and the following points were highlighted:

- a. The data quoted on the percentage of the Workforce Plan from the ethnic minority represented the current financial year.
- b. There were no government targets for ethnic groups to be employed.
- c. The figure of 14.24% for staff turnover included the staff that were made redundant at the end of the last financial year.
- d. 12.61% of the Council's Workforce were under the age of 30 years. Members were informed that Human Resources attended career fairs at schools to encourage this age group to apply for job vacancies.
- e. The training budget was proposed to be cut for the next financial year. Only essential Health & Safety training and Continued Professional Development (CPD) would be agreed. However, E-learning, mentoring and coaching for employees would still be carried out to ensure the workforce developed.
- f. Opportunities were still available for apprenticeships, although the Council did not take any at present.
- g. There was a freeze on recruitment at present unless the it was a specialist post.
- h. A tool kit for authorities would be available in the next 12 months to look at existing systems to be built upon for work placements and staff development.
- i. As Local Government changed, the council needed to address items such as two tier working, flexible working and shared services.
- j. It was perceived that staff morale was low. The Corporate Management Team were to look at this issue and would be addressing it. There was a lot of uncertainty at present in the workforce and therefore it was important to keep developing staff. Job uncertainty and additional workloads were the current concerns for staff.
- k. The majority of staff had access to the new Wyre Weekly document that was available on the intranet. If a member of staff did not have access to this, their manager would pass on the details.

Human Resources were holding drop-in sessions in various office locations which were accessible for all staff.

Members congratulated the Human Resources Officer on her presentation.

Agreed:

Recommendation to Cabinet:

The Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee recommend to Cabinet that the draft Workforce Plan 2010-12 be adopted by Council.

CR.112 Establishment of Review Panel

The Committee considered a Scrutiny Proposal Form that requested the establishment of a review panel on Corporate Performance Clinics.

Members were informed that at the June 2009 meeting of the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee, it had been agreed that the Corporate Performance Clinics would be reviewed. It was suggested that two meetings would be held, with the suggested dates being 18th February 2010 and 8th March 2010.

Agreed: A review panel be established on Corporate Performance Clinics and the dates for the meetings would be 18th February 2010 and 8th March 2010. The times of the meetings would be confirmed.

CR.113 Recommendations from the Budget Review Panel – Consideration of Financial Strategy 2010/2013 – Cabinet Proposals and Alternative Budget Proposals

Members received recommendations from the Budget Review Panel following Stage 3 of the budget process – Consideration of Financial Strategy.

Members were informed that no further amendments to the proposals had been received.

The Leader of the Council thanked the Budget Review Panel for their hard work on the budget process this year. A revised package would be presented at the Cabinet meeting on 16th February 2010 which would include some of the proposals from the political groups.

Agreed:

Recommended to Cabinet to Recommend to Council:

Having considered the Cabinet proposals, and amendments from the Independent Community & Health Concern, Labour and Liberal/Liberal Democrat Groups, the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee is satisfied that the proposals are all clear, achievable and financially sound.

CR.114 Directorate Business Plans 2009/10

The Committee were updated on the progress made on the Directorate Business Plans for 2009/10.

Chief Executive's Directorate

Councillor Nicholls informed the Committee that he was scrutinising the Chief Executive's directorate and reported the following:

Most of the Chief Executive's objectives had been achieved.

CEBP09HR18 – This had only achieved 35% of its target. Unfortunately the Council had no funding to develop an Apprenticeship Scheme at present.

CEBP09HR19b – The Equality Impact Assessments target had achieved 95% but this represented up to the end of December 2009.

Planning & Regulatory Services Directorate

Councillor Stokes informed the Committee that the overall business plan was average. An appointment had therefore been made for the 16th February 2010 to see the Development Manager.

Legal & Corporate Resources Directorate

Councillor Parish would make an appointment to see the Director of Legal & Corporate Services as there were items in the plan that were overdue and needed addressing.

Community & Partnership Services

Councillor H E Dyke informed the Committee that CPBP09Com01c and CPBP09Com01d were not on target as information was awaited from Wyre Forest Matters.

CAPLP12 – Stourport Community Centre, there were proposals in the budget for this to be transferred to a suitable alternative managing body.

Resources Directorate

Councillors J Thomas & J Baker went through the business plan and reported the following:

The Accountancy Section had done a lot of work in preparation for the Council's budget.

RSBP09Ac09a – The due date was shown as 30th December 2009. However, this would be changed to fall in line with budget discussions.

RSBP09Ac14a – This code had been marked as an aspiration and not a commitment. This related to electronic means of collecting money and this would be actioned once the budget work had been completed

RSBP09Ac16d – It was hoped that the target would improve as creditors came on board.

RSBP09Ac20a – This had gone into the red as the item had been pushed back due to the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee scrutinising the Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier (WETT) business case.

Audit Section were performing well.

Money had been saved by placing the order for the new wheeled bins before the end of December 2009.

RSBP09ES34c – Environmental Services staff were due to have had their EDR's by 31st March 2010. However, due to a change in the EDR system, the due date had been moved to between April – July 2010.

There were a few areas that were underperforming in the IT plan. This was presented to the Corporate Performance Clinic on 8th February 2010.

Payroll was shown as an underperforming area.

The performance indicator on property rent arrears was 9.8% against a target of 6%.

Agreed: The information be noted.

CR.115 Feedback from Cabinet

The Committee noted the contents of the Cabinet action list of 19th January 2010 which related to the following:

- a. Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier Business Case
- b. Budget Prioritisation Exercise
- c. Efficiency Strategy
- d. Equality and Diversity Update

Agreed: The information be noted.

CR.116 Work Programme

The Committee/Scrutiny Officer informed the Committee that an item relating to the Performance Management Action Plan would be added to the work programme.

Agreed: An additional item on the Performance Management Action Plan be presented to the Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee on 15th April 2010. The Committee/Scrutiny Committee to add the item to the Work Programme.

CR.117 Press Involvement

There were no items that required press involvement.

CR.118 Exclusion of the Press and Public

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 3 Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

CR.119 Single Site

The Committee considered a briefing paper from the Chief Executive and the Director of Legal and Corporate Services which gave an update on progress of the site and project.

The Director of Legal & Corporate Services informed Members that the confirmation of power on the site was still in hand.

The Chief Executive had lined up meetings with potential partners for the site.

Agreed:

- 1. The information be noted.**
- 2. The Committee be updated on a monthly basis on the progress of Single Site.**

The meeting ended at 7.40 pm.