

RESOURCES SCRUTINY PANEL**22 July 2010****Attendance:**

Councillors:

Henry (Chairman) (P)

Achwal (P)
Huxstep (P)
Higgins (P)
McLean (P)Mitchell (P)
Power
Verney (P)
Wright (P)**Deputy Members in attendance:**

Councillor Fall (Standing Deputy for Councillor Power)

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillor Learney (Leader with responsibility for Transformation and Resources)

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillor Phillips

1. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Councillor Learney declared personal and prejudicial interest, due to her involvement as a Cabinet Member in actions taken or proposed in the Reports outlined below.

However, the Panel requested that Councillor Learney remain in the meeting, in her capacities as Leader with responsibility for Transformation and Resources, under the provisions of Section 21(13) (a) of the Local Government Act 2000, in order that she could provide additional information to the Panel and/or answer questions.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Achwal be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Panel for the 2010/11 Municipal Year.

3. **TIME OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

RESOLVED:

That future meetings of the Panel commence at 6.30pm and that the timetable of scheduled meetings for the 2010/11 Municipal Year be noted.

4. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held 18 March 2010 be approved and adopted.

5. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No statements were made or questions asked.

6. **THE ROLE OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR AND DEVELOPMENT OF NEW 'CHANGE PLANS.'**

(Oral Report)

The Assistant Director (High Quality Environment) introduced the role of the new Commissioning Team which had been established by the Chief Executive. The Commissioning Team comprised of three Assistant Directors who would each take an overview of all services in the area (not just those delivered by the Council) that contributed to the wider outcomes of the Community Strategy. The Assistant Directors would ensure that, wherever possible, all opportunities were taken for enhanced partnership working to secure these outcomes and for the best value for money.

The Assistant Directors were to work closely with the relevant Portfolio Holder, Heads of Operational Teams and partners to manage any necessary change to deliver these outcomes. This would be undertaken via 'Change Plans', the monitoring of delivery of which would be reported to Scrutiny Panels. Draft Change Plans would be reported to Scrutiny panels in the autumn for comment. In parallel to the work of the Assistant Directors the Chief Executive would be leading the Transformation Team.

In answer to Members' questions, the Assistant Director confirmed that comparative expenditure on delivering outcomes would be made between provision by the City Council or voluntary groups.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be noted.

7. **“MANAGING THE BUSINESS” – INDICATOR SUITE**
[\(Report SO118 refers\)](#)

The Assistant Director (High Quality Environment) explained that future meetings of all the Scrutiny Panels would receive information on the key performance indicators, to give Members a broader understanding of performance across the Council. This report would be in addition to the quarterly performance monitoring reports. The Panel were asked to suggest performance indicators to be included in future editions of the report and the following suggestions were made:

- The use of resources, including the balance of expenditure to income, in respect of the processing of planning applications.
- The performance of the Guildhall following its refurbishment.

The Panel noted that Councillor Bell (Portfolio Holder for High Quality Environment) had been requested by the Environment Scrutiny Panel at its meeting on 20 July 2010 to investigate the reasons for the decline in the processing of minor planning applications since February 2010.

RESOLVED:

That an amended version of the report, to take account of points raised above relating to the use of resources in the processing of planning applications and the performance of the Guildhall, and any further amendments to arise out of future discussions, would be useful for the Panel to receive each quarter.

8. **INTRODUCTION OF AN IN-HOUSE IT SERVICE**
(Oral Report)

The Head of Information and Technology (IMT) gave a presentation on the introduction of an in-house IT service.

She explained that Cabinet in July 2009 had recommended bringing IT services in house. The resulting programme of infrastructure change included reducing the number of servers from 60 to 12, the introduction of a corporate reporting tool (Business objects) and a move to Thin Client (Citrix). Following due diligence, the existing Computacentre staff would be transferred to the new arrangement on 1 December 2010 and the Service Desk would be launched on the same day. The project would be closed on 1 January 2011.

Following bringing IT services in house, a shared Head of IT with Test Valley Borough Council would be appointed by the end of March 2011 and the Shared Services would be live by April 2011.

In answer to Members' questions, Head of IMT explained that it was proposed that the Service Team Leader would be shared in the partnership working with Test Valley Borough Council and that the anticipated savings over existing arrangements would be £76,000 in 2010/2011 and £229,000 in 2011/2012.

The arrangements for providing a help desk outside of core hours for home workers and Members was still under discussion, but likely to be provided by officers on-call. The present arrangements for the secure storage of data off site at Hampshire County Council would continue.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be noted.

9. **EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE COUNCIL (FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY AND PERFORMANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIOS) – 2009/10 PERFORMANCE MONITORING QUARTER 4 MONITORING**
[\(Report RE95 refers\)](#)

In reply to Members' questions, The Head of Information and Technology (IMT) explained that the benefit of Thin Client in reducing worker downtime by 88% was achieved through not having to replace individual PCs, not having to visit individual PCs to update software, including home visits; instead software upgrades would be carried out on servers out of hours providing a continuation of service.

RESOLVED:

That the Report be noted.

10. **EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE COUNCIL (TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES PORTFOLIO) – 2010/11 PERFORMANCE MONITORING QUARTER 1**
[\(Report RE96 refers\)](#)

The Panel asked questions of Councillor Learney in respect of Avalon House. She responded that no firm proposal for its future use was imminent, but if the Council decided to fit out the property to make it more attractive to potential renters or purchasers, then a Report would be submitted to Cabinet. The Panel was supportive of the short term lease of the property and its retention within the Council's property portfolio until the commercial property market improved.

In respect of the risk highlighted on page 17 of the Report that employees are not paid the correct level of pay, the Head of Finance stated that this matter was still under review by Internal and External Audit. It should remain as a matter for the Panel's consideration until the detailed processes to address the control weakness were resolved.

It was also established that the days of sickness absence for Customer Services shown on page 19 of the report were accumulative.

It was agreed that due dates for milestones should be updated to reflect the current situation.

Councillor Learney agreed to circulate to Panel Members details of the latest interest in 4 Bridge Street, Winchester. She also explained the increased value that had been obtained for Compton Stores by having planning permission granted for part residential use.

With regard to the Colebrook Street redevelopment, Councillor Learney stated that options being considered included the re cladding of the existing building to bring about visual and environmental improvements and the possibility of incorporating a mansard floor, the use of which could consolidate City Council usage releasing other floor space within the Council's control for external rental purposes. Abbey Mill required works to maintain its structural integrity and the use of a small scale hydro now appeared unlikely, although one might be incorporated at Durngate.

Members expressed their pleasure at the works carried out to date to refurbish the Guildhall. Eighteen71 had trebled its income compared with the previous Courtyard Café. Unanticipated works to the roof of the Walton Room and the opening up of space in the roof voids had put the project over budget, but it was anticipated that the improved marketability of the refurbished Guildhall would increase income. Marketing of the building and improved signage would also help generate income. It was agreed that when looking at the income for the Guildhall for future years allowance should be made for the reduced income during the refurbishment period to make comparison equitable. It was also agreed that the performance of the Guildhall should be added to the Managing the Business Indicator Suite referred to in Report SO118.

RESOLVED:

1. That the performance of the Guildhall should be added to the Managing the Business Indicator Suite referred to in Report SO118
2. That due dates for milestones be updated to reflect the latest situation.

11. **APPOINTMENT OF INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUPS ETC 2010/11**
(Report RE94 refers)

Following discussion, the Group agreed to re establish an Informal Scrutiny Group (ISG) to examine Asset Management. A second ISG would be established as and when required.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Asset Management Informal Scrutiny Group be re-appointed for the 2010/11 Municipal Year (Membership: Councillors Henry, Higgins, Huxstep, Mitchell, Verney and Wright.).
2. That the Contract Management Informal Scrutiny Group not be re-appointed.

12. **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (REPORT PS413 REFERS) AND MATTERS ARISING.**

RESOLVED:

That the Scrutiny Work Programme, as set out on the reverse of the agenda, and as extracted from Report PS413, be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 7.50pm

Chairman