THIS SET OF MINUTES IS NOT SUBJECT TO "CALL IN".

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (PERFORMANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES)

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT ON 17 FEBRUARY 2009

PRESENT: Councillor D. Hardy (in the Chair);

Councillors Connell (Substitute Member for Councillor Byrne), Cuthbertson, Gibson, McGinnity, Shaw and Weavers.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors P. Dowd, Maher, Parry and Robertson.

46. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Brennan and his Substitute Councillor Moncur, Councillors Byrne and Papworth.

47. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were received:-

Member / Officer	Minute No.	Reason	Action
Councillor D. Hardy	50. - Personnel Department – Services and Functions	Personal – his Mother-in-Law is employed in School Catering	Took part in the consideration of the item and voted theron.
Councillor Maher	50. - Personnel Department – Services and Functions	Personal – his Wife is employed in School Catering	Remained in the room but did not take part in the consideration of the item.
Councillor Robertson	52. - Revenue Budget 2009/10 – Budget Update	Personal – He is a Member of Maghull Town Council which is referred to in the report	Took part in the consideration of the item.

Member / Officer	Minute No.	Reason	Action
Debbie Campbell, Overview & Scrutiny Officer	52. - Revenue Budget 2009/10 – Budget Update	Personal - decision in relation to proposed service growth in the Scrutiny function could have consequences for her post and working practices	Remained in the room.

48. MINUTES

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2008 be confirmed as a correct record.

49. MATTERS ARISING

Purchase of Fixed Site Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) Capability

A Member enquired about progress relating to the above proposal from Merseyside Police, which had yet to be approved by the Cabinet.

Police Attendance at this Committee

Merseyside Police had now indicated their intention to attend the meeting of this Committee scheduled for 28 April 2009.

50. PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT - SERVICES AND FUNCTIONS

Further to Minute No. 35 (2) of 11 November 2008, the Committee considered the report of the Personnel Director providing information regarding the services and functions of the Council's Personnel Department. The report also set out the current key areas of activity as follows:-

- Major Service Review;
- Pay and Grading Review and Equal Pay;
- Occupational Health and Safety Strategy;
- Apprenticeship Scheme and other Learning and Development Initiatives ; and
- Performance Monitoring.

RESOLVED:

That the report be accepted and the reporting requirements from the Personnel Department to this Committee be considered at a future meeting.

51. SEFTON COUNCIL'S DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME – ANNUAL REVIEW

The Committee considered the report of the Equalities Director on the Disability Equality Scheme which the Council was required to produce and to review progress made against the action plan, on an annual basis. The report outlined the work undertaken by the Sefton Equalities Partnership and other key partners involved in reviewing the Scheme and updating the action plan, in order to continue to reflect the priorities of disabled people within Sefton.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the progress made to date with regard to the revised Disability Scheme for Sefton, be supported; and

(2) the revised Disability Scheme for Sefton Council be supported and endorsed.

52. REVENUE BUDGET 2009/10 – BUDGET UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 252 of the meeting of the Cabinet of 5 February 2009, the Committee considered the report of the Finance and Information Services Director, providing an update on the current base budget position for 2009/10, following previous decisions made by the Cabinet.

The Council was required to set a Budget and Council Tax for 2009/10 by 10 March 2009 at the latest and the Cabinet's recommended budget had to be scrutinised independently, prior to approval by full Council. The proposed budget would be considered by this Committee and any comments or associated issues on the budget would be forwarded to the Cabinet for consideration, as part of its deliberations on 26 February 2009.

The Committee also considered an additional report of the Finance and Information Services Director presenting his assessment of the robustness of the draft budgets proposed by the three Party Groups.

The Finance and Information Services Director circulated a copy of the three Party Groups' Budget Proposals. His view was that all three Budget Proposals were robust.

The three Party Group Leaders outlined the budget proposals from their particular Party Group.

Concerns were raised by Members regarding both the budget setting and budget monitoring processes.

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet be advised that:-

(1) the Finance and Information Services Director's view that all three Budget Proposals for 2009/10 are robust, be endorsed by this Committee;

(2) concerns are held regarding both the budget setting and budget monitoring processes; and

(3) this Committee would wish to play an active role in addressing the issues raised in (2) above.

53. WORK PROGRAMME KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN - 1ST FEBRUARY TO 31ST MAY 2009

The Committee considered the report of the Legal Director attaching the Key Decision Forward Plan for the four month period 1 February to 31 May 2009, which contained all the Key Decisions which the Executive was anticipated to take during the above period. The Committee was advised of its right to pre-scrutinise any Key Decision which fell under its remit.

The latest Key Decision Forward Plan, for the four month period 1 March to 30 June 2009, which had been published since the agenda had been produced, was also circulated for consideration.

Councillor Weavers raised queries relating to the Key Decision on a "Bid for Funding to Support a Low or Zero-Carbon School". The relevant officer would be requested to respond to him.

The Chair reported that he had met with relevant officers who regularly reported to this Committee and had requested a work plan of items from them.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer reported on recent meetings of the Equality of Access to Services Working Group, which had committed to support the progress made by the Council in achieving Level 5 of the Local Government Equality Standard. In addition, the Chair, Councillor D. Hardy, had replaced Councillor Brennan as the Labour Group Member on the Working Group.

As the visit from Merseyside Police officers had been postponed until 28 April 2009, it was proposed that the Committee's other Working Group, established to consider the perception of crime held by the public, be deferred until the Municipal Year 2009/10.

RESOLVED: That

(1) the contents of the Forward Plan, together with the report, be accepted;

(2) the progress and actions of the Equality of Access to Services Working Group to date, be approved;

(3) the replacement by Councillor D. Hardy as the Labour Group Member on the Working Group referred to in (2) above be approved;

(4) further meetings of the Perception of Crime Working Group be deferred until the Municipal Year 2009/10.