

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (PERFORMANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES)

Overview & Scrutiny

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT
ON TUESDAY 15TH DECEMBER, 2009

PRESENT: Councillor Byrom (Vice Chair, in the Chair).

Councillors: Byrne, Fenton, Weavers and Shaw,
(Substitute Member for Councillor Howe).

32. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. Hardy (Chair); Councillors Bigley, Howe; McGinnity; Papworth; Storey and Councillor Pearson (Substitute Member for Councillor Storey).

33. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declaration of interest was received:

Member	Minute No.	Interest	Action
Councillor Fenton	40 Communities Portfolio Quarter 2 Revenue and Capital Expenditure Monitoring to 30 September 2009	Personal - Member of O+S Committee (Health and Social Care). Para. 1.3 of the report refers to a request made by this Committee to amend the format of the budget monitoring report.	Remained in the room and took part in consideration of the item.

34. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meetings held on 10 November and 9 December 2009 be confirmed as a correct record.

35. CORE EVIDENCE BASE

The Committee received a presentation by the Ms. Sue Holden, Director of the Sefton Equalities Partnership, on the Core Evidence Base which provided key messages about the 'State of the Borough'.

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Ms. Holden indicated the importance of the Core Evidence base for the Borough; suggested how the Council could use it and highlighted the following issues as being of particular importance for Sefton:-

- Resident population and place – people who live in Sefton and their quality of life;
- Older People – Sefton had a growing population of older people who would need different things in different areas to have a good quality of life;
- Children And Young People – a good standard of education, but poorer outcomes for vulnerable groups; and young people leaving education;
- Worklessness And Skills – risks presented by the current economic crisis and the long-term recovery in the local economy.
- Inequalities – geographic inequality and also between communities, for example, health inequalities, gender and area; and
- Stronger communities – varied results on ‘stronger’ low civic participation and influence decision making.

She indicated that arising from the evidence, the next steps would be:

- To test and reflect on the evidence base;
- Report to every Area Committee as part of area management developments;
- Provide feedback to joint leaders and Area Committee Chairs on 17 December 2009;
- Development of the governance structure – for approval in January 2010; and
- Strategic prioritisation by area embedded in the governance structure.

Lengthy discussion took place on the implications of the Core Evidence Base findings for Sefton and Ms Holden answered questions thereon.

RESOLVED:

That the findings of the Core Evidence base and the implications for Sefton be received.

36. GOVERNANCE REVIEW

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The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Management) on the current position in relation to the Governance Review.

Ms. Sue Holden, Director of the Sefton Equalities Partnership presented the report on behalf of the Assistant Chief Executive, updating on progress in the following areas, and answered questions thereon:

- Changes to Executive Arrangements;
- Area Management;
- Sefton Borough Partnership;
- Other Partnerships and Outside Bodies;
- Performance Management and Risk Management;
- Overview and Scrutiny; and
- the Strategic Budget Review.

RESOLVED:

That progress in relation to the Governance Review be received.

37. EQUALITY STANDARD FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Committee considered the report of the Director of the Equalities Partnership on the current progress of Sefton Council in attaining the Equality Standard for Local Government, formerly the Equality Standard; and also detailing the partnership approach to delivery on equality and diversity, as developed through the Sefton-wide Single Equality Scheme.

The report indicated that Sefton Council was currently working towards the Excellent or Level Three of the Equality Framework, which had been introduced in April 2009 with the aim of achieving Excellence by March 2011.

Mr. Andy Woods, from the Sefton Equalities Partnership, presented the report, emphasising the importance of the following areas and answered questions thereon:-

- Equalities Impact Assessments in meeting the legal requirements placed on the Council; and to comply with the Equality Framework.
- Equalities Monitoring and the key challenge of embedding information gleaned through monitoring, to cover a wider area of service access points, which would put the Council in a strong position to evidence Excellent;
- Equality and Diversity and Procurement / Commissioning;
- the support of the Corporate Equalities Working Group;

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- the importance of support from key managers and leaders in the Council; and
- that the key challenge of progressing to Excellence across all Council departments would be the embedding of equality actions and target setting through the use of equality impact assessments, equalities monitoring and equalities in procurement; supported by effective consultation and engagement with under represented groups.

Mr. Woods concluded by outlining the joint work being developed by the Council with its partners, based on the Single Equality Scheme, for example, work on disability and employment; and community cohesion and hate crime, which would be important as evidence for Sefton's Comprehensive Area Assessment.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the positive progress made on the Equality Framework and the development of partnership work around the Single Equality Scheme be accepted; and
- (2) the Sefton Equalities Partnership be requested to submit quarterly updates on the Equalities Framework.

38. CORPORATE CUSTOMER CONTACT - USE OF 0845 PRE-FIX TO CONTACT CENTRE TELEPHONE NUMBER

Further to Minute No. 56 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member – Corporate Services held on 14 October 2009, the Committee considered the reports of the Legal Director and the Finance and Information Services Director, seeking views on the use of the current '0845' prefix to the Corporate Customer Contact Centre telephone number.

The report of the Legal Director indicated that the Cabinet Member – Corporate Services had considered representations received from the Sefton Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB), seeking support for a national CAB campaign to reduce the cost of contacting local and national Government agencies on a mobile phone. The CAB had contrasted the relatively higher cost of telephoning the Sefton Plus Contact Centre (0845 140 0845), compared to numbers using an 03 prefix.

Mr. John Farrell, Assistant Finance and Information Services Director, addressed the Committee, and indicated that the Cabinet Member – Corporate Services had resolved that no change be made to the Council's current Sefton Plus Contact Centre number (0845 140 0845) – subject to consideration of the matter by this Committee.

Consideration was given to the additional costs which would be incurred by the Council in procuring the 03 prefix, and also for some customers,

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such as mobile phone users. It was suggested that for some customers it would be cheaper for them to ring the Contact Centre on one of the two existing geographical numbers, namely, 01704 533 133, for residents in the North of the Borough, and 0151 922 4040, for residents in the South of the Borough, as these numbers were now automatically routed to the Sefton Plus Contact Centre.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the decision of the Cabinet Member – Corporate Services, to retain the current '0845' prefix Contact Centre number be supported; and
- (2) the Cabinet Member be requested to consider the 'promotion' of the two existing geographical numbers 01704 533133 and 0151 922 4040, as alternative ways of accessing the Sefton Plus Contact Centre, rather than introducing a new number with an 03 prefix.

39. COMMUNITIES PORTFOLIO - QUARTER 2 REVENUE AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE MONITORING TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2009

Further to Minute No. 56 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member – Communities of 2 December 2009, the Committee considered the joint report of the Chief Executive and the Finance and Information Services Director, providing details of the quarterly forecast position, based on information as at 30 September 2009, in relation to the Portfolio's 2009/10 Revenue Budget and indicating that a decision on this matter was required to comply with the corporate performance management process.

The report also sought a view on whether any comments should be made to the Cabinet regarding the overall performance of the revenue budget and the schemes within the capital programme.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and no comments be made at present to the Cabinet regarding the overall performance of the revenue budget and the schemes within the capital programme.

40. PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO - QUARTER 2 REVENUE AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE MONITORING TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2009

Further to Minute No. 61 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member – Performance and Governance of 2 December 2009, the Committee considered the joint report of the Chief Executive and the Finance and Information Services Director, providing details of the quarterly forecast position, based on information as at 30 September 2009, in relation to the Portfolio's 2009/10 Revenue Budget and indicating that a decision on this

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matter was required to comply with the corporate performance management process.

The report also sought a view on whether any comments should be made to the Cabinet regarding the overall performance of the revenue budget and the schemes within the capital programme.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and no comments be made at present to the Cabinet regarding the overall performance of the revenue budget and the schemes within the capital programme.

41. WORK PROGRAMME KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN - 1 DECEMBER 2009 TO 31 MARCH 2010

The Committee considered the report of the Legal Director attaching the latest Key Decision Forward Plan which contained all the Key Decisions that 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 report provided feedback on the progress of the Working Groups and indicated that members of the Equalities Working Group, Councillors Byrne and Papworth and also Ruth Appleby, O&S Officer, attended the Annual Northwest Equality Conference 2009, themed, 'Diversity is what we have in common', in Liverpool on 11 November 2009. The (2nd Annual) conference.

The conference had been useful in raising awareness of issues and work currently being undertaken in Equality and Diversity in the region; of equality challenges faced in the Northwest and for meeting delegates from other agencies in the region.

The Equalities Working Group had held its second meeting on 30 November 2009 and had been attended by Andy Woods, (Sefton CVS Equalities Partnership), who had advised Members on Sefton Council's role in achieving the Equalities Standard/Framework for Local Government in partnership with our Local Area Partners and the importance of implementing Equalities Impact Assessments to help Sefton achieve 'Excellent' standard.

Due to unforeseen circumstances the second meeting of the Perceptions of Crime Working Group had been cancelled, but would be rescheduled as soon as possible.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the contents of the Forward Plan for the period 1 December 2009 to 31 March 2010, be accepted; and
- (2) the progress and actions of the Working Groups to date be

received.

42. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act. The Public Interest Test has been applied and favours exclusion of the information from the press and public.

43. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE - STRATEGIC BUDGET REVIEW - 25 NOVEMBER 2009

Further to Minute No. 220 of the Cabinet held on 25 November 2009, the Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive which provided an update on progress made in relation to the Voluntary Early Retirement / Voluntary Redundancy exercise and the progress of the Strategic Budget Review options.

Mr. Bill Milburn, the Transformation Director, presented the report, indicating that the Cabinet had also considered a note produced by Unison in response to issues set out in the report and that the Chief Executive and Personnel Director had responded to questions from Cabinet Members on the content of the note. Mr. Milburn indicated that the issues set out in the note would be considered during the Strategic Budget Review.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the progress made in developing the Transformation Programme and the Strategic Budget Review be noted; and
- (2) the resolutions made by Cabinet on 25 November 2009 (Minute No.220), be noted.

44. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE - STRATEGIC BUDGET REVIEW - 3 DECEMBER 2009

Further to Minute No. 228 of the Cabinet meeting held on 3 December 2009, the Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Executive which provided an update on progress made in relation to the Transformation Agenda including the Strategic Budget Review (SBR). The report also provided an update on the Medium Term Financial Plan forecasts and set out the next steps in relation to progressing the achievement of SBR savings.

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Mr. Bill Milburn, the Transformation Director presented the report and answered questions arising from discussion about the report.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the progress made in developing the Transformation Programme and the Strategic Budget Review be noted; and
- (2) the resolutions made by Cabinet on 3 December 2009 (Minute No. 228), be noted.

45. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the date of the next meeting scheduled to take place at **6.30 p.m. on Tuesday 19 January 2010, at Bootle Town Hall**, be noted.