

CABINET – 4 FEBRUARY 2010

CORPORATE SERVICES – CABINET MEMBERS' REPORT

LEGAL & ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

1. The Planning, Environmental and Property Team

BSF – The school sites have been registered at the HM Land Registry and the Team will be dealing with all of the property related matters during the BSF project

HMRI – The team deal with the voluntary acquisitions and shop leases

Pontins – The team will be dealing with the legal work in connection with the major redevelopment proposals

Voluntary Registration – Ongoing work to complete the registration of all of the titles to the Council's land

Thornton to Switch Island Link Road – The team will deal with the acquisitions, land swaps and title issues in conjunction with the CPO

Cultural Centre – The team are dealing with negotiations with Tenants and the legal work following these negotiations

Land Registry Portal – The Team are working on setting up a land registry portal which will service several different Council departments

2. The Child Care and Social Services Team

The Child Care Team continue to be very busy and the number of new cases has risen dramatically during the last 12 months. Re-sourcing issues are currently being addressed.

3. Electoral Services

The Electoral Services team are busily making preparations for local government and parliamentary general elections in 2010. The uncertainty of the date of the parliamentary general election creates a host of logistical problems in terms of planning for the election, particularly if the parliamentary general election is combined with the local elections on Thursday 6 May 2010.

4. Committee & Member Services

In addition to the administrative support provided for various Cabinet / Committee meetings, the Section has supported the following:

School Admission Appeals

During the period 5 December 2009 to 21 January 2010, 20 School Admission appeal hearings (19 High School and 1 Primary School) and 1 School Exclusion appeal were organised. The original date for the Exclusion hearing was postponed due to the extreme weather conditions and re-arranged to a new date. The hearings were clerked by the Section.

Members' ICT Issues

During the period from, 5 December 2009 to 21 January 2010, The Members' ICT Support Officer provided training on IT issues to 8 Councillors and dealt with 34 requests for IT support from Councillors.

5. Civic & Mayoral Services

NACO Application

Civic & Mayoral Services is currently putting together the application for "Civic Office of The Year Award" which has to be submitted by the 31st January with the award being announced in March. This award receives national press coverage and also LGA Coverage and is certainly one we aspire to win!

Last year we received a special mention for some of the innovative projects we had undertaken.

NACO (National Association of Civic Officers)

In March 2009, Sefton joined and attended the NACO Conference and training event in Scarborough. At this event I was elected onto the NACO Executive and as such am responsible for developing Civic & Mayoral Initiatives nationally.

In January this year at Southwark, after a year of getting the bid together I will be presenting Sefton's case for hosting the 2011 NACO Conference in Southport, where a final vote will take place. If successful it will be held at the Floral Hall with accommodation solely booked at the Ramada and The Royal Clifton.

It is hoped 250 plus Civic Officers from all over the UK will attend the Conference and Training event, which is usually attended by a Minister and opened officially by the Mayor of the welcoming Borough.

ABBA Night

The Mayor of Sefton's Charity Night this year takes place one month earlier due to availability and is at the Floral Hall. Early indications show that we will hopefully reach 400

Southport & Bootle Town Hall Leaflets

In January after 18 months of rewriting and picture taking the Southport Town Hall leaflet has now been created and printed. This work was required as the old leaflet was a black and white photocopy and had not been updated since approx 1995.

The Bootle Town Hall leaflet is currently under construction and then will be presented to the Mayoral Working Group for consideration.

Civic Receptions

The Parish Luncheon took place recently and was an over whelming success with excellent comments about the food.

We now have two further events to organise the Business & Tourism Reception and the Civic Heads Luncheon

Heroes Welcome Campaign

This campaign goes from strength to strength and is now to receive a further publicity spread in the local newspapers. The scheme is administered by the Head of Civic & Mayoral Services.

PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT

A. Pay & Grading Review/Equal Pay

1. The Council's proposed pay structure was referred to the Trade Unions national officers for comment in November but no formal approval has been received yet. If it is not possible to reach agreement about implementation in the near future then Pay and Grading Committee may have to take a decision to impose the new pay arrangements via dismissal and re-engagement process.
2. Consultation with the Trade Unions is continuing on a regular basis and progress is being made on developing several committee reports that are connected with implementing the review.
3. Revised equal pay settlement offers were made to employees in December as a measure to try and reduce the Council's liabilities. Previous offers were enhanced by a further 5% but this has failed to stimulate the desired reaction. Tribunal dates in February, that were set to consider various jurisdictional issues associated with the claims, have been cancelled at the request of the Trade Union solicitors.

B. Establishment Control, Pensions, Payroll & HR Transactional Services

4. The weekly Client meetings continue and we are progressing in several areas including the introduction of new process and improving data quality. Protocols continue to be developed as and when required.
5. The Establishment Control Team is now involved in updating ResourceLink with frozen/deleted/vacant posts following vacancy panel meetings and reporting on the associated savings to the Finance Department.

6. The Establishment Control Team is in the process of preparing Workforce Data that will be published to all Service Directors on a regular basis.
7. The Pensions Officer is currently working closely with the policy team to develop pension policies.

C. Health Unit

8. The Health Unit structure is now an active part of the wider review of Corporate Services, taking the opportunity to further improve the Council's management of sickness absence and to address re-skilling of staff in dealing with H&S management system audits.
9. The balance between bought-in and internally-provided occupational health services is also being investigated to produce Strategic Budget Review savings agreed via Council.
10. The Corporate H&S Forum (is due to) meet on 20 January to discuss the progress the Health Unit has been making against its annual work plan, and to be made aware of where improvements will be needed. The Forum is chaired by the Chief Executive, and provides the senior management oversight of H&S issues.

D. Corporate Learning & Development Unit

Passport to Move On Programme

11. The first intake of 14 young people on the Passport to Move On Programme started on 14 January 2010: they are located as follows:

<u>Apprenticeship</u>	<u>Department</u>
Alarm Technician	Security x 4
Administration	St Ambrose Barlow
IT	St Ambrose Barlow
Administration	Resource Procurement & Management Unit
Administration	CSF - Business & Support
Administration	Personnel
Administration	Resource Procurement & Management Unit
Childcare	Thornton Children's Centre
Alarm Technician	Careline
Administration	Careline
Administration	Supporting People's Team

Group 2 recruitment day is 12th February 2010.

Coaching Skills for Managers

12. As part of the Culture Change workstream, the Chief Executive and Directors have agreed a programme of Coaching Skills for Managers training which is designed to equip managers with the skills to move from a "tell" culture to an "enabling" culture. A priority for CLDU is to deliver 54 courses from April 2010 to December 2011 covering 650 managers and team leaders. This programme is being resourced internally from existing learning and development resources and will not impact on the delivery of the Management Development Programme.

Retirement of Corporate Learning & Development Manager

23. After nearly 36 years with Sefton Council, Jo Lloyd is retiring at the end of March 2010. Interim arrangements have been made pending the outcome of the Corporate Training Review.

FINANCE & INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Budget Issues/Spending Freeze

The department continues to be heavily involved in the Strategic Budget Review. The Medium Term Financial Plan update and preparation work for agreeing a budget and Council Tax for 2010/2011.

The current year budget is still under pressure, and a spending freeze remains in place. The budget will continue to require close monitoring over the remainder of the financial year.

Specialist Transport Unit

A range of cost saving initiatives are currently being undertaken including optimisation of routes and review of staffing and structures. The head of STU did a presentation to the Cabinet Member Corporate Services Briefing on 13th January covering the range of issues being reviewed. As part of Strategic Budget Review restructuring the STU will move out of the Finance & IS Department and into the new Operational Services Department in 2010.

Insurance and Admin Services

Tenders are currently being evaluated for a new Insurance Broker contract and the outcome of that tender will be reported to the Cabinet Member Corporate Services meeting on 3rd February 2010.

Client Unit

ICT – The major engineering projects to upgrade the voice and data networks have been completed successfully. The relocation of the Data Centre from Balliol House to St. Peters House has commenced and is due to complete in April. In parallel to this, ICT staff will be moving across in phases, to ensure that service provision is maintained during relocation.

Customer Services – The Client is heavily involved in the work of the Customer Strategy Group, which is tasked with reviewing Customer Service across the Council.

Revenues & Benefits – Implementation work has commenced to replace the Pericles system with the new Northgate system, following and OGC tender exercise. It is planned that the new system will go live in October 2010.

Procurement

The Procurement Unit is heavily involved in the Strategic Budget Review led Procurement Working Groups, and plans are in place to analyse procurement and commissioning spend across the authority with a view to identifying savings and efficiencies.