

CABINET – 15th APRIL, 2010

CORPORATE SERVICES – CABINET MEMBERS' REPORT

LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT

1. Caroline Elwood took early retirement on 31st March, 2010, and Dave Mackey is to act as Interim Head of Legal Services until a new Head is appointed.
2. The **Childrens & Social Care Team** were short listed for the **Team of the Year** and **Judith Taggart**, in the Property Team, was nominated for Employee of the Year. Both the Team, and Judith, were runners up, so congratulations all round.

3. Electoral Services

The Electoral Services Team are extremely busy preparing for the Local Government Elections and a possible Combined General Election.

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 from 22 January to 31 March 2010, 24 School Admission appeal hearings (19 High School and 5 Primary School) were organised. The hearings were clerked by the Section.

Members' ICT Issues

During the period from 22 January to 31 March 2010, The Members' ICT Support Officer provided training on IT issues to 17 Councillors and dealt with 122 requests for IT support from Councillors.

Programme of Meetings 2010/11

The Programme of Meetings for 2010/11 was approved by the Council on 25 March 2010 and arrangements are been made for the production and printing of the Council Diary 2010/11, for circulation to Members and Officers in the near future. All of the details have been inputted on to the Modern.gov Committee Management System which can be accessed via the Intranet and Council web site. The Council Year Book 2010/11 will be produced following the Council Elections and Special Council Meeting to be held in May 2010.

Members Induction 2010

The Member Development Steering Group at its meeting on 16 March 2010 approved proposals for two half day Induction Sessions to be held in May/June 2010 for newly elected Members. The final arrangements will be determined in the week following the Council Elections on 6v May 2010.

5. Mayoral

Twining Visits planned for:

15 -16 April 2010 (Mons visiting Sefton)

18 – 22 Jun 2010 (Sefton to Mons)

The Team have begun to support Mons in their bid for the European Capital of Culture 2015 (incidentally the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Mons).

Installation Planning

Initial planning has begun on the forthcoming Installation of the new Mayor, Cllr Mrs M Fearn JP, who will take up office on 20 May 10. The event will follow established practice of the Installation (Southport Town Hall) followed by a formal Dinner at Formby Hall Golf Resort and Spa.

Bootle Town Hall Booklet

A new BTH Booklet has been produced and will shortly go into production. This will be the first revision of this document since 1988.

Temporary Incumbent of Mayoral Attendant Post

Ms Debbie Mills has settled in very well and continues to gain 'on the job' experience.

Civic Dinners

Both the Parish Chairmen's' Lunch (14 January 2010) and the Merseyside Civic Heads Lunch 3 March 2010) went well with complementarily letters being received by the Mayor.

Civic

Bootle Town Hall Kitchen Refurbishment

Since November 2009, Civic & Mayoral Services in conjunction with QD Services and Sines Fine Food, have been working together to have some essential Health & Safety works done to the Kitchen at Bootle Town Hall, these works are part of the tender process that was conducted for the catering contract at Bootle Town Hall for Meetings, Weddings & Functions, to which Sines Fine Food were successful. From these works are goal is to have a fully operational Kitchen to produce a high standard of quality catering at Bootle Town Hall.

New PA Systems at Bootle & Southport Town Halls

Following on from a successful visit to York for a conference held by TYCO Systems, both Jason Carroll and Shaun Pimblett have arranged for TYCO to visit both Bootle and Southport Town Halls on Monday 12th April to view our current PA Systems, with a view to bringing in a new system for mainly the Council Chambers but also other rooms at both venues, having seen a demonstration of the proposed system we are confident that it will prove to be a very essential asset to the Town Halls. Jason will be working with all users of the meeting rooms and will be submitting a report in due course in relation to a potential new system taking into account the DDA requirements.

6. Land Charges

Legal debate is still ongoing regarding land charges and a further report will be brought once issues are resolved.

PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT

A. Pay & Grading Review/Equal Pay

1. On 23rd February Pay and Grading Committee resolved to implement the outcome of the review with effect from 1st October 2010. Committee also recognised that it may not be possible to reach an agreement with the Trade Unions (within the necessary timescales) that formally approves the proposed pay structure. In the event that the new arrangements may have to be imposed, and in order to comply with employment law, Elected Members resolved to give the Director of Corporate Services the delegated authority to issue Section 188 Notices to the Trade Unions and an HR1 notification to the Department of Business, Skills and Innovation. These notices have now been issued.
2. Consultation with the Trade Unions has concentrated on the pay model and related policy issues such as assimilation, pay protection and other mitigation measures. The focus of discussions at the moment is on reviewing allowances to avoid an increase in costs when implementation takes place.
3. Revised equal pay settlement offers were made to employees in December as a measure to try and reduce the Council's liabilities. This has met with limited success but a further 13 claimants have now indicated that they want to settle. In the meantime preparation continues for the Tribunal hearings in June.

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

4. The Establishment Control Team have been in preparing and issuing a specification to arvato that will enable a package of SBR savings measures to be implemented with effect from 1st April.
5. The Team is now involved in updating and cleansing data held on ResourceLink in preparation for the implementation of the new pay structure. This has included developing a draft payroll specification, streamlining claims procedures and producing the data extract that will enable a series of letters to be sent to 7,800 NJC employees who will be affected by the review.
6. The Pensions Officer has been closely involved in finalising the arrangements for over 70 staff who decided to take voluntary severance on 31st March. Policy

development work continues in respect of determining local discretions and preparing for the pension changes that will apply from 1st April.

C. Health Unit

7. The Corporate Health and Safety Forum next meets on 14th April to discuss progress on the year's work plan (2009/10) and agree the work plan for 2010-2011.
8. The business risks centre on the management of contractors (brought into focus by the relationship with Capita) and the approval and audit of adventure activities.
9. The management of the Health Unit in the temporary absence of any Health & Safety Manager, is also on the agenda.

D. Corporate Learning & Development Unit

10. Coaching Skills for Managers

A complete list has now been received from Directorates of all Managers in Sefton. The first Coaching Skills for Managers course will be held for Directors starting in April 2010.

Another 4 programmes invitations have been sent out for April/June to various levels of managers across the authority.

11. Management Development Programme

The corporate Management Development Programme continues to run very successfully. There are now almost 90 managers who have graduated, four groups (MDP 12 to 15) are live and running at different stages, and MDP 16 begins in April. Feedback from participants and their line managers remains extremely positive, underlining both the professional and personal development that the programme offers.

12. Passport to Move On

The first group of young people have now completed their pre-apprenticeship; therefore 12 young people have progressed on to the Apprenticeship.

The second intake of 15 young people started on 1st March. Group 3 recruitment day is taking place on 14th April.

13. Skills for Life

The Skills for Life launch took place on 5th February at Bootle Town Hall. The Chief Executive, a representative from the Trade Unions, North West Employers Organisation (NWEO), Directors, Senior Managers and Union Learner Reps, attended this event.

The aim of the launch was to provide managers with information so that Skills for Life can be promoted throughout the whole workforce.

The launch will contribute towards the skills award that Sefton MBC is currently working towards.

14. Special Achievements

Three events have taken place in recent days to celebrate the achievement of staff across the council.

- **Outstanding Achievers Awards**

Took place at Bootle Town Hall in the company of the Mayor and Mayoress of Sefton, Cllrs Alf Doran and Gillian Cuthbertson, and the chief executive Margaret Carney.

The event recognises teams and individuals that have made a significant improvement to service delivery, or received major recognition or accreditation, or delivered a very difficult service and achieved outstanding results.

A shortlist of four "Directorate Teams of the Year" and four "Directorate Employees of the Year" are invited to the ceremony where the overall winners are announced.

The Individual winner was Debbie Phillips (Regeneration & Environmental Services Directorate) with runners up Judith Taggart (Chief Executives), Norman Scott (Children, Schools & Families) and Les Meadows (Social Care & Well-Being).

Team Winner was Network Management – Winter Service Team (Regeneration & Environmental Services Directorate) followed by runners up, Sefton OT and Sensory Services (Social Care & Well-Being), Common Assessment Framework (Children Schools & Families), Legal & Democratic Services – Children & Social Care Team (Chief Executive Directorate).

- **Work based learning celebration**

Took place at Bootle Town Hall. The celebration acknowledges and celebrates the achievements of all employees that have achieved an apprenticeship, NVQ or ECDL. To date 265 employees have completed an NVQ, 113 have completed an apprenticeship and 41 employees have successfully completed ECDL in the past twelve months.

- **Management Development Programme**

The latest group to graduate is MDP 11 who received their certificates for chief executive Margaret Carney at a celebration lunch in Bootle Town Hall.

FINANCE AND INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Budget Issues

The closure of the Accounts process for 2009/10 is now underway; the outturn position compared to the budget will be finalised in June. The spending pressures for the Authority identified previously are likely to need the support of one-off resources to arrive at a break-even position for the year.

The budget for 2010/11 was approved by Council on 4 March; the allocation of the budget amendments to service departments is currently being finalised. The department

will continue to be involved in the Strategic Budget Review / Transformation process during 2010/11.

The project to integrate financial services across all Departments will gather pace during the first half of 2010/11. The subsequent introduction of the new structure will enable the financial savings, identified in the budget, to be achieved.

Client Unit

ICT – The relocation of the Data Centre from Balliol House to St. Peter's House has commenced and is due to complete in May. The move will take slightly longer than planned due to problems encountered with the power supply and with the lifts. ICT staff have moved out of Balliol House into St Peter's House.

Customer Services – A workshop has been held around our Customer Strategy with Strategic and Service Directors, this will inform our overall business plan, and Customer Strategy.

HR and Payroll – Work continues in partnership with the Council to ensure our CRB checks are current. Work is to start on preparation for the introduction of E-Payslips.

Revenues & Benefits – Implementation work for the new Revenues and benefits system is ongoing. The contract with Northgate Information Solutions is now signed and the project is fully underway.

Council tax and Business Rates collection targets have been achieved. This includes the figures for the Docks which have been the cause of much concern during the year.

Procurement

The Procurement Project board, established in January 2010, has identified key areas of spend to target future efficiencies. Discussions will take place with relevant service directors over the next month on how these actions are taken forward. Discussions are also scheduled to take place imminently with the council's service partner, arvato, to agree a strategy to ensure that the most efficient use is made of existing procurement software solutions.