

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
CORPORATE BUSINESS SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL  
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD  
ON TUESDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2008 AT  
7.30 PM

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PRESENT: Councillor J O Ranger (Chairman).  
Councillors D Andrews, R Beeching,  
R N Copping, R Gilbert, G Lawrence, J Mayes,  
J Warren, M Wood.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors N Clark, P A Ruffles, M J Tindale,  
C Woodward.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Anne Freimanis	- Chief Executive
Linda Bevan	- Committee Secretary
Mike Collier	- Acting Director of Internal Services
Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Lorna Georgiou	- Performance and Policy Co-ordinator
Philip Hamberger	- Programme Director of Change
Marian Langley	- Scrutiny Officer

RESOLVED ITEMS

ACTION

382 MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the meeting of the  
Committee held on 7 October 2008 be confirmed as  
a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

ACTION383 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED - that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the Appendix to the report now submitted relating to Minute 388 on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

384 CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2008

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The Leader of the Council submitted a report which set out issues relating to finance, performance and risk monitoring for the Council from July to September 2008. The information was related to Corporate Priorities.

Members discussed the report and the Performance Indicators relevant to the Committee which were below target. Projected outturn on salaries was also considered.

The Committee decided the Executive should be informed of its comments as detailed below.

RESOLVED - that the Executive be informed that the Committee considers that:

- (A) £10,000 of the income received following the successful tender of the Critical Ordinary Watercourses should be used to offset the £10,000 budget pressure for land drainage;
- (B) the Capital Project for CCTV Safer Parking Award 2008 (£90,000) should be deferred to 2009/10; and

ACTION

- (C) approval of £29,400 should be given for funding to enhance the Council's telephone system to make it fit for purpose.

385 2008/09 SERVICE PLANS - SUMMARY OF PROGRESS AND EXCEPTIONS REPORT

A report was submitted on Service Plan Actions that had been achieved, were on target and those which required a revised completion date.

In response to a question, the Director of Neighbourhood Services explained the future of the remaining hostel for the homeless would be reconsidered in the light of the current economic downturn.

Members also queried plans for collecting plastic bottles and it was agreed they would be given a written report on the current situation.

The Committee decided to note the progress against 2008/09 Service Plans and actions requiring revised completion dates.

RESOLVED - that (A) the summary of progress against 2008/09 Service Plan actions be received; and

(B) those actions requiring revised completion dates be noted.

386 COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (CPA) IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

The Leader of the Council submitted a report on actions contained in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Improvement Plan, which sought agreement that outstanding actions be absorbed into the new Improvement Plan to be launched in April 2009.

ACTION

Members considered the progress on actions in the CPA Plan and arrangements for the new Comprehensive Area Assessment.

The new Improvement Plan would ensure a “good” score in the annual area and organisational assessment under the new Comprehensive Area Assessment framework. The Committee decided the Executive should be informed that it considers the three outstanding actions should be absorbed into the new Improvement Plan for the Council.

RESOLVED - that the Executive be informed that the Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee considers it should agree that the three outstanding actions be absorbed into the new Improvement Plan for the Council.

387 2009/10 SERVICE OPTIONS AND BEYOND

The Executive Member for Resources and Internal Support submitted a report outlining efficiency savings and growth items for 2009/10. The report set out overall aspirational targets for the next three years which would allow a balanced budget to be set and would allow further investment for priority areas to be identified in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Members discussed the items relating to Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee and raised a number of issues on these. Members were assured new arrangements for the work of the Chairman’s Secretary had been successfully piloted. The Director of Neighbourhood Services explained business re-engineering involved examining working processes to see how they could be streamlined. Fewer word processing staff were needed because of changing working arrangements. Electronic document management would lead to electronic records management which would take over from microfilming. A saving on floral displays would be made through new arrangements for these.

ACTION

The Committee decided to inform the Executive that the service options with the exception of 24 CBS - Repairs and Maintenance, which it felt would lead to more serious problems for the buildings concerned in the future, should be agreed.

RESOLVED - that the Executive be informed that the Committee considers that the service options should be adopted, subject to the comments outlined above regarding 24 CBS - Repairs and Maintenance.

### 388 RECRUITMENT SERVICES

The Leader of the Council submitted a report seeking agreement for the Council to enter into a shared recruitment service with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and Manpower. It was reported that the Human Resources Committee had decided an agreement for provision of recruitment services and advertisements should be investigated. In addition a review of HR had been completed and a number of the findings of the review related to the recruitment process. East Herts Council was also a member of the Herts HR Partnership which sought to identify areas for joint/partnership working to increase HR capacity and effectiveness across Hertfordshire. A meeting of the partnership had agreed an action plan for joint working which included researching recruitment services. As a result, arrangements for recruiting had been reviewed.

The advantages of the agreement with Hertfordshire County Council and Manpower were outlined. Members asked if other web-based methods of recruiting would be used in addition to the agreement. The Director of Neighbourhood Services explained this would not be allowed under the agreement but this could be reconsidered when the contract for it expired.

Members expressed concern at the suggestion of allowing

ACTION

staff six months to adopt the new recruitment practices.

Members excluded the press and public for the discussion of the price list in Appendix A9 of the report now submitted.

The Committee decided the Executive should be informed that it considers the agreement with Hertfordshire County Council and Manpower for the provision of recruitment services should be adopted and Officers should be encouraged to use the new scheme as soon as possible.

RESOLVED - that the Executive be informed that the Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee considers the agreement with Hertfordshire County Council and Manpower for the provision of recruitment services should be adopted and Officers should be encouraged to use the new scheme as soon as possible.

389 WORK PROGRAMME

The Chief Executive submitted a report inviting the Committee to review its Work Programme.

Members noted that Councillor P A Ruffles had been included in the membership of the Plain English and Report Writing Task and Finish Group.

The following amendments to the Work Programme were agreed:

- (a) report of Plain English and Report Writing Task and Finish Group to be considered in April 2009;
- (b) Amendments to Constitution to be considered in January 2009; and
- (c) the Task and Finish Group on shared services be set up in January 2009 and receive information from the Leader of the Council on Pathfinder.

ACTION

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

Chairman	.....
Date	.....