

Executive Scrutiny Committee

A meeting of Executive Scrutiny Committee was held on Tuesday, 23rd December, 2008.

Present: Cllr Lee Narrowway (Chairman), Cllr Mrs Ann Cains, Cllr Dick Cains, Cllr Julia Cherrett (Vice-Cllr Mrs Alison Trainer), Cllr Mick Eddy, Cllr Maurice Perry, Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Mick Stoker, Cllr Bill Woodhead

Officers: H. Dean (CE), G. Cummings (R), M. Waggott, J. Trainer, M. Jones (LD)

Also in attendance:

Apologies: Cllr Robert Gibson, Cllr Colin Leckonby, Cllr David Harrington, Cllr Mrs Liz Nesbitt, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Michael Smith, Cllr Mrs Alison Trainer, Cllr Mick Womphrey, Mrs Robson

1 Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Lee Narrowway be appointed Chairman for this meeting only in the absence of Chair and Vice-Chair.

2 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Ann Cains declared a personal/non prejudicial interest in item 4, Quarter 2 - Performance and Budget Report, July - September 2008, as she was a member of both the George Hardwick Carers Foundation and the Over 50's Forum that were mentioned in the report.

Cllr Maureen Rigg declared a personal/non-prejudicial interest in item 4, Quarter 2 - Performance and Budget Report, July - September 2008, as a family member was a recipient of the community equipment service.

3 Minutes for Signing - 28th October 2008

The minutes of the Meeting held on 28th October 2008 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4 Quarter 2 - Performance and Budget Report, July - September 2008

Consideration was given to the Quarter 2 Performance and Budget Report for the period July - September 2008, which highlighted achievements, areas for improvement, impact of the global economy and pressures against revenue and capital budgets.

It was noted that the report outlined areas where the the economic climate and subsequent increased demands on services was impacting on the Council's financial position and this was being considered as part of the 2009/10 budget process, which would be taken to Cabinet in January 2009.

There was also a general view that future reviews need to concentrate on improving efficiency and identifying savings and officers commented that a framework was currently being developed to address this issue.

The implications of a reduced resident satisfaction rate were queried. It was noted that if satisfaction dramatically reduced the Authority would need to offer an explanation as to why.

Concern was raised with the areas identified as needing their cost drivers challenged. Officers stated that the services would not be stopped, but trends would be identified so that the Authority could plan for these. The move towards personalised budgets for residents in need care services was noted, and this would have an impact on the Authority's finances. Concern was also raised with the slip in the success measure for the community equipment service.

Building Schools for the Future and its impact on the target to reduce the number of children travelling to school by car was raised. It was noted that school travel would be examined and school travel plans would be prepared as part of the BSF process.

The savings that were made due to unfilled posts was discussed, and officers noted that this was due to a high turnover of staff in some areas, and a delays in filling those positions.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The report be noted.
2. The performance at quarter 2 and progress in implementing the new Performance Framework be noted
3. The revised MTFP be noted
4. The level of working balances be noted and retained at £9.1million
5. The revised capital programme be noted.

5 Forward Plan

No issues were raised regarding the Forward Plan.

RESOLVED that the content of the Forward Plan be noted

6 Report on Chairs Updates

The Chairman/Vice Chairman of the following Select Committees provided an update on their current reviews/work programme:-

Corporate, Adult Services and Social Inclusion Select Committee - Review of Older People Strategy

Feedback from the latest MORI survey was expected and therefore the Committee were due to formulate recommendations in February 2009, not January 2009 as stated within the report.

Arts, Leisure and Culture Select Committee - Review of Tees Active

The report was noted.

Housing and Community Safety Select Committee - Review of Neighbourhood Policing/Neighbourhood Watch/Outward facing aspects of CCTV

Consultations with residents, area partnerships, Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators, and residents groups were planned to inform the review, and a press release would be circulated.

Environment Select Committee - Review of Animal Welfare Service and Dog Fouling

The report was noted. In addition, a meeting would be scheduled in January 2009 to receive an update report on the recommendation made as part of the Review of Cemeteries and Memorials regarding the provision of a crematorium in Stockton. An update would also be received at the January meeting regarding recycling issues as part of the Review of Waste Management.

Regeneration and Transport Select Committee - Review of Highway Network Management/Review of Pavement Parking

The Committee had received feedback from the MORI survey regarding road an pavement maintenance for the Review of Highways Network Management. The Committee were scheduled to report to Cabinet on this review in November 2008, however needed to fully consider the results from the MORI survey and was therefore due to report to Cabinet in March 2009.

The Review of Pavement Parking was on course to report to Cabinet on 5th March 2009.

Children and Young People Select Committee - Review of Obesity

The Committee would be agreeing its final report on 14th January 2009, and Cllr Eddy thanked the Chair and members of the Committee and all those who had been involved in the review for their contribution.

Members discussed the review on Teenage Pregnancy, and the value of the targets set by the Government regarding this issue.

Health Select Committee - Review of Audiology

The Committee would be visiting the Audiology Department at University Hospital of James Cook as part of the review. It was expected that the final report of the review would be delayed. A meeting would need to be scheduled in January 2009 to complete the Annual Health Check, which was a statutory requirement of the Committee.

It was noted that the Joint Scrutiny Committee was protesting against the decision to move the Ambulance call centre for this area to Tyneside. In particular, the Joint Scrutiny Committee were concerned that the decision making process was not carried out in a transparent and inclusive manner.

RESOLVED that the Chairs update reports be noted.