

PERFORMANCE AND REVIEW SCRUTINY FORUM

Minutes of meeting held in Committee Room 2, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 29 September 2009

Chair:

Councillor Edward McAvoy

Councillors Present:

Eileen Baxendale, Jim Docherty, Ian Gray, Graeme Horne, Anne Maggs, Alex McInnes, John Murray

Councillor's Apology:

Michael McCann

Attending:

Chief Executive's Service

A Strang, Chief Executive; H McNeil, Head of Improvement

Corporate Resources

R McIlwain, Executive Director; G Bow, Administration Adviser

Finance and Information Technology Resources

L Hardie, Executive Director; P Manning, Head of Finance Services; L O'Hagan, Finance Manager (Accounting and Budgeting)

Housing and Technical Resources

J Hayton, Executive Director; F Morrison, Revenues Manager; P Murphy, Head of Support Services

Also Attending:

S Smellie, UNISON

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Best Value Service Review - Accounting and Budgeting

A report dated 28 August 2009 by the Executive Director (Finance and Information Technology Resources) was submitted on the process and outcomes of the Best Value Service Review of the Accounting and Budgeting Service undertaken as part of the Council's Best Value Service Review Programme for 2009/2010.

The Head of Finance Services and the Finance Manager (Accounting and Budgeting) gave a presentation on the key elements of the review including:-

- ◆ the methodology used during the review
- ◆ business mapping and consultation process
- ◆ the process undertaken to assess each of the options for future service delivery
- ◆ key recommendations on future service delivery in the areas of Financial Performance, Research and Funding and Compliance
- ◆ arrangements for implementing the recommendations arising from the review

The preferred option was to introduce improvements to the current service delivery arrangements through a detailed Improvement Plan which was attached as an appendix to the report.

Consideration had been given to the staffing structure required to deliver the service in the future and details of the revised structure were provided.

The proposals would result in a saving of £0.088 million which, when taking into account the non-filling of the post of Financial Performance Manager, would be increased by a further £0.060 million.

The Forum decided:

- (1) that the key findings of the Accounting and Budgeting Best Value Service Review be noted; and
- (2) that the proposed Improvement Plan, as detailed in the appendix to the report, be endorsed as the basis for future improvements to service delivery.

3 Best Value Service Review - Benefits and Revenue Service

A report dated 15 September 2009 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the process and outcomes of the Best Value Service Review of the Benefits and Revenue Service undertaken as part of the Council's Best Value Service Review Programme for 2009/2010.

The Head of Support Services gave a presentation on the key elements of the review including:-

- ◆ the methodology used during the review
- ◆ details of the current service delivery model and performance information
- ◆ factors identified as barriers to service improvement
- ◆ the development of an Improvement Plan which was detailed in an appendix to the report
- ◆ revised service improvement targets following the implementation of the proposals
- ◆ staff efficiencies arising from a review of the staffing structure

It was anticipated that savings totalling £0.920 million could be realised over the next 3 financial years as a result of the proposals.

The Forum decided:

- (1) that the Best Value Improvement Plan for the Benefits and Revenue Service, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report, be endorsed; and
- (2) that the proposals on the revised structure of the Service be referred to the Housing and Technical Resources Committee for consideration.

4 Best Value Service Review - Gas and Solid Fuel Servicing

A report dated 15 September 2009 by the Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources) was submitted on the process and outcome of a Best Value Service Review of Gas and Solid Fuel Servicing carried out as part of the Council's Best Value Service Review Programme for 2009/2010.

The key elements of the review were summarised and included:-

- ◆ the methodology used during the review
- ◆ a profile of existing service provision
- ◆ the consultation process undertaken as part of the Review

- ◆ a benchmarking exercise carried out with other local authorities
- ◆ cost and service comparisons made against private and public sector providers
- ◆ the main challenges facing the service in the future

The preferred option arising from the review was for a reorganised internal service, to be reviewed after 2 years. Any future developments or expansions to the service would be subject to a full and separate review with an associated financial impact analysis.

The Forum decided: that the continued provision by Property Services of a reconfigured Gas and Solid Fuel Service be endorsed in line with the outcome of the Best Value Service Review and the projected short to medium-term requirements of the service.

5 Public Performance Reporting

A report dated 10 September 2009 by the Chief Executive was submitted on:-

- ◆ updated guidance relating to Public Performance Reporting (PPR)
- ◆ the Council's current arrangements for reporting performance information
- ◆ the proposed approach for reporting performance information during 2009/2010

The PPR guidance recommended that the Council required to be strategic in its performance reporting and should identify what information stakeholders required to allow them to form a view on the performance of the authority.

In order to progress the Council's arrangements, a Public Performance calendar had been developed and this was attached as an appendix to the report. The calendar would be reviewed annually by the Executive Committee and the Community Planning Partnership.

In terms of deciding what the Council would report, a number of key considerations would be taken into account and those were detailed. Individual performance reports would be based on:-

- ◆ legislative obligations
- ◆ Single Outcome Agreement/Council Plan priorities
- ◆ Best Value criteria
- ◆ national standards or targets
- ◆ professional body/regulatory requirements

The Corporate Improvement Advisory Body would proceed with the development of the Public Performance Reporting schedule based on the guiding principles and framework detailed in the report with progress being reported annually to the Executive Committee.

The Forum decided: that the report be noted.

6 National Diagnostic Projects Update

A report dated 11 September 2009 by the Executive Director (Finance and Information Technology Resources) was submitted providing an update on the following National Diagnostic Projects:-

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| ◆ Administrative/Clerical | ◆ Homecare |
| ◆ Asset Management | ◆ ICT |
| ◆ Customer Contact | ◆ Management Structures |

- ◆ Finance Service Review
- ◆ Flexible Working
- ◆ Procurement

Further updates would continue to be reported to this Forum and the Executive Committee as appropriate.

The Forum decided: that the report be noted.

Councillor Baxendale entered the meeting during consideration of this item of business

7 Future Best Value Service Review Programme and Council-wide Improvement Framework

A report dated 4 September 2009 by the Executive Director (Finance and Information Technology Resources) was submitted on:-

- ◆ updated guidance to be followed when conducting Best Value Service Reviews
- ◆ a programme of Service Reviews to be undertaken over the next 2 years pending the introduction of the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) system of self-assessment throughout the Council
- ◆ the Council-wide framework to be used to identify and manage future improvement projects
- ◆ proposed monitoring arrangements

The Best Value Review Guidance for use by Resources had been updated to reflect a number of key factors which now impacted on the review process. Those factors were detailed in the report and the updated guidance document was attached as an appendix.

Discussions with Resource Lead Officers had led to the identification of a number of gap areas which would be reviewed over the next 2 years pending the introduction of the PSIF. A list of those review areas was also attached as an appendix to the report. Prior to the introduction of the PSIF, the Council-wide framework would be used to identify and manage future projects using the criteria and improvement tool selection process detailed in the report.

It was considered that the development of IMPROVE would provide a long-term solution to the way in which the Council tracked and monitored its Best Value Service Reviews. In the short to medium-term, it was considered that the current system, "Figtree", could be upgraded on a corporate basis to track the benefits from Reviews and to enable a register of benefits to be maintained.

The Forum decided:

- (1) that the revised guidance to be used when conducting Best Value Reviews, attached as an appendix to the report, be noted;
- (2) that the future programme of Service Reviews, attached as an appendix to the report, be endorsed;
- (3) that the Council-wide framework be used in conjunction with the Public Service Improvement Framework to identify and manage areas for Best Value Reviews and other significant improvement projects; and
- (4) that Figtree be used, pending the development of IMPROVE, to track the benefits of all corporate improvement projects and to enable a single corporate evidence based register of benefits to be maintained.

8 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.