

**PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**  
**29th January, 2010**

Present:- Councillor Whelbourn (in the Chair); Councillors Austen, Barron, Boyes, J. Hamilton, Jack, McNeely, G. A. Russell and Swift.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P. A. Russell.

**128.       DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

**129.       QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

**130.       ICT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE**

Further to Minute No. C170(2) of the meeting of Cabinet held on 20th January, 2010, Mark Gannon, Transformation and Strategic Partnerships Manager, presented the submitted report detailing how, in September, 2008, the Council updated its ICT Strategy to cover the period 2008-2011. The report set out the progress currently being made against the implementation plan.

Also included was a RAG (red, amber and green) status against each action and a commentary outlining progress to date. Ongoing progress against the implementation plan was monitored through the e-Government Board and reported to the Strategic Leadership Team, Cabinet and Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee as appropriate.

The Capital Programme to support the ICT Strategy was approved by Cabinet at the same time as the Strategy in June, 2008. The total approved budget to support the ICT Strategy over the period 2006-2011 was £18,717,631. At the mid-point of the 2008 to 2011 Strategy it was estimated that there would be a net underspend of £21,754 by 31st March, 2011.

Delivery of the ICT Strategy was a critical element in ensuring the Council transformed its services for the benefit of customers, businesses, Members and staff in order to improve information management, business continuity and the customer experience.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- how aspirations were evidenced
- Electronic Social Care Records (ESCR) and mobile social work :

social workers use of technology

- integrated services and the rolling out of the ability to mobile work : potential scrutiny review
- SWIFT
- teething issues regarding the website redesign including :
  - presentation
  - new navigation
  - ensuring the complaint form was in plain English
  - alphabetical search system top be more intuitive
  - suggestion regarding on-line electoral registration form
  - lack of response to feedback
  - postcode search not working for the Aston area
- customer panel
- customer profiling and availability of the Acorn online application
- development of SMS (text messaging) platform
- customer/joint service centres ICT
- use of mystery shoppers
- computers for Members in libraries
- reliability of VOIP
- 'Modern Member' eLearning package
- PDR's and reluctance/lack of confidence to use new technologies

Resolved:- (1) That the progress on implementation of the ICT Strategy be noted.

(2) That the Chairs of the Adult Services and Health and Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panels liaise with scrutiny officers regarding a potential joint review into the use of technology.

### 131. LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME 2009/10

Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny, presented the submitted report detailing how the Government's legislative programme for the 2009/10 parliamentary session was announced as part of the Queen's Speech on the State Opening of Parliament on Wednesday, 18th November, 2009.

The report gave an overview of the proposed legislative measures that would impact on, or were relevant to, the Council.

Bills that had a direct relevance to the Council were summarised as part of the report and included:-

- Child Poverty Bill.
- Children, Schools and Families Bill.
- Equality Bill.
- Flood and Water Management Bill.
- Personal Care at Home Bill.

It was not possible at this stage to identify what resource implications may arise for the Council should the provisions of the legislative process come into effect.

The proposals that would have the most significant revenue financial implications were those set out in the Personal Care at Home Bill. These would affect both the Council's Adult Social Care budgets and the relationship with partner organisations involved in health and social care. Concerns had been raised by the Local Government Association and others following the publication on the Green Paper "Shaping the Future of Care Together". The debate on this was continuing and was likely to be taken forward with the promise of a White Paper to be published in the near future.

There could be no certainty that all Bills in the 2009/10 session would be enacted. Those Bills that had not been enacted when Parliament was dissolved for the general election would fall.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- Flood and Water Management Bill
- Personal Care at Home Bill and Equality Bill now in the House of Lords
- implications for the Council, scrutiny and the scrutiny work programme
- potential for scrutiny panel reviews
- cross cutting nature of the issues and need for this Committee to retain a strategic overview.

Resolved:- (1) That the proposed legislative measures that would impact on, or be relevant to, the Council be noted.

(2) That further reports on specific legislative measures be submitted as

appropriate.

(3) That the draft report on the Equality Bill be submitted to the next meeting of the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel.

(4) That the potential for scrutiny reviews be considered as issues emerge from the legislative programme.

**132. COOPTION ONTO SCRUTINY PANELS**

Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, presented the submitted report relating to scrutiny panel co-option arrangements.

The report covered:-

- background to the current co-option arrangements
- term of office
- legislative changes and developing partnership arrangements
- development of a co-optee role description and simple application form to express interest in becoming a co-optee
- full list of current co-optee organisations

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- current arrangements panel by panel
- need to provide/consider attendance details and involvement levels of anyone seeking re-election
- encouraging use of the website to see what co-optee representatives are involved in
- statutory co-optees
- partnership co-optees
- establishment of a 'talent pool'
- numbers of co-optees on scrutiny panels

Resolved:- (1) That the principle of recruiting co-optees onto scrutiny panels for 2010-2012 be approved.

(2) That the existing co-option arrangements be continued ensuring

flexibility to take on new initiatives.

(3) That an article be placed in Rotherham News publicising the role of scrutiny panels and co-optees, a press release and the website also be utilised. In addition, presentations should be given to each area assembly or co-ordinating group.

(4) That additional expressions of interest be sought from community groups and individuals for recruitment onto individual scrutiny panels or as part of future reviews.

(5) That a working group, comprising the five scrutiny panel chairs (or vice-chairs as substitutes), be established to consider the nominations for co-option and make recommendations to this Committee prior to the start of the 2010/11 municipal year.

### **133. MINUTES**

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 15th January, 2010 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

### **134. WORK IN PROGRESS**

Members of the Committee reported as follows:-

(a) Councillor McNeely reported that yesterday's meeting of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel received a presentation on climate change and how the council co-ordinated activity. A half day scrutiny review was to take place on climate change and include air quality management areas.

(b) Councillor Austen reported that yesterday's meeting of the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel had:-

- received a presentation on alcohol and substance abuse
- considered a paper on the vision of neighbourhood management
- received volunteers for the scrutiny review of perception

(c) Councillor Jack reported that last week's meeting of the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel had received a presentation on dementia.

There were concerns about delays in completing the breastfeeding review. It was hoped that the diabetes review would begin shortly.

(d) Councillor G. A. Russell reported that last week's meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel had considered the Rotherham Parenting Strategy

(e) Councillor Boyes highlighted Police Authority issues relating to:-

- priorities, use of the budget and governance arrangements
- Police establishment, recruitment level and budget savings
- 101 number pilot scheme and the totally inadequate one day consultation response timeframe for continued provision of the facility albeit not as trialled in Sheffield

The importance of the overview and scrutiny role was emphasised. It was noted that, whilst overview and scrutiny committees could deal with crime and disorder, discussions were still ongoing as to who would hold police authorities to account.

Resolved:- That Chief Superintendent Richard Tweed be invited to a future meeting of this Committee.

### **135. CALL-IN ISSUES**

There were no formal call in requests.