

**SELF REGULATION SELECT COMMISSION
20th September, 2012**

Present:- Councillor Currie (in the Chair); Councillors Atkin, Beaumont, Beck, Ellis, Godfrey, J. Hamilton and Mannion.

Apologies for absence:- Apologies were received from Councillors Pickering, Sharman and Watson.

17. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications to report.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest to report.

19. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

20. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 12TH JULY, 2012

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting of the Self Regulation Select Commission held on 12th July, 2012 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

21. CORPORATE PLAN OUTCOMES

Consideration was given to a report presented by Matt Gladstone, Director of Commissioning, Policy and Performance, and supplemented with a presentation which provided an analysis of the Council's current performance against the twenty-nine key delivery outcomes contained within the Corporate Plan. This was a year end and/or current position based on available performance measures together with an analysis of progress on key projects and activities which contributed to the delivery of the plan.

As a result of service reductions the Council's ability to deliver all the corporate plan objectives was high risk. The potential for under performance as a result of budget reductions highlighted the importance of integrating performance, risk and financial reporting.

All of the twenty-nine outcomes and associated high level measures would be reviewed during this reporting year to ensure that they remained meaningful and relevant, taking into consideration any new or changing outcomes dictated by external bodies.

The presentation drew further attention to:-

- The Scorecard.
- The Changes in Risk Rating.

- The areas of good performance and areas for improvement and recovery actions within:-
 - ◇ Making sure no community is left behind.
 - ◇ Ensuring quality education, ensuring people have opportunities and improve skills, learn and get a job.
 - ◇ Ensuring care and protection are available to those people who need it most.
 - ◇ Helping create safe and healthy communities.
 - ◇ Improving the environment.
- Political Influences.

The Select Commission welcomed this report, but raised a number of queries, particularly relating to:-

- Outcome No. 1 (Fewer children are living in poverty) – relaunch of the Early Help Strategy, its current and future success, the escalation of an outcome that had been a “red” (not meeting targets) concern and the discrepancies around the criteria used/target setting in the information contained in the report (pages 10 and 26).
- Involvement of schools in the targeting of support to vulnerable families.
- Outcome No. 21 (More people are physically active and have a healthy way of life) - the apparent increases in obesity levels and the reasons for this, alongside the delivery of effective treatment to more people. A detailed overview was required of the initiatives around active lifestyles and obesity. It was recognised that the reduction in benefits as part of the Government’s welfare reforms and low wages, may mean that fresh, healthier food is less affordable to many families on low incomes
- Outcomes 18 and 19 (People feel safe where they live and anti-social behaviour and crime is reduced) - whilst this was “green” this may be due to people to under-reporting. This still needed to be closely monitored.
- Format of Performance Clinics and their effectiveness.
- The need for a full assessment of targets and standards and their importance.
- Outcome No. 20 (People are able to live in decent affordable houses of their choice) - how this could be improved given that it only related to Council owned properties and whether this should be “amber” rather than “green”.
- The impact on the environment and the reductions to services such as grass cutting and weed clearance and whether consideration should be given to “meadow” planting.
- Costs associated with children living in poverty, particularly the Troubled Families Initiative, the criteria used and the make-up of the 700 families.

- Local Strategic Partnership involvement and promotion of new initiatives to boost the local economy, worklessness and job creation and the contributions from outside agencies, such as Job Centre Plus.
- Improvements in the targets associated with litter in Outcome 25 (Clean streets) and also in performance for Outcome 14 (Vulnerable people are protected from abuse).
- Promotion of the good news within the targets and as a result of the service reductions the ability to deliver all the corporate plan objectives remained a high risk, especially with the possibility of welfare reform.
- Councillors' surgery reports and how these factor into the performance and service delivery.

The Select Commission within its discussion suggested, as a means to taking forward the concerns, that:-

- That the relevant Cabinet Member and Strategic Director to be invited to a future meeting to discuss action to address child poverty
- To keep under review the reasons for the increase in childhood obesity.
- The need to keep a close eye on an emerging anti-social behaviour issues not being picked up routinely.
- The need to ensure that Performance Clinics follow a consistent format.
- The possibility of the Self Regulation Select Commission being involved in the overview of the twenty-nine corporate plan outcomes.
- Availability and timescales of the performance scorecard on the Intranet.

Resolved:- (1) That the Performance Team be thanked for their hard work in pulling together the report.

(2) That the current position against each of the Corporate Plan outcomes, ensuring implementation of the proposed interventions and corrective actions, be noted.

(3) That any performance issues be kept under close review to prevent amber outcomes becoming rated red.

(4) That the inclusion of year end information and first quarter 2012/13 information be noted.

(5) That the Self Regulation Select Commission keep under review child poverty, obesity and active lifestyles and the outcomes relating to worklessness and job creation,

(6) That a further report be provided to the Self Regulation Select Commission on the format of performance clinics.

(7) That Information be shared with Members around the criteria used for the 700 families, their make-up and costs associated with the Initiative.

(8) That consideration be given to including the Self Regulation Select Commission in the review of the corporate plan outcomes.

22. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE: 2012/13

Further to Minute No. 6 of the meeting of this Select Commission held on 31st May, 2012, consideration was given to the report presented by Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, which provided an update on the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2012/13.

The work programme was drawn up on the basis of its priorities and informed by comments from Commission Members and discussion with Cabinet Members and the Senior Leadership Team.

The work programme was flexible and issues may be referred to the Commission which were not known about at this stage.

The issue of parking charges was raised at the meeting on the 31st May, 2012 and it was noted that the Chair and Vice-Chair had met with the Director of Streetpride and the Parking Services Manager to explore concerns. As a result of the discussions, changes have been made to information provided to customers. The Chair and Vice-Chair agreed that no further action was required at this time.

In considering the contents of the work programme it was noted that the review into district heating, chaired by Councillor Beck, would be reporting to the November, 2012 meeting of this Commission.

Discussion ensued on areas for future scrutiny and it was suggested that some consideration be given to the commissioning of contracts and for this to be performance managed, the need for the budget setting process to come forward at a much earlier stage, Council Tax reforms and the timetabling of revenue account outturns. It was suggested that, in light of previous discussions, a review of the corporate outcomes also be included in the work programme.

The Select Commission noted the changes that had occurred during the last year and in the reduction of staffing resources and suggested that an update be provided on the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Resolved:- (1) That the work programme and its contents be noted.

(2) That the budget setting process and the corporate plan outcomes be listed as priority areas for future scrutiny.

(3) That the Deputy Leader and Strategic Director of Resources be invited to a future meeting to provide an update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

23. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next scheduled meeting take place on Thursday, 11th October, 2012 at 3.30 p.m.