

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
11th March, 2005

Present:- Councillor Stonebridge (in the Chair); Councillors Clarke, Hall, Hussain, G. A. Russell and Whelbourn.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R. S. Russell, St.John and Sangster.

121. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

122. COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (CPA) 2005 AND THE MEMBER ROLE

Tim Littlewood, Principal Officer, Performance Management, gave a presentation on the above and indicated the wish for elected member representation on the CPA Task Group.

The presentation covered:-

- purpose
- political leadership
- community leadership
- quality of decision making
- quality of decision taking
- Member/Officer relationships
- performance management
- ethical framework

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

- the importance of key relationship between the Leader and Chief Executive and need to cascade information down to all Members
- Standards Committee and the Confidential Reporting Code
- composition and independence of the Standards Committee
- Community leadership
- Best Value review of decision making
- Member/Officer developing protocol and need for proper induction
- support for Elected Members away from the Town Hall
- provision for community meetings at the Town Hall
- recognising and embracing the Councillor's role
- quality of meetings
- quality of decision taking

- need to work with partners to pick up issues not regarded as strategic
- need to improve the Forward Plan
- issues regarding presentation of performance related information
- Standards Committee role in the Audit Committee
- need for an up to date list of completed reviews for Members and Officers to include outcomes and recommendations for scrutiny reviews

Resolved:- (1) That the presentation be noted.

(2) That consideration be given to the following :-

(a) regularly updating Members on development of the CPA framework especially with regard to key lines of enquiry;

(b) self assessment and the role for Members;

(c) the need for a peer review to test ourselves before the CPA process;

(d) the presentation being made to Cabinet.

(3) That members of this Committee ensure a presence at future meetings of the CPA Task Group.

(4) That the notes from the CPA Task Group meetings be distributed to Members.

123. PROPOSAL TO HOLD A "SUCCESSFUL SCRUTINY" EVENT IN ROTHERHAM

The Committee considered a report on proposals that Rotherham host a regional seminar promoting "Successful Scrutiny" sometime in the Autumn, 2005.

The report indicated that, following a very positive response to the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS), "Successful Scrutiny" case studies publication, the Centre was offering roadshow events featuring local authority scrutiny success stories in a workshop format for members and officers. Events were designed to give a practical insight into how to maximise the effectiveness of scrutiny reviews and their impact on the well being of communities.

It was noted that the only cost to the Council would be providing the venue for the event and the MAGNA Science Adventure Centre would be a suitable venue.

Resolved:- (1) That the information be noted.

(2) That an offer be made to the CfPS to host a regional seminar promoting "Successful Scrutiny" in the Autumn.

(3) That arrangements be progressed with regard to the event including the possible use of mobile displays.

124. MINUTES

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 25th February, 2005 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

125. WORK IN PROGRESS

Members of the Committee reported on the following issues :-

(a) Councillor Whelbourn reported

- that the Panel was to look at area assemblies
- that the next Panel meeting was to be themed on local democracy and referred to :
 - Local Democracy Week in October, 2005
 - local government in the future
 - Wentworth South Area Assembly pilot update
 - Citizenship Scrutiny Review
 - Rotherham moving to Fairtrade Town status

(b) Councillor Hussain referred to the last Panel meeting and commented on the response to the Anti-Social Behaviour Scrutiny Review report. The Chairman undertook to pursue this matter.

(c) Councillor Hall reported:

- that the Wardens/Caretakers/Rangers review was nearing completion
- on a brilliant themed meeting yesterday regarding food standards

(d) Councillor G. A. Russell reported :

- Thursday's meeting had looked at the Gateshead work in relation to looked after young people
- the Panel had indicated its wish for future meetings to be held every four weeks
- that a Centre for Public Scrutiny representative had been

present at, and impressed by, the Panel's consideration of the Domestic Violence review

(e) Councillor Stonebridge reported :

- that the ODPM/CfPS researcher had spent a couple of days in Rotherham and wanted to produce a case study
- that feedback from the Hull visitors had been positive
- that he had been asked to participate in the strategy for Older People Group looking at the needs of Older People in the community holistically
- thought needed to be given to having a half day session on scrutiny organisation when the Cabinet portfolios had been finalised

126. CALL-IN

There were no formal call in requests.

(The Chairman authorised consideration of the following items to prevent any unnecessary delay in processing the matters referred to)

127. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION LEGISLATION

Further to Minutes Nos. B137 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 26th January, 2005 and 171 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member for Education, Culture and Leisure Services held on 8th March, 2005, the Committee considered the report submitted to the latter meeting relating to the above as presented by Guy Kilminster, Manager, Libraries, Museums and Arts and Paul Harris, Records Manager.

Also submitted was the draft Records Management Policy Statement and, in support of that policy, the Records Management Awareness Guidance document.

The commitment to the development and implementation of a Records Management programme stemmed from both legislative and regulatory obligations and recognition of the need for efficient and effective conduct of Council business.

An essential element in the development of a Records Management programme, and the establishment of a Records Centre as an integral part of this commitment, was the adoption of a policy governing implementation and operation. Programme Area representatives on the Records Management Group had taken responsibility for this process.

The key driver for the programme was the legislative obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

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

- conversion of the Station Road premises to facilitate a Records Centre
- process for transferring records to the Record Centre
- risk assessment of the Station Road building
- role of RBT
- distinction between archives and record management
- corporate memory
- responsibility for Records Management
- location of records currently
- review of the policy
- response timescales under the Freedom of Information Act 2000
- formal reporting

Resolved:- (1) That this Committee welcomes the programme and supports the Records Management Policy Statement and Records Management Awareness Guidance document now submitted.

(2) That formal reporting ought to be through the Audit Committee implementing Records Management in the Statement of Internal Controls reported annually.

(3) That progress reports be submitted to this Committee at six monthly intervals.

(4) That consideration be given to holding an all Member Seminar on this issue within the next few months.

(5) That consideration be given to arranging a future site visit to the Records Centre at Station Road.

128. SERVICE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR ROTHERHAM FOUNDATION TRUST - CONSULTATION

The Chairman referred to the above document which had been received in the Authority on 28th February, 2005 indicating that the response deadline was 18th March, 2005. A meeting of Members and Officers was to take place on 16th March, 2005 to consider a response to the consultation document and the Committee considered how best to contribute to that meeting.

General concern was expressed at the consultation process, particularly as to whether the short timescale for responses would facilitate meaningful consultation.

Resolved:- (1) That any views/comments from Members of this Committee be notified to the Chairman in time for him to raise them at the meeting on 16th March, 2005.

(2) That this matter be a future agenda item for the Health Services Working Group and Brian James, Chief Executive of the Rotherham General Hospital NHS Trust be requested to attend to explain the consultation process.