

EXECUTIVE

DATE: 25TH APRIL 2005

SUBJECT: REFERENCE FROM PERFORMANCE, RESOURCES AND ASSETS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – REFERENCE FROM BEST VALUE SCRUTINY PANEL: CORPORATE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT – CALLED-IN ITEM

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE (HEAD OF LOCAL DEMOCRACY)

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IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL

STAFFING

EQUALITIES

COMMUNITY SAFETY

FINANCIAL

RISKS

OTHER

CONSULTATIONS:

COUNCILLORS CONSULTED

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
CONSULTED

STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

OTHER

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

LEAD EXECUTIVE MEMBER(S): COUNCILLOR PEDERSEN

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That the Executive be advised that the Performance, Resources and Assets Scrutiny Committee would welcome a more thorough and detailed response to its previous recommendations relating to the Corporate Performance Assessment.

REPORT

2. At its meeting held on 28th February 2005 the Executive considered the following recommendations from the Best Value Scrutiny Panel with regard to the Corporate Performance Assessment Report outcomes:

- “(i) record the concerns of the Best Value Scrutiny Panel in relation to the difference in interpretation by the Chief Executive and the Executive Leader on the meaning of paragraph 20 of the Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) report in relation to ‘the Council’ not providing good leadership in education.
- (ii) record the concerns of the Best Value Scrutiny Panel about the weaknesses of the Executive in relation to performance management identified in the CPA report and to:
 - (a) give an assurance that there will be a clear and structured approach towards addressing areas of declining performance through lack of focus, with a programme/recovery plan developed to address the issue of benefits in particular;
 - (b) seek guidance as to how they can improve the monitoring of performance information;
 - (c) monitor the amount of money spent in high priority service areas to see if there is any corresponding improvement in service outcomes, to ensure that where money is focussed on improvement, value for money outcomes are achieved.
- (iii) note that the Best Value Scrutiny Panel will monitor the improvement by Executive Members in using performance management as a tool to drive up improvements in weak areas (with a particular eye on high youth service expenditure) which will include response times by the Executive in addressing declining performance.
- (iv) identify the Council’s lowest priorities to respond to the CPA’s criticism in this respect.
- (v) note the concerns of the Best Value Scrutiny Panel about the CPA report’s comments on the capacity of the Executive and request that learning and development opportunities are provided to Executive Members.
- (vi) note that the Best Value Scrutiny Panel have requested:
 - (a) the Chief Executive and Head of Policy & Performance to report back with evidence that the systems necessary to effectively manage and respond to performance information by those responsible for performance of the Council (CDMT and the Executive) were in place.

- (b) the Chief Executive and the Head of Policy and Performance to report to the Panel on a system which looks at performance indicators and how performance can be re-assessed to get early warning of issues of declining performance.
 - (c) in relation to organisational capacity, the Chief Executive to update the Panel on where the skills gaps were within the organisation and the plans in place to address this, having regard to the national skills shortages.
 - (d) the Chief Executive to update the Panel on the effectiveness of the Council's recruitment and retention measures.
 - (e) the Chief Executive to update the Panel on the plans for alternative methods of service delivery.
- (vii) That the Executive acknowledge the Panel's view of the importance of balancing the budget, maintaining a balanced budget and ensuring that the medium term financial strategy is adhered to."
3. The Executive decided: "That the views of the Best Value Scrutiny Panel relating to the Corporate Performance Assessment report outcomes, as set out in paragraph 1(i) to (viii) of the report of the Chief Executive (Head of Local Democracy) (Ref: 8.2), be noted."
4. The decision was called-in by Councillors Harris and Shaw in accordance with Standing Order 55.2.
5. At the meeting of the Performance, Resources and Assets Scrutiny Committee held on 7th April 2005 it was resolved:
- (i) That the Executive be advised that the Performance, Resources and Assets Scrutiny Committee would welcome a more thorough and detailed response to its previous recommendations relating to the Corporate Performance Assessment.
 - (ii) That the Best Value Scrutiny Panel be advised to continue to monitor progress on the Corporate Performance Assessment at appropriate intervals.
 - (iii) That the Constitution Committee be requested to amend the Council's Constitution so that references to the Executive from scrutiny panels are subject to the same prohibition on 'call in' as references from scrutiny committees."

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6. There are no legal implications to this report and this has been agreed with the relevant solicitor in Legal Services on 11th April 2005.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7. There are no financial implications to this report and this has been agreed with the Finance Manager of Chief Executive Department on 11th April 2005.

OPTIONS

The options open to the Executive are either to accept or reject the recommendations of the Performance, Resources and Assets Scrutiny Committee.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Committee Report Ref: PR&AS/4/05/8.1