

The Executive – 4 November 2009

Minutes of the meeting of **The Executive** held on **4 November 2009** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr T G Cutmore
Vice Chairman: Cllr Mrs M J Webster

Cllr Mrs L A Butcher	Cllr M G B Starke
Cllr Mrs T J Capon	Cllr P F A Webster
Cllr K H Hudson	

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An Apology for absence was received from Cllr K J Gordon.

OFFICERS PRESENT

P Warren	-	Chief Executive
R J Honey	-	Corporate Director (Internal Services)
G Woolhouse	-	Corporate Director (External Services)
Y Woodward	-	Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management
J Bostock	-	Committee Services Manager

279 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

280 PERFORMANCE REPORT ON KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR THE PERIOD JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2009

The Executive considered the report of the Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management on progress against key performance indicators for 2009/10 up to 30 September 2009.

With regard to the processing of benefit claims (NI 157a,b and c) it was noted that:-

- The average number of days for processing new claims was improving with the latest available weekly figure being 27.9 (lower than the end of quarter 2 figure of 36.31). Over the last twelve months there had been a 10% increase in the level of benefits recipients and an even larger increase in the overall number of claims being processed. A change in benefit rules has required the reprocessing of information relating to approximately 500 existing claimants during October.
- Action being taken to address processing times included the separation of staff teams dealing with existing and new claimants, the appointment of additional temporary experienced staff and the training of Rochford Housing Association staff so that they are able to verify applications

from tenants. Officers were cognisant of maintaining the quality of service associated with the Charter Mark.

- Consideration was being given to initiatives, such as the introduction of a facility to submit claims electronically.

It was recognised that, statistically, the significance of RAG Status can vary between performance areas. It is important to be aware of trends and to be in a position to address any problems at the earliest opportunity.

In discussing the need to monitor the number of households currently in temporary accommodation (NI156) it was noted that, although take-up was low, mortgage rescue schemes were available. It was also noted that there would be a report into the Executive on 9 December 2009 on the disposal of Council land to Rochford Housing Association for the purposes of creating new affordable housing units.

With regard to the handyperson and gardening schemes the appropriateness of current delivery mechanisms and the need for value-for-money was being given active consideration. A detailed report on both schemes had been considered by the Audit Committee. A number of issues were County-wide and there was ongoing consultation with Springboard on aspects of local service delivery.

It was observed that the percentage of land and highways having detritus (NI 195b) was disappointing. The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Cllr M G B Starke, apprised the meeting of the current options being considered to address this issue.

Resolved

That the progress against key performance indicators for the second quarter of 2009/10 be noted, subject to recognising that work is underway with the aim of addressing particular concerns associated with:-

- The processing of benefit claims (NI 157a,b and c) (HCS)
- The number of households currently in temporary accommodation (NI 156) (HCS)
- The handyperson and gardening schemes (HCS)
- The percentage of land and highways having detritus (NI 195b) (HES)

281 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Executive considered the report of the Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management on the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Responding to questions, the Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management advised that:-

- The original budget requirement of £32,000 for the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan was no longer required this year. A bid of approximately £7,000 was to be included within budget bids for the next financial year.
- A bid of £5,000 to meet the national indicator for bio-diversity would be included within the budget bids for the next financial year.

During discussion it was recognised that national political dimensions could be a factor when local authorities considered future pension fund contributions.

Resolved

- (1) That the mid year review of the 2009/10 budget which sets the context for the 2010/11 budget process be noted, subject to recognition that national political dimensions can be a factor when local authorities consider future pension fund contributions.
- (2) That the current assumptions being used for medium term financial planning be noted. (HFAPM)

282 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT – QUARTER 2 2009/10

The Executive considered the report of the Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management on current forecasts for the revenue budgets of the Council based on financial performance in the first half of the year 2009/10. It was noted that the variance figure relating to Community Safety should be in brackets.

Resolved

- (1) That the current year end forecasts for the revenue budgets of the Council, based on financial performance in the first half of the financial year 2009/10, be noted.
- (2) That the current financial performance on key financial indicators be noted. (HFAPM)

283 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING REPORT – QUARTER 2 2009/10

The Executive considered the report of the Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management on the financial progress at the end of Quarter 2 in completing the General Fund Capital Programme for 2009/10.

Resolved

That the financial progress as at the end of Quarter 2 in completing the General Fund Capital Programme for 2009/10 be noted. (HFAPM)

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining business on the grounds that exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

284 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S APPRAISAL

The Executive received the exempt notes of the Chief Executive's appraisal.

The meeting closed at 8.49 pm.

Chairman

Date

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