

STRATEGY & PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Monday, 20 December 2010 commencing at 5.15 pm and finishing at 5.50 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Melinda Tilley – in the Chair

Councillor Norman Bolster
Councillor Liz Brighthouse OBE
Councillor Nick Carter (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor Jean Fooks
Councillor Peter Jones
Councillor A.M. Lovatt
Councillor David Wilmshurst
Councillor Neil Owen (in place of Councillor Dr Peter Skolar)

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Couchman, Cabinet Member for Finance & Property
Councillor Mitchell, Leader of the Council

Officers:

Whole of meeting Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy), Assistant Chief Executive & Chief Finance Officer, Director for Environment & Economy, Claire Phillips, Sue Whitehead (Chief Executive's Office); John Parry (Oxfordshire Customer Services)

The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting, together with a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting and agreed as set out below

55/10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda No. 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Chip Sherwood and Councillor Dr Peter Skolar (Councillor Neil Owen substituting).

56/10 MINUTES

(Agenda No. 3)

It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2010 be considered at the next meeting.

57/10 SERVICE & RESOURCE PLANNING 2011/12 - 2015/16

(Agenda No. 5)

The Committee considered a report (**SYP5**) containing the Business Strategies and savings proposed for their service areas.

The proposals were considered under the following main headings. It was noted that the areas discussed largely represent staffing restructures to reflect the changing shape and size of the organisation in the coming years.

Property Asset Management

Proposals were supported. There was some discussion on the previously agreed re-tendering of the property services contract in 2012 that will seek a delivery partner.

Responding to comments Huw Jones, Director for Environment & Economy explained that the proposals relating to the retendering were not new, having been discussed last year and were now being implemented.

It was AGREED that the Committee be kept informed as matters progressed.

Customer Services (shared services, ICT, customer service centre, procurement)

There was overall support for the proposals put forward.

John Parry, Oxfordshire Customer Services responded to individual comments relating to Human Resources, provision of ICT training and changes to postal services that affected only Unipart House.

Chief Executive's Office (personal office, HR, corporate finance, Law and Governance and Policy, Partnerships and Communications)

Proposals were supported. There was some discussion on the profile of savings in HR and finance that reflect the tapering of the organisation in later years. The proposal to explore opportunities to 'sell' services such as internal audit to others organisations was supported. Responding to a concern about risks associated with the changes to internal audit the Assistant Chief Executive & Chief Finance Officer gave assurances that it was about reshaping and providing the service differently rather than a reduction in the service provided. She noted that going forward there would be a smaller Council organisation.

Corporate savings (includes inflation savings, insurance, terms and conditions)

The proposals were supported. It was noted that the consultation on terms and conditions reflected staff suggestions and was proceeding positively with unions. A member expressed her concerns about the proposals relating to redundancy payments and was advised that they were still well above the statutory minimum.

Following a vote by a show of hands it was AGREED by 8 votes to 1 to support the proposals detailed in the report.

SYP3

..... in the Chair

Date of signing 2011

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