

## **CORPORATE ISSUES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

MEETING, 13TH APRIL, 2010

Present – Councillors Shaw (Chairman), P. Brierley (Vice-Chairman) Allen (as deputy for Councillor J. Walsh) Ayub, Ashcroft, Chadwick, Cottam, Hayes, Hollick, Mistry, Spencer and J. Silvester.

### Also in attendance

Councillor Morris	- Executive Member for Strategy and External Relationships
Councillor Mrs Thomas	- Executive Member for Corporate Resources and Health
Councillor Kay	- Executive Member for Human Resources and Diversity
Mr. P. Molyneux	- Assistant Director, Highways and Engineering and Committee Chief Officer
Mr. I.D. Mulholland	- Principal Scrutiny Officer
Mr. S. Harriss	- Chief Executive
Mr S. Arnfield	- Director of Corporate Resources and Deputy Chief Executive
Mr. A. Eastwood	- Director of Chief Executive's Department
Ms. S. Johnson	- Deputy Director of Corporate Resources
Ms. L. Ridsdale	- Assistant Director Human Resources and Organisation Development

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J. Walsh

Councillor Shaw in the Chair.

### **36. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of meetings of the Committee held on 8th February, 2010 were submitted.

Resolved – That the minutes be signed as a correct record.

### **37. MONITORING OF DECISIONS**

The Director of the Chief Executive's Department submitted a report which provided details of the progress of decisions taken at previous meetings of this Committee.

Further to the appendix to the report relating to the actual savings/efficiencies regarding various aspects of the Marketing and Communications Division, Members discussed matters including:-

- the historic costs;
- benchmarking issues;
- new ways of working including online surveys that did not cost; and
- matters around whether actual cashable savings would be made in all areas listed.

Resolved – (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That in due course the Committee be appraised of the end of year report for MARCOMS when available.

### **38. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME**

The Director of the Chief Executive's Department submitted a report which set out details of the Committee Work Programme for the 2009/2010 Municipal Year.

Members discussed the Work Programme, in terms of any amendments that could be made.

In terms of the Property Maintenance Scrutiny Panel, Members were advised that the last meeting was held on 15<sup>th</sup> March at which the panel considered the remit of the strategic Property Review being undertaken by Corporate Property Services in conjunction with GVA Grimley Ltd.

The Panel agreed that the next meeting would be held following the conclusion of the Strategic Property Review and at this meeting GVA Grimley would be invited to attend to particularly highlight areas directly relevant to the remit of the Panel.

Resolved (i) That the updated Work Programme be approved.

(ii) That the progress of the Property Maintenance Scrutiny Panel be noted.

### **39. WORKFORCE STRATEGIC POSITION STATEMENT**

The Chief Executive and the Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development gave a presentation which provided a Workforce Strategic Position Statement on work over the last twelve months including Pay and Grading, Equal Pay and Value for Money programmes.

The Committee was also advised of the key challenges going forward.

By way of introduction the Committee was advised that this Presentation aimed to:-

- set out what the Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR/OD) Service had done and planned to do in the context of organisational requirements;
- gain understanding, ownership and challenge from Members; and
- ensure that the recent past and future planned service priorities were subject to appropriate

scrutiny.

Members were advised that the effectiveness, ability, quality and customer orientation of staff had a massive impact on outcomes for local people.

Most of the Council's costs related to employment, therefore, there was a strong efficiency argument for getting the most out of people. Furthermore, in the public sector, where there was limited scope for financial reward to motivate and reward staff, a positive organisational culture was key to ensuring high levels of efficiency and productivity.

In the recent past there had been a historic focus for HR/OD to ensure the major challenges around pay and grading and equal pay were met. Furthermore, the Council had succeeded in placing the organisation on a sound legal footing and maintaining staff motivation and engagement. This had involved:-

- development of a new pay and grading structure for NJC staff and Chief Officers;
- implementation for all staff through consensual and imposed contract change;
- new Part 3 terms and conditions;
- compensation for staff with potential claims against protected bonus;
- finalisation of legal position on equal pay; and
- review and removal of market rate supplements.

With regard to the next challenge, Members were apprised of the following:-

- a public sector spending squeeze would impact on jobs and employment;

- 30% savings over four years would mean many changes to jobs and services:
  - job and skill redesign;
  - changes to the number of staff employed;
  - enforced change and potential redundancies; and
- service remodelling would require new skills and competencies from HR staff, directors and managers.

With regard to a dual strategy to deliver in a changed financial environment, Members were informed of:-

- a strategic, proactive approach to reducing staff numbers:
  - recruitment freeze;
  - filling essential roles internally as far as possible;
  - matching between vacant and at risk posts;
  - use of Agency and Fixed Term staff; and
  - new corporate severance scheme.

There would also need to be procedural excellence to deliver enforced change in terms of:-

- refreshed redundancy, restructure and redeployment policies;
- OD Service re-positioned to provide integrated skills development for managers;
- dedicated HR expertise for individual reviews;
- investment in creating a positive employee relations climate with staff and the Trades Unions; and
-

a focus on staff engagement, training and communications.

The emerging strategic context implications for the Service were as follows:-

- HR/OD Service at the heart of organisational delivery;
- a shift in role away from procedural compliance to facilitating transformational;
- need to get the service fit for purpose to deliver new role;
- new priorities and a largely static workforce required a new approach to assessing the effectiveness of people management interventions.

Members were also apprised of the key outcome aims for 2009/2010, viz:-

- new pay and grading structure delivered on time and within budget;
- broadly on track to deliver target sickness absence outturn for 2009/10 (9.68 days per head; 9.93 in 2008/09);
- IIP status retained across all departments for at least seven years; and
- early Value for Money reviews completed and on track to deliver £2.8m savings.

With regard to the proposed outcome measures 2010/11, these were:-

- continued reporting on sickness absence and management interventions;

- staff engagement and motivation (staff survey); and
- review of equality measures planned following the 2010 staff audit.

In conclusion, the Committee was advised of the following Priorities for 2010/11:-

- continue to develop and redesign all parts of the HR/OD Service to better meet the new agenda;
- significant Trade Union engagement on Value for Money;
- targeted support to equip managers, Members and Executive Management Team to deliver people based change (strategy, headcount, skills and structures);
- new look at equality and diversity following staff audit;
- finalise aspects of pay and grading during remaining protection period;
- review of Occupational Health Unit Service to further reduce sickness absence; and
- corporate savings to be led by HR/OD:
  - 30% efficiency from service itself
  - training spend
  - agency spend
  - recruitment process costs.

Members in their discussions referred to:-

- The challenge from the unions;
- Sickness absence statistics and Greater Manchester Comparisons.

It was indicated that this information would become available;

- Corporate re-deployments and management of redundancies together with culture change issues; and
- 30% budget savings.

Resolved – That Mr Harris and Ms Ridsdale be thanked for their joint presentation and that the position be noted.

#### **40. HANDLING OF CLAIMS**

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report on how efficiently claims against the Council were handled and whether value for money was achieved.

The report went into specific details in terms of the claims handling process, cost of claims against the Authority, work undertaken to reduce the risk of claims and possible improvements to the process. Members in their discussions referred to the growing numbers of claims.

Resolved – That the position be noted.

#### **41. MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**A question was submitted by Councillor Hollick in accordance with Standing Order 36, viz:-**

In view of his agreement to release land which would allow a further extension to parking at Horwich Parkway Station for fewer than 100 extra spaces, would the Leader agree that officers should also investigate the problems of parking at Blackrod Station where the number of users was increasing daily and there were not enough parking spaces after 8am yet there had been suitable land adjacent to the station for sale for months?



Would he agree to pursue GMPTE and Railtrack on this matter and arrange for officers to report back?

Whilst this was being pursued would the Leader also agree that officers request GMPTE to look into the question of disabled access to trains at Blackrod as at present disabled passengers could only go to Chorley and the north and could not then return to Blackrod station?

**The following response was prepared by the Director of Environmental Services, Viz:-**

The Council supported park and ride at rail stations in accordance with the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan and had implemented a programme of schemes across the Borough through the Transport Infrastructure Fund, which was now in its final year. Horwich Parkway was a regionally significant station and had therefore been prioritised in the Greater Manchester Park and Ride Programme, receiving funding from the Greater Manchester Transport Fund through the Regional Funding Allocation. Also Transpennine Express prioritised Horwich Parkway over Blackrod and Lostock in terms of the number of stopping trains. Funding would be the big issue, first in terms of land purchase, but also in terms of scheme delivery as further park and ride facilities at Blackrod were not featured in any current programme.

The PTE were in the process of undertaking an accessibility study of all its rail stations to help inform future LTP targets and programmes. Blackrod would feature in the programme, although at this point it was unclear how stations would be prioritised across Greater Manchester and the levels of funding allocated to this programme.

The question regarding availability of land in the vicinity of the station could be researched if necessary and reported back to the Executive Member in due course.

The Committee received the extract of minutes of other meetings of the Council relevant to the remit of this Committee:

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- (a) The Executive held on 1st February and 1st March, 2010;
- (b) The Executive Member for Corporate Resources and health held on 23rd February and 30th March, 2010;
- (c) The Executive Member for Strategy and External Relationships held on 24th February and 31st March, 2010;
- (d) The Executive Member for Human Resources and Diversity held on 24th February and 24th and 31st March, 2010;
- (e) The Corporate Resources and Health Policy Development Group held on 24th February, 2010; and
- (f) Human Resources Policy Development Group held on 10th February, 2010.

Resolved – (i) That the question and response be noted and that the Councillors who were representatives on the Greater Manchester Integrated Transport Authority (GMITA) be asked to raise these matters at a future GMITA meeting.

(ii) That the minutes of various meetings be noted.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 p.m. and ended at 7.17p.m.)