



Confident Capable Council Scrutiny Panel

17 April 2014

Report title	Work Programme 2013-14	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Paul Sweet Governance and Performance	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Simon Warren	
Originating service	Office of the Chief Executive	
Accountable officer(s)	Deb Breedon	Scrutiny Officer
	Tel	01902 55(1250)
	Email	deborah.breedon@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by		

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Panel is recommended to:

1. Review the Confident Capable Council Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2013-14.

1.0 Purpose

This report seeks to review the work programme for the Confident Capable Council (C3) Scrutiny Panel 2013-14.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Panel has responsibility for the scrutiny of the human, financial, technical and material resources which support the delivery of Council services.
- 2.2 The Panel has met eight times this year and has considered some important issues that support the business plan for the Delivery Directorate which sets out all the overall direction and priorities for the Directorate and how its sits with the Council's corporate priorities. The work programme has focused on the six identities of a Confident Capable Council:

FutureWorks
FuturePerformance
FutureSpace
FuturePeople
FutureMoney
FuturePractice

The six identities lead to one outcome, 'a better, stronger council, ready and able to deliver the change this city needs' and achieving the C3 objective depends on the creation of a strong and corporate core for the organisation and on delivering high quality, cost effective services.

3.0 Work Programme Items

3.1 Budget Update and Review

The Panel discussed the main issues highlighted in reports to Cabinet (Resources) Panel and Cabinet. Councillors considered the circumstances that had led to significant overspends being identified and of the subsequent actions that had been taken and were satisfied that adequate identification and management of budget risks had taken place. As part of budget consultation, the Panel gave special consideration to the draft budget and medium term financial strategy 2014/15 to 2018/19. The Panel established a Specific Reserves Working Group and considered arrangements for ensuring adequate provision for budget risk and budget planning and forecasting for future years.

- Specific Reserves Working Group met in January 2014 to examine if any specific funds were able to be released to general funds.
- A summary of the Panel's observations about individual savings proposals were referred to Scrutiny Board to co-ordinate a response to Cabinet.
- In response to settlement figures the Panel conducted in-depth scrutiny of the adapted revised strategy requiring services to be cut faster and deeper and approved the way forward.

- Councillors asked for more information about recent changes to business rates and the implications for the Council and agreed to receive a report to explain the new system relating to Retention of Business Rates system.

3.2 HR Improvement Plan and Policy Framework

The Panel carried out pre-decision scrutiny of the four phases of policy reviews to develop the HR Framework. The HR Improvement Plan Phases 3, 4 and 5 introduced new policies, refreshed existing policies and ensured that Council policy integrated with the Agresso Business World HR modules. Councillors identified several changes and points for clarification including an amendment to 'Support for Carers Policy'.

- The Panel endorsed the revised policy framework work programme and the progress being made on delivering the work streams with HR improvement plan.
- Pre-decision scrutiny endorsed in principle the new probation policy and a revised capability policy, subject to the outcomes of consultation.
- Pre-decision scrutiny of HR policies and improvement plan has helped the transition of the organisation when huge numbers of employees and managers are looking for clarity in HR policy
- The Panel welcomed the good progress being made based on the new policies.

3.3 Changes to Leave Policies

Leave Policy was considered in March 2014. During pre-decision scrutiny of this item the Cabinet Member and the Unison Branch Secretary participated in the debate bringing different perspectives of the issues to the debate. The Panel made recommendations to the Cabinet (Resources) Panel that the proposals be endorsed in principle subject to meaningful consultation.

As a result of this discussion the Cabinet Member reviewed the proposals and meaningful consultation with the trade unions on the revised proposals is underway to reach agreement for the new scheme.

3.4 FutureWorks Programme

The Panel carried out overview and pre-decision scrutiny of the milestones in the FutureWorks programme and was satisfied with the progress made by the programme in relation to:

- the contract award and the business case for the FutureWorks Programme reports
- the FutureWorks Target Operating Model as the blueprint for delivery of finance, HR, procurement, payroll and some support services
- the Training Strategy for the FutureWorks programme and progress against the key programme milestones

Councillors endorsed the approach being taken to ensure that the programme benefits are identified, monitored and delivered and fed back comments to the programme team.

3.5 Creating a Council Temporary Staffing Agency

The Panel considered and gave feedback to the business case for creating a temporary staffing agency and received a briefing on the due diligence exercise conducted on the final business case. Councillors' comments and feedback helped shape the Yoo Recruit agency which the Cabinet (Resources) Panel agreed to on 7 January 2014.

3.6 Resilience Project

The Panel considered and gave feedback relating to the Resilience Project. The Panel asked for further information relating to the due diligence exercise conducted on the final business case for the Agency prior to the proposed soft launch in November 2013. A progress report was considered six months later which apprised the Panel of developments in the Council's emergency planning and business continuity activities. The comments of the Scrutiny Panel were taken into account and incorporated into the final version of the business case. The Confident Capable Council Scrutiny Panel agreed to have oversight of the governance process for the Resilience Work Programme.

3.7 Corporate Landlord Model

In October the Panel considered the proposals for the introduction of the Corporate Landlord Model for the future strategic and operational management of Council's land and property assets. The corporate landlord implications were added to all Council report templates following Scrutiny's endorsement of the proposals.

3.8 Employee Volunteering Scheme

The Panel considered the employee volunteering scheme proposals and comments made by the Panel were taken into account to shape the scheme which supports community activities, as part of the Council's work on developing self-reliant communities. The Panel agreed to receive further information to consider progress of the employee volunteering scheme. Councillors' comments were taken into account when shaping the scheme.

3.9 Implementation of Customer Services Strategy

The Panel considered aspects of customer services that have helped shape the Customer Services Strategy. The Panel raised concerns and issues about managing the use of computers available to the public on the ground floor of the Civic Centre, and this helped shape the Customer Services Strategy.

3.10 Single Status and Equal Pay Claims

The Panel has maintained a watching brief of Single Status implementation and equal pay claims from start of the process to conclusion to ensure that it is scrutinised and monitored during its implementation. The Panel received a report relating to transitional pay arrangements for those affected by Single Status outcomes. The implications of the

Supreme Court judgement in relation to Birmingham City Council equal pay claims were also considered.

3.11 Portfolio Performance Measures 2012/13 and 2013/14 (Quarterly)

The Panel received a progress report which outlined the performance process. A number of comments were made relating to the process, terminology and measuring mechanisms but the Panel was re-assured that the performance measures would be reviewed as the Council started to develop more sophisticated data. It was agreed to note the report and request a report relating to 'requests for information and complaints'

3.12 Information Requests and Complaints Report 2012-13

In July, the Panel considered the Council's performance to respond to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. The Panel considered plans in place to ensure the Council handles both complaints and requests for information in an effective and efficient manner. Councillors agreed to receive further reports on FOI requests and complaints with a breakdown of results against Directorates for comparison

3.13 Introduction of individual Electoral Registration (IER)

The Panel considered the implications of the Electoral Registration and Administration Bill 2013 and the move to IER in June 2014. The Panel acknowledged the change to individual registration to vote rather than registration by household and considered the proposals for registration processes.

Scrutiny identified that some of the processes could change following the publication of secondary legislation and the Panel agreed to receive a progress report with a summary of the legislative changes and the project plan to deliver IER in Wolverhampton.

4.0 Financial implications

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report. Within the Office of the Chief Executive there is a scrutiny budget to support the investigation of issues highlighted by councillors through the work programmes of the panels and the reviews and inquiries.

[GE/03042014/T]

5.0 Legal implications

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

[JH/04042014/N]

6.0 Equalities implications

6.1 There are no direct Equalities implications arising from this report. However, Councillors are asked to consider equalities, especially when identifying who to consult and who to call to give evidence. The [Equality shared service](#) pages of the Council intranet provide specific advice in this area.

7.0 Human resources implications

7.1 This will only be relevant for some reports but will be significant in those cases.

8.0 Corporate landlord implications

8.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.