

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 11 October 2010
5.00 - 7.00 pm

Present: Councillors Taylor (Chair), Al Bander, Dryden, Herbert, Nimmo-Smith, Ward and Brown

Officers Present:

Chief Executive – Antoinette Jackson
Director of Environment – Simon Payne
Director of Customer and Community Services – Liz Bissett
Head of Strategy and Partnerships – Trevor Woollams
Urban Extensions Project Manager – Tim Wetherfield
Strategy Officer – Graham Saint
Committee Manager – Martin Whelan

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

10/47/SR Apologies for absence

The committee received apologies for absence from Cllr Boyce, Cllr Brown attended as a substitute.

The Chair welcomed Cllr Brown and Mr John Williamson (Deputy Chief Executive – Cambridgeshire Horizons) to their first meeting.

10/48/SR Declarations of interest

None

10/49/SR Minutes of the meeting held on 27th May 2010 and 5th July 2010

The committee resolved to approve the minutes subject to the following revisions

- (i) May 2010 – The Committee Manager to check and update as appropriate the attendee list prior to the Chair signing them off.
- (ii) July 2010 – To replace the reference to “pub” with “social club” in Cllr Dryden’s declaration of interest.

10/50/SR Public Questions

There were no public questions.

10/51/SR Decisions of the Leader of the Council and Executive Councillor for Customer Services and Resources

10/52/SR Merchant Acquirer Contract (CHIP and Pin)

Matter for Decision: To consider the re-tendering and award of the Council’s Merchant Acquirer Contract (Chip and Pin) for a period of 2 years from 1 April 2011 (with the option for the Council to renew for a further 2 years).

Decision of Executive Councillor:

The Leader of the Council resolved to

- (i) Authorise officers to undertake, in conjunction with ESPO, the re-tendering and award of the Council’s Merchant Acquirer Contract (Chip and Pin) for a period of 2 years from 1 April 2011 (with the option for the Council to renew for a further 2 years), subject to the preferred tender price being within 15% over the estimated contract value.

Reason for the Decision: As set out in the officer’s report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: N/A

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Scrutiny Committee considered and approved the recommendations by 7 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendations.

10/53/SR LAA Performance Report 2009/10: Cambridgeshire Together and Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Strategic Partnership

Matter for Decision: To consider the LAA performance reports 2009/10 relating to Cambridgeshire Together and Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Strategic Partnership.

Decision of Executive Councillor:

The Leader of the Council received comments from the Scrutiny Committee regarding

- 2009/10 end of year performance against LAA indicators associated with Cambridgeshire Together and Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Strategic Partnership
- Any issues that the committee through should be fed back to Cambridgeshire Together or the Local Strategic Partnership.
- Any changes that should be made to the Council's Principles for Partnership Working. The committee recommended the following changes
 - It was agreed that references to activities related to the Local Area Agreement should be removed by removed from statement of partnership working principles.
 - The value of the Joint Accountability Committee was seriously questioned, and it was suggested that references that it provides effective scrutiny should be removed.

Reason for the Decision: As set out in the officer's report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: N/A

Scrutiny Considerations:

The committee were advised that items 10/53/SR, 10/54/SR and 10/55/SR were reporting performance of the local area agreement in the previous year. It was noted that the local area agreement would end in March 2011 and that it was anticipated that the reward grant would not be forthcoming. It was further noted that data collection had already ceased on a number of targets, such as the cancellation of the place survey.

The committee received a report from the Head of Strategy and Partnerships regarding LAA performance in 2009/10 associated with Cambridgeshire Together and the Local Strategic Partnership. The Head of Strategy and Partnership highlighted the following key points

- i) The partnership arrangements were currently subject to review and that the likely outcome was a very radical overhaul of the existing structure, and that this should be considered in conjunction with the Council Motion of July 2010 regarding effective partnership working.
- ii) The committee were advised that appendix A of the committee report was a list of the project funded through the LPSA reward grants. It was noted that the city council acted as the banker for the local strategic partnership and that £4.5m had been received to date across the county but that the final payment of £4.5m had been cancelled by the government. The committee noted that certain projects had been cancelled or remodelled as a result of the funding not being forthcoming.

The members of the committee made the following comments on the report and responded to the recommendations.

- i) With reference to table on page 29 on the committee agenda clarification was sought on when the targets were set. The Head of Strategy and Partnership advised that the local area agreement had been refreshed prior to the full effects of the recession becoming clear.
- ii) It was agreed that references to activities related to the Local Area Agreement should be removed by removed from statement of partnership working principles. The Leader agreed to the proposal.

- iii) The value of the Joint Accountability Committee was seriously questioned, and it was suggested that references that it provides effective scrutiny should be removed.
- iv) Clarification was sought on the legal status of the Sustainable Community Strategy and whether there continued to be a legal duty to produce one. The Head of Strategy and Partnerships confirmed that there was a currently legal requirement to produce one and that the LSP was currently leading on a refresh of the document to be completed prior to March 2011.
- v) The success of the partnership arrangements in mitigating for the problems which arose through the concessionary bus fares was welcomed.
- vi) The Director of Customer and Community Services was asked whether the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment would continue to be produced. It was confirmed that the current iteration would be produced imminently, however it was explained due to the restructuring of the health service it may not be possible to maintain the document on an ongoing basis.
- vii) Concerns were expressed about the effects on the voluntary sector due to the nature of the funding cuts.
- viii) It was agreed by all members that there were too many partnerships but where appropriate that most valuable and cost effective partnership working should continue.
- ix) With reference to the summary analysis of partnership working, the value of the continued existence of, or involvement, in certain partnerships was questioned.

The Leader responded and welcomed the comments raised by members of the committee. The Leader agreed to remove the reference to the Local Area Agreement in appendix A. The committee were updated on the proposals for updating partnership arrangements.

The committee made the following additional comments in light of the leader's response

- i) The strength of particular partnerships and joint working arrangements were emphasised. The enhanced relationship with South Cambridgeshire District Council was given as an example.
- ii) It was noted that other partner organisations were undergoing significant changes.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and noted the recommendations.

The Leader of the Council agreed the recommendations.

10/54/SR LAA Performance Report 2009/10 : Managing Growth Partnership (Cambridgeshire Horizons)

Matter for Decision: To consider the LAA performance reports 2009/10 relating to the Managing Growth Partnership (Cambridgeshire Horizons).

Decision of Executive Councillor:

The Leader of the Council received comments from the Scrutiny Committee regarding

- 2009/10 end of year performance against LAA indicators assigned to the Managing Growth Partnership.
- Issues that should be fed back to Cambridgeshire Horizons.
- Which aspects of Horizons' role and which of its projects were important for the growth of Cambridge and need to continue.

Reason for the Decision: As set out in the officer's report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: N/A

Scrutiny Considerations: The committee received a report from the Head of Strategy and Partnerships and the Urban Extension Project Manager regarding the performance of the local area agreement associated with the Managing Growth Partnership.

The committee made the following comments regarding the report

- i) The committee highlighted performance issues associated with the failure of Cambridgeshire Horizons to deliver particular projects and suggest the organisation has “remit creep”.
- ii) It was agreed that the successful aspect of Cambridgeshire Horizons work should be continued in some format.
- iii) The difficulty of delivering projects in the current climate was emphasised, and it was suggested that the blame for non-delivery should not be solely focussed on the employees of Cambridgeshire Horizons. Additional concerns were raised about the difficulty of effectively planning growth in the future in the absence of regional targets.

The Leader responded to the comments made by members of the committee and provided an update on proposed future arrangements.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and noted the recommendations.

The Leader of the Council agreed the recommendations.

10/55/SR LAA Performance Report 2009/10 - Economic Prosperity Partnership (Greater Cambridge Partnership)

Matter for Decision: To consider the LAA performance reports 2009/10 relating to the Economic Prosperity Partnership.

Decision of Executive Councillor:

The Leader of the Council received comments from the Scrutiny Committee regarding

- 2009/10 end of year performance against LAA indicators assigned to the Economic Prosperity Partnership.
- Any issues that should be feed back to Economic Prosperity Partnership.

Reason for the Decision: As set out in the officer’s report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: N/A

Scrutiny Considerations: The committee received a report from the Head of Strategy and Partnerships and the Urban Extension Project Manager regarding the performance of the local area agreement associated with the Economic Prosperity Partnership.

The committee made the following comments regarding the report

- i) The value of the Greater Cambridge Partnership analysis was welcomed, but concerns were expressed about potential overlaps with Cambridgeshire Horizons and parallel agendas.
- ii) It was agreed that certain targets such as participation in sport didn't sit neatly with the partnership. With specific reference to the National Indicator 8, there was agreement that the target was too specific and excluded many sport related activities.
- iii) The effectiveness of the partnership was emphasised in relation to particular funding streams such as investing in communities.

The leader responded that there was a clear sub-region associated with Cambridge, which was reliant of the development of jobs and housing but that simply placing both functions in a single quango was not the solution and overly simplistic. The leader highlighted the limitations of the existing arrangements.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and noted the recommendations.

The Leader of the Council agreed the recommendations.

10/56/SR Greater Cambridge-Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership

Matter for Decision: To consider the Greater Cambridge-Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership proposal.

Decision of Executive Councillor:

The Leader of the Council resolved to

- i) To endorse the outline proposal made to government on the 3rd September for the establishment of a Local Enterprise Partnership, and that a final decision on participation would be subject to the involvement being consistent with the councils partnership protocol.
- ii) To receive the views of scrutiny members on issues, which need to be considered and / or addressed, should the proposal be accepted.

Reason for the Decision: As set out in the officer's report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: N/A

Scrutiny Considerations:

The committee received a report regarding the proposed Greater Cambridge-Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership.

Clarification was sought on proposed boundaries and whether it represented natural economic boundaries. The Leader responded that the proposal was designed to fit with the guidance offered by central government. It was agreed that "travel to work" areas were not a representative definition of economic areas.

It was suggested that Cambridge and Peterborough lacked a common identity.

Concern was expressed that the proposal were a "fig leaf" to cover the removal of funding. It was also suggested that the regional growth fund would be focussed on the areas of greater deprivation elsewhere in the country.

Advice was sought from the Chief Executive on the implications of the proposal not being endorsed. The Chief Executive advised that withdrawal would not be in the best interests of the City and its businesses, and that the Council should continue to be involved and seek to address the issues raised through negotiation with partners. The Leader endorsed the response from the Chief Executive.

Cllr Ward proposed an amendment to make involvement in the LEP conditional on the involvement being in accordance with the principle of partnership working. The committee resolved by 5 votes to 0 to recommend the amendment to the leader. The Leader accepted the recommendation.

Clarification was requested on the status of the recommendation 2.1 if the submission had altered since September 3rd. It was confirmed that a further decision would be required, as the proposal submitted on 3rd September was only an initial submission.

An explanation was requested on the likely membership and governance format, and whether there was any flexibility. The committee were advised that no decisions had yet been made and the details of membership could be defined in the White Paper.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations by 5 votes to 2.

The Leader of the Council agreed the recommendations.

10/57/SR Annual Review of Equalities

Matter for Decision: To consider the Annual Review of Equalities.

Decision of Executive Councillor:

The Leader of the Council resolved to

- i) Approve the Equalities Action Plan for publication and the proposed new performance management framework for the delivery of equality in employment and service delivery within the Council and in the Council's role as a community leader with the following amendments
 - Insert into "Employment Practices" section - We will not exclude transgender people from positions, which require a gender-appropriate candidate.
 - Insert into the "Valuing our customers – delivering services" section - transgender people will not be excluded from gender-appropriate single sex/sex segregated facilities operated by the council
 - Insert "as a minimum standard" at the end of aims/action 6 and 7
- ii) Approve the adoption by the City Council of the Inequalities Charter for Cambridgeshire.

iii) Approve the up-dated Comprehensive Equalities and Diversity Policy.

Reason for the Decision: As set out in the officer's report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: N/A

Scrutiny Considerations: The committee received a report from the Head of Strategy and Partnerships regarding the Annual Review of Equalities.

Councillor Brown proposed a number of amendments to strengthen the protection for transgender employees and service users. Other members of the committee expressed support for the proposal, although it was noted additional notice about the amendment would have aided the debate. The Head of Strategy and Partnership advised the committee of a number of proposed amendments to address the concerns raised. The Scrutiny Committee endorsed the following amendments by 5 votes to 0;

- Insert into "Employment Practices" section - We will not exclude transgender people from positions, which require a gender-appropriate candidate.
- Insert into the "Valuing our customers – delivering services" section - transgender people will not be excluded from gender-appropriate single sex/sex segregated facilities operated by the council
- Insert "as a minimum standard" at the end of aims/action 6 and 7

The current positions in relation to the targets for the employment of members of the BME and disabled community were noted, and clarification was sought on the mechanisms in place to improve performance particularly around the access to buildings. The committee were advised that the current reporting period to which the targets related had not been concluded, and that the targets had been raised recently as a result of strong past performance. The Chief Executive agreed to prepare a briefing note on the arrangements in place to support members of staff who are not able to access specific buildings or offices.

The Director of Customer and Customer agreed to supply Cllr Al Bander a copy of the "Community Safety Plan.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations by 5 votes to 0.

The Leader of the Council agreed the recommendations as ammended.

10/58/SR EELGA Assembly - Change of Appointment

The committee noted the appointment of Cllr Nimmo-Smith to replace Cllr Reid as the city council representative on the East of England Local Government Association Assembly.

The meeting ended at 7.00 pm

CHAIR