

Time reconvened - 6.00 pm  
Time Finished - 7.40 pm

## **SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION 7 DECEMBER 2004**

Present: Councillor Troup (in the Chair)  
Councillors Ahern, Bayliss, P Berry, Graves, Hussain, Jones,  
Latham, Lowe, MacDonald, Redfern, Repton, Smalley, and Travis

### **48/04 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **49/04 Late items introduced by the Chair**

There were no late items. However the Chair asked Steve Dunning, Assistant Director - Democratic Services to give an update on staffing in Overview and Scrutiny. He reported that David Romaine had been appointed as Scrutiny and Complaints Manager. The Commission congratulated David on his appointment.

### **50/04 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **51/04 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2004 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **52/04 Call-in**

There had been no call-in of a decision.

## **Items for Discussion**

### **53/04 Website Development**

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Finance, which stated that the City Council website was introduced in 1999. This went through further versions before being replaced in 2003 by the current design. The website now contained over 2500 pages of information. As part of the new system, a 'content management' system was introduced to automatically manage the life cycle of all pages and make sure the provision of content was sustainable and empowered service units to directly add

information and transactions to support the delivery of their service. There were approximately 150 contributors across the Council adding the content. The report gave details of improvements which had been made to the website, and details of a Web Strategy Group which was responsible for reviewing and advising on strategic developments to the website. Work had already started to develop phase two versions of the website and it was suggested that Members take part in a workshop to contribute to feedback on the current website and the phase two development.

## **Resolved**

- 1. To note the report.**
- 2. to nominate Councillors Bayliss and Troup and a representative from the Conservative group to take part in a workshop to contribute to feedback on the current website on the Phase two development.**

## **54/05 Update on Achievement and Organisation of Overview and Scrutiny in Derby Topic Review**

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Corporate Services, which stated that a group of members from the Commission had met to consider the written responses from Chief Officers to the recommendations on the topic reviews. They had decided to proceed, initially at least by looking at responses to two topic reviews in more detail. The topic reviews selected for closer examination were the Adaptations topic review, and the Service Access review. The review would involve inviting the Chairs and the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officers – OSCERs - involved in conducting the topic reviews, to give evidence to the Commission on the progress made on the recommendations. This would enable the Scrutiny Management Commission to consider the Chairs' perspective to be considered on "What's Happened Since". Steve Dunning, Assistant Director - Democratic Services reported that a joint Cabinet/Scrutiny workshop was to be held on 22 January 2005 and facilitated by the IDeA. A suggested timetable for the topic review was circulated. The proposed timetable would allow for any changes to be made prior to the Annual Meeting of the Council. It was proposed that a session be arranged with as many members of the Commission as possible to attend to discuss the two reviews along with the OSCERs, Directors and relevant Cabinet Members. A special meeting of Council could be held in April to agree any recommendations.

Councillor Graves questioned the need for a special Council meeting and asked if the outcome of the topic review, already decided, was to downsize commissions. The Chair reported that he wished to see all options kept open. Steve Dunning suggested that the remit of commissions may need to be re-configured or other changes to structures made. There was no pre-disposition to the outcome of the review. He reported that other Commissions would feed into Council Cabinet, but as this review may have constitutional effects it would require the approval of Council. Councillor Redfern and Steve Dunning referred to the implications of the Council's new Liquor Licensing responsibilities and the amount of work this would bring to the Council. This was a statutory responsibility, which the Council would take on from February 2005.

Details of this would be considered at the meeting of Council in January 2005. The workload was looking onerous and it was suggested that Members of the new Liquor Licensing Committee may have difficulties in meeting the time commitments. Each political group was to consider possibly reducing the number of Commissions or numbers of Members on commissions for the transitional period of liquor licensing. There was also the possibility of the Planning Control Committee meeting on a fortnightly basis.

The review would need to take account of the new licensing regime. Decisions on licensing taken at the January Council meeting would feed into the topic review. It was hoped that the review could be reported in April. Councillor Graves suggested there needed to be a frank debate about all these issues to enable discussions to take place, so that difficulties could be identified and solutions drawn up. Consideration needed to be given to commitments to daytime meetings for liquor licensing.

### **Resolved**

- 1. To note the progress of the first phase of the Topic Review.**
- 2. To agree the arrangements for the detailed consideration of the Adaptations and Service Access reviews, and the Cabinet/Scrutiny Workshop.**

## **55/05 Cultural and Prosperity Commission Topic Review 2004/05 A Review of the Ways in Which Derby City Council promotes the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site in Derby**

A report of the Chair of the Culture and Prosperity Commission was considered which stated that the Culture and Prosperity Commission had selected a review of the way in which the Council promotes the World Heritage Sites within the City as a work plan topic at its first review in 2004/5. The review started in October 2004 and it was intended to report the Commission's findings to Council Cabinet on 15 March 2005. The terms of reference of review were set out in the report.

**Resolved to approve the review of the way in which the Council promotes the World Heritage Sites in the City, which the Culture and Prosperity Commission had selected as one of its work plan topics for 2004/5.**

## **56/05 Performance Management**

The Commission considered a report, which stated that Performance Eye was now available to all members of the Commission. Commission members could use Performance Eye to look at performance of service departments against a range of performance indicators covering areas that fall within the remit of their Commissions. Performance indicators that fall within the remit of the Scrutiny Management Commission were in a table of sub elements, which were attached to the report. Performance against these indicators was indicated by the traffic light shown in the

fourth column of the table. Performance Eye also provided graphical and tabular data, which showed the performance against individual sub-elements. The performance data could also be compared with the unitary top and bottom quartiles and the median for unitary authorities. The Commission at its meeting on 13 July 2004 had resolved to confirm that the overview and scrutiny commissions should monitor the performance of the Council by considering the performance against key indicators relevant to Council Priorities and Objectives. The Commission also resolved that the Commissions should comment on the Councils priorities and they should use Performance Eye to identify key issues. The Commission considered the following options:

1. to include Performance Eye on agendas for every other meeting and request the Chief Officer or their Deputies to attend those meetings to answer whatever questions Members might have about their departments performance in respect of the indicators.
2. to include Performance Eye as a standing item on the agenda. At one meeting Members could then identify the performance indicators they wanted to examine in detail at the next meeting of the Commission.
3. to identify an area in which the Commission had a particular interest and for the Co-ordination Officer to prepare a Forward Plan aiming to bring a report on all the indicators relating to that particular area to the Commission within two or three business meetings. A simple guide to accessing Performance Eye was circulated to Commission Members.

Consideration was given to how questions could be collated and it was suggested that this could be done through the Chair or the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer or both.

### **Resolved**

- 1. To note the report.**
- 2. To refer any questions to the Chair/OSCER who would then refer them to the Accountable Officer who could update the commentary on Performance Eye**

## **57/04 Budget Consultation Meeting Schedule**

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Finance, which set out the schedule of budget consultation meetings for 2005 including those for Scrutiny Commissions. The proposed arrangements for the meeting were as follows.

January - all Scrutiny Commissions would be invited to a presentation by the Director of Finance covering the government financial settlement and the overall budget proposals submitted by departments. This would also include feedback on the results of the SIMALTO budget consultation exercise.

January/February – Individual Scrutiny Commissions would examine their specific

areas in detail. The relevant Cabinet Members and Chief Officers would attend these meetings. Scrutiny Management Commission would examine their own particular budget area but would take an overview of the Council's budget and the Leader, Chief Executive and Director of Finance would attend these meetings. Minutes from the meetings would be presented to Cabinet prior to making any recommendations on the Budget to Council.

### **Resolved**

- 1. To note the consultation schedule and proposed approach for the meetings.**
- 2. To request that Chief Officers and Cabinet Members present the budget and not just attend the meetings and then answer questions from the Commissions.**

### **58/04 Council Cabinet Forward Plan**

No new items were selected.

### **Matters Referred to the Commission by Council Cabinet**

### **59/04 Freedom of Information Act Policy**

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Corporate Services, which set out the draft Freedom of Information Act policy which had been approved by Council Cabinet at its meeting on 19 October 2004 and referred to this Commission for comment. It was noted that processing of charging and complex requests would be dealt with centrally. This would be done by the Freedom of Information Team. The Commission wished to monitor the number of requests received and the outcome of those requests. Details of an internal appeal process for people unhappy with information received, was set out in the report.

### **Resolved**

- 1. To note the draft Freedom of Information Act policy.**
- 2. To make the following comments to Council Cabinet for consideration before adopting the policy.**

**The Commission wished to receive information relating to requests and outcomes of requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act and whether the information was provided in full or partially so that the Commission could scrutinise the workings of Freedom of Information.**

- 3. The Commission requested that they receive half yearly reports on the implementation of Freedom of Information Act.**

MINUTES END