

**SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION  
1 JULY 2008**

Present: Councillor Graves (Chair)  
Councillors Batey, Bolton, Hird, Hussain, F Khan, Poulter and Webb

Also in attendance: Councillor Carr

**18/08 Apologies for absence**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Repton.

**19/08 Late items introduced by the Chair**

There were no late items.

**20/08 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Webb declared a personal interest in item 5 'Response of the Council Cabinet Member for Direct and Internal Services and the Director of Environmental Services to the petition opposing the animal closure at Allestree Park.

**21/08 Response of the Council Cabinet Member for Direct and Internal Services and the Director of Environmental Services to the petition opposing the animal closure at Allestree Park**

**Resolved**

**That the Commission deferred consideration of this item until its next meeting.**

**22/08 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 4 June 2008 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**23/08 Response to the petition concerning the Medieval Augustinian Abbey at Darley Abbey**

The Commission considered the response of the Council's Cabinet Member for

Children and Young together with the response of the Director of Regeneration and Community to petition concerning the Medieval Augustinian Abbey at Darley Abbey. The lead petitioner also attended the meeting and the Commission heard representations from her.

## **Resolved**

**That the Commission notes the progress made in developing the professional archaeological brief and endorses the establishment of a Project Team to oversee its further development and implementation.**

## 24/08                      Call in

There were no items called in.

## 25/08                      Budget Scrutiny Process

The Director of Resources provided a briefing to members of the Commission on the budget scrutiny process. In summary the Director outlined the timescale for the budget setting process, key stages within the timetable and areas where the Commission could add value.

In light of the information now reported the Commission identified a number of suggestions that could enhance the budget scrutiny process, particularly;

- the identification of key issues and financial pressures by Chief Officers in their respective service areas
- undertaking joint Commission meetings
- taking into account value for money and performance comparisons
- areas of shared services
- the Transforming Derby programme and efficiencies within it

It was recognised that these suggestions should be taken into account as the budget scrutiny process for 2008/09 developed.

## **Resolved**

**That the information now reported be noted.**

## 26/08                      Performance Framework

The Commission considered a report to be presented to the Council Cabinet at its meeting on 8 July 2008 outlining proposals for the new performance framework and reporting timetable. The report indicated that the Local Government and Public Involvement Health Act 2007 introduced a new performance framework on 1 April 2008 which included a set of 198 national indicators for Local Area Agreement Authorities/Partnerships.

This new set of indicators was reflective of the schedule of outcomes through partnership working and would replace existing best value performance indicators with 52 (including 17 mandatory indicators for Children and Young People Services) of them

forming the basis of the new Local Area Agreement. The report set out an updated performance framework reflecting both Council and Partnership reporting cycles at appendix 2 with the main changes proposed outlined in paragraph 2.5.

The report stated that a new performance support group' was proposed to coordinate areas of under performance and minimise the risk of duplication across and within partner organisations. The remit of the group would be to consider under performing indicators and challenge progress against delivery of plans referring actions back to the relevant group. This was subject to agreement by Cabinet, and it was proposed to pilot the reporting process and the new performance group for the first 2 quarters of financial year 2008/9. The report sought nominations to new performance support group from the Commission.

### **Resolved**

- 1. To endorse the new performance framework and reporting timetable 2008/9.**
- 2. To request the Chair of each Commission to attend the first meeting of the Performance Support Group and, thereafter, for each Commission to nominate its representative.**

## **27/08 Derby Direct Performance update**

In response to the request of the Commission made at its meeting of 4 June 2008, the Head of Customer Services reported on the performance update for Derby Direct. The report set out performance in May 2008, the set up arrangements for the service and the process for recording and reporting performance.

The report included a summary of performance for May 2008 relating to the four busiest services covering Waste Management, Benefits, Council Tax, and Main Reception in the Council House. It also set out key projects and further developments which would enhance and improve the services provided.

In light of concerns expressed by the Commission the Head of Customer Services responded on a number of points particularly relating to:

- the time taken to answer telephone calls and how the service standards compare with the previous arrangements
- delays in responses to email enquires
- telephone callers being cut off
- the amount of information provided about personal callers

He also outlined areas where the programme of activities for the service would help support functionality improvements targeting the concerns of the Commission.

### **Resolved**

- 1. That the information now reported be noted and arrangements be made for Commission Members to visit the service at a peak time.**
- 2. That quarterly monitoring reports be provided to the Commission detailing the performance of the service.**

28/08

## Progress Update – Accommodation Strategy

The Commission considered a report presented by the Chief Estates Officer outlining the progress made in relation to the Council's Accommodation strategy. The report set out the work undertaken since March 2007 particularly relating to the findings of the Consultants engaged to look at office accommodation and working practices.

The Consultants study had concluded that significant efficiencies, including savings in accommodation were achievable by introducing new ways of working. To achieve this, transformational change in working practices was required to facilitate improvements to property and information and communications technology. As the project progressed, the Consultants concluded that it was not a property project but a transformational change project and therefore was an integral part of the Council's "Transforming Derby" programme.

The report stated that the Council House was in need of major refurbishment and it was unsuitable as a modern service deliverer. Subject to Cabinet approval, and following a feasibility study, it was proposed to move to the full design stage with construction work due to commence in Spring/Autumn 2009. In view of this officers were finalising the review of alternative accommodation with a view to making a recommendation on a way forward in the near future.

### **Resolved**

**That the progress of the accommodation strategy be noted.**

29/08

## Council Bereavement Services

In response to the request of the Commission made at its meeting of 4 March 2008, the Grounds maintenance Manager and Bereavement Services Manager reported on the provision of the Council's Bereavement Services.

The report set out key issues in relation to fees charged for burials within Council Cemeteries particularly inconsistencies and the impact of this on families choice and their ability to pay. It also set out the current fees and charges, the cost of the providing services and issues relating to vault interments and government proposals for the re-use of old and abandoned graves.

### **Resolved**

- 1. That the Councils Cabinet undertakes wide consultation on any proposals for the Council's Bereavement Services prior to implementation**
- 2. That any proposals take into account the comparative costs and charges of neighbouring and peer authorities.**
- 3. That in the development of proposals for the service consideration be given to recovering the subsidies reported.**

30/08

## Corporate Complaints Procedure

In response to the request of the Commission made at its meeting on 4 June 2008 the Scrutiny and Complaints Manager provided a report outlining the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure. The report indicated that the procedure had been approved by the Council's Chief Officer Group in July 2006 and copies of it were available from the Council's website.

In summary the report provided a definition of complaints, outlined how complaints should be made to the Council and the stages within the complaints process.

### **Resolved**

**That the information now reported be noted.**

31/08

## Work Plan 2008/9

### **Resolved**

**That the Commission deferred consideration of this item until its next meeting.**

32/08

## Council Cabinet Forward Plan

The Commission considered the Council's Cabinet forward plan in its new table format in order to identify items that fall within its remit.

### **Resolved**

**That the new format of the Forward Plan be welcomed and the information now reported be noted.**

33/08

## Performance Eye

The Commission considered relevant Performance Eye indicators and it was noted that no "bottom quarter" indicators had been reported to the Commission.

### **Resolved**

**That the information now reported be noted.**

34/08

## Retrospective Scrutiny

The Commission did not request any items for Retrospective Scrutiny.

35/08                      Matters referred to the Commission by the  
Council Cabinet

There were no matters referred to the Commission by the Council Cabinet.

36/08                      Response of Council Cabinet to the  
Recommendation and Report of the Commission

There were no responses of the Councils Cabinet for consideration.

Chair of the next ensuing meeting  
at which these minutes were signed