**RESOURCES AND GOVERNANCE BOARD
20 AUGUST 2012**

Present   Councillor L Winter (Chair)
              Councillors Carr, Radford, Sandhu, Stanton, Tittley

08/12   Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Ashburner, Davis and Roberts

09/12   Late items introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

10/12   Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

11/12   Minutes of the meeting held on 23 July 2012

The minutes were agreed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of an additional resolution at minute 06/12: "Resolved that copies of previous overview and scrutiny topic reviews of electoral processes would be circulated to members of the board."

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager reported that the information would be circulated as soon as possible.

12/12   Call-in
There were no items.

13/12   Remit and Work Programme 2012/13

Presentations were received from the Director of ICT and the Director of HR and Business Support to provide members with background of those areas within the board's remit.

The Director of ICT provided a service overview including the externally operated services run through Serco and internal services including schools. A number of future challenges were outlined, such as the return to the Council House which would require 2,000 new computers, 60 data circuits and new telephony system and the introduction of thin client hardware. Other challenges included plans for a new corporate intranet by October 2012, an improved schools network service and ICT transformation projects such as a new system

for HR and specifically Payroll and a new system for social care. Following questions from members, it was confirmed that the procurement of the HR/Payroll system was running to schedule.

It was reported that financial pressures were likely to lead to additional challenges. Savings options under consideration were the reduction in service desk hours at non-busy periods, though it was recognised that this would affect some users. The Director for ICT stated that the greatest risk resulting from the financial pressures was that ICT could become a barrier to business change.

The Director of ICT reported that a number of items would be reviewed in the future, including the ICT Strategy and the service delivery model. It was reported that the existing contract with Serco was due to expire in 2016. Other proposals for the future included making better use of cloud services.

Members noted that the number of software applications had been reduced significantly to 250 but asked whether this could be reduced further. It was reported that between 150-250 would be normal for an organisation such as the council. The Director of ICT felt that, while this meant the current figure was on the upper end of normal, it was reasonable given how many applications there had been previously, although work on further reducing this number would continue.

The board also sought clarification on the schools network. It was noted that four schools had already rejected the opportunity to remain in the council-provided network. The Director of ICT confirmed this was because the previous provision was not fit for purpose but that the new network would far better suit the needs of schools. Changes included providing better advice to schools and provision better tailored to different schools' needs.

Members asked how challenging the new social care ICT solution was likely to prove. The Director of ICT confirmed that the existing system was around 15 years old and that replacing it was considered to be a major challenge. It was moved by Councillor Carr, and seconded by Councillor Tittley, that the board should be kept updated on this issue.

The Director of HR and Business Support provided a background to the service and an overview of the split between HR and Business Support. It was explained that the HR management team was broadly new from January 2012 following exits of previous postholders, and that the Business Support structure had been implemented in April 2011.

A number of challenges were detailed. These included the delivery of 51 transformation projects key to the return of the Council House, including the Electronic Document Retrieval Management System (EDRMS) and the upskilling of the Business Support workforce to provide for more flexibility.

Objectives cited included the development of a revised pay and reward strategy to ensure future compliance on matters such as equal pay. It was reported that the existing agreements protecting the council against equal pay

claims were due to expire in 2014. Other objectives included developing a new HR information system and further developing the council's high rating in terms of equalities.

A document detailing the council's Organisational Development Strategy for 2012-14 was circulated. Clarification was sought on a review of facilities and time off arrangements for staff involved in officer roles with the recognised trade unions. It was reported that this matter would be reviewed later in 2012.

It was asked whether there was sufficient resources in HR and Business Support to deliver its objectives effectively. The Director of HR and Business Support confirmed that in the current climate this looked to be an extremely challenging feat, although future changes arising from the planned transformational changes would ease the burden.

Resolved that the board should receive future updates on progress relating to:
1) **The implementation of a new social care ICT system**
2) **The HR Transformation Programme.**

14/12   Petitions Scheme

A report of the Strategic Director of Resources was presented by the Head of Democratic Services. The report detailed how the Leader of the Council had requested that a new scheme be introduced to make petitions easier to use by the public. The new proposed scheme included changes including:
- The introduction of a process where petitions can be formally accepted at the start of Council Cabinet meetings
- The reduction in the number of signatures required to trigger a Council debate, from 8,500 to 4,000.
- The relaxation of e-petition requirements, making it easier for such petitions to be posted an considered
- The publication of a new Petitions Scheme and a petition template to assist the public.

Members felt that the e-petition requirements needed to be amended to ensure e-petition portals required validation of identity through email.

Resolved to commend the report to Council Cabinet and Council subject to an amendment requiring that e-petition portals used by petitioners must require electronic validation of signatory.

15/12   Review of the Electoral Cycle

A report of the Strategic Director of Resources was presented by the Overview and Scrutiny Manager. The report set out a proposed list of witnesses and timetable for the previously agreed review of the electoral cycle.

The board gave consideration to forming a sub-group to hear the evidence of

witnesses. However, the board felt that it would be more appropriate for all members to be invited to evidence gathering sessions so they could attend whenever possible. It was proposed by the Overview and Scrutiny Manager, and agreed by members, that where possible and reasonable more than one witnesses would be invited to evidence gathering sessions.

Members considered the list of proposed witnesses. It was agreed that the Derby Renaissance Board should be added to the list of potential witnesses when considering the impact of the electoral cycle on the well-being of the city, and that election agents should be added to the list of potential witnesses when considering the impact on political parties and candidates.

Resolved to agree:
- **the proposed timetable and potential witnesses as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes**
- **that the Overview and Scrutiny Manager would circulate dates to members in due course.**
- **that the issue of electoral turnout would be considered as part of the review.**

16/12   Forward Plan

A copy of the August Forward Plan was included on the agenda for consideration by the board. The Overview and Scrutiny Manager explained that the September Forward Plan had been published following the publication of the agenda. Copies of the element of the September Forward Plan pertinent to the board's terms of reference were circulated in order for members to consider items for pre-scrutiny.

It was noted that the Item 18/12 'Adoption of a Local Council Tax Scheme' would already come before the board following the decision at minute 05/12 of the meeting on 23 July 2012 to include 'Benefits and Exchequer Services with particular regard to the likely impact of the Welfare Reform Act' as a topic review priority for the board for 2012/13. It was further noted that the Council Cabinet minutes relating to items 28/12 and 30/12 'Changes to the Capital Programme 2012/13' were likely to come before Council at a future date due to their content so members would have an opportunity to comment at that stage.

It was proposed by Councillor Carr, and seconded by Councillor Tittley, that items 27/12 and 29/12, both relating to financial monitoring results and progress of savings delivery, should be presented to the board. It was proposed by the Chair, and seconded by Councillor Tittley, that item 34/12 'Adoption of a new Local Assistance Scheme for Derby' should be presented to the board.

Resolved to consider the following items from the September Forward Plan at future meetings of the board:
- **18/12 - Adoption of a Local Council Tax Support Scheme**
- **27/12 - Financial Monitoring Results and Progress on Savings Delivery for Quarter 2, 2012/13**

- **29/12 - Financial Monitoring Results and Progress on Savings Delivery for Quarter 3, 2012/13**
- **34/12 - Adoption of a new Local Assistance Scheme for Derby.**

MINUTES END

Agreed timetable and witnesses for Review of the Electoral Cycle

Issue	Witness	When
Cost comparison between election-by-thirds and four-yearly elections	Electoral Team	Wk beginning 3 Sept
Comparing the impact on administration of elections	Electoral Team	Wk beginning 3 Sept
Comparing the impact on voter participation between the two elections cycles	Returning Officer/Deputy Returning Officer	Wk beginning 3 Sept
Impact on political parties and candidates	Returning Officer/Deputy Returning Officer Group Leaders Election agents	Wk beginning 3 Sept
Comparing impact on long-term policy decisions of the council	Chief Executive / Strategic Directors Current and former leaders of Council	Wk beginning 17 September
Comparing the impact on the well- being of the city between election by thirds and four yearly elections	Chief Executive/ Strategic Directors Chamber of Commerce Marketing Derby Derby Renaissance Board	Wk beginning 17 September
Consider experience/ approach of authorities that have considered making changes	Bristol CC Newcastle Sefton MDC Purbeck DB	October
Experience of regional councils	Nottingham CC Leicester CC	October
Consider evidence and agree draft set of recommendations		November
Scrutiny Board to agree final report		7 January
Report presented to Council		30 January