

## **REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC MONITORING COMMITTEE**

### **Meetings Held on 13 June and 16 July 2008**

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**Membership:**

Councillors: PJ Edwards (Chairman), PA Andrews, WU Attfield, WLS Bowen, KG Grumbley, T.M. James, RI Matthews, PM Morgan, AT Oliver, SJ Robertson, and K Swinburne.

#### **REVIEW OF THE SERVICE DELIVERY PARTNERSHIP WITH AMEY WYE VALLEY LIMITED**

1. The Committee has considered the draft recommendations from the Service Delivery Review of the Council's Service Delivery Partnership with Amey Ltd.
2. The Committee was informed that a review had commenced in November 2007 to examine ways of improving the Council's Service Delivery Partnership arrangements with Amey (incorporating Amey Wye Valley and Amey Consulting (formerly Owen Williams)). The review was carried out jointly with Amey with the overall aim: to review the Council's approach to delivering services through the existing Service Delivery Partnership and identify opportunities to enable the Council to deliver a better service for less cost.
3. Two key objectives were set for the review:
  - To review alternative forms of delivery with a view to securing annual savings to the Council of a minimum of £1 million; and
  - To improve current quality and level of service.
4. The Committee has noted how the review has been conducted and how 18 possible delivery options have been reduced to 3: the improved business as usual model; the managing agent model, which would give greater responsibility for planning to Amey; and the integrated services model, with services delivered by an integrated organisation staffed by employees of both Amey and Herefordshire Council and managed by a single manager reporting to both organisations.
5. It was informed that it had been concluded that the improved business as usual model would not achieve the degree of improvement or level of savings required. The other two models offered a potential basis for negotiation. It noted that the aim was to develop a model tailored to meeting the needs of Herefordshire.
6. The Committee welcomed the depth and breadth of this preliminary stage of the review and the involvement of the Committee in its consideration. It has recommended that all Members be invited to comment on the review and that the Committee itself should be provided with a further opportunity to comment on the review prior to recommendations being considered by Cabinet.
7. In the meantime, the Committee, recognising that good working relationships between the Council and Amey and unity of culture are key to success has recommended that where bad practice is identified this should be remedied on an ongoing basis and not await the outcome of the review.

## **OFFICE ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY**

8. Council was informed in May that the Committee had received a briefing paper on the office accommodation strategy options and formed a Working Group to consider this in detail.
9. The Committee has now received a report from the Group and endorsed its principal findings on the proposed process and timetable for developing an integrated office accommodation strategy for the Primary Care Trust and the Council.
10. The Group commented in particular on the proposed timescale for the project; the need for the project to be resourced with a full-time project team; the acknowledged need for further detailed work to be undertaken; and proposed sites for a back office.
11. The Committee expects to receive a further report by November this year.

## **FINAL REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2007/08**

12. The Committee has noted the final outturn for 2007/08, the use of the carry forward of the unspent budget into 2008/09, there being a net underspend of £591,000, and the creation of some new reserves.

## **PROCUREMENT STRATEGY**

13. The Committee has noted the contribution the Procurement Strategy can make to meeting the Government's efficiency targets and how efficiency savings form part of the Audit Commission's Use of Resources Assessment and consequently the overall rating of the Council's performance.
14. The Strategy welcomes the use of local suppliers but the Committee has expressed the hope that this use could be further encouraged. It has also highlighted the need for the Strategy to explicitly reflect the Council's policy commitment to supporting Fairtrade.

## **BACKWARD LOOKING ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT 2007/08**

15. The Committee has noted the Statement mindful of the attention paid to efficiency savings in external assessments of the Council's performance and noting that the Council exceeded its savings target for 2007/08.

## **SCRUTINY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2008/09**

16. The Committee has approved a Scrutiny Development Plan for 2008/09. The Plan is based around the four principles of good scrutiny as defined by the Centre for Public Scrutiny. The Plan reflects areas where it is recommended to continue to develop and improve on arrangements already in place, some areas which it was thought worth revisiting to see if development could take place and several new areas.

## **PRESENTATIONS BY CABINET MEMBER (RESOURCES)**

17. In accordance with the performance management framework the Committee has received presentations from the Cabinet Member (Resources) Cabinet Member (Corporate & Customer Services & Human Resources), Cabinet Member (ICT, Education and Achievement) and discussed a number of issues with them to which further consideration will be given in setting future work programmes.

## **HEREFORDSHIRE CONNECTS**

18. The Committee has considered the outcome of an options appraisal carried out to inform future implementation of the Herefordshire Connects programme.
19. It was informed that the Joint Management Team, with strategic partner Deloitte, had undertaken an options appraisal to:
  - ensure the vision for Herefordshire Connects is fit for purpose both now and for the future
  - update the business case to take account of current and future needs and identify those benefits already achieved
  - ensure that governance arrangements are robust and appropriate.
20. The Committee has noted the conclusion that the original vision is still valid with a recommendation in the appraisal that the programme is re-shaped and prioritised to reflect increased joint working with the Primary Care Trust and the increased risk of key ICT system failure.
21. The Committee has agreed that there is clearly a need to address the growing risk of systems failures highlighted in the Deloitte report promptly. It has also suggested that the wording of the proposed new vision for Herefordshire Connects should be revisited. Cabinet, which is due to consider the matter on 31 July, will also be advised of the Committee's continuing desire for reassurance that the Connects project will deliver what is now promised, noting that promises in the earlier life of the project did not come to fruition, and its wish that Cabinet ensures measures are put in place to enable effective monitoring of the delivery of the project.

## **END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT**

22. The Committee has considered the end of year performance report covering the whole of the operating year 2007-08 against the Annual Operating Plan 2007-08, Best Value Performance Indicators, and the Direction of Travel indicators used previously by the Audit Commission.
23. The Committee has noted that the main risk identified is that the key points to emerge from the report will not be addressed, that further improvement will not therefore be achieved (particularly as regards the Council's new Corporate Plan priorities), and that this would be reflected in adverse judgements under the Comprehensive Area Assessment in 2009. The Committee agreed that Directors should prioritise and address the issues within their respective areas, including through the updating of service improvement plans.

## **COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT**

24. The Committee has noted progress against the proposed action plan to ensure that the Council, with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) and its other partners is well-placed for the new system of Comprehensive Area Assessment. It has noted that a number of areas are considered to be Amber (where it is not yet possible to determine if the success criteria will be achieved) and agreed the need for effective remedial action.

## **ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE INDIVIDUAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

25. The work of the Committees is analysed below in accordance with the following two roles for scrutiny based on a University of Birmingham categorisation. Each Committee has also considered and rolled forward its work programme.

<b>Holding the Executive to Account</b>	<b>Developing Policy</b>
Questioning members of the Executive	Pre-Decision Scrutiny – commenting on decisions about to be made
Call-ins – Scrutinising decisions before they take effect	Policy Reviews and Development
Scrutinising decisions after they are made	External Scrutiny
Management of Performance	Health Scrutiny
Ensuring Corporate Priorities are Met	
Budget Scrutiny	
Community and Area Scrutiny	

	<b>Holding the Executive to Account</b>	<b>Developing Policy</b>
<p><b>Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing</b></p> <p>24 July 2008</p>	<p>Presentation by Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing)</p> <p>Revenue Budget Outturn 2007/08 and the Budget 2008/09</p> <p>Adult Social Services Performance Monitoring</p> <p>Strategic Housing Performance Monitoring</p> <p>Strategic Housing Service Plan</p> <p>Contract Monitoring Arrangements with Shaw Healthcare</p>	<p>Strategic Review of Provider Services</p> <p>Scrutiny Review of the modernisation of day opportunities for older people</p> <p>Scrutiny Review of Transition from leaving Care to Adult Life</p> <p>Scoping Statement for a Review of Support to Carers.</p>
<p><b>Children’s Services</b></p> <p>7 July 2008</p>	<p>Presentation by Cabinet Member.</p> <p>Review of Directorate and Service Plan / Performance Monitoring.</p> <p>Youth Service Update: Targeted Youth Support and Positive Activities.</p> <p>Capital Budget Outturn Report 2007/08.</p>	<p>Review of Behaviour and Discipline Management in Herefordshire Schools.</p>

	Revenue Final Outturn Report 2007/08. Racist Bullying "MeWe" Video.	
<b>Community Services</b> 17 July 2008	Presentation by Cabinet Member Directorate and Service Plans Revenue Budget outturn and the Budget 2008/09 Environment and Cultural Services performance Indicators Scrutiny Review Action Plans Monitoring Broadband Provision	Scrutiny Review of the Findings of the Scrutiny Review of the Agreement with Halo Leisure Trust Scoping Statement for Scrutiny Review of the Community And Safety Drugs Partnership. Scoping Statement for Scrutiny Review of Herefordshire's Future Economic Policy
<b>Environment</b> 9 June 2008	Cabinet Member Presentations Reports by Directors Review of the Service Delivery Partnership Capital Budget Monitoring. Revenue Budget Monitoring Performance Monitoring.	Scrutiny Review of Planning Services.
<b>Health</b> 18 June 2008	Public Health Issues – Stroke Services Public Health Issues – Sexual Health Intermediate Care Services	West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust – Response Times GP-Lead Walk-in Health Centre Development Cancer Services Changes in the Management of Mental Health Services Audiology Services
<b>Strategic Committee</b> 13 June 2008 16 July 2008	<b>Monitoring</b> Backward Looking Annual Efficiency Statement 2007/08 Final Revenue and Capital outturn 2007/08 Cabinet Member Presentations End of year Performance Report Comprehensive Area Assessment Preparation	Review of the Service Delivery plan with Amey Wye Valley Ltd Scrutiny Development Plan Procurement Strategy Office Accommodation Strategy Herefordshire Connects

	Programme Progress Report Update on Review of Consultant Expenditure 2007/08	
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**Issues of particular note:**

- **Children's Services**

While discussing the Committee work programme the Chairman proposed that the Committee consider appointing each of the Councillors on the Committee as either a Champion or Vice-Champion for one of each of the five outcome areas of the Every Child Matters agenda (Be Healthy; Stay Safe; Enjoy and Achieve; Make a Positive Contribution and Achieve Economic Well-being.) Champions and Vice-Champions would be encouraged to take a more proactive role by shadowing and observing appropriate meetings to enable them to hear first hand some of the issues that have to be addressed. The involvement of the Champions would be governed by terms of reference.

The Committee agreed the proposal and recommended that Strategic Monitoring Committee consider the proposal when it considers a report on the future structure of scrutiny arrangements. The Strategic Monitoring Committee has agreed to consider this matter.

- **Environment**

On scrutinising the Capital Budget outturn the Committee expressed regret concerning the continual underspend on sustainable transport budgets, particularly cycling initiatives, as opposed to overspends on car management and road building. The Committee have requested that all officers delivering the Local Transport Plan should make every effort to ensure that budgets for sustainable modes of transport will be fully committed in 2008/09.

The Committee considered and agreed the terms of reference for a Scrutiny Review of Planning Services and agreed the membership of the Review Group.

- **Health**

**GP Led Walk-in health Centre Development**

As part of the NHS Next Stage Review being led by Lord Darzi, each Primary Care Trust in England is tasked with developing a GP-led health centre which will be open from 8am until 8pm, seven days a week, which can provide booked appointments and walk-in services to registered and non-registered patients.

There has been mounting concern locally, regionally and nationally about the affordability of these centres, and about their suitability for rural areas. Against this backdrop the Committee has considered the Primary Care Trust's proposal for a bespoke Herefordshire model. This envisages the walk in centre providing essential general services without undermining the County's good base of primary care.

The Committee has welcomed the proposed Herefordshire Model for extended access to GP Services in Hereford City recognising that it is demonstrably based on local need. The combining of the out of hours contract with the new extended access service should ensure a cost-effective and enhanced GP service 24 hours a day seven days a week for the County's residents and visitors. It has agreed that the public consultation particularly with patient groups has ensured an appropriate level of engagement in the process.

In taking the proposal forward the Committee has urged continued engagement with GPs throughout the County to ensure their co-operation. It has also recommended that the PCT instigate a communication programme to ensure the public know how and when to access the appropriate medical care.

### **Proposed Expansion of Radio Therapy Services**

Council was informed in May that the Committee had considered the Three Counties Cancer Network's (Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire) (3CCN) proposed expansion of radiotherapy services. The Committee endorsed the Hereford County Hospital option for extra radiotherapy services provided on a satellite basis and asked the Three Counties Cancer Network to consult on this preferred option. It has strongly endorsed the National Cancer Strategy recommendation that no patient should have to travel more than 45 minutes for cancer treatment and therefore supported development of a treatment facility at Worcester as the next subsequent phase of development after that recommended at Hereford.

An update was provided to the Committee in June with the 3CCN having circulated a pre-consultation paper inviting comment on the proposed decision making and consultation processes.

It was noted that the enhanced provision had been under consideration since 2005 and implementation was now planned to take place in two years time. Members expressed unhappiness at the delay in reaching a decision noting in particular the weight of public expectation that the provision of enhanced services in Herefordshire was thought to be imminent.

The Committee has reiterated its endorsement of the Hereford County Hospital option for extra radiotherapy services. It has also urged that the pre-consultation process, generally, remains acutely aware of the long and painful journey necessitated by most Herefordshire residents who have to travel to Cheltenham for treatment, and that there are some who have refused treatment because they could not face travelling so far.

### **Future Work Pressures**

The Committee has discussed the range of health issues the Committee will need to consider in the coming months. It agreed that it was highly likely that both additional formal and informal meetings will be required. The Committee has agreed that provision should therefore be made for their next two scheduled meetings to be extended into the afternoon to ensure that they can give proper consideration to issues before them and to make more efficient use of the time of visiting presenters.

The Committee has also formally requested that an additional two meetings for the Health Scrutiny Committee be scheduled when the 2009/10 Council diary is prepared and that the Strategic Monitoring Committee give consideration to requesting that the same provision be made for the other Scrutiny Committees. The Strategic Monitoring Committee has agreed to consider this matter.

**PJ EDWARDS**  
**CHAIRMAN**  
**STRATEGIC MONITORING COMMITTEE**

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Agenda Papers of the Meetings of the Strategic Monitoring Committee held on 13 June and 16 July 2008