

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was held on 3 July 2007.

PRESENT: Councillor Carr (Chair), Councillors Bishop, Biswas, Cole, Cox, Ismail, Mawston, Rooney, Sanderson, Ward and Williams.

OFFICIALS: B Baldam, J Bennington, P Clark, A Crawford, P Slocombe, K Stokes and E Williamson.

PRESENT BY INVITATION: Councillor N J Walker (Executive Member for Resources).

****APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were submitted on behalf of Councillors Dryden and G Rogers.

**** DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made at this point of the meeting.

**** MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 5 June 2007 were submitted and approved.

EXECUTIVE FEEDBACK – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As part of the scrutiny process and in a report of the Executive Manager it was reported that the Executive had considered the Board's comments on the final report in relation to the Respect Agenda.

The Executive had considered and supported both the Service and Corporate Management Team responses and had also agreed the proposed Action Plans.

NOTED

REVENUE OUTTURN 2006/2007

The Director of Resources submitted a report, which outlined the final outturn position for expenditure against the 2006/2007 Revenue Budget.

A detailed breakdown was given of each Service areas' outturn position together with a summary of the position relating to corporate costs and central provisions.

The overall service outturn variances from budget were summarised as follows: -

	£'000s
Children, Families and Learning	-100
Social Care	0
Environment	-617
Regeneration	-119
Corporate Services	-724
Central Costs, Provisions and Reserves	+1,308
	-306

Although a number of budget pressures within certain Service areas were highlighted it was noted that each Service Department had remained within budget.

The Board sought clarification on a number of areas including:-

- a) although improvements had been made to the overall situation in respect of the vulnerable children budget reference was made to important ongoing work to address the remaining budget pressure areas;

- b) an indication was given that there may now be no claw back in relation to the significant underspend in respect of the Sure Start Grant;
- c) in order to address current problems associated with the lack of foster carers reference was made to significant ongoing work which included an examination of the range of placements available;
- d) it was confirmed that there were robust systems of stepped levels of internal control in place for all grants depending on the size and different funding regimes of schemes.

In response to a number of queries the Director of Resources confirmed that further information would be provided in respect of the following:-

- i) percentage of children in care and number of external and residential placements;
- ii) Council's Fostering Allowance Scheme;
- iii) distinction between the Early Years and Childcare Management and Management Support sections within the Family Services area of CFL;
- iv) Members' Allowance Budgets.

NOTED

CONSOLIDATED PERFORMANCE CLINIC REPORT YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2007

A report of the Principal Corporate Development Officer was submitted which outlined the Council's performance for the year ending 31 March 2006 in relation to:

- Key Planned Actions given in the 2006/07 Strategic Plan;
- Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs)
- BVPI targets set for 2007/08.

Details of performance were provided as follows: -

Appendix A: against each Planned Action;
 Appendix B: BVPIs that met the target set;
 Appendix C: BVPIs that did not meet the target set;
 Appendix D: BVPIs set for the next three years.

The main findings were reported that the Council had performed well in delivering its key planned actions and improving performance in the suite of BVPI's in particular:

- 91% of key planned actions were achieved (149 out of 163) which included six within a longer timescale;
- 53.1% of BVPIs met or exceeded the target set;
- 69% of BVPIs improved or remained the same (2006/07 performance compared to 2005/06 performance);
- it was the fourth consecutive year in which performance in approximately two-thirds of BVPIs had improved or remained the same.

The Key Planned Actions that were not achieved or were not achieved within timescale mainly related to Key Planned Actions where over-ambitious targets had originally been set.

In terms of the 2006/07 suite of BVPIs, 77 (53.1%) had met the target set and 68 (46.9%) did not meet the target set. It was noted however that some of the targets set had been extremely challenging, in particular, educational attainment and diversity related targets.

Members sought clarification on a number of areas specifically those cases where the Key Planned Actions and the BVPI targets had not been achieved. It was suggested that a summary of such areas could be provided.

Although a number of targets had not been met in respect of Children, Families and Learning the Board was advised that in overall terms the figures had shown improvement. It was reported that in a number of cases there had been a low baseline and targets imposed.

ORDERED as follows: -

1. That the information provided be noted.
2. That further information be provided on a summary of Key Planned Actions and BVPI targets which had not been achieved.

SCRUTINY REVIEWS - CONSIDERATION OF REQUESTS

It was confirmed that no requests for scrutiny reviews had been received from the Executive, Executive Members, Non Executive Members and members of the public since the last meeting of the Board.

NOTED

SCRUTINY PANEL'S WORK PROGRAMMES 2007/2008

The Senior Scrutiny Officer submitted a report, which outlined the various stages in particular a number of scrutiny events, which had contributed to the development of the formulation of the work programmes of the Scrutiny Panels for 2007/08.

The Chair presented the suggested Scrutiny Work Programme 2007-2008 which was circulated at the meeting as follows:-

Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel:

- extended schools programme;
- Sure Start & early years improvement;
- school attendance;
- substance misuse by parents/carers;
- regular BSF updates.

Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panel:

- 'teenagers hanging around';
- speed cameras;
- parks and open spaces – green spaces strategy action plan.

Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel;

- Erimus – progress on offer document;
- public transport – particularly bus services;
- town centre parking – including residents' parking update and clamping ;
- park and ride;
- Teesside Archives.

Environment Scrutiny Panel:

- waste collection policies;
- enforcement strategies;
- tree management.

Health Scrutiny Panel:

- Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS);
- Out Of Hours GP services;
- dental services;
- non-emergency patient transport;
- integration of health and social care systems.

Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel:

- street wardens;
- mental health services;
- telecare;
- transition from child to adult services;
- integration of health and social care systems.

The following topics were suggested for possible investigation to be undertaken on an ad hoc basis:-

- diversity policies;
- asylum seekers services;
- democracy – electoral turnout.

In addition it was hoped that most Panels would be able to undertake some joint work on the Respect Agenda.

ORDERED that the Scrutiny Work Programme 2007/2008 as outlined be approved.

CALL IN REQUESTS

It was confirmed that no requests had been received to call-in a decision.