

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

24th July, 2006

Present:

Councillor Peter Jackson (Performance Management Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
 Tony Brown, Chief Solicitor
 Graham Frankland, Head of Procurement and Property Services
 Joanne Machers, Chief Personnel Services Officer
 Pat Watson, Democratic Services Officer

21. Formal Response to ‘Parish Council Election Recharges’ Scrutiny Referral *(Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee)*

Type of Decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To report the unanimous decision of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee in relation to the recent scrutiny topic referral by the Performance Management Portfolio Holder on 26th June 2006 to the Overview and Scrutiny Function.

Issues for consideration by the Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder was reminded that at his Portfolio meeting held on 26th June 2006 consideration had been given to a report of the Chief Solicitor in relation to whether the costs of the Headland Parish by-elections should be recovered from the Parish Council. At the meeting the Portfolio Holder had requested that Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee be asked to examine certain aspects touching upon a decision.

In line with Council procedures the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee had considered the referral at its meeting on 30th June 2006. Members acknowledged that the Committee had a mandatory obligation to consider referrals from individual Cabinet members but had ultimately reached the decision not to undertake the referral as they felt there was sufficient information available within the existing report to make an informed decision and the advice of the Chief Solicitor was in line with the Council's policy.

Any decision made to not recover Parish Council Election Expenses would be contrary to Council policy.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder acknowledged and endorsed the decision reached unanimously by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee to not undertake the Scrutiny Referral.

22. Parish Council Election Recharges (*Chief Solicitor*)

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To invite the Portfolio Holder to consider the request by Headland Parish Council that the borough council should not recover the cost of parish council elections from the parish council.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Chief Solicitor explained that legislation enabled costs incurred by the district council in respect of parish council elections to be recovered from the parish council. The Headland Parish Council had been invoiced for the cost of by-elections, with further costs yet to be invoiced. The parish council had requested that the costs should not be recovered from the parish council.

At the previous Performance Management Portfolio meeting the Portfolio Holder had decided to refer the matter to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee with a view to examination of a number of factors touching upon the decision. Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee had concluded that they did not consider any scrutiny necessary and that the information presented earlier was sufficient to enable a decision to be made.

Decision

That, bearing in mind the conclusions of Scrutiny Coordinating Committee detailed above and in accordance with current Council policy, the request of the Headland Parish Council be declined and the Chief Solicitor be requested to pursue payment of the relevant invoices.

23. Employee Attendance 2005/6 – Annual Report (*Chief Personnel Services Officer*)

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To update the Portfolio Holder on the Council's performance in 2005/6 in relation to employee absence and future targets and to receive endorsement of the actions proposed to achieve the targets.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report to the Portfolio Holder contained detailed information relating to employee absence in 2005/06. A table was provided indicating the classification of sickness absence into short, medium and long term. During 2005/06 a number of actions had been taken which would hopefully contribute to a continued improvement in sickness levels and these were listed in the report. Future years' indicators and targets and actions planned to achieve the targets set were also outlined.

Further details of performance, including analysis by department and cause of sickness were included in Appendix A to the report.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder noted the actions to date, thanked the team for their work in helping to improve sickness levels and hoped that the planned actions would lead to improvement, and that the best practices of Councils that are successfully bringing down sickness levels are still to be sought, as requested at the last Portfolio meeting.

24. Policy on Violence and Aggression to Employees (Chief Personnel Services Officer)

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To obtain the Portfolio Holder's endorsement of a corporate policy on the management of the risks of violence and aggression to employees.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

Details were given of the draft policy on violence and aggression to employees and the other measures that would be put into place to manage the risk of violence and aggression to employees. The draft policy was appended to the report for the Portfolio Holder's attention.

A copy of the Policy Statement and Procedures on Violence and Aggression to Employees was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder noted and endorsed the draft policy and indicated that any aggression towards employees or people visiting Council buildings would not be tolerated. He thanked the team involved and the Trade Unions for their collaboration in formulating the document.

25. Local Authority Collaboration Update *(Head of Procurement and Property Services)*

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To provide an update on Local Authority Collaboration in Procurement and to seek the Portfolio Holder's endorsement of procedures to be followed if Collaborations results in more than one contract opportunity.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report highlighted the significance of Collaboration in Procurement and the Council's progress to date. Detailed information was given on the potential for collaboration to result in more than one contract opportunity and guidance was sought on the procedures to be followed.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder:

- (a) noted the report and endorsed the collaboration exercises outlined;
- (b) approved the procedure that brings best value to the Council to be followed when collaboration provides more than one contract opportunity;
- (c) requested that officers look at the options that will save the Council the most money, whilst also bearing in mind risk and convenience factors.

26. Vehicle Asset Management Strategy *(Head of Procurement and Property Services)*

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To obtain Portfolio Holder approval to the Council's Vehicle Asset Management Strategy.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report outlined the Council's processes in vehicle acquisition, maintenance and disposal. The proposed strategy was appended to the report for the Portfolio Holder's attention.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder approved the Council's Vehicle Asset Management Strategy.

27. Plant, Tool and Equipment Asset Management Strategy *(Head of Procurement and Property Services)*

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To obtain Portfolio Holder approval to the Council's Plant, Tool and Equipment Asset Management Strategy.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report outlined the Council's processes in Plant, Tool and Equipment Asset Management Strategy. The proposed strategy was appended to the report for the Portfolio Holder's attention.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder approved the Council's Plant, Tool and Equipment Asset Management Strategy.

28. Children's Centres on Non-Council Land *(Head of Procurement and Property Services)*

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To obtain Portfolio Holder approval to complete the land use and ownership arrangements in respect of Children's Centres attached to Diocesan schools to be built.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report gave detailed information on the background to the Children's Centre initiative, an outline of the schemes and the funding involved. The financial implications were also outlined.

Decision

That the Head of Procurement and Property Services be authorised to complete negotiations with the Diocesan representatives to regularise the Council's use and ownership and liability for these premises.

29. Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan 2006/07
(*Head of Procurement and Property Services*)

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To agree the Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan for 2006/2007.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Departmental Plan set out the department's aims and objectives and detailed the actions to be taken over the coming 12 months toward achieving these. The plan also included performance indicators associated with these actions, together with a range of key national and local indicators. A copy of the plan was appended for the Portfolio Holder's attention.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder approved the Neighbourhood Services Departmental Plan 2006/07.

30. Complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman in 2005/06
(*Assistant Chief Executive*)

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To report on the annual letter from the Local Government Ombudsman.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report gave details of the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Letter reviewing complaints received about Hartlepool Borough Council in 2005/06.

The details of complaints handled in 2005/06, with comparative figures for the previous two years were appended as a table to the report, together with a copy of the Ombudsman's Annual Letter.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder noted the report and appendices.

31. Communicating with your Council – Progress Report
(Chief Personnel Officer and Assistant Chief Executive)

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To report on the progress and impact of the Communication with your Council suite of strategies during 2005/2006.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report detailed progress made in respect of the Communication with your Council suite of strategies during 2005/06. The 2005/06 action plan, including progress made by March 2006, was appended to the report for the Portfolio Holder's attention.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder:

- (a) noted the report and appendix;
- (b) requested that arrangements be made for him to meet the Customer Services departmental champions.

32. Postal Arrangements *(Chief Personnel Services Officer)*

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To advise the Portfolio Holder on the processes relating to postal arrangements.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report detailed the existing arrangements for receipt and issue of post for departments of the Council and Elected Members. Included were details of the number of items received and sent each day together with information about the Royal Mail's changes to their pricing structure due to be implemented in August 2006. The processes related to postal services had been identified as part of the Electronic Document and Records Management Systems project and Contact Centre development. Information on the work that had commenced in re-engineering the business processes was also included as were the financial considerations.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder noted the report and agreed to receive a progress report in three months.

33. Local Government Access to Information

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Minute 34 – Partnering Arrangements for Corporate Planned Maintenance and Minor Works (Para 3) - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) – *Head of Procurement and Property Services*

34. Partnering Arrangements for Corporate Planned Maintenance and Minor Works (*Head of Procurement and Property Services*)

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To confirm Portfolio Holder approval to urgent action to address the issue of a partner going into administration.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report highlighted urgent problems and proposed courses of action in connection with one of the private sector partners going into administration.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder:

- (a) formally approved the urgent actions, detailed in the report, taken to address works allocated to a partner who had gone into administration;
- (b) agreed to receive a further report on the need for future action.

J A BROWN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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