

CORPORATE PLAN WORKING GROUP

NOTES OF MEETING HELD 24TH FEBRUARY 2010

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Corporate Plan Working Group met on 24th February 2010 when Councillors J D Ablewhite, S J Criswell, P M D Godfrey, D Harty, G S E Thorpe and R J West were present.
- 1.2 Mrs C Garbett, I Leatherbarrow, A Roberts, H Thackray and Mrs J Walker were in attendance.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Working Group has been reminded that the Council has adopted 37 corporate objectives, eight of which are considered to be a priority for the immediate future. The eight priority objectives have been split between the Overview and Scrutiny Panels (Social Well-Being, Environmental Well-Being and Economic Well-Being) accordingly.

3. WORKING GROUP COMMENTS

Social Well-Being

- 3.1 The Working Group has drawn attention to the number of admissions/participants in activities provided or promoted by the Council, which remains 4% below target. It has been noted that the closure of the two pools over the summer period and the inclement weather in December have been contributory factors to the shortfall, and it has been suggested that the current economic climate would also have had an effect. Members have noted that Huntingdon Leisure Centre has experienced an increase in visitor numbers.
- 3.2 Members have questioned how the data capture of all users from January 2010 will ensure the target number of active card holders is reached. In response, the Working Group has been advised that following the launch of 'One Leisure' in January 2010, a 'One Card' is being promoted which is free of charge and offers the cardholder benefits such as savings on activities, discounts and promotions. It is hoped that this initiative will result in an increase in the number of active cardholders.
- 3.3 Members have noted the increase in the number of households living in temporary accommodation, which stood at 65 at the end of the quarter. A maximum of 45 households will need to be achieved by the end of March 2010 to achieve the temporary accommodation reduction target. The Panel has asked whether those households living in temporary accommodation are automatically placed on the housing waiting list.

Environmental Well-Being

- 3.4 Having noted that the number of tonnes of CO2 saved through the installation of energy efficiency measures and renewables in domestic properties is slightly below the target, the Working Group has questioned how the CO2 saving is calculated. Members also have questioned whether the recent boiler replacement scheme is reflected in these figures. It is suggested that these issues should be pursued further by the Overview and Scrutiny (Environmental Well-Being) Panel.

Economic Well-Being

- 3.5 Attention has been drawn to the percentage of thematic groups who have reviewed their performance and delivery, which is below the target. The Working Group has been advised that the action plan for the Growth and Infrastructure Thematic Group needs to be redeveloped to ensure it is smarter, and can be integrated with partner activities and the Local Investment Framework.
- 3.6 Performance for the key measure for the Leisure Centres relating to the 'actual income received compared to budget' is five percent lower than the quarterly target. Members have discussed the schools' use of the pools and questioned the extent to which this has affected leisure centre income. The Working Group has suggested that this matter should be investigated further by the Overview and Scrutiny (Economic Well-Being) Panel.

4. REVIEW OF GROWING SUCCESS TARGETS

- 4.1 The Policy and Strategic Services Manager has addressed the Working Group on the review of Growing Success non-priority targets. The review has been undertaken in conjunction with Heads of Service and has concentrated on the targets, objectives and measures to determine whether they remain appropriate for the period to the end of 2010-11.
- 4.2 Members have been acquainted with the changes that have been suggested to date. The Policy and Strategic Services Manager has requested any further comments within two weeks of the date of the meeting.

5. MAKING CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNT

- 5.1 The Director of Central Services has provided the Working Group with an update on the Council's involvement in Making Cambridgeshire Count and the progress of shared services. Members have been reminded that Making Cambridgeshire Count is an initiative that intends to examine the local area's public services to ensure the needs of local residents are being met. It is hoped that this will prevent duplication of service provision and, therefore, reduce costs. 13 pilot schemes are ongoing nationally, though Making Cambridgeshire Count is a voluntary scheme which has been funded by a grant of £350k from Invest East.
- 5.2 It has been reported that Cabinet Members have expressed reservations about the project, specifically that there has been a lack of clear direction, references have been made to the possible reorganization of local authorities in

Cambridgeshire and insufficient evidence has been presented of the cost savings that might be achieved. In addition, Cabinet Members have concerns regarding project management, governance and the perceived lack of benefit to local residents. Concerns also have been raised over the lack of scrutiny and elected Member involvement in the project. As a result the Leader of the Council has suspended the Council's formal involvement and decided to monitor progress of the project before making any decisions on the extent of the District Council's future involvement in it. South and East Cambridgeshire District Councils have adopted similar positions.

- 5.3 While it has been noted that some work is continuing at officer level, the Working Group has strongly expressed the view that ways should be found to enable the Council to resume playing a full part in Making Cambridgeshire Count.
- 5.4 Members also have reiterated their view that shared services could offer significant benefits to the Council and, as such, ought to be explored further. Although the Director of Central Services has provided assurances that the management team is continuing to explore the possibility of shared services, the Working Group has suggested that the Cabinet should be recommended to investigate whether there are any opportunities for jointly employing expert staff to avoid the greater costs using of specialist consultants.

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