

Economy and Business Improvement Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 19th September, 2011
6.00 - 7.10 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Malcolm Stennett (Chairman), Tim Cooper, Paul McLain, Lloyd Surgenor, Pat Thornton, Andrew Wall, Peter Jeffries and Jon Walklett
Also in attendance:	Councillors Jordan and Colin Hay
Apologies:	Councillor Garth Barnes and Councillor Paul Massey

Minutes

- 1. APOLOGIES**
Apologies were received from Councillors Barnes and Massey.
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
None received.
- 3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**
The minutes of the last meeting of the 18 July 2011 were approved as a correct record.
- 4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**
None received.
- 5. MATTERS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE**
None.
- 6. IMPROVING PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURES FOR CHELTENHAM**
The Policy and Partnerships Manager introduced the report. The report outlined the need to review the current partnership arrangements for Cheltenham to ensure they added value and made effective use of the limited resources available. A review programme was carried out facilitated by external representatives and this resulted in a proposed draft structure for how partnership working would operate in Cheltenham. A period of consultation with partners and key stakeholders, including elected members was carried out and their views were documented in the appendix to the report. This was an opportunity for overview and scrutiny to comment on the proposals before the report went to the Cheltenham Strategic Partnership and then Cabinet on the 18 October 2011.

The Leader stressed the importance of partnerships coordinating their work with Leadership Gloucestershire, whatever the resulting structure.

Members made the following comments:

- The links of the Positive Participation Partnership with the Gloucestershire Health and Well-being Board must be established. This board will be responsible for joint commissioning across the county and it is essential that representatives for Cheltenham have some input.
 - The Leader supported this view especially as there would only be one district representative on the Health and Well-being Board and this was unlikely to be Cheltenham.
- Financial Information on the comparative costs of the current and revised partnership structure would have been expected at this committee in view of its remit for the economy and the current financial situation. What added efficiencies or savings would the new arrangements bring?
 - The Policy and Partnerships Manager said that this information was available and he could circulate it to members in a briefing note. This would set out the resources available to the partnerships before and after, as well as the finances that the partnerships were responsible for.
 - The Director of Commissioning emphasised that with commissioning there would be more focus on partnerships for both delivery and defining required outcomes. With this in mind the new structure would facilitate a realignment of resources rather than direct savings.
- When would the terms of reference referred to in Appendix A on page 13 be completed.
 - The Policy and Partnerships Manager said that the high level terms of reference were set out in the Appendix and these would be passed over to the respective partnership for further refinement where necessary.
- The report was lacking any statements on why partnerships were necessary and how they were associated with better outcomes for local people or delivery of council objectives. How is the success of partnerships measured to ensure they are cost-effective? The report suggested they would be monitored by the democratic process which seemed quite vague.
 - The Leader emphasised that the council needed to do most things in partnership to achieve its objectives. The need to be outcome driven and be cost-effective could be added as a fourth bullet point in paragraph 1.3 of the covering report. There was an obligation on any partnership embarking on an initiative or task to define their targets.
 - The Policy and Partnerships Manager explained that O&S had a role in scrutinising the partnerships and indeed he had brought reports on partnership delivery to this committee in the past. He also referred members to the Corporate Strategy which set out clearly which objectives needed to be delivered by working in partnership. He explained that once the partnerships were established there was a piece of work to be done to revisit the needs analysis, set outcomes and define measures for each partnership. This would be led by the Strategic Leadership Group.
- How would the statutory duties currently performed by the CDRP be carried out.
 - The Policy and Partnership Manager confirmed that the statutory duties for the Council to work in partnership to tackle Crime and Disorder were still in place. These may be covered by the Gloucestershire Safer Stronger Justice Commission and representatives from the Fire and Rescue and Probation Services would be included in the membership of the Strategic Leadership Group.

- Who is accountable for the delivery at partnership level?
 - The Policy and Partnership Manager advised that this would be the chair of the partnership however there was also a collective responsibility through partnership working.
 - The Leader added that the Strategic Leadership Group also had an intervention role if there were problems with a particular partnership.
- The report and appendices would benefit by being written in a more plain English style and that would aid the understanding of both partnership members and the public.
- Were other districts setting up their own partnership structures and would this result in a complex set of partnerships across the county.
 - The Leader advised that Leadership Gloucestershire were due to receive a report on this topic at their next meeting and he would be happy to circulate this to members if requested.

Resolved that:

- 1. Cabinet note the comments of this committee when considering this report on 18 October 2011**
- 2. Officers be requested to produce similar reports in more plain English.**

A summary sheet of financial detail on the current and proposed partnership arrangements be circulated to members including a breakdown of the resources needed to support the partnerships and the finances each partnership secure.

7. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

The Director of Resources introduced the report and explained the role of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in owning and managing the Corporate Risk Register. Officers had taken into account the comments of the committee and this report now represented the latest version of the Corporate Risk Register and was no more than 12 days old.

Members commended officers for the improved format of the report and asked the following questions:

- Risk CR34 associated with business continuity had missed its deadline but the score appeared to have gone down rather than up. Why was this?
 - The Governance Officer explained that there were two elements to the mitigating actions, one had been completed and the testing of the backup systems at the depot had been rescheduled for technical reasons and was due to take place shortly. He stressed that deadlines may change for good reasons and these would be reflected in the register.
- In response to a question, the Governance Officer advised that a risk was placed on the Corporate Risk Register as it could potentially have corporate implications. A divisional risk could be transferred to the corporate register following consideration by the SLT. It was not unusual for a risk to be moved in and out of the corporate register as actions were completed and/or circumstances changed. The risks highlighted in

grey were closed risks where SLT had decided that the mitigating actions taken were sufficient to remove it. The scores were not shown for these items.

- A member suggested that officers could consider representing how many risks had been accepted and their total score in the dashboard.
- In response to a concern about risk CR57 – “that the North Place process could be compromised by misunderstanding of the proposal or legal framework”, the Governance Officer explained that this had been passed from the Development Task Force which maintained its own risk register. It was his understanding that this risk had now been addressed but this had not yet been confirmed because of the timing of the meetings of the task force risk group.

Resolved that the improved format of the Corporate Risk Register was commended and there were no issues arising that this committee wished to bring to Cabinet’s attention.

8. INFORMATION STRATEGY

The Director of Resources explained that this strategy was being considered by the committee following a risk being identified in the Corporate Risk Register. He emphasised that management of information was already happening across the council but the strategy would ensure that the necessary awareness and procedures were in place as the council moves forward on its commissioning agenda. It would be essential to engage the organisation at all levels, in the roll-out of the strategy and to emphasise to Service Managers their responsibility for managing data under their control and ensuring data housekeeping procedures are in place. A roll out session would need to be backed up by periodic promotion of the strategy and reminders to staff.

In response to a question, he confirmed that a process for protective marking of documents was already in place. For example, this would be critical for the implementation of the ERP System to determine what level of data an individual should have access to depending on their role in the organisation.

A member highlighted that good data management was the responsibility for everybody in the organisation and not just service managers.

The Governance Officer agreed and stressed that the policies highlighted in the report were supported by guidance notes to assist staff in interpreting the policies.

He emphasised the potential risk of incurring significant fines from the Information Commissioner if procedures were not followed. The Director of Commissioning confirmed that all job descriptions required staff to adhere to these policies and data security was included as part of the mandatory induction for new starters.

Resolved that the information strategy be noted and officers be commended on producing a clear and concise document

9. BRIEFING FROM CABINET MEMBERS

None

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The future workplan was noted and the date of the next meeting was Monday 28 November 2011.

Malcolm Stennett
Chairman