

## Notice of Meeting

### SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

**Wednesday, 11 February 2009 - 6:00 pm**  
**Meeting Room 2, Civic Centre, Dagenham**

**Members:** Councillor Mrs P A Twomey (Chair); Councillor G M Vincent (Deputy Chair); Councillor R W Bailey, Councillor R J Buckley, Councillor J R Denyer, Councillor P T Waker, Councillor Mrs M M West and Councillor J R White

**Education Co-opted Members:** Church Representatives: Reverend R Gayler (Church of England) and Mrs G Spencer (Roman Catholic Church); Parent Governor Representatives: Mrs L Rice (Primary) and Mrs T Woodhouse (Secondary)

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### AGENDA

**1. Apologies for Absence**

**2. Declaration of Members' Interests**

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Members are asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interest they may have in any matter which is to be considered at this meeting.

**3. Minutes - 21 January 2009 (Pages 1 - 5)**

**4. Budget Process 2009/10**

Report to follow.

**5. Treasury Management Strategy 2009/10**

Report to follow.

**6. Any other public items which the Chair decides are urgent**

**7. To consider whether it would be appropriate to pass a resolution to exclude the public and press from the remainder of the meeting due to the nature of the business to be transacted.**

## **Private Business**

The public and press have a legal right to attend Council meetings such as the Scrutiny Management Board, except where business is confidential or certain other sensitive information is to be discussed. The list below shows why items are in the private part of the agenda, with reference to the relevant legislation (the relevant paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended). ***There are no such items at the time of preparing this agenda.***

- 8. Any other confidential or exempt items which the Chair decides are urgent**

## SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Wednesday, 21 January 2009  
(6:00 - 8:45 pm)

**Present:** Councillor Mrs P A Twomey (Chair), Councillor R J Buckley, Councillor J R Denyer, Councillor P T Waker, Councillor Mrs M M West and Councillor J R White

**Also Present:** Councillor S Carroll and Councillor T Justice

**Apologies:** Councillor G M Vincent, Councillor R W Bailey and Mrs T Woodhouse

### 59. Declaration of Members' Interests

None.

### 60. Minutes - 17 December 2008

**Agreed.**

### 61. Executive challenge session

Councillor Carroll, Executive Member with responsibility for Customer Services, had been invited to the meeting to discuss his portfolio.

Councillor Carroll advised that the key areas within his portfolio were:

- i) Customer Strategy, Tell Us and Complaints
- ii) Customer contact points, such as the Call Centre, One Stop Shops and Registrars
- iii) Civic buildings - ensuring a low carbon footprint and a good use of space.

David Woods, Corporate Director of Customer Services, added that Councillor Carroll was the Lead Member for One B&D, and that the Customer Services portfolio was crucial to achieving the One B&D objectives. Priorities included improving value-for-money to deliver higher quality services at a lower cost, tailoring services in response to customer needs and strategic partnership working to improve efficiency and customer access.

Bill Murphy, Corporate Director of Resources, added that these services could only be delivered if joined-up and proactive ICT support systems were in place. He explained that this programme would be implemented over the next three years and would lead to an increased ability to innovate and better customer service at a lower cost.

During the question and answer session that followed Councillor Carroll made

the following points:

- That a Business Process Reengineering approach was being taken to developing the new ICT systems, meaning practical issues about how staff operate were being taken into account and that the full end-to-end process was being considered.
- That if actions were not completed or exceptions occurred, the new ICT system would automatically notify a supervisor, meaning that work would not be overlooked due to staff absence.
- That Microsoft products (namely upgrades) would be available at reasonable prices due to successful negotiations by the OGC on behalf of all local authorities.
- That a merger of Tell Us and the corporate complaints process had been proposed, but that stage three complaints would remain separate and continue to be based within the Resources Directorate.

Members thanked Councillor Carroll for attending the meeting and providing full answers to all the questions raised.

## **62. Achieving Excellence**

Received and noted the Achieving Excellence performance report, as presented by the Group Manager of Corporate Performance.

Noted that Best Value Performance Indicators were in the process of being replaced by National Indicators as part of the Comprehensive Area Agreement, and that future performance reporting would reflect this.

**Agreed** that future performance reporting should be done on an exceptions basis.

## **63. GP Services Scrutiny Panel Final Report**

Received the final report and recommendations of the GP (General Practitioner) Services Scrutiny Panel, introduced by Councillor Marie West. Noted Councillor West's concerns that the short timescale allotted to the review had led to pressure on Members and should be avoided in future, if possible.

Noted that the recommendation seven, relating to initial and refresher training of GP surgery staff, did not cover refresher training for established GPs. Officers were requested to liaise with NHS Barking and Dagenham to determine whether this issue was already covered by GP contracts or whether it might be an appropriate addition to recommendation seven.

Expressed support for the draft report and thanked the Panel for their work.

**Agreed** that the issues identified in section 4.1 of the report as worthy of further

scrutiny, namely the appointment system and multi-agency receptions, should be considered by the Health Scrutiny Panel as possible topics for future scrutiny reviews.

#### **64. Health Scrutiny Panel update**

Received and noted a progress report from the Health Scrutiny Panel.

Received an amended version of the four-borough Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) terms of reference from the Legal Partner for Corporate Law and Employment.

**Agreed** that the new version of the terms of reference should be submitted to the JOSC for consideration at their next meeting, subject to the following changes:

- That the following sentence, under 'Membership', be removed:  
"Members of the constituent local authorities who are Non-Executive Directors of the NHS cannot be members of the JHOSC".
- That the clause relating to 'Urgent Action' be removed, as this issue is covered by the ability of Members to call additional meetings, as set out under 'Meetings of the JHOSC'.
- That the reference to the Chief Clerk, under 'Officer Administration of the JHOSC', should be amended to remove the officer's name.

#### **65. Forward Plan**

Received a verbal update on reports that had been cancelled or rescheduled on the Forward Plan since the publication of the Board agenda:

- i) Barking and Dagenham Community Strategy: rescheduled from 17 February 2009 to the 10 March 2009 Executive meeting, and from 25 February 2009 to the 01 April 2009 Assembly meeting.
- ii) Borough-wide 20mph Zone Strategy: rescheduled from 17 February 2009 to the 10 March 2009 Executive meeting.
- iii) Gascoigne Estate Regeneration: rescheduled from 17 February 2009 to the 10 March 2009 Executive meeting.
- iv) Local Development Framework – Approval of Minor Changes to Core Strategy and Borough Wide Development Policies: rescheduled from 10 March 2009 to the 21 April 2009 Executive meeting.
- v) Local Development Framework – Approval of Pre Submission Site Specific Allocations Development Plan: rescheduled from 10 March 2009 to the 21 April 2009 Executive meeting.

Expressed strong concerns that the full cohort of Members had not been consulted regarding the item on 'Provision of Wheelie Bins for Household Waste – Pilot Outcomes and Borough Roll-Out'.

## 66. Scrutiny budget update

Received a report from the Divisional Director of Legal and Democratic Services setting out spend so far against the Scrutiny budget in 2008-09.

**Agreed** an additional sum of £3000 to be allocated to fund an external expert to support the Energy Savings Informal Scrutiny review. Councillor Phil Waker confirmed he would circulate further details to the Board for information.

## 67. Scrutiny Panels

Received and noted the report.

**Agreed** an Informal Scrutiny of Housing Supply, led by Councillor Phil Waker.

Terms of reference were set out as follows:

- To consider statistics and other evidence relating to
  - Current housing needs and demand
  - Current housing availability and future housing projects (both new build and stock reduction)
  - Predicted future housing needs / demand, based on predicted population and demographic changes
- To determine whether a formal in-depth scrutiny review should be established to investigate Housing Supply issues within the borough, and if so, the key areas such a review should focus on.

**Agreed** that officers should invite expressions of interest to join the Informal Scrutiny from the wider Member cohort.

**Agreed** that an officer would be allocated from the Scrutiny Team to support Members undertaking the review.

## 68. Future and Outstanding Reports

Received an update from the Divisional Director of Legal and Democratic Services regarding the new duties that will be placed on Scrutiny from 1 April 2009.

**Agreed** a comprehensive review of Scrutiny arrangements to ensure that the structures in place are those best suited to meet the new challenges ahead.

The scope of the review is set out as follows:

- To undertake a comprehensive review of the Council's scrutiny arrangements with a view to making recommendations to the Assembly before May 2009 on a new form of political structure for overview and scrutiny.

- In doing so, to (a) have regard to best practice in other authorities, (b) draw on learning from the Parliamentary “select committee” model, (c) engage with recognised experts, organisations or networks in the scrutiny field (for example the Centre for Public Scrutiny), and (d) ensure all current and emerging legal requirements are covered.
- To consult with all Members of the Council, senior managers, and other stakeholders including the Council’s key partners .
- To consider, as part of the review, how functions such as Call-In and Councillor Call for Action will be accommodated, and to be particularly mindful of ensuring community engagement issues are addressed.
- To consider the role of the Policy Commissions as part of the review as their role complements the overview and scrutiny function.

The reporting timetable is set out as follows:

- Initial report seeking agreement to review - Scrutiny Management Board: 21.01.09
- Draft report to the Executive for comments: 10.03.09
- Draft report to the Scrutiny Management Board for comments: 04.03.09
- Final report to Assembly to agree new structure: 01.04.09
- Appointments to committees and selection of chairs/lead Members as relevant – Annual Assembly: 13.05.09
- New structure takes effect: 4.05.09 onwards

## **69. Any Other Business**

Noted the additional Board meeting scheduled for 6pm on 11 February 2009 to scrutinise the Council budget.

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