

Minutes of: PERFORMANCE TASK GROUP

Date of Meeting: 1st March 2007

**PRESENT: Councillor Sandiford (in the Chair)
Councillors Neal, Morris, Dickinson, Lynskey and Forshaw**

**IN ATTENDANCE: Lesley Noble, Head of Policy Change Management
Heather Moore, Committee Services Manager
David Ingham, Chair of Rossendale Partnership
Gary Hood, Chief Executive of Rossendale Leisure Trust
Norman Hauserman, Chair of Rossendale Leisure Trust
John Molyneux, Private Sector Renewal Manager
Leanne Dixon, Performance Management Officer
Miladur Rahman, Community and Partnerships Officer**

**ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Brian Essex, Portfolio Holder, Policy and Performance
Councillor Cheetham, Older Persons Champion
Councillors Starkey and Entwistle**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of the Portfolio Holders Councillors Challinor and Smith.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No questions were raised under this item.

4. CHAIRS UPDATE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided an update on the actions taken since the last meeting.

She informed the meeting that she would be attending the performance management training on Covalent and she reminded the Committee that an invitation had been extended to all Members to receive the training.

In respect of the request for the Head of Street Scene and Liveability to attend the meeting, it was noted that this had been scheduled to take

place at the next meeting. The Chair reminded the Committee that any questions in advance of the meeting could be fed through to the Scrutiny Support Officer who would contact the Head of Street and Scene and Liveability.

In response to a question from a Member regarding transport arrangements to Hardmans Mill it was agreed that additional information would be circulated to all Members.

5. PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING RENEWAL EQUITY RELEASE SCHEME PROGRESS AND REVIEW REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Economic Regeneration and Strategic Housing, presented by the Private Sector Renewal Manager, which outlined progress of the implementation of the Private Sector Housing Equity Release Scheme, known as the Decent Homes Assistance.

The Committee considered the options for the future delivery of the Equity Release Scheme to ensure there was an improved service to customers. It was agreed that West Pennine Housing Association were best placed to provide the Equity Release Scheme for all age groups.

It was noted that St Vincent's Housing Association would remain as delivery agent for the Council's Homecare and Repair Agency which provided assistance to older residents to improve and repair their homes through private funding, charitable trusts and the Handyperson Service. Members commented that the work of St Vincents was very valuable.

In response to a question from Councillor Cheetham, Member Champion for Older People, the Private Sector Renewal Manager confirmed that the older people were given support through the Handypersons Service and a charge was made for materials. The Service ensured that someone would be on site quickly to undertake repairs.

The Committee discussed disabled adaptations and an explanation was given on the disabled facilities grant.

The Committee considered the performance of West Pennine Housing Association and St Vincent's Housing Association and it was noted that more effort was required in terms of promotional activity to ensure that residents were aware of the opportunities that the scheme provided.

Resolved:

1. That the Cabinet be recommended to note the progress of the implementation of the Private Sector Housing Equity Release Scheme known as Decent Homes Assistance.

2. That the Cabinet be recommended to approve changes in the delivery mechanism of the Equity Release Scheme as set out in the report and that West Pennine Housing Association be appointed as the delivery agent for a period of 2 years.
3. That an annual review including satisfaction surveys be submitted to the Performance Scrutiny Committee.

6. QUARTER 3 BVPI PERFORMANCE REPORT AND END OF YEAR QUARTILE REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Policy and Change Management which outlined the Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) that were collected monthly and quarterly which were not currently on track to achieve the targets set against them for Quarter 3 together with information on the quartile positions assigned to the 2005/06 outturns.

The Portfolio Holder for Policy and Performance presented the key findings of the report for the consideration of the Committee. He highlighted the new reporting arrangements and it was agreed that information should be presented in this format for future meetings.

The Chair reminded the Committee that the report was submitted on an exception basis and the role of the Committee was to challenge those indicators which were not meeting target.

In respect of BV82a (tonnes of household waste recycled) the Committee raised concern that this target was not being achieved. It was noted that there were a number of areas which currently did not recycle, for example, particular areas in Haslingden and these should be targeted in order to improve performance. It was requested that the Head of Street Scene and Liveability provide an explanation on how this could be taken forward.

In response to a question regarding encouraging commercial properties to recycle it was noted that this question would be forwarded to the Head of Street Scene and Liveability.

In respect of BV9 (% of Council Tax collected) it was noted that action was being taken, however, the Committee were mindful of target setting and whether realistic yet stretching targets were being set.

The Committee raised questions relating to a number of targets within the Customer Services and E-Government portfolio. It was agreed that the Portfolio Holder for Customer Services and the Head of Customer Services and E-Government be invited to the next meeting to provide an explanation of performance and to highlight actions that could be taken to ensure performance improved.

In respect of BV156 (buildings accessible to people with a disability) it was noted that the remaining 7% related to public conveniences and a Task and Finish Group had been established to consider options relating to the provision of public conveniences. In response to a question from a Member regarding private sector responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act, it was requested that information be provided to the Committee on how the Council could provide leadership and support to businesses.

It was noted that the Committee had previously challenged BV8 (% of invoices paid on time) and improvements had been made, however, the cumulative figure remained below target.

The Chair referred to a previous meeting where the Portfolio Holder for Street Scene and Liveability had been in attendance to answer questions relating to performance within Street Scene and Liveability. She highlighted that as a result improvements had been made to BV199a, 199b and 199c (Cleanliness related indicators).

The meeting considered the quartile position performance results for 2005/06. The Head of Policy and Change Management informed the Committee that the Council usually compared quartile positions against other Districts, however, for 2005/06 a comparison had also been undertaken against all English Councils which showed a more favourable position.

The Committee considered the improvement plans, however, it was noted in respect of the Customer Service plans, the information was insufficient to assure the Committee that actions were being taken.

Resolved:

1. That the Committee agree to the new reporting style for performance management.
2. That the Committee continues to monitor performance of those indicators that are under-achieving targeted levels of performance.
3. That the Portfolio Holder for Customer Services and the Head of Customer Services and E-Government be invited to the next meeting to provide information on the improvement plans to ensure action is being taken to address under-achieving targeted levels of performance.

7. GRANTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Community and Partnerships which provided information on the policy on Grants to Outside Bodies together with the proposed allocations for 2007/08.

The Community and Partnerships Officer informed the meeting that organisations from the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector were invited to apply for Council grants in December 2005. Grants were awarded to organisations that were able to demonstrate their ability to add value to services needed by the communities in Rossendale and which complemented the Council's corporate objectives and those of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

The Community and Partnerships Officer further reported that all organisations awarded a grant were also required to sign a funding agreement which set out the amounts awarded, what the funding had been awarded for and the outcomes and outputs to be achieved.

The Committee noted that Sunnycrest was the only organisation not to spend any money awarded to them and the Committee requested details of how this would be taken forward.

A question was asked about how the funding allocated for the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Group would be spent and the Head of Community and Partnerships was requested to provide details.

In response to a question by Councillor Cheetham, the Older Persons Member Champion relating to the membership of an organisation which would support his role as Member Champion it was noted that the Head of Community and Partnerships be requested to respond directly.

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the Cabinet be recommended to allocate the grants for 2007/08 as set out in the report.
3. That Groups who have not completed spend by the end of the financial year be asked to report back to the next Grants Advisory Group meeting to account for spend.

8. PERFORMANCE REVIEW ROSSENDALE LEISURE TRUST 2006

The Committee welcomed Gary Hood and Norman Hauserman of Rossendale Leisure Trust and considered the report which outlined

performance information of the Trust for the period of January to December 2006.

Gary Hood reported on the background to the Leisure Trust and he informed the Committee that it had been operational since 1st June 2004. He highlighted that the Trust managed a large part of the Council's leisure portfolio and the Trust and the Council had signed up to a partnership delivery plan which formed the basis of the Trust's three year business plan.

The Portfolio Holder for Policy and Performance referred to the White Paper issued by the Cabinet which outlined options for the community to consider in terms of leisure provision. He also highlighted that the Council had confirmed its previous decision to support the development of a Health and Fitness Suite at Haslingden Sports Centre.

The Committee considered the performance framework and a number of questions were raised as detailed below to which the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Leisure Trust responded:

- Assessment of partnership satisfaction levels. It was noted that a questionnaire would be circulated in 2007.
- Business interruption insurance would be considered in the longer term
- Quest Quality Award. It was noted that work was ongoing to achieve this.
- Sickness absence levels. It was noted that robust absence management processes were in place.

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That an annual performance report continue to be submitted to the Performance Scrutiny Committee.

9. PERFORMANCE OF ROSSENDALE PARTNERSHIP 2006/07

The Committee welcomed David Ingham, Chair of Rossendale Partnership and considered the report of the Head of Community and Partnerships which outlined progress of the Rossendale Partnership in delivering its delivery plan 2006-09.

David Ingham reported that there were a total of 41 objectives in the three year delivery plan of which:

- 6 are blue (completed)
- 26 are green (on target to achieve)
- 8 are amber (up to a quarter behind)

- 1 is red (more than a quarter behind target or unlikely to deliver)

David Ingham reported that good progress was being made in delivering the objectives and almost 80% of objectives were either completed or on target to be achieved by March 2009. He informed the Committee that the next steps were to link to Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets.

Resolved:

That it be noted that the Rossendale Partnership is making good progress towards improving the quality of life for people in the Borough.

N.B. It was agreed that the following reports be considered en bloc.

10. REVIEW OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES AND OLDER PEOPLE AND THE LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

The meeting considered the reports of the Head of Community and Partnerships which provided updates on the LSP's activities to support older people and the current work ongoing which supports young people.

The meeting discussed the role of the Member Champions for Young People and Old People. Councillor Essex, Member Champion for Young People indicated that a role description was available and he had prepared a report which could be considered by the Committee on the work he had undertaken as the Member Champion.

The Chair referred to the next LSP Assembly on 19th March 2007 which would focus on young people. She encouraged Members to attend to find out how the activities of young people were making a difference to people in Rossendale.

Resolved:

1. That some progress is being made by the LSP on delivering against the needs of older people, however, the LSP should consider the need to explicitly identify the activities which the theme groups are delivering against which will assist older people, details of which should be contained in the annual report to the Performance Scrutiny Committee.
2. That the work of the LSP in respect of young people be noted.
3. That the Member Champions for Younger and Older People be requested to submit a report to a future meeting of the Committee outlining the work that they have been doing in their roles as Member Champion and an annual report be submitted thereafter.

(The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and conclude at 9.30pm)