
MEETING	HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	20 JUNE 2007
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS MERRETT, MOORE, SIMPSON-LAING, HEALEY, HOGG AND R WATSON
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLOR CREGAN

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal or prejudicial interests they might have in the business on the agenda. No interests were declared.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 26 February 2007 be approved and signed as a correct record.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation scheme.

4. SCOPING REPORT FOR PART B OF THE REVIEW

Members considered a scoping report for Part B of the Highways Maintenance Procurement and Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Scrutiny Review.

The Assistant Director of City Development and Transport updated Members regarding the Expression of Interest (EOI) and confirmed that he had not had any response to letters sent in both May and June or to recent telephone calls.

Additional information detailing the outcome of the Highway Maintenance Best Value Review' was circulated at the meeting, including:

- a summary of the cashable efficiencies gained as a result of the review
- a graph showing the budgets for highway maintenance between 2002-2007

- details of staff numbers in the Highways Infrastructure Section between 2002-2007.

Members were informed that when the Best Value Review was originally considered there were 7 proposals made and a decision was taken to implement the following 2 options:

1. To improve the efficiency of the current system
2. Change the basis of contractual arrangements and extend the scope of the mixed economy of service provision that currently exists

Members also noted the 11 improvement objectives set as part of the review i.e.:

1. Produce a Highways Maintenance Management Plan.
2. Review the current approach to managing and planning the service.
3. Develop an operating culture of 'Right First Time'.
4. Increase the customer orientation of the service.
5. Improve the quality of financial information.
6. Further improve the efficiency and effectiveness of staff who deliver the service.
7. Develop procurement practices and partnership working.
8. Review the remit of the Highways Maintenance Service.
9. Raise the profile and understanding of the service and develop understanding of customer needs.
10. Increase the quality of the finished product delivered.
11. Further increase and improve knowledge of the highway asset.

Members were informed that work was ongoing to benchmark the whole of the Highways Maintenance Service in a meaningful way and that information on this, as well as on the new Local Highway Efficiency Toolkit would be available for presentation at the October meeting.

As there were unanswered questions regarding the costs incurred by the Council due to the delay in implementing the improvement objectives listed above, Members requested an audit trail of the process be brought to the next meeting in the form of a summary of decisions, reports and minutes from 2001 to the present date.

RESOLVED: Members agreed to the following schedule of work for Part B of this review as follows:

- The Committee will be renamed Highways Maintenance Scrutiny Committee
- Timeline of dates of decisions in relation to implementing the improvement objectives and a summary of the reports and minutes for those to be presented at their next meeting on 28th August 2007 at 5pm

- To receive reports on the Local Highway Efficiency Toolkit and Benchmarking at the meeting scheduled for 24th October 2007 together with details on which of the objectives had been fully implemented and reasons why others had not.

REASON: In order to progress existing agreed scrutiny reviews within procedural and constitutional requirements.

Cllr. R. Moore, Chair
[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 7.00 pm].