

POLICY FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

29 JUNE 2010

REPORT OF THE EXTRAORDINARY EFFICIENCY TASK GROUP

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To receive an update from the Extraordinary Efficiency Task Group (the Task Group) upon progress and activity since the last meeting of the Committee on 3rd March 2010.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the report of the Efficiency Task Group upon activities and actions be noted.

3.0 KEY ISSUES

3.1 As reported to this Committee on 3rd March 2010 the Task Group has refocused its activity towards obtaining cashable savings to supplement the budget setting process for 2011/12. The Task Group has also spent a significant proportion of its time in the first quarter examining opportunities to produce genuine in year cashable savings which could support the Full Council resolution with respect to the opening of the Wilton Road toilets. Following consideration several areas of potential savings "in year" which could be guaranteed by the set date of 30th June 2010, the Task Group realigned its approach to support the intent of Council to consider re-opening the toilets to be pursued by suggesting a revisiting of the option concerning "roaming attendants". The decision with respect to the reopening lay with the Community and Social Affairs Committee which looked at all the options but was made aware of the Task Group's view.

3.2 The Member leadership of the Task Group has continued with respect to the priority areas of activity identified in Phase Two of the Task Groups programme, however, the Task Group has indicated a clear focus upon cashable savings and targeted its work in this area. The update is as follows:-

- **Procurement**
A detailed analysis and review of the Council waste contract has taken place and certain actions and activities have been highlighted for further work. This work is in parallel to the activity of the Waste Management Task Group and this being carried out working closely with the Policy Committee Chair.

Also, the Task Group is being kept abreast of the Action Learning Set activity relating to the review of small contracts let.

- **Service Redesign**
The Chair of the Task Group has taken a seat on the Housing Repairs Task Group reporting to Community & Social Affairs Committee. This will maintain the link between the Task Group and the Policy Committee with respect to this important area of HRA expenditure. Also, the Chair has had discussions with the senior officers concerning assurances that processes have been, and are continuing to be, redesigned in response to the HRA difficulties in 2009/10.

- **Shared Services**

An initial contracted shared service is now in place with Leicestershire County Council, the Task Group leading member is now aware of, and has contributed to, the development of the arrangements. The Corporate Management Team will consult the Task Group lead upon settlement of the IT programme and plan for 2010/11.

- **Asset Management**
Detailed work of the review of the Council's Access Strategy related to the New Build and other premises has commenced. Particular focus has taken place initially upon the role of the Children's Centres to enable an effective proposal to be made as part of the budget process for the coming financial year. This work will then impact upon the partnership approach to be carried out in the New Build and other service delivery options. Reports through the Making Progress Group and the Sub-Committee will be made as appropriate.
- **Technology**
The Task Group has been kept up to date concerning technology changes which have the potential to release savings in 2010/11 and 2011/12. The focus of the lead member in recent months has been upon the potential to roll out electronic Committee working. This is under review as a result of the requests made by Members and formalised through this Committee for a different approach to be adopted.
- **Cost Avoidance**
Review of the methodology from delivery of the Council's Local Development Framework has continued and again, will need to be refocused in the light of the national policy and other announcements.
- **Citizen Centred Business Improvement**
The Task Group has decided that whilst it will continue oversight of the Circles of Need project this will be light touch as the potential for the cashable savings in 2011/12 is not significant. The Task Group supports the work of this project but has recognised that it will have a longer term impact.

3.3 Focus and emphasis continues upon the website project and its link through to transactions on line and an emphasis upon the promotion of the opportunities of channel shift. However, an upgrade of the customer relationship management system is required before this can take full effect at its most efficient level.

3.4 The Task Group also oversees the role out of the "paperlight" project which is moving very well and continues to meet its required targets.

3.5 A developing focus of the Task Group is to ensure that relevant training is available to its Members and the wider Member grouping. A "lean day" was held on Monday 21st June attended by Members and officers and a further session on how to be an effective "critical friend" will take place shortly.

3.6 In order to maximise its own efficiency the Task Group has agreed to meet formally on a two-monthly basis with the intervening meeting being taken up by training and/or a surgery approach for specific projects or activities.

4.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The work of the Task Group is a key part of the Council's efficiency approach. The Task Group is mindful of its role of "critical friend" with respect to other projects and programmes and it may suggest that a review of a policy or approach by a Policy Committee is required. Individual reports will be made to the relevant Policy Committees

as those circumstances may arise. A close working relationship has been developed with the Policy Committee Chairs.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 In order to meet the expected challenges of service delivery in 2011/12 and beyond the Council has an opportunity to use the coming months to further establish its approach to efficiency and realisation of cashable savings. The Task Group is very conscious of this need and continues to realign its approach accordingly continuing with identified projects which will meet this need.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS

6.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The legal issues applicable to each project within the programme will be examined at the appropriate time.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

7.1 At least one of the projects identified for cashable saving has a community safety focus in its initial activity. The relevant officers are confident that this saving can be accommodated in year.

8.0 EQUALITIES

8.1 The equalities issues relating to specific projects as they are developed will be carried out by Equalities Impact Assessments.

9.0 RISKS

Probability



Very High A				
High B				
Significant C			1,2	
Low D				
Very Low E				
Almost Impossible F				
	IV Neg- ligible	III Marg- inal	II Critical	I Catast- rophic

Impact →

Risk No.	Description
1	Management of the impacts of the economic downturn
2	Managing the budgetary challenge

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 Should projects have climate change implications, these will be addressed as individual projects develop, however, the over-arching theme needs to be considered as the programme develops.

11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 Consultation internally takes place between the relevant Task Group need and the Policy Chairs as required. Senior officers report to the Task Group on projects and developments in a structured manner. The two-monthly formal meetings interspersed by a surgery approach will help improve the efficiency of consultation and other requirements.

12.0 WARDS AFFECTED

All wards are affected.

Contact Officer: Lynn Aisbett – Chief Executive
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Appendices : None
Background Papers: Minutes of Extraordinary Efficiency Task Group
Reference: X:PFA/2010-11/290610 – LA Report of Efficiency Task Group