

POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3 OCTOBER, 2012

Present: County Councillor Clark (Chairperson)
County Councillors Bale, Hunt, Knight, Lloyd, Mitchell,
Robson and Walker.

Also : County Councillor Derbyshire, Chairperson - Environmental
Scrutiny Committee

County Councillor Ralph Cook, Cabinet Member – Strategic
Planning, Highways, Traffic & Transportation

Apology: County Councillor Keith Jones,

20 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Policy Review & Performance
Scrutiny Committee held on 5 September, 2012 were agreed as a correct
record and signed by the Chairperson.

21 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairperson reminded Members of their responsibility under Part III
of the Members' Code of Conduct to declare any interest in general terms
and to complete personal interest forms at the start of the meeting and
then, prior to the commencement of the discussion of the item in
question, specify whether it is a personal or prejudicial interest. If the
interest is prejudicial Members would be asked to leave the meeting and
if the interest is personal, Members would be invited to stay, speak and
vote.

The following declaration was made:

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Interest</u>
Councillor Mitchell	Future Meeting Dates	Non pecuniary interest as Chair of Riverside Advice Ltd, a charity in receipt of a small grant and involved in the tender process for Families First

22 : LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2006 – 2026: PREFERRED STRATEGY - SCRUTINY INQUIRY

The Chairperson welcomed County Councillor Derbyshire, Chairperson of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee to the meeting in his capacity as Joint Chairperson of the Task Group set up to scrutinise the Council's Preferred Strategy for its Local Development Plan (LDP).

The Chair advised that 15 Members, taken from all five Scrutiny Committees, and politically proportionate, had heard evidence from a range of internal and external witnesses, and had produced a report on its key findings and recommendations for submission to Cabinet in October.

The cover report detailed the background to the development of the LDP for Cardiff, and the requirement for the plan to be submitted to the Welsh Government for examination. The Committee was advised that Scrutiny Members through the Task and Finish process had previously considered progress towards securing the LDP for Cardiff at various stages of the Plan's development. The Task and Finish Group reports had formally been submitted to this Committee for endorsement prior to forwarding to the Executive/Cabinet.

The Principal Scrutiny Officer referred to the Terms of Reference for the inquiry which had been agreed to reflect findings of the Welsh Government Inspector on the previously submitted and subsequently withdrawn LDP. The Terms of Reference were to scrutinise the Preferred Strategy for the preparation of the LDP against the ten tests of soundness.

Procedural Tests

- prepared in accordance with the Delivery Agreement including the Community Involvement scheme;
- plan and policies have been subjected to Sustainability Appraisal including Strategic Environmental Assessment

Consistency Tests

- it is a land use plan that has regard to other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to the area or adjoining areas;
- it has regard to national policy;
- it has regard to the Wales Spatial Plan;
- it has regard to the Community Strategy;

Coherence and Effectiveness Tests

- the plan sets out a coherent strategy from which its policies and allocations flow and, where cross boundary issues are relevant, it is compatible with the development plans prepared by neighbouring authorities;
- the strategy, policies and allocations are realistic and appropriate having considered the relevant alternatives and are founded on a robust and credible evidence base;
- there are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring;
- it is reasonably flexible to enable it to deal with changing circumstances.

The Principal Scrutiny Officer provided detail behind each of the key findings which were set out under the following key headings:

- Growth
 - Population Projections;
 - Housing Projections
- Strategy
- Infrastructure
 - Community Infrastructure Levy
 - Transport
- Economic
- Social & Environment.

Details of the evidence based for each of the key findings were contained in the main body of the report, and the key findings supported the recommendations that were proposed to go forward to Cabinet on 18 October 2012.

Councillors Clark and Derbyshire as Joint Chairs of the Task Group presented each of the recommendations, which linked to the key findings, and Members discussed a number of matters arising from the proposed recommendations.

As part of the discussions it was recognised that Members of the Task and Finish Group, in considering evidence and information from internal and external witnesses, had expressed a range of views and areas of concern, and that there had not always been agreement on some of the issues. The report going forward to Cabinet was a collective conclusion with recommendations that had been formulated from the evidence heard, and it was accepted that Members, particularly on issues affecting ward areas or policy matters, would have, and would wish to, in other forums,

express opinions that may not be in accord with the recommendations and other information included in the report.

Other comments and observations raised as part of the discussion were as follows:

- R2 – a greater importance should be given to the protection of transport routes. Issues were discussed around key radial and main routes in and around the Cardiff boundary; key road interchanges; pinch-points and areas of congestion. It was proposed that a separate recommendation on this matter be included as follows:

‘It is imperative that the Council protects the desire lines for potential routes to facilitate future transport visions.’

- Members underlined the importance of the green belt designation and ensuring that the M4 boundary was maintained. Members noted that this could be further considered as part of the future scrutiny of the LDP. The Committee was told by Councillor Ralph Cook, Cabinet Member – Strategic Planning, Highways, Traffic & Transportation that the LDP will ensure the permanence of a green belt for the period of the plan and beyond;
- KF53 – Members discussed the Civic Society suggestions to introduce distinct phases into the LDP possibly on a five year basis. It was felt that the Cabinet should consider applying such phasing to any large candidate sites, which would concentrate the first phase on brown field sites and limited agreed areas subject to infrastructure requirements. The second phase could then be linked to surrounding LDPs and expand into a Regional Development Plan in the second and third phases relieving pressure on any potential green field sites around Cardiff in the longer term.
- R5 – Members stressed the vital need for strong lines of communication with neighbouring authorities and in the context of a Regional Development Plan , and Members suggested that the first bullet point of this recommendation be strengthened;
- KF3 – inclusion of the words *‘It is forecast that’* at the beginning of the penultimate sentence;
- Page 30 - Members had concerns with the phrase used around sustainable communities in relation to the student population and agreed that this be deleted.
- KF5 the deletion of the word ‘house’ to be replaced with the word *‘residential units’*. The fact that the most recent developments had been flats and apartments was also noted

RESOLVED – That Task and Finish Group report on the Local Development Plan 2006 – 2026: Draft Preferred Strategy be endorsed subject to the changes as proposed, and the report be submitted to the meeting of Cabinet on 18 October 2012.

23 : WALES AUDIT OFFICE: IMPROVEMENT STUDY - EFFECTIVENESS OF SCRUTINY

The Chairperson welcomed Paul Keeping, Operational Manager, Scrutiny Services who had been invited to outline details of the Wales Audit Office's (WAO) proposed Scrutiny Improvement Study, and proposals for participation of Elected Members from Cardiff Council.

The Committee was advised that the Auditor General had indicated that a number of all-Wales improvement studies would be undertaken on an annual basis, with a focus on barriers to transformation and issues that give rise to the greatest inefficiencies within Local Authorities in Wales, with the aim to identify areas of common learning that will support Councils' efforts to improve and help resolve service delivery and issues for Councils moving forward. As part of the exercise this year, the WAO Regulatory Programme has included an Improvement Study on Scrutiny, which will require participation of all Councils in Wales, and the first stage of the work was due to begin shortly.

Details of the project brief had been circulated, and set out the proposed developmental approach which would contribute to developing Councils' self-evaluation skills as well as their scrutiny functions.

The WAO considered that the timing of this study was right, as many Members elected in May 2012 would be participating in Scrutiny for the first time.

The first stage of the five stage process would be for Councils to carry out a self-assessment against nationally agreed criteria. The other four stages would involve:

- Regional workshop for Councils to share their self-evaluations with each other;
- Peer Learning Exchange. A team (approx 5, including Elected Members and officers) from one Council will visit two committee meetings at another Council and provide feedback;
- A further Regional Workshop where Peer Learning Exchange teams

would make presentations based on their findings during their visits to another Council. Afterwards, each Council would complete another self-evaluation.

- WAO would then write a national summary report and disseminate findings.

The study would take place over an extended period starting in November 2012, with the report due in April 2013, and the further dissemination event in the Summer, 2013.

Members were advised that the proposed involvement of a team of 5 representatives had been discussed at the Scrutiny Chairs Liaison Forum and it was suggested that the five representatives from Cardiff would be made up of

- Cabinet Member – Councillor Ralph Cook;
- Scrutiny Chair – Councillor Corria;
- One Elected Member from the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee to be nominated ; and
- Two officers.

Members were advised that it was likely that Cardiff would be paired with Swansea as part of the Peer Exchange. It was considered that Council's would gain benefits from participation in the study in particular from the close collaborative interface with the WAO; benchmarking with other local authorities; learning from good practice; and the continued enhancement of scrutiny in Cardiff which had already been acknowledged nationally for its scrutiny work.

Nominations for a participant from the Committee was discussed and it was suggested that the nominee should have some experience of Scrutiny, to balance with the nomination of Councillor Corria as a new Member and Scrutiny Chair.

The Committee made a number of comments on the proposed scrutiny improvement study. It was considered important that a focus should be made on outcomes from scrutiny more than the process itself in particular in Councils that have well developed Scrutiny. For Scrutiny to be successful the impact and outputs needed to be measured. Some Members had concerns about the ratio of proactive to reactive scrutiny and also the process for scrutiny to look at delegated decisions.

RESOLVED – That

- (1) the Wales Audit Office Scrutiny Study programmed for 2012-13 Regulatory Programme be noted;
- (2) Councillor Walker be nominated as the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee Member to actively participate in the study process including the Peer Learning Exchange.

24 : BUDGET MONITORING MONTH 3 – 2012/13

The Chairperson advised that in accordance with work programming discussions the Budget Monitoring report considered by Cabinet on 20 September 2012 had been circulated for Members information. The Chair indicated that Members would have an opportunity to consider the budget position in detail as part of month 6 monitoring.

RESOLVED – That the Budget Monitoring report for Quarter 1 be noted.

25 : CORRESPONDENCE

The Chairperson drew Members attention to correspondence prepared and sent by the Committee since July 2012 and the responses received in relation to the following topic area, which were provided for Members information:

- 2011/12 Performance Report;
- Internal Services Strategy and Technology Framework 2012-15;
- Senior Team Model;
- Proposed Equal Pay Settlement and the Living Wage.

Members sought clarification on the Portfolio remit of Cabinet Members, and it was noted that as part of the proposals for the Senior Team Model some areas may move between portfolios.

RESOLVED - That

- (1) the report and the responses be noted;
- (2) progress on the actions and outcomes arising from recommendations and matters raised be reviewed in six month.

26 : FUTURE MEETING DATES

(Councillor Mitchell declared a non pecuniary interest under the Members Code of Conduct as Chair of Riverside Advice Ltd, a charity in receipt of a small grant and involved in the tender process for Families First)

The Chairperson reported that she had been advised that the November Cabinet meeting would be considering a report on Commissioning of Advice Services, and on a request from the Chair of the Community and Adult Scrutiny Committee for a special Joint pre-decision Scrutiny inquiry into this item prior to consideration by Cabinet. The Chair reminded Members that this Committee had, as part of its work programme, scheduled a scrutiny of the Commissioning and Procurement process.

The Committee discussed the proposed scope of the scrutiny; matters relating to the Commissioning process and grant allocation to Advice Services; the requirement for specialist Advice Services; and the impact for service users of issues arising from the process.

RESOLVED – That

- (1) the pre decision scrutiny of Commissioning of Advice Services be considered by the Community and Adult Services Committee and outcomes be reported to this Committee;
- (2) the Chairperson advise the Chairperson of the Community and Adult Scrutiny Committee of concerns raised by this Committee

27 : NEXT MEETING

The Committee was advised that its next scheduled meeting was on Wednesday 24 October, 2012.

Items for scrutiny at that meeting would include:

- Our Space.
- Welfare Reform – Briefing Report.
- Transformation/Efficiency - Progress report.
- Performance Monitoring Quarter 1 - for information only.