

**CUSTOMER SERVICES & RESOURCES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

27 March 2006
5.00pm – 6.10pm

PRESENT: Councillors Armstrong, Barrett-Payton, Ellis-Miller (Vice-Chair), Hughes, Hymans, McPherson, Taylor (Chair), and Reid.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor Liddle, Executive Councillor for Customer Services and Resources

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

The Chair paid tribute to the previous chair, Councillor Adigun-Harris and thanked him for chairing the meetings in a very efficient manner.

The Chair welcomed Jackie Condon as the new Head of Human Resources.

06/CSR/12 MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2005 as a correct record.

06/CSR/13 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Adigun-Harris and Stuart.

06/CSR/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

06/CSR/15 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

**06/CSR/16 GENERAL FUND- 2005/06 ESTIMATED REVENUE AND
CAPITAL OUTTURN, CARRY FORWARDS AND SIGNIFICANT VARIANCES**

(See also record of decision CS&R/060327/A5)

Non-Key Decision

The Committee's accountant introduced the report.

To a question from the Committee, the Head of Human Resources explained that the carry forward requests under the title "Staff General: Equal Opportunities and Completion of Access & BME into Management" do not refer to two posts waiting to be filled, but to activities within the equal opportunities programme.

Action

The Head of Human Resources was asked to report back to the Committee on how these activities were carried out.

Action: Head of Human Resources
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The Scrutiny Committee approved the recommendations by 6 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

06/CSR/17 **LOCAL COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT-
MOORINGS IMPLEMENTATION POLICY**

(See also record of decision CS&R/060327/A6)

Key Decision

The Head of Revenue Services presented the report to the Committee.

To questions from the Committee, the Head of Revenue Services made the following clarifications:

1. The policy did not offer exemptions but discounts.
2. Proof of payment of the mooring licence should be provided before any discounts would be applied.
3. The Council would collect the mooring fee.
4. The closing date for applications was 31st March 2006.
5. Cambridge City Council will assess the impact of this policy in conjunction with Cambridgeshire County Council and the Conservators of the River Cam.
6. The appeals procedure for those whose applications have been refused will open on 1st April 2006. The appeal procedure will be the same as the Council's complaints procedure.
7. The policy was the final version of the licence agreement as amended by Community Services in January 2006 (06/CS/11 Moorings Implementation Policy Progress).

<http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/public/councillors/minutes/2006/0119CS.pdf>

The Scrutiny Committee approved the recommendations by 7 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

06/CSR/18 **GUILDHALL HALLS BUSINESS PLAN**

(See also record of decision CS&R/060327/A7)

Non-Key Decision

The Assistant Head of Arts & Entertainments presented the report, pointing out the importance of the branding and marketing of the Guildhall halls to compete with college venues.

Members welcomed the proposals to develop use of the halls:

1. The marketing strategy for both the Corn Exchange and the Guildhall Hall should be looked at separately. As the Corn Exchange is celebrating its 20th birthday, we should look at the possibility of re branding/ redesign the Corn Exchange brochure.
2. The lack of disabled access on the Guildhall halls side and the poor condition of toilets and facilities was noted. The Assistant Head of Arts & Entertainments agreed to address these deficiencies.
3. The use of greater discretion in charging in order to have more flexibility to negotiate with customers was questioned and a framework was proposed to avoid inconsistencies and lack of transparency.
4. The use of temporary signs to advertise events taking place in the Guildhall halls was inappropriate.
5. The need to increase the number of events in order to increase revenue was noted.

Actions:

Members agreed to help in renaming the halls and the Chair suggested that staff might also be involved.

The Assistant Head of Arts and Entertainments agreed to review disabled access of the Guildhalls Hall and the facilities.

Action: Assistant Head of Arts & Entertainm ents
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The Scrutiny Committee approved the recommendations by 8 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

06/CSR/19 **ICT CONTRACT RETENDERING.
RECOMMENDATION OF PREFERRED SUPPLIER**

(See also record of decision CS&R/060327/A8)

Key Decision

The Head of ICT Client Services presented the report.

To questions from the Committee, the Head of ICT Client Services made the following responses:

1. Any concerns about the provision of the service should be addressed to the Head of ICT Client Services.
2. Serco is not responsible of the maintenance of members' private computers used for Council related business.

The Committee welcomed the recommendation to approve the selection of Serco as preferred supplier for the provision of ICT services, as it is a company with great experience in the public sector.

The Scrutiny Committee approved the recommendations by 8 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

06/CSR/20 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

Resolved to exclude members of the public from the meeting on the grounds that, if they were present, there would be disclosure to them of information defined as exempt from publication by Category 3 as defined in the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

06/CSR/21 **TENDERING FOR THE INTERNAL COURIER SERVICE
CONTRACT**

(See also record of decision CS&R/060327/A9)

Non-Key Decision

The Head of Reception Services presented the report.

The Committee raised the following points:

1. Better timing was needed in the decision-making process, as the closing date for tenders preceded the previous Customer Services and Resources meeting by just two weeks.
2. Tendering for the internal courier service was not considered in the January cycle, as the agreed timetable drawn up by ESPO, Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridge City Council did not allow. All partners' requirements were included in the timetable. The City Council entered into the ESPO/County partnership agreement on the grounds of efficiency and cost effectiveness.
3. All departments should be reminded and encouraged to use the central Members' postal service to avoid duplicate same day deliveries by the courier and Royal Mail.
4. The new contract should stipulate the use of an electric van within the first contract year.
5. The Executive Councillor decided that the courier service should be reviewed within three years.

To questions from the Committee, the Head of Reception Services made the following points:

1. No post should be delivered after 9.00pm and complaints should be reported directly to the Head of Reception Services.
2. The first daily courier service delivery run is at 9.00am, the second service is at 11.00am and the third service is at 2.00pm. This service delivers and collects post, printing and stationery to all main Council sites and our many satellite offices across the city.

Actions

1. All departments should be reminded and encouraged to use the central Members postal service to avoid duplicate same day deliveries by the courier and Royal Mail.
2. The new contract should stipulate the use of an electric van within the first contract year.
3. The Executive Councillor decided that the courier service should be reviewed within three years.

Action: Head of Reception Services

The Scrutiny Committee approved the recommendations by 8 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

The meeting ended at 6.10pm.

Chair