

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 20 SEPTEMBER 2010

REPORT TO THE COUNCIL MEETING – 12 OCTOBER 2010

This report details the work undertaken by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee over the municipal year 2009/10.

The Committee met five times, in June, September and November 2009, and January and March 2010. The membership was as follows: -

	June 2009	September 2009	November 2009	January 2010	March 2010
Cllr Ken Reed (Chairman)	*	*	*	*	*
Cllr Bryn Morgan (Vice-Chairman)	*	*	*	*	*
Cllr Mrs Gillian Beel	*	*	*	*	*
Cllr Jim Edwards	*	*		*	
Cllr Brian Ellis		*		*	*
Cllr Mrs Mary Forszewski		*		*	
Cllr Bob Frost	*	*			
Cllr Peter Isherwood		*		*	*
Cllr Alan Lovell					
Cllr Peter Martin	*	*	*	*	*
Cllr Tom Martin	*	*	*	*	*
Cllr Stephen Mulliner		*			*
Cllr David Munro	*	*	*	*	*
Cllr Steven Renshaw					
Cllr Ms Jane Thomson		*		*	*
Cllr John Ward			*		*
Cllr Mrs Liz Wheatley	*	*		*	*

\* = Present

A. REVIEW OF ITEMS CONSIDERED BY THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2009/10

Items considered by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee during the course of the municipal year 2009/10 (May 2009 to April 2010) are set out below: -

A.1 Overview Items

*New Powers for Overview & Scrutiny Committees*

At its meeting on 22 June 2009 the Committee considered proposals for the introduction of a protocol for Councillor Calls for Action and the new powers relating to scrutiny of partnership arrangements.

- Councillor Call for Action Protocol

The Committee endorsed the recommendation from the Community O&S Committee and ELOS, that both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the relevant committee should undertake the consideration of the Call for Action form unless they had a personal interest in the issue raised.

- Scrutiny of Partnership Arrangements

The Committee noted the new powers relating to scrutiny of partnership arrangements, in particular the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership and the Local Area Agreement. The Committee noted that the LAA involved Surrey County Council as well as all eleven Surrey districts, and felt that it would be more efficient and effective if the scrutiny scheme for the LAA were led by SCC, perhaps modelled on the Health Scrutiny Committee, which could draw members from all the Surrey districts. Similarly, given the organisational structure of Surrey Police, the scrutiny scheme for the CDRP would also have to be carefully considered, including the possibility of joint working between Surrey districts in the same Surrey Police division.

*Proposals for the Future Role and Operation of Waverley's Local Offices*

At its meeting on 22 June 2009 the Committee considered the Customer Services SIG's recommendations to the Executive regarding the role of locality offices, opening hours and the cost implications.

The Committee RESOLVED to pass the following observations on the Customer Service SIG's recommendations to the Executive:

- i) The Committee agreed that Waverley should continue to provide a local office service in Farnham, Haslemere and Cranleigh.
- ii) The Committee was concerned about the cost implications of re-introducing Saturday opening at the Locality Offices and Godalming.
- iii) Whilst noting that the proposed staffing of the offices was within the post-November 2009 staffing establishment of 5.2fte staff, the Committee was concerned at the additional costs proposed and felt that the Executive should look more closely at cost-neutral options.
- iv) The Committee agreed in principle with recommendations for the location of the locality offices, but observed that the proposed position for the locality office within the refurbished Cranleigh Leisure Centre would not make it suitable for holding member surgeries.
- v) The Committee queried the costs involved with the programme of alteration and improvement works to be carried out in 2010/11 to remove the secure cash desks and improve customer facilities and asked that detailed costs be considered as part of a capital programme bid.
- vi) The Committee endorsed the need for a review of the revised service model in May 2010.

#### *ICT- Vision and Direction of Travel 2009-12*

At its meeting on 26 June 2009 the Committee received a presentation outlining the Vision and Direction of Travel for ICT which subject to members' views would form the basis for the new ICT Strategy for 2009-12.

The Committee RESOLVED to endorse the ICT Vision and Direction of Travel 2009-2012, subject to delivery plans being affordable and justified by a clear benefit to our customers, and to pass the following observations to the Executive:

- i) The Committee suggested that there might be scope to investigate the use of 'live-chat' as an alternative to one-to-one meetings between members and officers or, for example, planning or benefits surgeries
- ii) The Committee also felt that Business Continuity might be better secured by partnering with a local authority more geographically distant than Guildford. The concern was that there was a risk that an incident that affected Waverley might also affect Guildford, and therefore a shared, relatively local back-up facility might not be as secure as one that was more distant.

### *Ombudsman's Investigations into Complaints made about Waverley's Services in 2008/09*

At its meeting on 15 September 2009 the Committee received a report addressing the issues raised by the Ombudsman's annual letter to Waverley for the year 2008/09. The Committee welcomed the efforts made by officers to further improve the average time taken to respond to the Ombudsman's initial enquiries and RESOLVED to pass the following comments to the Executive:

- (i) It was reassuring to note that the Ombudsman found no cases of maladministration or injustice in respect of complaints about Waverley's services in the past 15 years, and this was a considerable achievement on the part of the Council.
- (ii) The Council's average response time to the Ombudsman's first enquiries in 2008/09 was a significant improvement on performance in previous years. While Waverley took a little longer in responding to the Ombudsman's first enquiries than 3 out of the other 10 districts and boroughs in Surrey, this could be due to the fact that our investigations were more thorough.
- (ii) In future years it would be helpful to know whether there were any complainants who had submitted more than one complaint to the Ombudsman which had then been the subject of further investigation by the Ombudsman.

### *Complaints Handling in Waverley in 2008/09*

At its meeting on 15 September 2009 the Committee received a report which showed the number of complaints received in 2008/09, Waverley's performance in responding to complaints and lessons learned. The Committee was pleased to note the improving picture in terms of response times, and the relatively low level of complaints bearing in mind the very large number of interactions between the public and the Council. The Committee expressed some concern about the number of planning complaints and the fact that almost 50% of these were upheld or partly upheld.

The Committee RESOLVED to recommend the Executive to approve the following recommendations:

- (i) In future years, it would be helpful to draw attention to the total number of complaints received by Waverley at the beginning of the report. HOST (Heads Of Service Team) should be asked to develop further the recording of lessons learned and action taken in response to complaints, so that this information could be used more effectively in improving the delivery of services.

- (ii) Officers should undertake a review of planning complaints, with a view to effecting a reduction in the numbers of complaints and the proportion of those complaints that were upheld.
- (iii) Further consideration should be given to whether there was any real value in obtaining feedback through the customer satisfaction questionnaires, given the low response rate of approximately 24% (despite a reply paid envelope being supplied). If this was considered important, then officers should look at ways of increasing the feedback from complainants.
- (iv) Officers should investigate the feasibility of obtaining comparable complaints handling statistics from other Surrey authorities, bearing in mind that there may well be differences in the way in which other authorities record customer complaints, and report back to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in due course.

These recommendations were endorsed by the Executive at its meeting on 29 September 2009.

#### *Review of Equality and Diversity Matters*

At its meeting on 18 January 2010, the Committee received a report which reviewed the work of the Council in the previous year on equality and diversity matters, explored the challenge role of Members on those issues and sought members' endorsement of Corporate Equality and Diversity aims.

The Committee agreed that the equality and diversity objectives be incorporated within Waverley's corporate objectives, and that members continue to undertake a role of scrutiny in the area of equalities.

## A.2 Financial Issues

- *General Fund Revenue Estimates 2010/2011*

A.2.1 At its meeting on 18 January 2010, the Committee considered the Draft Revenue Estimates for 2010 including the Star Chamber proposals for the services within its remit which had contributed to the reduction in the budget shortfall from £795,230 to £270,570.

The Committee noted the Draft Revenue Estimates and made the following observations to the Executive: -

#### Haslemere and Cranleigh Initiatives

Members requested that the programmed be re-evaluated.

### Licensing enforcement – Staffing

Members endorsed the concerns voiced by the Licensing Committee over the reduction in staffing and that Committee's request that it be reviewed after three months.

### Customer Services Relations Manager (Growth bid)

Members requested an explanation of the role of Customer Services Relations Officer.

### Saving on two contract cars

Members requested that savings made by staff using the pool cars rather than their own vehicles should be identified in next year's budget.

### Public Conveniences – transfer to Cranleigh Parish Council

Members commented that discussions had only just started with the Parish Council, and the financial implications had not therefore been taken into account in setting its precept.

#### ▪ *Draft Capital Programme 2010/2011*

The Committee considered the Draft Capital Programme for 2010/2011 and made the following observations:

- There appeared to be no justification for DDA work for external organisations;
- The estimate for miscellaneous properties maintenance and improvement programme appeared to be low and questioned whether this was sufficient;
- The lack of estimates on savings following the expenditure on computer room air-conditioning; and
- That the capital expenditure justification statements should include a return on investment calculation in the future.

The Committee considered that prioritisation should be the responsibility of officers who had a better detailed knowledge of the schemes.

## A.3 Performance Management Issues

### *Appointment of Performance Sub-Committee*

During 2008/09 the Committee had not appointed a performance sub-committee and the whole Committee had been responsible for reviewing the quarterly performance management reports. As this approach had

worked satisfactorily during 2008/09 the Committee resolved not to appoint a Corporate O&S performance sub-committee for 2009/10.

*Best Value Performance Outturn 2007/08*

*Review of National and Local Performance Indicators – 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2008/09 and 2009/10– Quarterly Reports*

The Committee received and considered quarterly reports for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2008/09 and the first 3 quarters of 2009/10.

*Review of Performance Indicators and Targets for 2009/10*

At its meeting on 22 June 2009 the Committee reviewed the performance indicators and targets for 2009/10 and resolved to submit the following recommendations to the Executive:

- (i) L12 Housing Benefits Security - that in 2009/10 the performance indicator should measure the percentage of fraud cases detected that are successfully prosecuted.
- (ii) L11d Customer Satisfaction with Complaints process – that the target for 2009/10 be 50% of responses recording some level of satisfaction with the way their complaint had been handled.
- (iii) NI14 Avoidable contact – that the target for 2009/10 be 20%.
- (iv) L12 Working Days lost due to Sickness – that long- and short-term sickness absence be reported separately in future.
- (v) L18 Return on Investment – notwithstanding the current market conditions, that the target for 2009/10 should be reviewed and set at a more challenging level than 0.25% above agreed target rate.

These recommendations were accepted by the Executive at its meeting on 7 July 2009.

At its meeting on 15 September 2009 the Committee reviewed the performance indicators for the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2009/10 and considered the outstanding proposals for performance indicators and targets for Quarter 2 2009/10 onwards. The outturn for NI 179 was also included.

The Committee RESOLVED to pass the following comments to the Executive; -

- (i) L1 13b Take up of benefits in target groups

This showed performance more than 5% off target with an 11% decrease from Q4 2008/09, but a 32% increase from Q1 2008/09. The

reason for the decrease was unknown and officers were asked to include a detailed explanation in the Q2 report.

- (iii) L15b Percentage of invoices from local/small businesses paid within 10 calendar days

The Committee noted that this initiative had been well received and that officers were not aware of any similar initiative by other local authorities. The officers reported that performance had now increased to 87%, the backlog had been cleared and HOST was trying to improve the cover arrangements for authorising officers during the summer when staff were on leave.

- (iii) L18 Annual average rate of return on Council investments above market rate

The Committee noted that the rate of 2.3% for Q1 reflected the higher rate for 2 longer-term investments during this period. These had now matured, reducing the overall rate. The rate would also be reduced because the Council had decided to limit the number of organisations with which money could be placed, to reflect their priority of safety over rate of return.

Members were informed that a revised, higher, target is being considered by the Executive at its next meeting.

- (iv) N1180 Number of changes of circumstances affecting customers' Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit entitlement in the year

The Committee noted the large increase in these numbers in the last 2 quarters. These resulted from, for example, increases and decreases in income, family make-up changes, changes of address. The Council had no control over the numbers of changes which occurred.

The Committee asked the officers to make a statement to the Executive as to why there were so many changes and whether there were any resource implications.

- (v) N1 179 Value for Money Total Net Value

Officers clarified the meaning of this category which reports savings made by efficiency (cuts in services and fortuitous savings in costs are not included). They confirmed that it was anticipated that savings of £2 million will be made by the end of 2009/10 and therefore the target of £2.3 million by the end of 2010/11 was achievable.

- (vi) Format of report

The Committee noted that some indicators related to performance but others related only to activities. The Committee requested that in

future these should be shown in separate sections.

The Executive noted these comments at its meeting on 29 September 2009.

The report to the meeting of the Committee on 16 November 2009 contained the performance indicators for the 2nd quarter (July-September) 2009/10, and, as requested at the previous meeting, further detailed analysis of recent performance in processing benefits claims, and information relating to increases in caseload. Nicky Harvey, Waverley's Benefits Manager, made a presentation to the Committee that clarified some aspects of the Benefits Section's work for which performance indicators were included.

The Committee RESOLVED to pass the following comments to the Executive; -

NI 181- Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council tax new claims and change events

The Committee noted that time started to run from the date the claim was received, even if it could not be processed as information was missing. Now that incomplete forms were returned to claimants there was an incentive for claimants to produce the remainder of the information. This had led to a reduction in the average number of days taken to process claims.

A temporary member of staff had been recruited to assist claimants coming into the counter at Godalming and to guide them through the form or complete it for them where necessary. This had been funded from a top-up (amounting to nearly £83,000) to the Department of Work and Pensions grant for administration costs. Additionally staff in the locality offices were trained to provide the same service for claimants coming to the locality offices. The Committee noted that it was not possible to reduce the numbers of questions on the form, which was lengthy, as all the information was required to provide a complete picture of the claimant's circumstances.

31% of new claims were now processed within 5 days of a fully completed claim being submitted.

LI13b – Take-up of benefits in target groups- Number of low-income families receiving Housing or Council Tax Benefit

The Committee noted that this indicator related only to those in work. The numbers claiming benefit had increased during each quarter of 2008/09 but decreased slightly in Q1 and Q2 of 2009/10. It was thought that the increased number of claims reflected reduced incomes for those working in 2008/09 and the decreases, to rising unemployment. Unemployed claimants were not in this group and were not monitored.

LI13a and 13b –Take-up of benefits in target groups – both pensioners and low-income families

The Committee noted that there were national campaigns to improve take-up of benefits. Waverley was working with the Pensions Service who provided a list of those claiming Pension Credit that could be checked against benefit claims.

Whilst there was a slight reduction in the numbers of low-income families making new claims from the previous quarter, the Committee did not think that this warranted the “sad face” shown on in Annexe 1 as the target of a 5% year on year increase had been achieved. The Committee requested that this should be changed to a “smiley face”.

Overall there had been a huge increase in benefit payments, particularly from March 2009, and an increase in caseload of 14% from then. This was unprecedented. In the year to March 2009 benefits totalled £24.5 million but for 2009 as a whole it would amount to £32 million. Only 9 staff provided this service, which on average cost £6.71 to process each claim. This was the lowest cost per claim for all local authorities in Surrey and represented very good value for money.

The Committee noted that the caseload was likely to continue rising for some time and that the performance indicators showed that performance was constant in very difficult operating conditions.

Number of working days lost due to short-term sickness absence 2009/10

The Committee requested that the report be extended to show how many FTEs were in each department, together with the number of sickness days per FTE alongside.

LI15b – Percentage of invoices from local/small businesses paid within 10 calendar days and

LI15 – Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days

The Committee noted the improvement in performance in these categories, which was good within the context of current circumstances. Members commented that the current level of 80% is excellent.

LI6a and 6b – Percentage of Council Tax and Non-domestic Rates collected

The Committee noted that the re-billing of Council Tax had caused some disruption and praised the revenues team for the good overall performance, given current conditions.

These comments were noted by the Executive at its meeting on 1 December 2009.

At its meeting on 16 March 2010 the Committee considered the performance management report and review of performance indicators and targets for Quarter 3 (October – December 2009).

The Committee commended officers for their work in improving performance, particularly relating to the early payment of invoices, and for the report “Don’t Lose Your Home”; Members noted that Waverley’s work in the latter area had been praised by a number of outside agencies.

The Committee wished to examine the Quarter 3 performance indicators and targets in greater detail and RESOLVED to seek the permission of the Executive to set up a sub-committee for this purpose which would meet on one occasion only. The Vice-Chairman would chair the meeting.

The Executive gave its permission at its meeting on 13 April 2010.

## B. IN-DEPTH REVIEWS

The Committee carried out one major review during 2009/10 (on Waverley’s Discretionary Income and Expenditure). It also concluded the review on Electronic Communications with Customers, which had been started in 2008/09, and commenced a review into Value for Money and Joint or Partnership Working.

### ***Waverley’s Discretionary Income and Expenditure***

At its meeting on 17 March 2009 the Committee resolved to reconstitute the Member sub-committee to take forward the recommendations from the initial review of discretionary income and expenditure. This would include:

- a review by the sub-committee of the appropriate heads of expenditure to be considered and
- extending the exercise to cover the whole borough by including a fifth analysis item comprising all parts of the borough not included in the four settlements, and replacing the four settlements by the four Planning sub-committee areas.

At its meeting on 22 June 2009 the Committee appointed Councillors Mrs Beel, Edwards, Morgan (Chair) and Renshaw to the sub-committee.

The sub-committee had three meetings and submitted its report to the Corporate O & S Committee on 16 November 2009.

Cllr Bryn Morgan, the Chairman of the sub-committee, introduced the sub-committee’s report, and gave a presentation highlighting its main findings. The review included 65% of all discretionary expenditure, including expenditure in rural areas, which had been allocated to the 4 planning areas. Waverley wide expenditure was shown in a separate category.

The Committee noted that expenditure on three of the four areas was roughly equal, with Cranleigh and its surrounding villages and rural areas receiving more due to other factors such as the inclusion of compensatory grants in the analysis. Farnham, the largest town in the borough, and its surrounding

areas, produced far more income than expenditure. The inclusion of the 2 year average expenditure to 2009/10 and the 3 year average to 2010/11 including the budget figures for next year showed trends in expenditure.

The Committee recognised the hard work officers had put into producing an analysis tuned to the Sub-Committee's requirements. Whilst recognising that the statistics could be interpreted in various ways, they considered that the database, added to year on year, would provide a useful tool for comparison. Now that the initial work of constructing the database had been completed, the work involved in adding to it year on year would be less onerous, providing the format remained unchanged, and would allay criticisms about the geographical distribution of spending in the Borough.

The Committee RESOLVED:

- (i) that future reports be prepared annually on the same basis, with budget book headings retained, for consistency;
- (ii) that it be noted that the increase in average annual expenditure was not attributable to actual increased expenditure, but rather the increase of the scope of the review which now included the majority of Waverley's discretionary expenditure rather than three selected areas of expenditure.

### ***Electronic Communications with Customers***

At its meeting on 15 September 2008 the Committee agreed to carry out an in-depth review into the areas in which the Council currently communicated electronically with residents, businesses and Members, and the extent to which this could be developed, thereby reducing costs and improving efficiency.

The review would examine and focus on the following key questions: -

- (I) How extensive is the Council's use of electronic forms of communication in communicating with its customers, and how is this carried out e.g. via the website, by email or by text messaging.
- (II) How have other authorities and organisations in Surrey developed electronic communications with their customers, with the aim of decreasing the volume of paper transactions.
- (III) How electronic communication be developed by individual service areas in Waverley, and what would be the most suitable medium i.e. email, text messaging or RSS feeds from Waverley's website.
- (IV) How feasible would it be for Waverley to compile a record of those customers who would be content to receive all communications from Waverley in electronic format only, and how could this be effectively

managed to ensure that all customers' contact details are kept up to date.

- (V) What would be the resource implications in increasing the use of electronic forms of communication in communicating with Waverley's customers, both in terms of technology and staff time.
- (VI) What would be the best way of canvassing the views of residents and customers on their attitude to Waverley increasing its use of electronic methods of communication.

An officer group would carry out the majority of the work. A timetable was set with the draft final report to be considered in March 2009.

The progress of the review was delayed due to unexpected work pressures in the IT section related to business continuity issues. A report was submitted to the Committee in June 2009 which set out the results of the audit of the various ways in which the Council communicates with its customers i.e. use of generic email accounts, general correspondence by email, service specific electronic communication, text messaging.

Although it was clear that there had been an increase in the use of electronic communication by customers when communicating with the Council, it was not possible to quantify its use or how this compared with other forms of communication.

The 11 Heads of Service who responded to the audit all expressed the view that there was scope for developing existing forms of electronic communication though only 4 could give specific examples: -

- Revenues and Benefits

Council tax bills and letters, business rates bills and letters and notification letters could be sent electronically. However, the majority of the 6000 respondents to a questionnaire sent out to customers claiming the single person discount had confirmed that they would not want to receive such information electronically. A feasibility study would therefore be required to assess the demand for this facility.

- Housing

Housing Officers could not give any specific suggestions. The 2008 Status Survey of Waverley's Tenants that only 23% use the internet and only half of these would use the website to report repairs. Only 5% of respondents would use email to contact the Council and only 5% of all tenants would be prepared to pay their rent through the website.

- Finance

The purchase of a package was under consideration to allow forms, particularly for fees and charges, to be completed electronically.

- Electoral registration

Because of the risk of fraud it seemed unlikely that the government would permit registrations or changes to be made online. The telephone and web facility for households confirming no change to the current registration details, was used by 10,000 households with a saving of paper and postage and it was thought that there was scope for encouraging greater use of this.

As the exploitation of technology to expand the current methods of communicating with the Council's customers, was one of the key issues to be addressed by the Council's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Vision and Direction of Travel for the period 2009 to 2012 the Committee RESOLVED that further work on the issue should be undertaken as part of that strategy, on the understanding that the Committee would be kept informed of future developments in this area.

### ***Value for Money Review and Joint or Partnership Working***

At its meeting on 22 June 2009 the Committee considered suggested topics for in-depth reviews for 2009/10. As a value for money review of the unit costs of services was likely to indicate where efficiencies might be gained from joint or partnership working, the Committee resolved to undertake an in-depth review that examined the unit costs of key services and compared these with the unit costs of similar or the same services provided by other local authorities, and identified areas that might benefit from joint or partnership working with other tiers of local government. A scoping report was to be submitted to a future meeting. If time allowed, the Committee resolved that there should be an investigation into performance related pay that would need to be aligned to the equal pay audit on which there was work in progress.

The scoping report was considered by the Committee at its meeting on 16 November 2009. The report aimed to build on existing work and develop the comparison of services and unit costs with other organisations to support the identification of further opportunities for service improvements and efficiencies. Waverley was involved in "Surrey First", a project that had recently commenced involving Surrey county Council and most of the district and borough councils, with the aim of identifying opportunities for the joint provision of services, functions and systems across the county.

The report suggested an initial group of services to analyse, together with an analysis of the tasks to be undertaken and a proposed timetable. This involved 3 phases of the review, with reports being prepared for consideration at the meeting in May 2010, if possible. The Committee approved the proposals for the review and the timetable.

## CALL-IN

Two decisions made by the Executive were called-in during the year: -

### C.1 WAVERLEY'S LOCALITY OFFICES – REVISED OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Four councillors (Cllrs Mrs Patricia Ellis, Ken Reed, Victor Duckett and Mrs Celia Savage) called-in for scrutiny the Executive's decision, made on 2 March 2010, to revise the operational arrangements at Waverley's locality offices.

The decision was scrutinised by the Committee at its meeting on 16 March 2010. Three members in attendance addressed the meeting (Cllrs Mrs Patricia Ellis, Cllr Mrs Diane James and Cllr Mrs Celia Savage).

Officers attended the meeting to provide members with clarification of the data contained in the report considered by the Executive. Additional information not previously available was provided which showed that during a six week period the average number of customers attending the Haslemere and Cranleigh locality offices on a Saturday morning was four per hour and at Godalming two per hour.

The Committee observed:

- The data - gathering period (three months) had been too short
- The data would have been affected by the intrusion of the unusually severe weather that kept people indoors, and the Christmas period
- The potential reduction in services to certain groups, in particular working people and more vulnerable customers was a matter for concern
- The changed opening hours and schedule of outreach specialist services would no longer provide a general local presence by the Council that has been valued in the communities.
- Customer satisfaction should be closely monitored and fed into the review in December 2010. This review should be robust, open and in-depth.

The Committee endorsed the Executive's decision, but requested that its observations be submitted to the Executive for consideration.

### C.2 REDUNDANCY PAYMENTS – LOCALITY OFFICES

The decision of the Executive (made on 2 March 2010) authorising redundancy payments for staff at the locality offices was considered in exempt session on the ground that it concerned information relating to an individual.

The Committee endorsed the decision.

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D. CONCLUSION

D.1 It is RECOMMENDED that the work carried out by the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee in 2009/10 be noted.

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Background Papers (CEx)

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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Contact Officer

Name: Linda Redford

Telephone: 01483 523226