
PROCUREMENT TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP

Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Don Bristow, Resource Management Portfolio

Responsible Director – Paul Wildsmith, Director of Corporate Services

Purpose of Report

1. To report the Resources Scrutiny Committee's findings and recommendations in relation to the development of Procurement within the Authority.

Information and Analysis

2. In June 2006, Members of the Resources Scrutiny Committee considered how they could best assist the Officers with the work they were undertaking in relation to the development of procurement within the Authority and agreed to re-convene the established Task and Finish Review Group so that they could become actively involved in the work being undertaken.
3. Since then the Group has visited a number of authorities which have been awarded Beacon status for Delivering Quality Services through Procurement in 2006/07, to seek information and best practice. The Authorities visited were Wakefield, Liverpool and Leeds and, in addition to these visits, the Chair of the Resources Scrutiny Committee, the Assistant Chief Executive and the Procurement Advisor also visited Rotherham.
4. All of the visits undertaken were extremely beneficial and worthwhile, not only to the work the Scrutiny Committee is doing in relation to efficiency gains, but also to the work it has done in relation to the Pedestrian Heart contract and some best practice can be drawn from each of the authorities visited.
5. The Group presented its Final Report (**Appendix 1**) to a meeting of the Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 15th December, 2006 and, at that meeting, the Scrutiny Committee agreed to accept and endorse the Task and Finish Review Groups recommendations and agreed to forward the following recommendations to Cabinet: -
 - (a) the Council's Procurement Strategy be reviewed and an Action Plan, incorporating all the points raised in paragraph 10 above be developed; and
 - (b) the monitoring of the Action Plan be undertaken by this Scrutiny Committee.

Assistant Chief Executive's Comments

6. Members have greatly assisted the Leading Edge Review of procurement through their identification of good practice and challenge. An implementation plan for the review is currently being drafted for presentation to Resources Scrutiny Committee. Details of the review will also be presented to Cabinet.

Outcome of Consultation

7. In undertaking this Review, Officers of Darlington Borough Council were involved.

Legal Implications

8. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

9. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

Council Policy Framework

10. The issues contained within this report do not represent change to Council policy or the Council's policy framework.

Decision Deadline

11. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.

Recommendation

12. It is recommended that the implementation plan be drafted and presented to the Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet and thereafter be monitored by the Resources Scrutiny Committee.

Reasons

13. The recommendation is supported so scrutiny input to improvements to procurement can be continued.

Paul Wildsmith
Director of Corporate Services

Background Papers

There were no background papers used in the preparation of this report other than those referred to.

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