

BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

Service Level Agreement Monitoring 31st January 2005

Report of Head of Administration Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report sets out a proposed process for the Panel to discharge its Terms of Reference in relation to Service Level Agreement Monitoring.

This report is public

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

a) That Members delegate the SLA monitoring to the Principal Democratic Support Officer in consultation with the Chairman for forwarding to the Council's Executive function.

b) That the Budget and Performance Panel receive a report following the review of the grants process by the Overview and Scrutiny on the proposals for future grants allocation and monitoring.

2. REPORT

Introduction

As part of its Terms of Reference the Budget and Performance Panel has responsibility for reviewing and monitoring external service level agreements that the Council has entered in to. This includes annual monitoring of service level agreements that the Council has with the voluntary sector.

Outline

Previously this function of monitoring grants was carried out by the External Affairs Review Board and last year by the Budget and Performance Panel. Last year was particularly important as it was the end of the previous service level agreements and the Budget and Performance Panel were not only monitoring but recommending to Cabinet which grants should be continued.

This year is the monitoring of the first year of a three-year service level agreement and as such 'lighter touch' monitoring has been implemented as compared to last year. However, this information is not yet ready for consideration due to pressures on staff in Administration Services caused through providing support to the Luneside East CPO Enquiry, but will be available in the next few weeks. In light of this it is recommended that this year this task should be delegated to the Principal Democratic Support Officer. in consultation with the Chairman, for forwarding to the Council's Executive function.

Future Monitoring

As Members may be aware the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has commissioned a piece of work to review the grants process operated by the Council following an Internal Audit report in to the grants process, which is due to be reported in March. Issues emerging from the work include:

- Whether a 'tendering style' criteria/process for inviting new Service Level Agreement's could be introduced so that the Council could allocate funding based on the services/functions it wants providing in line with its corporate priorities.
- The need for clearer Service Level Agreements.
- Tighter monitoring arrangements so that monitoring is in proportion to the level of funding each organisation receives and therefore makes the organisation accountable for receiving public money.

In light of this work, it is likely that the way that Service Level Agreements are structured will change and that the Budget and Performance Panel may wish to consider how it can best fulfil an improved monitoring role. Members are asked to consider if they wish to receive a report following the review of the grants process by the Overview and Scrutiny on the proposals for future grants allocation and options for improved monitoring.

Financial Implications
There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.
Legal Implications
Legal Services have been consulted and have no comments to make on this report.
SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS
The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comment to add.
MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS
The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comment to add.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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