

Item 3

SEDGEFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council Chamber,
Council Offices,
Spennymoor

Friday,
29 July 2005

Time: 11.00 a.m.

Present: Councillor Mrs. L. Hovvels (Deputy Mayor) and

Councillors W.M. Blenkinsopp, D.R. Brown, Mrs. B.A. Clare, Mrs. K. Conroy, Mrs. J. Croft, V. Crosby, M.A. Dalton, R.S. Fleming, T.F. Forrest, Mrs. B. Graham, A. Gray, Mrs. J. Gray, J.E. Higgin, Mrs. L. Hovvels, J.G. Huntington, M. Iveson, M.T.B. Jones, J.M. Khan, B. Meek, J.P. Moran, G. Morgan, K. Noble, B.M. Ord, R.A. Patchett, Mrs. E.M. Paylor, G.W. Scott, A. Smith, Mrs. I. Jackson Smith, Mrs. L. Smith, Mrs. C. Sproat, T. Ward, W. Waters and J. Wayman J.P

Apologies: Councillors Mrs. A.M. Armstrong, B.F. Avery J.P, J. Burton, Mrs. A.M. Fleming, G.C. Gray, B. Hall, D.M. Hancock, K. Henderson, A. Hodgson, G.M.R. Howe, D.A. Newell, J.K. Piggott, Mrs. C. Potts, Ms. M. Predki, J. Robinson J.P, J.M. Smith and K. Thompson

C.38/05 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted.

C.39/05 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 29th June, 2005 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. (For copy see file of Minutes).

C.40/05 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Deputy Mayor reported that since 29th June, 2005 the Mayor had attended 30 functions and events including the Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace.

He had attended the official opening of Sedgefield Age Concern Locality Office, the official opening of Spennymoor Annual Gala, Durham Miners Gala and a Service of Commemoration in Durham Cathedral to mark the 60th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

The Mayor had also attended a number of awards ceremonies/presentations, civic services, charity events, a Golden Wedding Anniversary and a Diamond Wedding Anniversary celebration.

The Deputy Mayor had attended the Spennymoor School Summer Fete and a presentation of awards to school children held at the Council Offices.

C.41/05

IMPLEMENTING ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT STATEMENT (IEG4.5)

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Resources detailing progress on delivery of the Council's Customer Service Modernisation Programme. (For copy see file of Minutes).

It was reported that the implementation of e-Government was a Government priority. Since 2001 the Council had received £900,000 in Capital Grant from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM).

The e-Government Manager was present at the meeting to give a presentation and answer queries on progress on delivery of the Programme.

It was reported that e-Government was not just concerned with technology but was also related to people and service delivery. It was about reviewing ways in which services were delivered with a view to achieving service improvements.

The Community Strategy was central in influencing the implementation of local e-Government. The Council had therefore locked e-Government into its corporate planning process.

The Council was committed to working in partnership and it was through working together that the Council aimed to make full use of new media and technology to improve services. Reference was made to the County Durham e-Government Partnership (CDeGP). It was explained that a common Customer Relationship Management solution (CRM) had been implemented through the partnership. The CRM was an enabling technology that would assist Customer Service Agents to resolve the majority of customer enquiries at first point of contact.

Members were informed that on the 14th June 2005, Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 approved a project assurance role in overseeing the implementation of the Customer Service Modernisation Programme. The Council continued to take the e-Government agenda seriously and had allocated £1m from the 2005/06 Capital Budget to fund the delivery of the Modernisation Programme. The Council had also brought forward £325,000 from the 2004/05 Capital Budget for business transformation, project management and IT capacity.

Specific reference was made to BVPI157. It was reported that performance against BVPI157 had risen to 88.55% which exceeded the Government target of 84% for 2004/05.

Members were informed that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) had identified 73 priority service outcomes, 19 of which were voluntary outcomes. It was explained that 29 outcomes should be implemented by December, 2005 and the remaining 25 by March, 2006.

Members were informed that a number of systems had been implemented to underpin the Priority Service Outcomes, these included :

- Customer Relation Management
- The Content Management System
- Electronic Records and Document Management System
- Geographical Information System

It was explained that work on the Customer Relation Management solution was ongoing. This system would link all service departments. The Geographical Information System was also ongoing. With regard to Electronic Records and Document Management System, work needed to be undertaken prior to implementation. It was pointed out that the Content Management System had now been implemented.

Reference was made to Customer Services and the implementation of the Contact Centre. It was explained that Customer Services Agents were located at the Reception area to resolve face-to-face enquiries. It was pointed out that a training programme was underway to ensure that staff had the relevant skills.

Specific reference was made to the introduction of a Single Golden Telephone Number for Customer Services. It was felt that this would reduce call volume to Reception, reduce key waiting times for our customers and enable the Council to hit the 80% result target at first point of contact.

With regard to One Stop Shops it was reported that the Council continued to work with the Citizens Advice Bureau. It was pointed out that the Council was also working with West Cornforth Partnership to exploit access to services opportunities via video conferencing.

It was emphasised that the e-Government Agenda required a large upfront investment in core business transformation technologies and therefore efficiency savings would not be realised immediately but in the longer term.

RESOLVED : *That the contents of the IEG 4.5 Statement be agreed.*

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to exercise the right of inspection, etc., in relation to these Minutes and associated papers should contact Lynsey Walker 01388 816166 ext 4237

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