

Report to: Resources and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date: 7 February 2008
Author: City Solicitor
Title: Information and Overview Report

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide information about relevant issues affecting the Committee's remit to aid Members to manage their work programmes.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is requested to consider the topics highlighted in the report and either:

- Note the information
- Request a briefing note to provide further details
- Add the item to the Committee's Work Programme

3. Contact Officer:

Kate Brown, Scrutiny Support Officer

Tel: 0161 234 3376

k.brown3@manchester.gov.uk

4. Suggestions for the Work Programme

No suggestions have been received this month. A copy of the latest Work Programme is attached for information.

5. Forward Planning

Relevant extracts from the Executive Forward Plan are attached to this report.

6. Monitoring Previous Recommendations

Date	Item	Recommendation	Action	Contact Officer
	RG/08/6 Information and Overview Report	<p>To agree that the Chair of the Committee should be party to the discussions to take place in relation to district public service boards to represent this Committee's previously expressed interests in the issue, and that there should be a further report back to this Committee before the issue is next discussed in the Executive.</p> <p>To request that details should be made available to all ward councillors of the ward coordination arrangement to be in place in their wards from the start of the next financial year, or the interim arrangements to be in place pending determination of final plans in individual cases.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Details to be circulated to Members from the start of the next financial year as requested.</p>	<p>Kate Brown</p> <p>Maria Boylan</p>
	RG/08/3 Business Plans 2008/9	<p>To request further information in relation to:</p> <p>Executive: Clarification on the level of budget increase in 2008/9</p>	<p>As well as inflation and fees, the proposed budget for 2008/9 of £1.953M includes proposed growth of approx. £60k. The growth reflects the budget pressures that have been highlighted in recent budget monitoring reports</p>	

		<p>To add the following to the Work Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A report on the legacy revenue from the City of Manchester Stadium 	<p>Added to the Work Programme for a date to be determined</p>	
	<p>RG/08/4 People Strategy</p>	<p>To fully endorse the comments of the Human Resources Sub-Group in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting the strategy as the strategic vehicle in gearing the internal culture of the organisation to the achievement of the aims of the Community Strategy; - Emphasising the importance of leadership development as a crucial element in improving the overall capacity of the organisation; and - Encouraging the provision of opportunities for continual self-development that go beyond traditional methods of recognising good performance such as pay and opportunities for promotion and focus as well on job satisfaction and skills <p>and on this basis to commend the Strategy to the Executive.</p>	<p>The People Strategy was endorsed by the Executive on 16 January</p>	<p>Kate Brown</p>
	<p>RG/08/5 Cash Grants</p>	<p>To request that Ward Councillors should be provided with a clear statement about Cash Grants and the procedure to be followed in relation to their award, such statement to be reported for consideration by the</p>	<p>Added to the Work Programme for March</p>	<p>Kate Brown</p>

		Resources and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee before the end of the current financial year.		
--	--	--	--	--

7. Items for Information Only

Members may recall that the former Finance and General Purposes Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2005/6 conducted an in-depth investigation into social and economic impact of the development of Post Office and Postal Services in the city.

The Committee assumed responsibility for continued monitoring the impact of the change programme, however owing to the change to the remits of Overview and Scrutiny Committees approved by Council in May 2008, the Chairs of Communities and Neighbourhoods and Resources and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committees have agreed that detailed scrutiny of the impact of the Post Office Network Change Programme should be conducted by Communities and Neighbourhoods.

Set out for below for information is the report that will be considered by this Committee at its meeting on 5 February. A copy of the Appendix to this report will be circulated to members separately.

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TO **COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBOURHOODS OVERVIEW
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

DATE **5th FEBRUARY 2008**

SUBJECT **POST OFFICE NETWORK CHANGE PROGRAMME 2008**

REPORT OF **THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to brief Members on the recent developments and work that has been undertaken in respect of the Post Office Network Change Programme. It is intended to set out Post Office Limited plans and proposals as well as our policies in response to this. Attached to the report is the submission of Manchester City Council to Post Office Limited in response to requests for information regarding our regeneration plans in the City.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are recommended to note the contents of the report.

ANNEX (circulated separately)

1. Manchester's submission to Post Office Limited in response to their request.

CONTACT OFFICERS

Eamonn Boylan	Deputy Chief Executive e.boylan@manchester.gov.uk	234 3280
Sara Todd	Head of Regeneration s.todd@manchester.gov.uk	234 3267
Elaine Weinbren	Policy Officer e.weinbren@manchester.gov.uk	234 3315

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Information Item to Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee on 6th September 2007.

DTI Report 'The Post Office Network: Government Response to public consultation' May 2007

Report to Executive 14th February 2007 'The Last Post Report' by New Economics Foundation and Department for Trade and Industry (DTI) Consultation regarding the future of the Post Office Network.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is to brief Members on the recent developments and work that has been undertaken in respect of the Post Office Network Change Programme. It is intended to set out Post Office Limited plans and proposals as well as our policies in response to this. Attached to the report is the submission of Manchester City Council to Post Office Limited in response to requests for information regarding our regeneration plans in the City.

2.0 Background

2.1.1 Alistair Darling, the then Secretary of State launched a consultation on the future of the Post Office Network in December 2006.

2.2.1 The key proposals in the consultation were:

- The DTI will limit Post Office Limited to 2,500 compensated closures nationally and they expect this will be split 50/50 between rural and urban post offices.
- A set of key criteria defining the minimum access requirements to post office services which are as follows:
 - *Nationally*, 99% of population within 3 miles and 90% of population within 1 mile of a post office;
 - *In deprived urban areas*, 99% of population to be within 1 mile;
 - *In urban areas*, 95% of population to be within 1 mile.
- 500 new outreach services will be created, for example, mobile post offices.

These criteria will be considered when looking at plans for local areas and will be developed with the participation of sub-postmasters and Postwatch. Once local plans have been drawn up, there will be a six-week public consultation amongst customers and other organisations.

2.2.2 The City Council responded in detail to this consultation highlighting our concerns regarding the process, which we considered was flawed. The main concerns were that:

- the process should involve Local Authorities because of their placemaking role, their in-depth knowledge of deprivation issues and their community leadership role in the development of regeneration plans
- the process was driven by self-nominations by Sub-Postmasters as happened in the Urban Network Reinvention closure programme in 2004
- there were separate reviews for Crown and Sub Post Offices
- the access criteria did not go far enough
- no account was taken of the effect on local businesses
- the opportunity to improve the post office card account was lost.

Our concern was that the closure programme would be likely to result in ad hoc closures and an unsustainable network that did not fit strategically within our economic and social frameworks.

- 2.4 A number of our key concerns were addressed in this response, namely the Government acknowledged that it was important that local authorities were involved in the early stages of drawing up area plans prior to public consultation. The Government stated that closures would not be determined by sub postmasters, but would be strategic and they wanted to engage with local authorities to ensure that they were able to input information into the area plans.

3.0 The current Post Office Network Change Programme

- 3.1.1 Post Office Limited wrote to the City Council in July 2007 explaining that our Area Plans will be released detailing the proposed post office closures, and at that stage will be subject to public consultation, in June 2008.

- 3.1.2 In advance of the public consultation process, Post Office Limited have requested information on relevant local factors that will be taken into account when preparing the Local Plans for each area. They have asked all authorities to provide information by 25th February on the following:

- Regeneration and development plans in each local authority area;
- Proposed new settlements;
- Major road schemes likely to have a material impact on accessibility between communities;
- Significant public transport changes including enhancements, new provisions and likely withdrawal of key services.

They are particularly interested in matters, which are likely to come to fruition within the next two/three years.

- 3.3 Attached is the submission that we are proposing to send to Post Office Limited detailing the regeneration plans in Manchester in support of our local post offices. The City Council is keen to work with Post Office Limited at this early stage in order to try to influence decisions on post office closures. We have highlighted our vision for the City and detailed plans as set out in the Strategic Regeneration Frameworks. We have highlighted that in the future, Manchester will ensure that the existing district and local centres continue to be the focus for retail development and service provision since these centres are in the most accessible locations and already contain a range of facilities. We consider that post offices should be included as part of this offer.

- 3.4.1 The City Council, along with other interested stakeholders, will have the opportunity to make further representations to Post Office Limited once the proposed post office closures are announced in June 2008.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1.1 Post Offices offer a vital service to our communities and the loss of a post office can be devastating to a local community. We consider that it is vital that we work constructively with Post Office Limited to try and influence decisions about post office closures as part of the Network Change Programme.

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - SUMMARY OF KEY DECISIONS

<u>Decision Reference</u>	<u>Subject Area for Decision</u>	<u>Anticipated date of decision</u>	<u>Decision Taker (Executive or Chief Officer)</u>
	Capital Expenditure Approvals		
	Daisy Works Refurbishment (inc lift renewals)	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Corporate Disability Discrimination Act Works	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Beswick Housing Renewal	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Corporate Asset Management	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Spend and Save Schemes	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Surestart Children's Centre Programme	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Building Schools for the Future	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	NDS Devolved Capital 2007/08	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Housing Market Renewal	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Heaton Park Regeneration	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Fire Safety	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Primary School Re-building Programme 2007/08 to 2009/10	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Hattersley Stock Transfer – demolition and replacement of timber-framed properties	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Band on the Wall	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Investment in Manchester Central	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Civica IT Project – formerly Comino (Housing)	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Wythenshawe Town Centre	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Maine Road remediation	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Northwards Housing programme of works accelerated from 2008/09 to take up slippage in 2007/08	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	New East Manchester Academy: Land Assembly	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
	Any recent additions to the Capital Budget that may require Capital Expenditure Approval Key Decision	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer

		Revenue Budget		
		Allocations from Central Contingency	Dec 07 – April 08	Executive
		Requests for Funding from the Development Fund	Dec 07 – April 08	Executive
		Allocations from the Service Improvement Fund	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive/ City Treasurer
		Council Tax 2008/09		
		Setting the Council Tax Base for 2008/09	January 2008	City Treasurer
		Setting the Revenue/Capital Budgets for 2008/09, the Council's borrowing/investment strategies and the level of Council Tax for 2008/09	March 2008	Council
		Disposal of Land		
		Property 68-70 Newton Street, Manchester	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive
		Land at Wastdale Road, Wythenshawe	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive
		Land at Bury New Road, Cheetham	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive
		Ossington Court	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive
		Land at Altrincham Road, Baguley	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive
		K2, Ashton Old Road/Pottery Lane, West Gorton	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive
		Land at Dean Lane, Newton Heath	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive
		Land at Wayland Road, Gorton	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive
		Five sites in Moston/Harpurhey	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive
		Three Manchester Care homes – Newall View, Templemead and the Coppice	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive
		Grey Mare Lane/Raglan Close/Albert St., Beswick	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive
		Parrs Wood Lane/Kingsway, Didsbury	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive
		Pottery Lane/Redgate Lane, Longsight	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive
		Former Sharp Office and Warehouse, Oldham Road, Newton Heath	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive

		Disposal of an interest in land		
		Proposed disposal of land at Water Street/Regent Road to Towergate Developments	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive
		Manchester Industrial Estate	Dec 07 – April 08	Chief Executive
		Tender Acceptance		
		To finance the procurement of desktop printers, photocopiers, combined photocopier/printer/fax machines, and large-scale printers to the City Council	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
		Building materials	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
		Waste and Recycling Project	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
		ICT equipment, software and maintenance	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
		Banking Services	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
		Purchase Card Contract	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
		Hire of excavators	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
		Supply and delivery of flags and kerbs	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
		Highway maintenance – sub contract	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
		SME post employment support	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer
		Office Furniture	Dec 07 – April 08	City Treasurer



Resources and Governance Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2007/08 February 2008

Meeting Date	Item	Purpose	Evidence Required	Executive Member and Lead Officer	Comments
7 February 2008	Review of the Local Area Agreement	To examine process and outcome of the revised LAA and consider how the priorities identified in the Community Strategy are reflected in the Local Area Agreement. Also to consider the role of scrutiny in relation to the LAA, and particularly the Committee's interest in partnership governance and commissioning in the Manchester Partnership		Geoff Little Sara Todd	
	Manchester Improvement Programme: Progress	To review the performance of the Manchester Improvement Programme since inception in achieving it's primary objective of improving the experiences of Council Services and increasing efficiency and cost effectiveness.		Councillor Leese Eve Martin	
	Education Services Redesign	- Final Report of MEP Sub-Group - Update on outstanding financial and HR matters		John Edwards Courtney Brightwell	

Meeting Date	Item	Purpose	Evidence Required	Lead Officer	Comments
26 February 2008	Budget Review	To comment on the Executive's proposals for the Budget 2008/9		Councillor Leese Councillor Priest Richard Paver	
	Housing Revenue Account	To receive and make comment		Councillor Eddie Newman Deborah McLaughlin	
6 March 2008	School Governance	To revisit the issue of School Governance and the implementation of the review and to consider governance arrangements for new Academies		John Edwards	
	Review of Governance	Progress report on the review of the Council's governance arrangements		Geoff Little Michelle Chard	
	CASH Grants	To receive an update on progress on issues raised by Members at the January meeting		Maria Boylan	
	Manchester Working	Following consideration at the September meeting, to receive an update on A) the number of complaints received following the introduction of a customer relation management system and impact of Civica; and B) Planned programme of maintenance		Richard Paver Paul Castle	Previous Minute RG/07/14 July 2007
	Procurement: End of Year position	Update on savings achieved through the centralised procurement system and whether the projected savings have been		Richard Paver Ian Brown	Previous minute RG/07/15 July 2007

		realised.			
--	--	-----------	--	--	--

Items to be Scheduled:

Manchester Markets

Leadership Development Programme: Referred to the HR Sub-Group

Sickness Absence: HR Sub-Group

June: Revenues and benefits