

By: Peter Sass: Head of Democratic Services
To: Scrutiny Committee – 17 April 2013
Subject: Appointment of Efficiency Partner for Delivery of Transformation
Programme Decision Number 13/00010

Summary: Notification of a call-in of decision number 13/00010 was received from Mr L Christie on 5 April 2013. This report sets out Mr Christie's reasons behind the call-in and sets out the options for the Scrutiny Committee.

1. Background

1.1 On 2nd April the Leader took a decision to appoint Newton Europe as the transformation and efficiency partner who will manage the delivery of the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme. Mr L Christie requested that this item be called into the Scrutiny Committee with reasons as set out below.

2. Reasons justifying the call-in – from Mr L Christie

2.1 Lack of Consultation with Non-Executive Members

The decision has not been subject to a sufficient or proper consultation with members.

The decision was not brought before the Cabinet Committee until the preferred bidder had been identified and the contract was ready to award. No updates to the Cabinet Committee over the previous year, by officers or Members, suggested that work was underway to appoint an Efficiency Partner.

The decision has been taken by the Leader and not the Cabinet Member. At least the Cabinet Member was present at the meeting to hear the Cabinet Committee's views. The Leader was not present and could not see it on Webcast because much of the issue was not webcast. Surely this is not how Cabinet Committees are supposed to work.

2.2 Insufficient clarity and consideration

This issue involves fees to consultants on a complicated alleged "payment by results" system which was not adequately explained; in particular it was not clear what would happen if the Consultant's savings, once identified were politically unacceptable? Would this count towards their "payment by results"?

The Leader was not informed within the report on which he based his decision that the consultants mentioned at para. 1(5) who were involved in deciding

whether a Transformation and Efficiency Partner was necessary/workable were the very same consultancy to whom it is proposed the contract be awarded – i.e. Newton Europe. I believe this relationship requires in depth scrutiny. In addition the Cabinet Committee was not given this information

There was some confusion between the information contained within the open paper and that contained within the exempt paper, particularly around financial savings expected. No clarity was provided as to the actual level of savings being sought / considered by the efficiency partner.

It was partly because of this lack of clarity and therefore inability on the part of the Cabinet Committee or Cabinet Member / Leader to give the decision full and fair consideration that a motion to defer the decision was only defeated by the Chairman's casting vote.

3. Witnesses

- 3.1 Mr P Carter, Leader of the Council, and Mr A Ireland, Corporate Director Families and Social Care will attend the meeting to answer Members' questions on this item.

4. Options for the Scrutiny Committee

- 4.1 The Scrutiny Committee may:

(a) make no comments

(b) express comments but not require reconsideration of the decision

(c) require implementation of the decision to be postponed pending reconsideration of the matter in the light of the Committee's comments by whoever took the decision or

(d) require implementation of the decision to be postponed pending consideration of the matter by the full Council.