

POLICY & CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 21 January 2020

PRESENT – Councillors; Harling (In the Chair), Connor, Floyd, Harling, Hussain, Liddle, Slater and Whittle.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillor Mahmood

OFFICERS

David Fairclough (Director of HR, Legal and Governance), Louise Mattinson and Sian Roxborough – Head of Services, Legal Services

RESOLUTIONS

1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies were received from Councillors Afzal; Groves; Hussain and Rigby.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest received.

3 Minutes of the previous meeting

David Fairclough, Director of HR, Legal and Governance advised that the minutes of the meeting held on 16th September 2019 would be circulated to members and submitted for approval at the next meeting.

4 Report on RIPA

The Committee was provided with an update on RIPA (Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act). The purpose of the report was to update Members of RIPA activity / applications, RIPA training delivered to officers, the outcome of a recent desktop inspection undertaken by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO) and current plans to amend / update the RIPA procedural guide.

The Committee heard that whilst there had been no RIPA applications since the inspection in 2016, the Council had continually reviewed and updated its Procedural Guide and delivered training using external training companies.

On the 12th September 2019 the authority was informed that it was due for its next programmed inspection. As fewer RIPA applications had been granted in recent years, the IPCO were adopting a more flexible approach to inspections and this meant the inspection would be based on a remote assessment. The Council completed a pre-assessment questionnaire and submitted additional materials identified in the form

including any details of training that had been provided as well as a copy of the Procedural Guide.

The Committee heard that the outcome of the Desktop Inspection was that there was no need for a physical inspection at this stage, however the Commissioner did feedback the observations of his inspector. On the 18th December 2019 the Council wrote back to IPCO to update the Commissioner on the recent activity undertaken to address the issues raised in the desktop inspection.

The Committee was informed that the procedural guide would be completely re-drafted and it was anticipated that this be reported back to this Committee at its meeting in March, with a view to it being reported to Executive Board for approval thereafter.

RESOLVED –

- That the Committee note the update;
- That the Committee recommend a report be submitted to Executive Board explaining the outcome of the IPCO desktop inspection, recommending that any actions required from the observations within the inspection outcome letter should be implemented; and
- That once the re-drafted RIPA Procedural Guide has been completed, it be reported to the Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the next meeting in March 2020, for comments prior to Executive Board approval

5 Update on Key Priorities

Finance and Governance

The Committee heard that there were 4 performance measures with a red RAG rating during the period April to September 2019. These were as follows;

- ***Undisputed and valid supplier invoices paid within 30 days***

The Committee was informed that work was underway to identify those budget areas who only raised orders on receipt of invoices and / or, who hold invoices within their department, which therefore impacted on the Finance Team's ability to pay the invoices within 30 days from the date of the invoice. Civica automatically matched invoices to orders to facilitate smooth and quick payment.

A Member raised concerns over the Mosaic payment method not working as effectively and efficiently as it should and it was suggested that it would be more appropriate that this issue be taken to Audit Committee as payments relating to Social Care were dealt with on a different system and were not included in this performance measure.

Councillor Floyd agreed to raise this issue with the Executive Member for Adult Social Care.

- ***Current ratio of total useable reserves (excluding Public Health and schools) to net revenue expenditure; and***
- ***Percentage change in reserves over the past 3 years***

The Committee heard that reserve levels were very low and every effort was being made to contain spending within agreed budgets whilst also trying to increase reserves wherever possible.

- ***Achieve a breakeven or underspend against overall portfolio and corporate budgets***

The forecast outturn for 2019/20, based on information as at 30th September 2019, was for an overspend of £2.75 million across the portfolio budgets, of which £3.00 million related to Children's Services, due to increasing demand pressures and complexity of need, offset by a forecast underspend on the Digital and Customer Services portfolio of £0.25 million, largely due to vacancy savings following a restructure of the IT Team.

The Finance Team were currently working on the forecast based on the position as at 31st December and this would be presented to the Executive Board on 13th February.

Digital and Customer Services

Councillor Quesir Mahmood, Executive Member for Digital and Customer Services, attended the meeting to highlight some of the significant work that had been taking place. The Committee received updates on the following;

- **Digital Customer Portal**
The procurement process for the new Digital Customer Portal had concluded and had been approved at the Executive Board meeting in January 2020. Implementation would commence early 2020.
- **Business Intelligence**
Currently working with a supplier to develop a number of pilot areas including Children's Services, Customer Services and Council Tax.
- **Integrating Health and Social Care Systems**
Work was continuing to integrate Health and Social Care systems with a view to go live April 2020.
- **Council Website**

The new Council website went live last year and had continued to receive positive feedback from customers. In 2019, the last quarter had received 700,000 hits compared to the same quarter in 2018 which received 550,000.

RESOLVED – That the updates be noted and that the Executive Member for Digital and Customer Services be thanked for the good work that had already taken place.

Signed:

Date:

Chair of the meeting
at which the minutes were confirmed