

**COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

Tuesday, 23rd January, 2018

Present:-

Councillor P Innes (Chair)

Councillors	Borrell	Councillors	Flood
	Dyke		Sarvent
	L Collins		Niblock

Damon Bruce, Head of Customer Services ++
Clare Fowkes, Operational Benefits Manager ++
Brian Offiler, Democratic and Scrutiny Officer
Rachel O'Neil, Customer, Commissioning and Change Manager +

+ Attended for Minute Nos. 33 and 34

++ Attended for Minute No. 34

30 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.**

No declarations of interest were received.

31 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

32 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee held on 21 November, 2017 were presented.

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

33 **CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION - PROGRESS REPORT ON WORKFORCE STRATEGY**

The Customer, Commissioning and Change Manager presented the progress report prepared by the Human Resources Manager on developing a workforce fit for the future, following the previous report to the Committee in July, 2017 (Minute No. 5).

It was reported that the Workforce Strategy Group had worked on the following issues during 2017:

- Development of a competency framework (to be rolled out with service managers and above for 2018/19);
- Guidance on team meetings and communication and use of a core brief for all Council services;
- Governance and decision making and appropriate levels of decision making.

Service manager meetings had been refocused to link with the workforce strategy agenda, and the core brief process had been devised by the communications team and supported by CMT.

The Workforce strategy would be updated once the Investor in People report had been issued in March, 2018.

Since the introduction of the online learning platform, Aspire learning, in March 2017 approximately 50% of staff had completed mandatory training for safeguarding and data protection and a further 665 courses had been completed online. Additional training had been provided to over 200 staff to ensure that all staff could access the online training and intranet.

The development of an online annual appraisal had enabled the Council to achieve a completion rate of 89% for appraisals in 2017.

An online corporate induction package would be formally launched in February 2018.

Following the introduction of an apprentice levy (0.5% of the paybill) in April 2017, the Council had procured training from four different providers delivering nine apprenticeship programmes to 23 apprentices (including 16 existing employees) covering customer service, business

administration, digital marketing, legal executive and management as well as traditional trades apprenticeships. Apprenticeship requests were currently being collated from annual appraisals to feed into the next round of recruitment for apprentices starting in September 2018.

Following the commercial awareness training workshops which had been delivered for Venues, Visitor Information and Museum staff a range of activities had been developed to generate further income, and recommendations would be considered for rolling this model out to other service areas.

The Senior Leadership Team had decided to seek accreditation under Investor in People (IiP) - the process of review had begun in November 2017 with an online survey being issued to all staff and Members. A 37% completion rate was achieved, enabling progression to the next stage of the assessment process - submission of data and evidence relating to workforce management and leadership in addition to interviews on site with a selection of staff and Members during January 2018. The final report would be submitted to the Council in March 2018.

Arising from Members' questions it was explained that the reasons why team meetings did not happen regularly in all areas and why all staff had not yet completed online mandatory training modules were being investigated with managers, taking account of differing circumstances in different areas to enable these issues to be addressed.

It was confirmed that the online appraisal system enabled managers to see where appraisals had not been completed, and that individual records could only be accessed by an individual's manager, their manager and Human Resources staff in order to collate learning needs.

The Chair thanked the Customer, Commissioning and Change Manager for her contribution to the meeting.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the report be noted and the work undertaken in developing the workforce strategy be supported.
- (2) That a progress report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee, subject to confirmation through the Scrutiny annual work programming process for 2018/19.

34 **CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES AND COMMUNITIES - PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSAL CREDIT**

The Customer, Commissioning and Change Manager, the Head of Customer Services and the Operational Benefits Manager presented a progress report to the Committee on the implementation of full service Universal Credit (UC) following the previous report to Committee in November, 2017 (Minute No. 25).

The report provided updated information on the measures taken and the continuing work to support residents claiming or transferring on to UC and to minimise adverse impacts on them, including:

- Maximising income for claimants, resulting in 28 claimants receiving additional benefit totalling £97,435 per annum, and 25 claimants receiving backdated arrears totalling £196,091;
- Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) of £33,383 paid to UC recipients, and close working with Job Centre staff to raise awareness of DHPs and budgeting support available;
- 25 personal budgeting support interviews completed since November;
- An online calculator available via the website to enable those needing to claim UC to check their benefit entitlement;
- 95 customers supported with assisted digital claims since November, including a limited number from other local authority areas – the number of customer facing computers to provide this service and the number of customers from other areas would continue to be monitored;
- 177 Council tenants with UC as their income were claiming Council Tax Support, 125 tenants were in rent arrears and 39 were on managed payments.

Members recognised the excellent work undertaken to support claimants, particularly in enabling them to maximise their income.

Arising from Members' questions and comments the following points were raised:

- It was expected that the budget for DHPs for 2017/18 would be fully allocated;
- Council Tax Support claim forms had been provided for Job Centre staff to issue and DHP claim forms would also be provided;
- The impact of any changes from national government in respect of PIP entitlements would be considered as necessary;
- Awareness raising sessions in respect of separating water rates payments from rent and providing contact details had been well received;
- Tenants would be advised to notify DWP when their rent increased to avoid loss of the housing element of UC payments;
- It was expected that full service UC would be implemented in Staveley in July, 2018.

The Committee expressed its support of the work undertaken and proposed that a letter be sent from the Committee to the staff involved, thanking them for their work in ameliorating issues arising from the introduction of UC. The Chair thanked the Customer, Commissioning and Change Manager, the Head of Customer Services and the Operational Benefits Manager for their contribution to the meeting.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the report be noted and the ongoing work on implementation of UC be supported.
- (2) That a letter be sent from the Committee to the staff involved, thanking them for their work in ameliorating issues arising from the introduction of UC.
- (3) That a progress report be submitted to the meeting of the Committee in May, 2018, subject to confirmation through the Scrutiny annual work programming process for 2018/19.

35 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 February – 31 May 2018.

It was noted that the Communications and Engagement Strategy was identified on the Plan for approval in April, 2018 and for consideration by the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee in March.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the Forward Plan be noted.
- (2) That consideration of the Communications and Engagement Strategy be included on the Committee's work programme for its meeting on 20 March, 2018.

36 **SCRUTINY MONITORING**

The Committee considered the Scrutiny recommendations monitoring schedule.

RESOLVED -

That the Scrutiny monitoring schedule be noted.

37 **WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee considered the list of items included on its work programme for 2017/18.

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the progress report on Food Poverty, Mental Health and Deprivation from March, 2018 until after the Scrutiny annual work programming process for 2018/19.

It was noted that the first day of the Scrutiny annual work programming for 2018/19 had been arranged for 13 February and that all Members would be invited to attend.

RESOLVED -

- (1) That consideration of the progress report on Food Poverty, Mental Health and Deprivation be deferred from March, 2018 until after the Scrutiny annual work programming process for 2018/19.
- (2) That the work programme be noted and updated to include the decisions of the current meeting.