

**COMMUNITY CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Thursday, 22nd January, 2015**

Present:-

Councillor Innes (Chair)

Councillors Bagley

Tom Murphy

King+

Huw Bowen, Chief Executive +  
Donna Cairns, Committee and Scrutiny Co-ordinator  
Anita Cunningham, Policy and Scrutiny Officer  
Jane Dackiewicz, HR and Payroll Lead +

+ Attended for Minute Nos. 38 – 40.

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

No declarations were received.

**39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

**40 EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR GOVERNANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT - PROGRESS REPORT ON WORKFORCE  
STRATEGY**

The Executive Member for Governance and Organisational Development, the Chief Executive and the HR and Payroll Service Lead submitted a progress report on the implementation of the actions agreed within the Council's Workforce Strategy and the priorities for the development of the revised Strategy.

It was reported that there had been many successes and achievements in the implementation of the Workforce Strategy. These included the success of Project Academy, the development of a core competencies

framework and the significant amount of training and development provided to staff, much of which was funded from external sources, including the European Social Fund and the Skills Funding Agency.

A corporate wide Development Plan had been agreed and had commenced in May 2014.

The Pay and Reward review was still in progress as it was identified as a longer term project, involving negotiations with Trade Unions and changes to terms and conditions.

The priorities that had been discussed at the Workforce Strategy working group for the development of the revised strategy included: Pay and Reward, Workforce Planning, Talent Management, Staff Engagement and the Performance Management Framework, including the appraisal scheme

It was reported that improvements had been made in the completion of appraisals following some initial changes but progress was still required to deliver a 100% return rate from managers for all employees.

Another priority that was discussed was to 'validate' the training and development delivered to staff to ensure it was being applied in the performance of individual staff, services and the Council as a whole. Members asked how this would be measured and suggested that the process should be determined in advance and written in the Strategy so that validation could be measured as training programmes are delivered, rather than retrospectively.

The Chief Executive advised that it would be difficult to define what success looks like on an individual level as the personal outcomes may differ, taking Project Academy as an example. It was agreed that Employee Performance and Development plans should be linked to the Corporate Plan objectives. This would enable staff to identify their part in delivering the Corporate Plan. The Council's performance in delivering the Corporate Plan would then be a form of validation of the training and development provided to staff.

The reassessment for Investors in People accreditation that was due in 2015 would also indicate the Council's performance in delivering the Workforce Strategy objectives.

The Committee asked about the Trade Unions involvement in the implementation of the Strategy's action plan and in the development of the revised Strategy. The Executive Member for Governance and Organisational Development advised that Trade Union representatives were involved in the Workforce Strategy working group, the Great Place, Great Service executive board and also the Council's consultative committees: Council Joint Consultative Committee and Council Health and Safety Committee.

Members raised some concerns about the current Employee Performance and Development (EDP) scheme process, arising from a matter dealt with by the Appeals and Regulatory Committee. The Committee were advised that there had been a period where this system had not been working well, partly due to the restructure of senior management, which had led to EDP actions not been followed up effectively. A new framework was to be developed and training for managers carrying out appraisals would also be provided.

Members queried whether there was evidence of the savings from Project Academy and the scheme's value for money. The Chief Executive advised that a recent Council report had set out this information and the report would be circulated to the Committee members.

The importance of developing skills and employability of local people was also raised by Members. The creation of an apprenticeship scheme was supported as a way to do this. Members also queried whether the Council still offers school placements. It was reported that the placements had been run for many years; however the scheme within schools had recently changed.

Members agreed that engagement with staff was a key priority. The effectiveness of team meetings was queried as it was commented that ideas from front-line staff being raised in team meetings should be communicated to senior management to be taken into account. The Chief Executive advised that there was a lot of work invested in internal communications and training for managers to improve this going forward.

In relation to the Pay and Reward review, members discussed that earning money was not the only incentive for coming to work; it was important to recognise other motivations such as serving the community and recognition of contribution to the workplace. It was also felt that equal opportunities for employees to progress, fair treatment, job security and

dealing valued were important. Members suggested the retention of talented staff could be improved by delivering on these areas.

Members thanked the Executive Member and officers for presenting the report and answering the Committee's questions.

### **RESOLVED –**

- 1) That the progress on the implementation of the Workforce Strategy be noted.
- 2) That the priorities identified in the development of the revised Strategy be supported.
- 3) That the Committee's comments and suggestions be taken into consideration in revising the Strategy.
- 4) That a further report with the draft Strategy be presented to the Committee prior to this being submitted to Cabinet and Full Council for approval.

## **41 SCRUTINY PROJECT GROUPS PROGRESS UPDATES**

### Health Inequalities Scrutiny Project Group

No report was available.

### **RESOLVED -**

That a report from the Health Inequalities project group be considered at the next meeting of the Committee.

## **42 FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 February to 31 May 2015.

It was queried whether the Committee would receive a progress report on the Cemeteries Strategy before it was submitted to Cabinet. Members were still awaiting information regarding the financing of the strategy

proposals The Committee and Scrutiny Co-ordinator advised that the approval of the Cemeteries Strategy had been removed from the Forward Plan as it was postponed until after the budget for 2015/16 was confirmed.

**RESOLVED –**

That the Forward Plan be noted.

**43 SCRUTINY MONITORING**

The Scrutiny Monitoring Report was considered.

**RESOLVED –**

That the Scrutiny Monitoring Report be agreed.

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

The Committee considered a list of items raised to date for its Work Programme.

It was noted that the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny meeting had taken place on 8 January 2015 and that a further meeting of the Committee would be dedicated to Crime and Disorder matters in six months time. The date was to be confirmed when the new meeting schedule had been set.

The Committee and Scrutiny Co-ordinator advised that the Cultural and Visitor Services Manager had requested that a meeting be held in April 2015 in order for the Committee to be consulted on the Outside Market Reconfiguration proposals by the appointed consultant.

It was agreed that the meeting of the Committee scheduled for 19 March 2015 be postponed until 16 April 2015 to allow for the appointed consultant to attend the meeting.

**RESOLVED –**

- 1) That the meeting of the Committee scheduled for 19 March 2015 be postponed until 16 April 2015.

- 2) That the Outside Market Reconfiguration consultation be considered in April 2015.
- 3) That the Cemeteries Strategy financial information be considered in April 2015, if available.

#### **45 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY DEVELOPMENTS**

Councillor Innes, Chair of the Committee, reported that she had been contributing to the corporate review of Overview and Scrutiny. Cllr Bagley, as Vice-Chair of the Committee, was advised to contact the Policy Officer as soon as possible in order to contribute to the review as a report on findings was soon to be completed.

The Policy and Scrutiny Officer advised the Committee that suggestions for training and development sessions would be welcomed.

#### **46 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee held on 20 November, 2014 were presented.

It was noted that the information requested on comparative costs of using text messaging services in customer services (Minute No. 26 (2014/15)) had not been provided and it was agreed that this request be reiterated.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- 1) That the Minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
- 2) That a further request be made for the information on comparative costs of using text messaging services in customer services.