

# **BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

## **CO-ORDINATING O&S COMMITTEE – PUBLIC MEETING**

**1000 hours on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2020, Committee Rooms 3 & 4**

### **Action Notes**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Carl Rice (Chair)

Councillors: Albert Bore, Debbie Clancy, Liz Clements, Roger Harmer, Ewan Mackey, Rob Pocock, Lou Robson and Kath Scott.

#### **Also Present:**

Cllr Brigid Jones, Deputy Leader

Peter Bishop, Director Digital and Customer Services

Wendy Griffiths, AD, Customer Services and Business Support

Varun Sitaram, Head of Business Improvement and Change

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services

#### **1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST**

The Chair advised that this meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site ([www.civico.net/birmingham](http://www.civico.net/birmingham)) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

#### **2. APOLOGIES**

None.

#### **3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None.

#### **4. ACTION NOTES AND ACTION TRACKER**

(See documents No 1 and No 2).

Members requested an update on the Street Trading Policy.

## **RESOLVED:**

The action notes from the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020 were agreed and the action tracker was noted.

## **5. DEPUTY LEADER UPDATE**

(See document No 3 and 4).

Cllr Brigid Jones introduced the work on the performance framework, including operational changes (e.g. to automate collection of data to allow more focus on acting on the results) and business planning.

Performance numbers only tell part of a story, not the full picture, so work is on-going to get that full picture, and appendix 2 of the report sets out how information will be collected from service areas.

The intention is also to move to outcomes focused reporting; rather than having piecemeal indicators, a range of measures should be collated to give a more comprehensive view of key outcomes.

Varun Sitaram set out how directorates will work to ensure a smoother reporting system, to reduce administrative effort.

Members raised the following points in the discussion:

- It was recognised that we are moving forward but there is still work to be done.
- One area is precision of language e.g. the indicator of missed collections is those who have reported this, not actual missed collections (which could include a whole street).
- There is no clear thread setting out thinking behind the indicators that we measure and the time that that will take, e.g. setting out how indicators will assess how we are improving life expectancy.
- Local data is important, but needs more consideration, i.e. the relevant units for local data and how that would be useful operationally e.g. depot based indicators for waste.
- Performance data is reported to Cabinet, previously it was reported to District Committees for local councillors as well, e.g. street cleansing or fly-tipping at ward level. There is nothing in the model to address that.
- The planning template should include reference to the climate emergency, ensuring that this has been considered.
- The relevance of the data collected and how it is used is key:
  - There needs to be assurance that there will be intervention when there is poor performance.
  - It should be to tackle issues citizens face or to support policy, to ensure that some benefit is derived from the collection of data.
  - How will the data be used to ensure good partnership working, accepting that not all services that matter to citizens are run by the City Council.

- Questions were also raised around the indicators on particulates, unemployment, childhood obesity, recycling figures, apprenticeships, planning and land use and climate change.

The Deputy Leader and officers responded that sometimes the council is limited by what can be measured, and not all that should be measured can be, or cannot be locally. It was noted that there is a process for tweaking indicators in-year.

The intention is to move from piecemeal reporting to capture actual impact.

Work on localisation is on-going and will contribute to this; there is the My Brum maps where services can be viewed geographically. The intention is to move to displaying more ward level performance data to have an active citizen dashboard.

There are structural changes but also critical is how the services work together. The pro-forma has been developed with services so that it is useful for them, including capture of external feedback and judgements.

The second part of the report focused on the Citizen Access Strategy (CAS). The plans to update the strategy was being shared at an early stage to get members' views.

Peter Bishop explained that the presentation originally circulated was focused on one particular area and had been shared in error. A new set of slides was circulated at the meeting.

There is a need for a One Council approach but one that reflects the diversity of services. The CAS is about putting the framework in place. There are design principles that will apply to all services. There has been a debate about whether "customer" or "citizen" was the more appropriate term.

The website has been successfully re-designed, but needs further work, including to cope with the demand for mobile use. Digital access is necessary, but it is not appropriate for all customers. Almost 50% of the activity of the council does not have a web presence. The aim is to ensure all managers know what the journey for their customers is.

Some members noted that they had visited the contact centre and were impressed with the work of the team. However, concerns were raised regarding managing contractors and sub-contractors.

In response to questions from members, the Deputy Leader and officers informed members:

- The end to end process is key; the strategy is about understanding the process.
- There are too many channels, with over 3,000 separate phone lines.
- Using plain English is important, and there are still some letters going out that are not up to scratch.
- Web chats are recorded, but officers will look at emailing scripts of the chat.
- Non digital channels will always be needed, which emphasises the need to get people using the right channel.
- The Strategy is about co-ordinating queries and requests as they come in so that access is simple and the service is then delivered.

- What goes through the contact centre and website are a very small proportion of the contacts to the council as a whole, and there is lots of room for improvement there.
- With regards to external providers, we need to look at what we write into the contracts and specifications to enable us to hold them to account.

## **6. WORK PROGRAMME**

(See document No. 5)

### **RESOLVED:**

The work programme was noted.

## **8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is on the 3 April 2020.

## **9. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL-IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)**

None.

## **10. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

## **11. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

### **RESOLVED:**

In an urgent situation between meetings, the Chairman jointly with the relevant Chief Officer has authority to act on behalf of the Committee.

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The meeting ended at 1200 hours.