

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

CORPORATE RESOURCES AND GOVERNANCE O&S

COMMITTEE

1030 hours on 7th February 2018, Committee Room 6 – Action Notes

Present:

Councillor Mohammed Aikhlaq (Chair)

Councillors Muhammed Afzal, Randal Brew, Liz Clements, Meirion Jenkins, Yvonne Mosquito, Rob Pocock, Sybil Spence, Paul Tilsley, Waseem Zaffar

Also Present:

Paula Buckley, Assistant Director, Customer Services

Geraldine Collins, Head of Operations, Customer Services

Chris Gibbs, Service Director, Customer Services

Iram Choudry, Research & Policy Officer, Scrutiny Office

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

The Chairman advised the meeting to note that this meeting will be webcast for live and subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site (www.birminghamnewsroom.com) and that Members of the press/public may record and take photographs.

2. APOLOGIES

Cllr Changese Khan and Cllr Ewan Mackey

3. CORPORATE RESOURCES & GOVERNANCE – ACTION NOTES JANUARY 2018

RESOLVED

(See document No 1)

The action notes from January 2018 were agreed.

4. UPDATE ON CUSTOMER SERVICES SERVICE DELIVERY AND CITIZEN SATISFACTION MEASUREMENT

(See document No 2)

Paula Buckley and Chris Gibbs attended for this item and made the following key points:

- The contact centre receives 2 million telephone calls, approximately 60,000 emails each year and 44 million views across the website.
- They are looking to extend Housing benefit/Council tax training to a greater number of first point contact staff within the Call centre to enable public queries to be dealt with faster
- The Children's Information and Advice Service transferred to the Contact Centre in autumn 2016. For 2018 academic year, 95% of all school applications were made online.
- Home options transferred in October 2016 and this has resulted in 18% more calls answered across the team with same number of staff
- Waste: To support improved services to customers, Resolution Champions were placed in two of the largest waste depots within the city and as a result they were able to resolve cases in a timely manner- this pilot will be extended to the Redfern depot.
- Measuring customer satisfaction: In order to support benchmarking with other Local authorities, the Council appointed a provider to undertake customer satisfaction surveys using the end of call survey method. Following a review of the data collated, it was felt this was not the most effective method of capturing data and as a result they have reverted back to using texts and follow up phone calls as a means of collecting data.
- Council Tax-One and Done pilot – the pilot was evaluated after 6 months and it was found to have led to improved income generation of over £400,000 in phone payments as well as a reduction in the volume of repeat calls. This pilot will be rolled out to other teams within the contact centre

Responding to questions and comments from the Committee, Paula Buckley and Chris Gibbs made the following points

- Given the sensitive nature of calls relating to Children services, these were handled by a separate specialist team within the contact centre.
- Training for staff: Contact Centre staff are trained across a number of different service areas enabling them to answer a varied range of calls quickly and efficiently.
- Council Tax debts-4% of transaction are audited by managers each week and further independent verification is also carried out.

- The authority was taking a more holistic approach to handling Council tax arrears and was working sympathetically with individual to put in place realistic and affordable repayment plans- 80% of these plans are still place.
- Approximately 52, 000 households have applied for the garden waste service and 39, 000 of this number applied via the Councils website.
- Twitter was now seen as an alternative and speedier method for resolving resident queries and issues
- In response to questions relating to using resolution champions for children’s services, Paula Buckley said she would take this back to the team

Additional Points

- Members praised officers managing the BCC Twitter account during the waste services industrial action strike
- The Committee would want to keep a watching brief on the roll out of Universal credit.
- The Committee extended its thanks and gratitude to Chris Gibbs for his support to both Scrutiny and individual members over of the years and wished him well for the future.

RESOLVED

List of local authorities to be circulated to the committee

Universal Credit roll-out to be added to the committees work programme for next year

5. CORPORATE RESOURCES AND GOVERNANCE – WORK PROGRAMME FEBRUARY 2017

An update on Parish Councils is scheduled for March meeting

Overview of procurement strategy work- A follow up meeting will be organised

Citizen Engagement-The Deputy Leader would be responding to outstanding concerns on this inquiry

Recruitment of Senior Staff inquiry to be undertaken by committee.

6. REQUEST FOR CALL-IN

None

7. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None

8. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

Agreed

The meeting finished at 1215 hours.