

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

CORPORATE RESOURCES AND GOVERNANCE O&S

COMMITTEE – PUBLIC MEETING

1030 hours on 1st March 2017, Committee Room 2 – Action Notes

Present:

Councillor Randal Brew (Chair)

Councillors Muhammad Afzal, David Barrie, Ray Hassall, Changese Khan, Chaman Lal, Ewan Mackey, Yvonne Mosquito, Rob Pocock, Hendrina Quinnen and Sybil Spence

Also Present:

Councillor Ian Ward, Deputy Leader

Claire Ward, Assistant Director, Workforce Strategy

Dawn Hewins, Director, Change and Support Services

Shauna Posanar, Assistant Director, Organisational Change

Chris Gibbs, Assistant Director

Jim Wilson, Project Delivery Manager

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

Apologies were received from Cllrs Mohammed Aikhlaq.

3. CORPORATE RESOURCES & GOVERNANCE: ACTION NOTES JANUARY 2017

(See document No 1)

RESOLVED:-

With the proviso that Cllr Barrie is noted as present at the meeting, the action notes were agreed.

4. WORKFORCE UPDATE

(See document No 2)

Cllr Afzal requested that presentations are printed in colour so that the slides can be read more easily.

Claire Ward, Assistant Director (HR) introduced the item

- Turnover rates are in line with other public sector organisations;
- The proportion lost to compulsory redundancy is very low, partly due to work started several years ago to support employees;
- 8% of dismissals is not particularly high;
- Settlements for those who have left are commensurate with those in other organisations;
- The profile of leavers is broadly proportionate in each grade;
- The destination of employees who resign is not mapped;
- Consultants can be procured in different ways – a broad contract for a specific project (e.g. engineering) or at a local level; but there is a clear governance process in place;
- Agency workers: high costs but sometimes the right decision for the Council. The largest areas are social care, fleet and waste and traded services (e.g. catering).
- Agency workers are not included in the workforce statistics; but the information is published on the workforce dashboard. This also includes data on expenditure.
- Currently 450 grievance cases
- Officers are working with other local authorities to establish a common way of collecting data, so that benchmarking can take place
- With regards to grievances, managers are expected to follow policy and if they identify issues with staff, they are responsible.

With regards to the workforce changes, it was noted that purchasing annual leave would be managed and is not an automatic right.

The Council of the Future work was explained by Shauna Posaner, Assistant Director.

The Improvement Hub has been established to support service redesigns.

Member development steering group is now in place and it is looking to develop a programme of activity for 2017/18

Talent agenda-85 apprentices to take on roles in Business admin customer services from April 17

The results from the staff survey 2016 would soon be available for Members to consider.

Action

The following information was requested:

- Data on the ethnicity of those leaving through resignation/dismissal/redundancy;
- Dashboard to be circulated to members.
- Gender and ethnicity profile for senior grades (grade 6 and above);
- Figure for absence in the People Directorate;
- Data on those who put in grievances by ethnicity;
- Number of JNC officers in each directorate;
- The staff survey report and a follow up on actions.

5. COUNCIL TAX UPDATE

(See document No 3)

The Deputy Leader introduced the report and the following points were raised in discussion:

- There was support to move away from using bailiffs, but using payment arrangements or deductions from welfare payments, was welcomed. The staff were also praised for their assistance and hard work, it is an excellent service;
- Future plans include reviewing correspondence to ensure it is user friendly and to ensure that citizens are aware of what is owed overall, not just year on year – this preventative approach will help reduce indebtedness;
- The consultants were very helpful in moving the service in-house and savings are net of those costs;
- Over £0.5m in bailiff fees were saved, working with the bailiff companies, by reducing fees and charges.

RESOLVED:-

That a further report on the development of future plans is brought to a future meeting of the Committee

6. CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT TRACKING REPORT

(See document No 4)

The report on progress against recommendations in the Citizen Engagement report and the following was agreed:

Recommendation 01: "2 – Achieved Late"

Recommendation 02: "3 – Not Achieved (Progress Made)"

Recommendation 03: "3 – Not Achieved (Progress Made)", but if the draft strategy is shared with members and agreed, then this will move to a

Recommendation 04: "3 – Not Achieved (Progress Made)"

Cllr Pocock is to meet with the Deputy Leader and officers to discuss what needs to be achieved.

7. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

(See document No 5)

Members were referred to the report included in the papers, and any questions to be directed to officers outside the meeting.

8. CENTENARY SQUARE

Jim Wilson, Project Delivery Manager, introduced the slides. In the discussion, the following points were made:

- Cleaning the Hall of Memory is included in the project;
- There are 59 trees going in, to replace 25. The Deputy Leader held a meeting last week regarding the London Plane Tree that has to be reduced; saving the tree was considered long and hard but was not possible. The tree policy is now out of date and in need of refreshment;
- Have spoken to Symphony Hall about their plans and they will fit in with the plans;
- The armed forces are happy with the new layout in respect of Remembrance Day;
- The water feature will be sustainable and there will be a cleaning regime to ensure it operates properly.
- There is different seating, including blocks and pebble seating as it is easily maintained;
- September 2018 is an absolute deadline, as there are events booked.

RESOLVED:-

That a further report is brought to a future meeting of the Committee

9. WORK PROGRAMME

The Parish Council inquiry terms of reference were agreed. The sub-group will include Cllrs Aikhlaq, Pocock, Barrie and Hassall.

Cllr Brew raised the possibility of the committee examining the events of the last couple of weeks with regards to the departure of the Chief Executive. It was agreed that a working group would be established to take this forward.

Cllr Pocock requested an additional item for April's meeting so that the committee can have an update on the progress of delivering the Council's future operating model and other savings plans.

RESOLVED:-

To note the work programme and to add the above items.

10. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)

None

11. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None

12. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS

Agreed

The meeting finished at 1305 hours.