

CUSTOMER SERVICE AND TRANSFORMATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Customer Service and Transformation Scrutiny Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Monday 24th July 2017 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:- Councillors Mrs P.M. Bowmer, P. Cooper, M.G. Crane, R.A. Heffer, A. Joesbury, D. McGregor, J.E. Smith and E. Stevenson.

Officers:- C. Millington (Scrutiny Officer), K. Drury (Information Engagement & Performance Manager) and A. Bluff (Governance Officer).

Also in attendance at the meeting was Councillor K. Reid, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services.

Councillor R.J. Bowler in the Chair

0112. APOLOGY

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor R. Turner.

0113. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

0114. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

0115. MINUTES – 12TH JUNE 2017

Moved by Councillor J.E. Smith and seconded by Councillor R.A. Heffer

RESOLVED that the Minutes of a Customer Service and Transformation Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 12th June 2017 be approved as a correct record.

0116. LIST OF KEY DECISIONS AND ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE

Moved by Councillor R.A. Heffer and seconded by Councillor D. McGregor

RESOLVED that the List of Key Decisions and items to be considered in Private document be noted.

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0117. CORPORATE PLAN TARGETS PERFORMANCE UPDATE – APRIL TO JUNE 2017 (QUARTER 1 – 2017/18)

Committee considered a report, which provided an update to Members on performance outturn targets for the first quarter; April to June 2017, in relation to 'providing our customers with excellent service' and 'transforming our organisation'.

C01 - Retain Customer Service excellence accreditation year on year.

This target was reported as being on track.

The Customer Service Excellence accreditation was successfully retained following assessment in April 2017. No action plan was required in the current year due to the small number of partial compliances (2) and improvements embedded. A further 3 elements had been awarded 'compliance plus'. Achievement and feedback had been communicated on the Council's website and ERIC, including a press release.

C02 - Achieve an overall biennial external satisfaction rate of 85% or above for services provided by the Contact Centres.

This target was reported as being on track.

The survey in relation to this target was scheduled for February 2018.

C03 - Achieve an overall annual satisfaction rate of 80% or above for leisure, recreation and cultural activities and services.

This target was reported as being on track.

No surveys had been conducted in the first quarter. The process of how the surveys were undertaken was currently being reviewed to improve the quality of return.

C04 - Promote the Council's website and increase (unique) visitor numbers by 7% year on year.

This target was reported as being on track.

A review of the statistics provided by Google analytics was currently being undertaken to ensure the software installed was working correctly and providing accurate figures. New figures should be available by the end of July 2017.

C05 - Implement the new EU Regulations on Data Protection within the timescales stipulated by the Information Commissioners Office.

This target was reported as being on track.

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Steady progress was being made against the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Work Plan. The first complete corporate round of desk top, personal data audits was nearing completion. A review was currently taking place of the desktop questions for match and fit with GDPR before a rolling programme was finalised. (GDPR would take effect from May 2018).

C06 - Prevent homelessness for more than 50% of people who are facing homelessness each year.

This target was reported as being on track.

There had been 72 approaches of people seeking assistance of which 41 cases were prevented from becoming homeless. 57% prevented cases.

C07 - Install 150 new lifelines within the community each year.

This target was reported as being on track.

83 units of 'careline' equipment had been installed in the quarter.

C08 - Process all new Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support claims within an average of 20 days

This target was reported as being on track.

Quarter 1 data would not be available until the end of July 2017. This information was obtained through an extract of the system and the extract date was determined by the Department for Work and Pensions.

C09 - Process changes to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support within an average of 10 days.

This target was reported as being on track.

Quarter 1 data was not available until the end of July 2017. This information was obtained through a data extract. The date of this extract was determined by the Department for Work and Pensions.

C10 - Carry out 300 disability adaptations to Council houses each year.

This target was reported as being on track.

73 completed adaptations had been undertaken in the first quarter.

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A Member requested that future reports include break down information of each disability adaptation undertaken in Council properties, for example, how many wet rooms and also how much budget was made available for the adaptations.

A discussion took place and it was noted that some disability adaptations were funded by DCC. Members requested that relevant officers attend a future meeting of the Committee to explain the two separate approaches to the service.

C11 - Fully deliver the equality objectives identified in the Single Equality Scheme by March 2019.

This target was reported as being on track.

Work was progressing on the Single Equality Scheme Action Plan. Notable actions this quarter:-

- First Hate Crime and Incidents Reporting Workshop delivered to relevant staff. A further two workshops would be delivered in July.
- Online reporting form promotion and external publicity to follow the initial workshops.

C12 - Ensure a minimum of 50% of clients experiencing Domestic Violence each year are satisfied with the support they received.

This target was reported as being on track.

A total of 37 new referrals were received during Quarter 1 - 12 of which were high risk; 9 did not engage with the service and of 6 had not yet completed their feedback form. Positive responses were received from 22 service users (100%).

C13 - Reduce average re-let times of Council properties (not including sheltered accommodation) to 20 days by March 2019.

This target was reported as being on track.

The average re-let time for the quarter was 32 days - this excluded sheltered housing, which if were included, the average re-let time would be 38 days.

Members were asked to note that the Head of Housing had advised that a small number of difficult to let properties were affecting this target. The Head of Housing had commenced a review of re-let times to address the issue and an officer/Member scoping meeting to review re-let times had taken place on 21st July. Councillor Bowler advised that she had attended a Housing Working Group meeting on 20th July and would continue to monitor this issue and update the committee on progress of this internal review.

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C14 - Attend 99% of repair emergencies within 6 working hours

This target was reported as being on track.

98.50% of Emergency call outs were attended within 6 hours during the first quarter of 2017/18.

C15 - Ensure a minimum of 50% of clients receiving parenting support each year express a positive outcome.

This target was reported as being on track.

New course completed. 6 parents started the course and 6 completed. Feedback forms had been received; however, they have not yet been evaluated.

T04 - Access the potential revenue impact and develop an action plan to address issues arising from the implementation of the Minimum Energy Standards on commercial properties by April 2018.

This target was reported as being on track.

This target was well within timescale. Legislation understood, quotes for relevant survey works obtained and in a position to place an order for a survey to assess the impact of the legislation. Guidance to landlords published February 2017 was currently being reviewed to fully understand the impact.

T 06 - Introduce alternative uses to 20% of garage sites owned by the Council by March 2019.

This target was reported as being on track.

All sites were surveyed during the year - some have been brought forward for BDC development. Some sites have been identified as future B@Home sites and a detailed report will be provided to Members during quarter 2. (Baseline data - 152 sites of which 20% = 30 sites).

T 08 - Fully deliver the electoral changes to District and Parish wards as a result of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's electoral review by 1 December 2018.

This target was reported as being on track.

The consultation period on the Local Government Boundary Commission for England recommendations closed on 19th June 2017. The Commission was now considering the nine responses and the Council was awaiting the publication of the Commission's final recommendations in September 2017.

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T 09 - Reduce the percentage of rent arrears by 10% through early invention and effective monitoring by 2019.

This target was reported as being on track.

The baseline figure (April 2015) was £562,328 (2.7% of the annual rent roll) and a reduction in Council Housing Tenants arrears by 10% by March 2019. If 10% reduction the figures will be £506,095. At the end of Quarter 1 - 2017, the figure stood at 2.8% (£591,702.90), which was an increase of 3.5%. Although this was an increase, the corporate plan target was met at the year-end 2016. Monitoring of this target would continue until March 2019.

Members should be aware that rent arrears were likely to rise in the first nine months of the year but reduce in the last quarter which has been the pattern for several years.

Members should also be aware that the impact of Government policies on welfare reform was likely to make maintaining rent arrears at this level challenging.

(Note: this target is a reduction in the percentage rather than the monetary value - this is common in measuring rent arrears and allows comparisons with other, and over time. A reduction from 2.8% to 2.6% is measured as $((2.8 - 2.6) / 2.8) \times 100 = 8\%$).

T10 - Reduce the level of Former Tenants Arrears by 10% through early intervention and effective monitoring by 2019.

This target was reported as being on track.

The baseline figure was £570,254 and a reduction in former Council housing tenants' arrears by 10% by March 2019 - if 10% was collected then that would be £513,227.

At the end of quarter 1, the figure was £701,907 which was an increase of 19% - the majority of these were newly arising (i.e. people being evicted or leaving their tenancy with debt).

A 'Write Off' report would be provided to Members during quarter 2.

Since the start of the Corporate Target, £124,513 former tenancy arrears had been collected and £109,089 written off, which has been a reduction of £233,602

T11 - Through successful delivery of projects within the Transformation programme achieve total income/savings of £600,000 by March 2019.

This target was reported as being on track.

As a result of the current Transformation Programme, a total of £515k had been achieved across both Councils with £260k attributable to Bolsover. Items within the plan that had potential for budget savings had been completed and these savings built into base budgets. A review of the plan would take place during quarter 2.

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T13 - Increase on-line self service transactions dealt with by the Contact Centre by 20% each year.

This target was reported as being on track.

On line transactions = 512 transactions and 315 SELF accounts created.

(Target for online transactions for 2017/18 was 1100)

T 14 - Achieve the Member Development Charter by December 2018.

This target was reported as being on track.

Documentation for submission to East Midlands Councils being finalised, due to be submitted during quarter 2.

Moved by Councillor M.G. Crane and seconded by Councillor R.A. Heffer
RESOLVED that (1) the report be noted,

(2) break down information of each welfare adaptation undertaken in Council properties be included in future reports, including budget provision,

(3) relevant officers attend a future meeting of the Committee to explain the two separate approaches to the disability adaptations service by BDC and DCC.

(Scrutiny Officer)

The Information Engagement & Performance Manager left the meeting at this point.

0118. FEEDBACK FROM ELECTIONS TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Scrutiny Officer circulated information to the meeting which informed Members of the current staffing situation within the Elections service.

Members raised concern that following advertisement of the vacancies for Elections Manager and Elections Officer, no recruitment had taken place.

Members requested that they be provided with a copy of the person specification for each of the posts and that the Assistant Director – Governance and Monitoring Officer and the Assistant Director – Human Resources and Payroll be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to provide clarity to Members on the job evaluation undertaken regarding the two posts.

Following further discussion, it was agreed that the issue in question was wider than just the Elections Team recruitment issues and therefore Members agreed to invite the Assistant Director - Human Resources and Payroll to a future meeting to provide a briefing on Job Evaluation and the impact on recruitment and retention.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor and seconded by Councillor M.G. Crane
RESOLVED that (1) the update be noted,

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(2) the Assistant Director – Human Resources and Payroll be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to provide a briefing on Job Evaluation and the impact on recruitment and retention.

(Scrutiny Officer)

0119. TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME

The Chair informed the meeting that she and the vice chair had recently met with the Chief Executive Officer to discuss the Transformation Programme.

A lot of work was being undertaken in relation to the current Transformation Programme and it was now the time to consider a refresh of the Programme. This would coincide with the appointment of two new Strategic Directors and the Chairs of each Scrutiny Committee had been invited to meet potential candidates for the two Strategic Directors posts.

The Chief Executive Officer would be attending the 4th September meeting of this Committee together with the Assistant Director - Finance, Revenues and Benefits to provide Members with a presentation on the refresh of the Transformation Programme.

Councillor Reid left the meeting at this point.

0120. WORK PLAN 2017/18

Committee considered their Work Plan which would be updated with items arising from this meeting. Members noted that the Transformation Programme was a priority.

Moved by Councillor M.G. Crane and seconded by Councillor J.E. Smith
RESOLVED that the Work Plan be noted.

As this was her last Customer Service and Transformation Scrutiny Committee meeting before leaving the Council to take up another position, the Chair thanked the Scrutiny Officer for all her hard work and support of the Committee over the previous seven years.

Members supported the Chair's comments and stated that they appreciated all the hard work Claire had carried out and that she would be sorely missed and a hard act to follow.

The Committee wished Claire all the best in her new role.

The meeting concluded at 1100 hours.