

## **EXECUTIVE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held in the Chamber Suites, The Arc, Clowne, on Monday, 3 November 2014 at 1000 hours.

### **PRESENT:-**

Councillor E Watts in the Chair

### **Members:-**

Councillors R Bowler, D Kelly, B Murray-Carr, K Reid, A Syrett and A Tomlinson

### **Officers:-**

W Lumley (Chief Executive Officer), P Hackett (Executive Director – Transformation), S Sternberg (Assistant Director – Governance and Monitoring Officer), D Clarke (Assistant Director – Finance & Revenues and Benefits), S Brunt (Assistant Director – Streetscene), K Drury (Information and Engagement Manager), A Bedford (Customer Standards and Complaints Officer), L Cheong (Acting Scrutiny Officer), S Chambers (Communications Officer), H Barnett (Communications Officer) and M Kane (Governance Manager).

Also in attendance: Councillors H Gilmour and J Smith

### **0475. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence given at this meeting.

### **0476. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items of business to be considered at this meeting.

### **0477. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no interests declared at this meeting.

### **0478. MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE HELD ON 6 OCTOBER 2014**

Moved by Councillor R Bowler and seconded by Councillor E Watts.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of Executive held on 6 October 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(Governance Manager)

### **0479. RECOMMENDED ITEMS FROM OTHER STANDING COMMITTEES**

There were no items recommended from other standing committees.

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### 0480. SCRUTINY REVIEW ON THE IMPACT OF WELFARE REFORM AND WIDER ISSUES ON THE CONTACT CENTRES

Executive considered a report of Councillor H Gilmour, Chair of the Improvement Scrutiny Committee, which set out the outcome of the recent scrutiny review into the impact of welfare reform and wider issues on the contact centres.

The aims of the review were to consider the effects of delivery of customer services within the context of welfare reform and the resilience of the contact centres in response to the welfare reform changes. The objective of the review was to ensure that the District's communities were receiving the most efficient service that the Council could provide, bearing in mind the changes brought about by welfare reform.

Nine recommendations were made based on the evidence gathered during the review. These were as follows:-

- That two full time Customer Advisor posts are created and permanently placed on the establishment from April 2015.
- That the current quarterly half day closing arrangements for staff training sessions are maintained to ensure that staff remain on top of the changing landscape of welfare reforms and maintain the high levels of customer service currently delivered.
- That any additional training with new voluntary partnerships for contact centre staff are considered a priority e.g. SAFFA, CISWO, Sign Language. These needs may be identified by customer feedback, as well as by staff.
- The Committee endorses the Portfolio Holder and Customer Contact Service Manager's support for investigating the possibility of a move to automated payment methods.
- That the Authority continues to provide Contact Centres in the four current locations.
- That consideration be given to the Contact Centre at Shirebrook being relocated in new premises as a matter of urgency, bringing Shirebrook up to the standard of the other Contact Centres.
- That the potential use of a language volunteer and the demand for such a service at the Shirebrook Contact Centre be investigated.
- That the Authority considers how privacy can be improved in all four Contact Centres.
- That the Revenues Service, where possible, take account of Bank Holidays and other issues when sending mass mail outs, to avoid additional pressure on both customers and the Contact Centres.

It was recognised that the first recommendation would result in a budget extension of between £43,360 and £51,280 for the creation of two full-time Customer Advisor posts from April 2015.

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Executive supported the principle of the report but felt that, rather than creating two new full-time posts, there should be efforts to redistribute resources from those areas that had moved work to the Contact Centres. Discussion also took place on a proposal from officers to fund one post through the reduction of overtime. It was understood that a further report on transforming the Council's Contact Centres would be brought forward to a future meeting of the Executive and that it would be appropriate to consider the scrutiny review report within the context of that wider report before making any decisions in respect of staffing.

Moved by Councillor R Bowler and seconded by Councillor E Watts.

**RESOLVED** that:-

- (1) Executive endorses the scrutiny review of the impact of welfare reform and wider issues on the Contact Centres and approves the implementation of the following recommendations:-
  - That the current quarterly half day closing arrangements for staff training sessions are maintained to ensure that staff remain on top of the changing landscape of welfare reforms and maintain the high levels of customer service currently delivered.
  - That any additional training with new voluntary partnerships for contact centre staff are considered a priority e.g. SAFFA, CISWO, Sign Language. These needs may be identified by customer feedback, as well as by staff.
  - The Committee endorses the Portfolio Holder and Customer Contact Service Manager's support for investigating the possibility of a move to automated payment methods.
  - That the Authority continues to provide Contact Centres in the four current locations.
  - That consideration be given to the Contact Centre at Shirebrook being relocated in new premises as a matter of urgency, bringing Shirebrook up to the standard of the other Contact Centres.
  - That the potential use of a language volunteer and the demand for such a service at the Shirebrook Contact Centre be investigated.
  - That the Authority considers how privacy can be improved in all four Contact Centres.
  - That the Revenues Service, where possible, take account of Bank Holidays and other issues when sending mass mail outs, to avoid additional pressure on both customers and the Contact Centres.

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- (2) The first recommendation, that two full-time Customer Advisor posts are created and permanently placed on the establishment from April 2015, be deferred until the matter can be considered within the context of a wider report around transforming the Contact Centres which is to be brought to Executive in December 2014.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To enable Executive to consider the scrutiny review report from the Improvement Scrutiny Committee.

**OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED:** None.  
(Scrutiny Officer)

### 0481. COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS QUARTER REPORT (Q2) 2014/15

Executive considered a report of Councillor R Bowler, Portfolio Holder for Resources, which provided information on the monitoring and effective management of complaints and customer requests for the period 1 July to 30 September 2014.

Executive was advised that a total of 33 written compliments had been received in the quarter with 11 for the Housing Team and nine for Streetscene Services.

A total of 25 comments were responded to within the standard 20 working days, with five being about the lack of toilet provision within Bolsover Town Centre.

An appendix to the report set out the number of stage one complaints received within the period. 32 stage two complaints were received, with 30 being responded to within the customer service standard of 20 working days, with the remaining two within timescale. A total of seven stage three complaints were received, all of which were responded to within timescale.

In terms of the complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman, one preliminary investigation was received and decided on within the quarter. The Ombudsman decided to discontinue the investigation.

Moved by Councillor R Bowler and seconded by Councillor E Watts.

**RESOLVED** that Executive notes the overall performance in respect of Compliments, Comments and Complaints in the quarter covering 1 July to 30 September 2014.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To inform members of volumes and trends in respect of Compliments, Comments and Complaints.

**OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED:** None.  
(Customer Standards and Complaints Officer)

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### 0482. INFORMATION REQUESTS – APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2014

Executive considered a report of Councillor R Bowler, Portfolio Holder for Resources, which provided details of information requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and Data Protection Act 1998 for the period 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014.

During the quarter, 276 Freedom of Information requests and 34 Environmental Information requests were received, making a total of 310 requests received for processing. All requests were responded to within 20 working days. In respect of the Data Protection Act 1998 a total of six subject access requests were received and 10 third party requests were received for personal data held. These were all responded to within the 40 calendar day timescale.

Concerns were raised that Members were not adequately informed when requests about themselves were made. Officers undertook to rectify this for the future.

Moved by Councillor E Watts and seconded by Councillor A Tomlinson.

**RESOLVED** that the report in respect of Information Requests made between April and September 2014 be received.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To keep members informed of volumes and trends regarding information requests.

**OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED:** None.  
(Information and Engagement Manager)

### 0483. DERBYSHIRE AND DERBY CITY JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Executive considered a report of Councillor D Kelly, Portfolio Holder for the Environment, which updated Members concerning the developing Derbyshire and Derby City Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy, including the development by the District Council of an Action Plan to deliver waste reduction, increased diversion and recycling.

Executive had approved the Joint Waste and Recycling Collection Policy on 30 September 2013. Measures at the time were being included in the Council's draft Action Plan and in the Waste Management Strategy to illustrate how the Council would support the Derbyshire wide position.

A copy of the Council's Action Plan was attached as an appendix to the report which provided information about the Council's waste and recycling services. Its approach reflected the previously adopted Joint Waste and Recycling Collection Policy position. It was recommended that the Council's Waste Management Strategy Action Plan be adopted to support and deliver the County wide strategy.

Moved by Councillor D Kelly and seconded by Councillor E Watts

**RESOLVED** that Executive adopts the Action Plan, attached to the report as an appendix, for inclusion in the Derbyshire and Derby City Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

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**REASON FOR DECISION:** To support waste reduction, increased diversion and recycling.

**OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED:** Developing the Council's Waste and Recycling Action by way of the Waste Management Strategy Action Plan negated the need to develop the Council's own Waste Strategy.  
(Assistant Director - Streetscene)

### 0484. RENEWAL OF COUNCIL INSURANCE POLICIES 2014

Executive considered a report of Councillor E Watts, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance, which informed Members of the outcome of the insurance tendering process which had been conducted under powers delegated to the Executive Director – Operations.

The Council's insurance contracts were previously awarded in 2011 and expired in September 2014 as part of a three year long term agreement (LTA) with an option to extend for a further two years. Following consultation with the Council's insurance broker, it was considered that it would be more appropriate to retender the contract rather than extend beyond September 2014.

The Council's insurance broker supported the insurance tendering exercise, analysing the tender responses whilst ensuring OJEU compliance and adequate tender cover.

The insurers were asked to tender for a three year LTA with an option to extend by two years, including options to reduce the excess on the majority of policies. The tender was based on 60% price and 40% technical capability and coverage. Policies were split into eight lots.

Tenders were received from Travelers, Aspen, Liberty, RSA, ACM, MAPS, RMP and Zurich Municipal, with the latter two quoting for complete packages of all policies, as well as for individual lots, with the remaining insurers quoting in isolation for policies within lots.

Option D (excluding points 5/6/8, which did not apply) with a three year LTA with two year optional extension, was chosen as the most financially advantageous for the Authority. While this option resulted in higher premiums than Option C, on the basis of the available evidence it was anticipated that the potential savings available from the lower excess of £10,000 would result in this option proving the most financially attractive to the authority.

Moved by Councillor E Watts and seconded by Councillor A Tomlinson.

**RESOLVED** that Executive notes the action of the Executive Director – Operations in continuing to secure the Council Insurance Policies within the framework established by the new long term agreement.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** Option D was considered the most advantageous tender for the Council's requirements.

**OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED:** As set out within the report.  
(Executive Director - Operations)

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### 0485. COMMUNITY COHESION PROJECT UPDATE

Executive considered a report of Councillor E Watts, Leader of the Council, which gave an update on the proposal for a Community Cohesion Officer at Shirebrook and the current funding plan associated with the post.

Back in April 2014 Executive had agreed to contribute up to £20,000 to a post of Community Cohesion Worker over a two year period. The post would seek to tackle some of the underlying tensions within the Shirebrook Community and be based within the Council's Community Safety Team.

Committed funding from various partners amounted to some £71,000 which would help to move the project forward over the period of two years based on the current salary projection. However, it was the view of the Bolsover Partnership Executive Board that the current salary indication was too low and that the postholder would need to be of a high calibre, able to work with key strategic agencies as well as community leaders, and ideally be multi-lingual. It was considered necessary therefore to re-visit the job description and person specification to ensure the resulting grading actively reflected the requirements of the post and attracted a sufficient calibre of candidates. The effect of this possible re-grading was a budget shortfall estimated in the region of £10,000.

Section 1.5 of the report identified a number of options to bridge that shortfall. Having considered the report, Executive felt that it was incumbent upon the Council to bridge the funding gap which would be an extra commitment of £10,000 in addition to the £20,000 already committed.

Concerns were raised by Members in respect of the time taken to take forward this particular project and there was a view that Members were not being kept informed on progress. Officers noted the comments and would feed them back to the appropriate officers.

Moved by Councillor A Tomlinson and seconded by Councillor E Watts.

**RESOLVED** that Bolsover District Council agree to bridge the anticipated funding gap to support the Community Cohesion Worker Post to the sum of £10,000 (in addition to the previous commitment of £20,000) to be taken from the Council's Transition Reserve.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To take forward the Community Cohesion Project and address concerns within the community of Shirebrook.

**OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED:** A number of options were presented within the report but those rejected would have resulted in a shorter term project. The third option would require additional resources to be committed to the project to enable it to run for a minimum of two years.

(Chief Executive)

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### **0486. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RESOLVED** that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the stated Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and it is not in the public interest for that to be revealed.

### **0487. EXEMPT – PARAGRAPHS 1 & 3 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN**

Executive considered a report of Councillor R Bowler, Portfolio Holder for Resources, which advised of the outcome of a consultation process with staff concerning a proposed restructure of the debtors section within the Revenues Team and sought approval to undertake work necessary to secure increased occupancy at The Arc, as well as to conclude agreement to enable the County Council, or other potential tenants, to occupy The Arc on the basis of a long lease.

In respect of the Sundry Debtors Team, it was proposed that the court work from the Senior Recovery Officer post would be removed and transferred to the Senior Recovery Officer within the Council Tax and NNDR Team. Given the proposed shift in duties, the Senior Recovery Officer post and Sundry Debtors would be disestablished with a post of Recovery Officer being created. The second element in the proposed restructure was a post of Billing and Recovery Assistant being replaced by a second post of Billing Officer.

A consultation process with staff had been positive, however, one member of staff who was approaching retirement, had indicated that they would take voluntary redundancy from the Council. Given the restructuring proposals involved the disestablishment of the current post of the officer concerned it would be difficult for the Council to refuse the request without withdrawing the restructuring proposals. On the basis of current information it was anticipated that agreeing to the voluntary redundancy request would incur costs of some £14,000 together with the cost for the early release of pension of £10,000.

In respect of income from letting accommodation, Executive was advised that the Council continued to pursue options for occupancy of part of the building on a long lease. Detailed discussions were taking place with the County Council and it was anticipated that both parties would be making a decision shortly. On the basis of the outline terms that had been negotiated, a long lease from the County Council would make a significant contribution to helping sustain the Council's financial position and open up the opportunity to offer local residents the benefit of more joint services.

In order to let the space officers had already cleared parts of The Arc building. It was recommended that approval be given to officers to continue this process and explore the option in the short term of securing an NNDR refund to reflect the fact that part of the office space would be under-utilised. It was envisaged that the HR Team would relocate to the depot with a limited space retained in The Arc where it was necessary to hold face-to-face meetings.



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In order to make best use of space at The Arc it would be necessary to undertake some work to the building. This may require some reconfiguration of the building, including minor building works. On the basis that a larger tenant was secured then the costs of this work would reach some £50,000 and it was recommended that funding be agreed from the Efficiency Grant in order to enable such work to proceed once any agreements had been entered into. This expenditure was likely to result in financial gains of £100,000 per annum and would contribute significantly to the financial sustainability of the Council.

Moved by Councillor R Bowler and seconded by Councillor E Watts.

**RESOLVED** that:-

- (1) Executive notes the proposals for a restructure of the Debtors Section which had been subject to a consultation process as required by Council policy.
- (2) Executive requests that the Chief Executive amend the staffing establishment to reflect the proposals as set out within the report and agrees to use the Efficiency Grant in order to meet the costs of the associated restructure, amounting to some £24,000 in 2014/15.
- (3) Executive grants delegated powers to the Executive Director – Operations following consultation with the Leader and/or Deputy Leader of the Council to agree the terms of a lease under which Derbyshire County Council or alternative potential tenants would occupy space at The Arc.
- (4) Executive approves a programme of works up to a value of £50,000 for alterations to The Arc and the depot to optimise the use of space in order to enable the Council to secure rental income from space freed up at The Arc, with these costs to be met from the Efficiency Grant.

### **REASON FOR DECISION:**

The reasons for the Sundry Debtors restructure included greater flexibility across the various debtor streams managed by the Council. The work to secure tenants for The Arc would ensure best use of Council assets and enable longer term financial sustainability for the Council.

### **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED:**

In respect of the Sundry Debtors restructure, the other option was to continue with existing arrangements, and whilst these were working in a satisfactory manner, officers were of the view that further improvements could be secured by a restructure of the team which would facilitate improved collection rates. In respect of The Arc there were no alternative options set out in the report.

(Executive Director - Operations)

The meeting concluded at 1115 hours.