

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) held
at 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 4 July 2018

Members: Councillor R Singh (Chair)
Councillor S Bains
Councillor R Brown
Councillor J Clifford
Councillor L Harvard
Councillor K Sandhu
Councillor T Sawdon
Councillor R Thay

Other Members: Councillor J Mutton, Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources

Employees:
People: D Ashmore, A Belingeri, P Ward
Place: V Castree, C Sinclair

Apologies: Councillor R Auluck and K Taylor

Public Business

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2018 were signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

3. Customer Service Update

The Board considered a briefing note which detailed actions being taken to improve customer service.

The programme and current performance of the Customer Services department was last considered by the Audit and Procurement Committee in February 2018, therefore the briefing note focussed on the progress made between February and June 2018. In summary:

- Data showed that the call answer rate had increased from 63% to 72% compared to the previous year.
- Average wait time to answer had fallen from 6.27 minutes to 5.42 minutes.
- Total numbers of calls answered would increase for 2018-19 due to an increase in services that could now be measured.

The briefing note also detailed data on customer feedback from online satisfaction forms. A household survey was conducted in Spring 2018 and an analysis of survey results was currently being undertaken by the Insight Team.

The briefing note indicated that Adult Social Services had made significant improvements in their online offer and these were indicated in the report.

The future programme included:

- Maximising the use of the online platform to support customers to progress transactions within a self-service setting.
- Roll out of customer service monitoring
- Seek ways to further improve productivity
- Review of unified communications

The Board questioned officers and received responses on a number of matters arising from the report including:

- Why the call answer rate, although improved from the previous year, was only 72%
- How many incoming calls by service area
- What was the abandonment rate
- How the City Council compared with other similar local authorities
- How the City Council could make best use of social media to alert the public to potential anticipated issues (for example, messages when bins would not be collected in specific areas) and this would subsequently reduce incoming calls.
- Issues around the current telephony system
- The new recruitment process and staff turnover
- Issues around the current telephone system.

Following consideration, the Board wanted to further explore if there were any service areas that had significantly more calls which would indicate problem areas, and that if the problem(s) were addressed, the call rate would drop off. The Board asked that data be brought to a future meeting showing a breakdown and analysis of calls by service area.

The Board discussed how social media and public broadcasting could be used to its fullest potential to notify members of the public to service announcements or interruptions in advance. Following discussion, officers agreed to liaise with the Head of Communications to consider how to proactively engage using a variety of media. The Chair indicated that should there be any protocols obstructing progress, he would personally champion resolving the issues.

RESOLVED that the Board note the content of the Briefing Note and requested further information to be brought to a future meeting of the Board on the following:

- **Data on calls by service area**
- **Data on abandoned calls**
- **Staff turnover figures for the Contact Centre**
- **Using media to communicate with public**

4. Digital First

The Board considered a briefing note which set out long term plans to improve digital across the Council.

The Digital Coventry Strategy, adopted by Council in February 2017, aimed to set the scene for the City Council and partners for the future direction of digital services, infrastructure and innovation. It recognised that the digital strategy was for the city and not just for the Council. Universities, businesses, residents, public sector organisations, including the NHS and police, the voluntary and community sector would all be progressing digital work and would continue to innovate and devise digital solutions.

The Council's role would be focussed on helping to identify the priorities that would lead to the biggest impacts on economic growth and public service reform – this would include the infrastructure to support digital innovation in the city, providing insight and delivering public service reform directly, including working in a more digital way as a Council and promoting work that will support every resident in the city to benefit from digital change.

The Board welcomed the briefing note and discussed a number of matters including cyber safety and associated issues including compliance with GDPR regulations and data captured by apps. In respect of third party apps, existing and widely used apps were integrated into the City Council's existing systems and business process where appropriate. An example of a third party app that would be use was free public Wi-Fi. People would be prompted to use the Citi-Wise app to long on to the free Wi-Fi. The Chair indicated that our systems are opened up using tools available, to empower and enable citizens. Officers responded that the intention is to look to innovate and to make data as open as possible.

RESOLVED that the Board endorse the approach of delivering the digital infrastructure across the City as an enabler for digital innovation.

5. Work Programme 2018/19

The Work Programme was noted with the following updates:

- 'City of Culture Finance' to be considered in November 2018
- 'Customer Service Improvement' and 'Income Generation' to be considered in December 2018

6. Any other items of Public Business

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 4.15 pm)