



Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1)

Time and Date

10.00 am on Monday, 3rd March, 2014

Place

Committee Rooms 2 and 3 - Council House

Public Business

1. **Apologies and Substitutions**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes**
 - (a) To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2014 (Pages 3 - 8)
 - (b) Matters Arising
4. **Report Back from CIPFA Conference July 2013** (Pages 9 - 12)

Report of the Executive Director, Resources
5. **Strategic Property Review and Council Move to Friargate**

Workshop session for Scrutiny Board Members
6. **Work Programme 2013-14** (Pages 13 - 16)

Report of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator
7. **Outstanding Issues Report**

Outstanding issues have been picked up in the Work Programme
8. **Any other items of Public Business**

Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved
9. **Meeting Evaluation**

Private Business

Nil

Chris West, Executive Director, Resources, Council House Coventry

Friday, 21 February 2014

Notes:1)The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Su Symonds, Governance Services, Council House, Coventry, alternatively information about

this meeting can be obtained from the following web link:

<http://moderngov.coventry.gov.uk>

2) Council Members who are not able to attend the meeting should notify Su Symonds as soon as possible and no later than 9am on the day of the meeting giving their reasons for absence and the name of the Council Member (if any) who will be attending the meeting as their substitute.

3) Scrutiny Board Members who have an interest in any report referred to this meeting, but who are not Members of this Scrutiny Board, have been invited to notify the Chair by 12 noon on the day before the meeting that they wish to speak on a particular item. The Member must indicate to the Chair their reason for wishing to speak and the issue(s) they wish to raise.

Membership: Councillors N Akhtar, K Foster, D Gannon (By Invitation), R Lakha, C Miks, R Sandy (Chair), T Sawdon, H S Sehmi, T Skipper, H Sweet (By Invitation) and S Thomas

Please note: a hearing loop is available in the committee rooms

**If you require a British Sign Language interpreter for this meeting
OR if you would like this information in another format or
language please contact us.**

Su Symonds

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Agenda Item 3a

Coventry City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) held at 10.00 am on Monday, 13 January 2014

Present:

Members: Councillor R Sandy (Chair)
Councillor N Akhtar
Councillor K Foster
Councillor R Lakha
Councillor J Mutton (Substitute for Councillor Miks)
Councillor T Sawdon
Councillor H S Sehmi
Councillor T Skipper
Councillor S Thomas

Other Members: Councillors J Clifford

Employees:

B Black, Resources Directorate
L Commane, Resources Directorate
J Crawley, Resources Directorate
L Knight, Resources Directorate
A Pepper, People Directorate
A Walster, Place Directorate
A West, Resources Directorate

Apologies: Councillor C Miks

Public Business

37. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

38. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th November, 2013 were signed as a true record. Further to Minute 31 headed 'Procurement Strategy', the Board were informed that this report had been endorsed by the Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources) at his meeting on 2nd December, 2013 and that he had received a briefing note outlining issues discussed at the Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board. In relation to Minute 32 headed 'Social Value Act – Consultation', the Board noted that the consultation on the draft policy had concluded just before Christmas and the Board would receive updates in due course.

39. Agency Workers and Interim Managers - 6 Month Performance Report

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Resources which detailed performance information on the use of agency workers procured through the Master Vendor Contract for the quarter two period from 1st July to 30th September, 2013. The report also compared expenditure for the first two quarters of 2013/14 and considered Interim Manager spends for the same periods. The report had previously been considered by the Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources) at his meeting on 2nd December, 2013 (Minute 38/13 refers). It was submitted to the Board in light of recommendations about compliance with policies and governance; the increase in spend since the previous quarter; and the change of Master Vendor provider.

The Master Vendor contract covering the first two quarters required all agency workers to be ordered through Reed Recruitment. They supplied all suitable agency workers through their own agency or through a second tier arrangement with other agencies on behalf of the Council using rates of pay based on an agreed pay policy and a negotiated mark-up rate with Reed. The information supplied by Reed on the agency spends gave detailed information on agency worker usage and spends across the different Council Directorates. These details were set out in appendices attached to the report.

The Board were informed that this contract with the Master Vendor provider ended on 1st December, 2013. The contract, which was a joint contract with Warwickshire and Solihull, transferred to Pertemps UK on 2nd December, 2013. The new contract was for a hybrid Master Vendor arrangement and provided the Council with additional advantages to the previous contract.

Members of the Board questioned the officers and responses were provided. Matters raised included:

- Details about the transition between Master Vendor providers
- Specific issues in parts of the Place Directorate and Children's Social Care identified in the report
- The approaches being taken corporately and within services to put effective recruitment arrangements in place to address posts that had been vacant for a long time, rather than placing continual reliance on agency workers filling the gaps
- Information about working hours of the bank staff used by the Council
- The measures being taken to address the spend on replacing leavers and the arrangements in place for short and long term succession planning in order to reduce this
- The lack of in depth analysis of sickness cover and how better information could be used to target reductions in spend
- The suggestion that, in future, members be provided with the performance data information at an earlier stage
- What was being done to improve the quality of diversity monitoring with the new contract provider
- The position in relation to off contract spend and particularly the extent to which some of this was unauthorised
- Areas of concern and the actions being taken to address the issues of compliance and governance that were the subject of recommendations to the Cabinet Member.

The Board also questioned how the decision to change the master vendor contract following a tendering process from Reed Recruitment to Pertemps had been authorised and it was agreed that this would be reported back at the next meeting.

RESOLVED that:

(i) The six month performance report be accepted.

(ii) A more comprehensive analysis of sickness absence and a more detailed analysis of off contract spend which identified the unauthorised spends to be included in future performance reports.

40. Customer Journey - Vision and Strategy

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Resources which reconfirmed the vision and strategy for the way the Council delivered customer services, which would underpin the changes required prior to the opening of the single Customer Services Centre in Broadgate House by 2015. The programme to deliver the changes to customers facing property, ICT and the Council's ways of working was called 'Customer Journey' and this covered every aspect of the Council's interactions Coventry citizens. The report was also to be considered by the Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources) at his meeting on 20th January, 2014.

The way many residents wished to interact with the Council had changed, which was aligned to the way they interacted with their bank and the Council needed to respond to this need.

The current financial climate meant that the Council needed to ensure that services were as efficient as possible. The focus was on the practical aspects of good customer services – how people wanted to make contact and making this simpler and more cost effective and using new technology to benefit everyone. Part of the planned move to Friargate involved investing in improved customer services which would deliver savings and continue to provide services to the most vulnerable.

The Board questioned the officers on a number of issues and responses were provided. Matters raised included:

- The importance of effective engagement with citizens in designing and testing out new approaches in order to ensure that they would be easy to use
- The current low level of on-line transactions
- The support available to help people move from the current to new ways of accessing services and the timing of this to make sure that people were not left stranded
- The importance of effective management information in designing and developing new approaches and ensuring that managers had the skills to use this effectively
- The measures being put in place to address the significant culture change required for citizens, front line staff and services

- The equality impacts of the changes, both in relation to the physical Customer Services Centre at Broadgate House and other channel of access.
- The requirement to have an equality impact assessment carried out as soon as possible to support the customer journey work
- In light of the aspiration for Coventry to be a dementia friendly city, the inclusion of dementia in the equality impact analysis
- The involvement of Members in the customer journey work, using their experiences of working with their constituents.

The Board were informed of the establishment of a Member Reference Group to support this work of the Council.

RESOLVED that:

(i) The Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources) be requested to: (1) ensure that an equality impact analysis is carried out as soon as possible and (2) ensure that the equality impact analysis addresses the needs of people with dementia.

(ii) That six monthly progress reports on the Customer Journey be submitted to future meetings of the Board.

41. Transformation Programme Progress Report

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Resources which set out what had been achieved in 2013/14 to date with the Transformation Programme and how the Programme was contributing to the significant challenges facing the City Council. The report was also to be considered by the Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources) at his meeting on 20th January, 2014.

The Transformation Programme was launched in June 2009 and its delivery remained a key element of the Council's response to continuing cuts in local government resources. The emphasis on abc (A Bolder Coventry) was to move towards challenging the things the Council needed to consider stopping doing or doing in partnership with others, in particular in high spend areas. Services would be focused on supporting the most vulnerable. The importance and benefits of Kickstarting the Friargate business district by relocating the Council's office estate into the first office building were also outlined.

The financial savings required to be made over the next three years were highlighted. An appendix to the report showed the forecast and budgeted savings for recently completed and live reviews and provided an explanation for variances.

The Board questioned the officer on a number of issues and responses were provided. Matters raised included:

- The reason for the shortfall against the commercial waste review and the opportunities for marketing
- How effectively the Council used the network of services to promote each other, for example through communications on business rates, or how intelligence gathered by Environmental Health could be used to promote commercial waste services where problems were identified

- The reasons for the shortfall against the savings target in the Children, Learning and Young People Review, the impact of this on the medium term financial strategy and the role of and fees paid to external consultants.

RESOLVED that the progress that has been made in delivering specific reviews in the Transformation Programme be noted.

42. Work Programme 2013-14

The Board noted the work programme for 2013-14

43. Outstanding Issues Report

All outstanding issues had been included in the Work Programme, Minute 42 above refers.

44. Any other items of Public Business

There were no additional items of public business.

45. Meeting Evaluation

The Board evaluated the meeting which was viewed as very useful.

(Meeting closed at 11.50 am)

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Coventry City Council

Public report

REPORT BACK ON CONFERENCE/SEMINAR

REPORT TO: Scrutiny Board 1
REPORT OF: Chris West, Executive Director Resources
TITLE: Report back from CIPFA Conference
DATE: 10-11th July 2013
VENUE: London

1. Purpose

The purpose of the report is to give feedback on the CIPFA Conference 2013. Cabinet on 18th June 2013 approved the attendance of Councillor Gannon, a Conservative nominee (Councillor Blundell), the Director of Legal and Finance Services (Chris West) and one additional officer from the Finance and Legal Services Directorate (Barrie Hastie).

2. Background

The CIPFA Annual Conference is an opportunity to network with colleagues, exchange ideas and learn from others by an exciting programme of speakers from across the public services, practical workshops/sessions and a large exhibition where you can view the latest products and services.

Speakers at for the 2013 Conference included:

Jaki Salisbury – CIPFA President
Stephanie Flanders, Broadcast journalist and economics editor
Chuka Umunna MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills
Ben Page, Chief Executive IPSOS Mori
Professor Tony Travers, Chairman, The London Finance Commission
John Pienaar, political correspondent
Lord Heseltine
Mariana Mazzucato, RM Phillips Chair of Science and Technology Policy, University of Sussex Business School

Panel speakers:

Owen Jones, The Independent columnist and author of *Chavs: The Demonization of the Working Class*
Derrick Anderson, CEO, London Borough of Lambeth
Tim Montgomerie, Comment editor, The Times, Conservative blogger and commentator

Lord Sutherland, Chair of Royal Commission into long-term care of the elderly, President Alzheimer Scotland, Action on Dementia and Chair of the English Community Care Association
 Anand Shukla, Chief Executive of Daycare Trust

3. Cost of attending

	Costs Approved by Cabinet/Cabinet Member	Total of Actual Costs
Conference Fees	First delegate £795.00 3 further delegates at £495.00 Total: £2280	
Flights	£0	£0
Additional Travel Expenses	£576.00 (rail tickets)	£552.00 (4 tickets)
Accommodation	£720.00 (x 4 persons)	£560.00 (x4 persons)
Subsistence		

4. Benefits

The annual CIPFA conference is the main event each year for senior Local Government Officers and Members to consider the key strategic issues affecting local government finance. This year's conference took place at a time of significant change for local authorities. Not only are the financial challenges unprecedented and set to get even harder, but the sheer volume of new policy initiatives and fundamental changes to the way in which local government finance works add to the challenge of navigating a way through these difficult times.

The first keynote speaker was broadcaster and journalist Stephanie Flanders who set the current global recession in context and examined how countries recovered from them. Ms Flanders then outlined what she perceived was in store for the UK and its public finances by 2020.

Other keynote speeches which were particularly informative included an analysis of the role of public services in fostering the conditions for prosperity and growth delivered by Chuka Umunna. Ben Page, the Chief Executive of IPSOS Mori, delivered a typically entertaining review of demographic and attitudinal changes in society and Tony Travers delivered a study on the London Finance Commission which was established to help improve the tax and public spending arrangements for London in order to promote jobs and growth.

Following the publication of his 'No Stone Unturned: in pursuit of growth' report for the Department of Business Innovation and Skills, Lord Heseltine presented his key findings and messages for the local government sector. Mr Heseltine's report focuses on a comprehensive plan to improve the UK's economic prospects and makes the case for a major rebalancing of responsibilities for economic development between central and local government, and between government and the private sector.

Lord Heseltine's address very much picked up the key theme of the conference, entitled 'Beyond Austerity', which was that a new response was needed to the financial and policy challenges that lie ahead. It was widely emphasised that the traditional response of looking for ever more efficiency savings would not address the scale of the pressures ahead. Instead local authorities not only needed to be looking at delivering services differently, but that they had a crucial role to play in fostering the conditions to promote economic growth locally which would be vital to securing economic recovery in the longer term.

In addition to the keynote addresses, there were also series of more operational workshops on subjects such as procurement and commissioning, social enterprises, health and social care integration and the challenge for the finance function in local authorities which offered practical insight into how these issues might enable local authorities to be better placed to respond to the difficult financial challenges they face.

Outside of the main conference activities, the opportunity to network and discuss current issues with peers and colleagues proved invaluable. In such an uncertain climate, the opportunity to discuss and understand the strategic financial planning assumptions which peers are making across the country is invaluable and has impacted directly on some of the financial assumptions that we have made at a local level in terms of our Medium Term Financial Strategy and our early work on the budget for 2014/15.

In addition, the opportunity to consider some of the wider strategic policy issues has been instrumental in helping to shape the key strategic thinking at officer level as we develop plans for the ABC programme, our City Deal, the Friargate development and the various other economic growth initiatives that are being developed locally.

List of background papers

Proper Officer: Executive Director, Resources

Author: Barry Hastie

Tel Number: 024 7683 3710

(Any enquiries should be directed to the above)

Other contributors:

Papers open to public inspection: Nil

Description of paper: Report Back on Conference/Seminar

Location: CH60

Approved by Cabinet on: 18 June 2013

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Finance Corporate and Services Scrutiny Board (1) Work Programme 2013/14

29 July 2013

abc Transformation Programme Progress Report
Income Generation Policy

2 September 2013

Money Matters
CLYP ABC Review

7 October 2013

Strategic Property Review and Council move to Friargate
Medium Term Financial Strategy

25 November 2013

Procurement Strategy
Social Value Policy

13 January 2014

Customer Journey
abc Transformation Programme Progress Report
Half yearly reports on agency workers/sickness absence

3 March 2014

Strategic Property Review and Council move to Friargate

14 April 2014

TBC

Dates to be confirmed

ACL
Pension Fund
Electoral Registration
Business Services Review – progress report
Review of Bailiffs Guidelines
Progress update on Services to Schools
Legal Services Costs and Income
Customer Journey
Half yearly reports on agency workers/sickness absence
Half yearly report on Benefits Service Performance
Half yearly report on Revenues Service performance

Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) Work Programme 2013/14

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Meeting	Work programme item	Lead officer	Brief Summary of the issue
29 July 2013	abc Transformation Programme Progress Report	Adrian West	To scrutinise progress on the abc Transformation Programme during 2012/13.
	Income Generation Policy		
2 September 2013	Money Matters	Barrie Hastie	To scrutinise the Money Matters review including the implementation of the new financial system.
	CLYP ABC Review	Andy Pepper/ Isabel Merrifield	To look at the review process, why delays have been made in making savings and whether lessons can be learnt from this review, regarding the methodology.
7 October 2013	Strategic Property Review and Council move to Friargate	Nigel Clews, Lisa Commane	The Strategic Property review and Council relocation to the Friargate development have significant implications for the Council's transformation journey and use of resources.
	Medium Term Financial Strategy	Paul Jennings	For the Scrutiny Board to comment on, and make recommendations about, the MTFs before it goes to Cabinet.
25 November 2013	Procurement Strategy	Liz Welton	To scrutinise the development and progress of the procurement strategy.
	Social Value Policy	Jenni Venn	To participate in the consultation on the Council's proposed Social Value Policy, which is due to go to Cabinet Member in January 2014.
13 January 2014	Customer Journey	Lisa Commane/ Chris West/ Belinda Black	To review vision and plans for Customer Journey programme under Kickstart.
	abc Transformation Programme Progress Report	Lisa Commane	To scrutinise progress on the abc Transformation Programme since the last report in July.
	Half yearly reports on agency workers/sickness absence	Jane Crawley	A regular update on progress on reducing staff sickness and use of agency staff across the Council
3 March 2014	Strategic Property Review and Council move to Friargate	Nigel Clews, Lisa Commane	To review progress on the Strategic Property Review and Council relocation to the Friargate development following discussion at the 7 th October Board meeting.
14 April 2014	TBC		

Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) Work Programme 2013/14

Meeting	Work programme item	Lead officer	Brief Summary of the issue
Dates to be confirmed	ACL	Chris West	Item to be scheduled at an appropriate time, following the judicial review.
	Pension Fund	Chris West	To scrutinise, at an appropriate time, changes to the pension fund.
	Electoral Registration	Liz Reed	To look at the number of registered voters for the 2014 elections and to consider the planned changes from 2015 when the Electoral Registration process is being changed from household registration to individual electoral registration in 2015. Also to consider the sale of details from the electoral register.
	Business Services Review – progress report	Doran Pierce	SCRUCO looked at the evaluation report on 20th February 2013. This set out a series of recommendations which aimed to build the foundations of the future shape the service and assist in securing additional savings. It's recommended that scrutiny review progress is 6 months (August 2013).
	Review of Bailiffs Guidelines	Helen Harding	A review of the policy which provides guidelines to how Council appointed bailiffs deal with vulnerable people, and how the Council monitor how the guidelines are adhered.
	Progress update on Services to Schools	David Haley	An update on progress on how services are becoming more commercial in marketing themselves to schools and also progress on full-cost recovery where this hasn't already happened. Report expected June/July 2013
	Legal Services Costs and Income	Christine Forde	To review opportunities to reduce external legal spend and increase income generation opportunities from the service.
	Customer Journey	Lisa Commane/ Belinda Black	To review 6 monthly progress on the Kickstart Customer Journey programme following discussion at the Board on 13 th January 2014.
Update reports – to be circulated with agendas for information only			
Date to be confirmed	Half yearly reports on agency workers/sickness absence	Shokat Lal	A regular update on progress on reducing staff sickness and use of agency staff across the Council <i>NB Half yearly report on sickness absence considered by the</i>

Meeting	Work programme item	Lead officer	Brief Summary of the issue
			<i>Cabinet Member Strategic Finance and Resources 2nd December 2013 – Chair of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board reviewed and decided not to bring report to Board.</i>
	Half yearly report on Benefits Service Performance	Tim Savill	A regular update on progress on performance in the benefits service. <i>NB Half yearly report considered by the Cabinet Member Strategic Finance and Resources 2nd December 2013 – Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered key issues as part of their 11th December meeting on Welfare Reform.</i>
	Half yearly report on Revenues Service performance	Jan Evans	A regular update on progress on performance in the revenues service. <i>NB Half yearly report considered by the Cabinet Member Strategic Finance and Resources 2nd December 2013 – Chair of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board reviewed and decided not to bring report to Board.</i>