

CABINET MEMBER (STRATEGIC FINANCE AND RESOURCES)

13th March, 2013

Cabinet Member

Present: - Councillor Duggins

Shadow Cabinet Member

Present: - Councillor Blundell

Employees Present: - H. Abraham (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
J. Crawley (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
J. Evans (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
S. Iannantuoni (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)
P. Jennings (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
J. Smith (Finance and Legal Services Directorate)
S. Symonds (Customer and Workforce Services Directorate)

44. Apologies

There were no apologies.

45. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

46. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th December, 2012 were signed as a true record.

47. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

48. Second Quarter Hospitality Statement for the Mayoralty of Councillor Tim Sawdon 2012/13

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Customer and Workforce Services which summarised the actual expenditure for the second quarter of Councillor Sawdon's Mayoral year, together with the estimated expenditure for the third quarter.

The report indicated that the start year budget for the Mayoralty was £65,595. Total spend to 16th November 2012 was £24,644, equating to 38% of the total budget. Although the amount was slightly above average for the same period for the previous three years, the budget was expected to break even at the end of the mayoral year.

RESOLVED that after due consideration of the report and the matters raised at the meeting, the Cabinet Member approved the contents of the report which described how the hospitality budget was spent on an event-by-event basis

49. City Council Contribution to Funding of Davis Cup Event in the City

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Finance and Legal Services concerning a commitment for the City Council to make a financial contribution of £50,000 towards the hosting of the Davis Cup tennis event which was scheduled to take place at the Ricoh Arena between 5th and 7th April 2013. The Davis Cup was a world-class tennis event that represented an opportunity to raise the profile of Coventry on a national and international stage. The hosting of a sporting event such as this also sat well alongside the Council's stated aim of building on the legacy from being a co-host for London 2012 as well as encouraging people to take part in sport and physical activity.

RESOLVED that after due consideration of the report and matters raised at the meeting, the Cabinet Member approve retrospectively a contribution of £50,000 from corporate resources to support the Davis Cup tennis event to be held in the city in April 2013

50. The Exercise of Delegated Authority in the Write-off of Debt Owing to the Authority in 2012/13

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Finance and Legal Services in respect of the write-off of debts owing to the authority in the financial year ending 31st March 2012. A range of measures were employed to ensure that every effort was made to maximise the collection of all income and debt owed to the Council. In certain circumstances it was appropriate and necessary to write off debts owing to the Council. Robust processes were in place within the Revenues and Benefits Service to ensure that debt was written off and authorised in accordance with the Council's rules of delegated authority.

The level of debt written off during 2012/13 was expected to total £5.37 million. A significant proportion of the figure was the £3.04 million of business rates debt forecast to be written off by the end of March 2013. The need to write off significant amounts of business rates had arisen as a result of government-led technical changes to business rates and local authority funding which meant the Council would bear the cost of any debts written off after 1 April 2013.

RESOLVED that after due consideration of the report and matters raised at the meeting, the Cabinet Member:

- (1) Review the level of write-offs authorised under delegated authority**
- (2) Note that the level of debt written off during 2012/13 will exceed £3.5 million**
- (3) Agree to receive a further report at the first meeting of the new municipal year 2013/14 to provide an update for the period April 2012 to March 2013**

51. 9 month (April-December 2012) Cumulative Sickness Absence 2012/13

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Customer and Workforce Services regarding the cumulative sickness absence for the 9 month period from April to December 2012 and the actions being taken to manage absence and promote health work across the Council.

The annual and quarterly information was based on full time equivalent (FTE) average days lost per person against the FTE average days per person available for work. This was the method that was previously required by the Audit Commission for annual Best Value performance indicator reporting. The City Council continued to use this method to ensure consistency with previously published data.

The quarter 3 projected annual cost of sickness absence for all employees stood at £0.7m above the target cost. This was broken down into all employees except teachers projecting £0.1m above target cost and teachers projecting £0.6m above target cost.

RESOLVED that after due consideration of the report and the matters raised at the meeting, the Cabinet Member receive the report providing sickness absence data for the 9 month period of April – December 2012 and accept the actions taken to monitor and manage sickness

52. Agency Workers and Interim Managers – Performance Management Report Quarter 3 (1 October to 31 December 2012)

The Cabinet Member received a report of the Director of Customer and Workforce Services regarding the use of agency workers procured through the Master Vendor Contract for the quarter 3 period, 1 October to 31 December 2012. The report compared information for quarter 3 with that for quarter 2, and considered Interim Manager spends for the same period.

The Master Vendor contract required all agency workers to be ordered through Reed Recruitment and came into force on 2 May 2011. Information supplied by Reed on agency spend gave detailed information on agency worker usage and spends.

RESOLVED that after due consideration of the report and matters raised at the meeting, the Cabinet Member:

- (1) Require monitoring processes to continue for both agency workers and interim managers**
- (2) Ensure compliance with the corporate policy on the recruitment of temporary agency workers through the Master Vendor, Reed Recruitment, and interim managers through the Preferred Suppliers List**
- (3) Continue to work towards reducing expenditure on the use of agency workers**
- (4) That future orders are not accepted if no reason is given for the need for the agency worker**

53. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues.

54. Any other Business

The Cabinet Member considered the Attendance at Conference Form which sought approval for Councillor John Mutton, the Leader of the Council; Jenni Venn, Assistant Director (Policy, Partnership and Performance); and Laura Elliott, Arts

Development Service to attend a delegation to Volgograd from 8th-12th May 2013.

RESOLVED, that after due consideration of the report and the matters raised at the meeting the Cabinet Member gave approval for the following to attend a delegation to Volgograd from 8th-12th May 2013:-

**Councillor John Mutton, Leader of the Council
Jenni Venn, Assistant Director (Policy, Partnership and Performance)
Laura Elliott, Arts Development Officer**

(Note: the meeting closed: 2.25 p.m.)