

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources)
held at 2.00 pm on Monday, 30 June 2014

Present:

Members: Councillor D. Gannon (Cabinet Member)
Councillor T Sawdon (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Employees: J Crawley, H Peacocke, T Savill and D Skinner,
Resources Directorate.

Public Business

1. **Apologies**

None

2. **Declarations of Interest**

None

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes from 28 April were confirmed by the Cabinet Member and signed as a true record.

4. **Performance within the Revenues Service for the period April 2013 - March 2014**

The Cabinet Member reviewed a report from The Executive Director, Resources on performance and developments within the revenues service during the financial year 2013/14. The service collected more than £105 million of Council Tax from 136,000 domestic properties, more than £116 million of non-domestic rates from 8,000 properties and more than £90 million of corporate income. The percentage collections were 95.6 per cent of Council Tax, 97.8 per cent of Business Rates and reduced Council Tax arrears by 37.8 per cent during 2013/14.

The service reduced the level of corporate debt outstanding for more than six months and maintained the level of housing benefit overpayment debt in 2013/14.

The Cabinet Member asked for details of the increase of £4M collected in Council tax.

The Cabinet member noted the increase of £3M in business rates collected and the fact that the Council can retain £1.5M of this increase.

Payments by direct debits were up 1% and the Service was preparing a report on ways to increase this.

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

- 1) Notes the performance of the revenues service for the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014;**
- 2) Agrees to receive a further report at the meeting of 21 October 2014 to provide an update for the period April 2014 to September 2014.**
- 3) Receives a report on ways to increase payments by Direct Debits, and**
- 4) Receives a breakdown on the increase in Council Tax collection.**

5. Performance within the Benefits Service for the period April 2013 - March 2014

The Cabinet Member received a report from the Executive Director, Resources, on performance and developments within the benefits service during the financial year 2013/14. The service administered more than £162 million to around 40,000 households. The average new claim for housing benefit and council tax support was processed in 23 days and processed the average notification of a change in circumstances for Housing Benefit in 12.2 days.

The Cabinet Member noted how the service had managed the changes from Council Tax Benefit to Council Tax Support and the changes in Welfare Reform during the year.

The Cabinet member noticed the 14% increase in phone calls answered and asked for a report on repeat callers.

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

- 1) Notes the performance of the benefits service for the period 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014**
- 2) Agrees to receive a further 2) report to provide an update for the period April 2014 to September 2014, and**
- 3) Receives a report dealing with repeat callers.**

6. Agency Workers and Interim Managers - Performance Management Report Quarter 4 (1 January to 31 March 2014) with a final summary of 2013/14 compared with 2012/13.

The Cabinet Member received a report from the Executive Director, Resources, on performance information on the use of agency workers procured through the Master Vendor Contract for the Q4 period 1 January to 31 March 2014 and comparing Q3 2013/14 with Q4 2013/14 expenditure. The report also compared the final figures on agency workers for 2013/14 with the previous year 2012/13 and Interim Manager spends for the same periods which were now procured through National Framework Agreement RM692.

The Cabinet Member noted that there had been a significant increase in agency workers in Children's Services and the Council was undertaking a recruitment drive for experienced social workers.

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

- 1. Approves monitoring processes to continue for both Agency workers and Interim Managers**
 - 2. Endorses compliance with the corporate policy on the recruitment of Temporary Agency Workers through the Master Vendor, Pertemps, for the Q4 period and Interim managers**
 - 3. Reviews the yearly spends on agency workers for the period April 2013 to March 2014**
 - 4. Instructs officers to continue to work towards reducing expenditure on the use of agency workers.**
 - 5. Approves that future orders are not accepted if no reason is given for the need for the agency worker**
- 7. Any other items of public business which the Cabinet Member decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.**

None.

(Meeting closed at 2.45 pm)