

## Coventry City Council

### Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources)

held at 2.00 pm on Monday, 8 December 2014

Present:

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

Employees: Jas Bilen, Jane Crawley, Karen Gist, Shokat Lal,  
Hugh Peacocke and Joy Smith  
(All Resources Directorate)

#### **Public Business**

16. **Apologies**

None

17. **Declarations of Interest**

None

18. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the Cabinet Member meeting held on 20 September were confirmed and signed as a true record

19. **The six month (April - September 2014) Cumulative Sickness Absence 2014/15**

The Cabinet Member received a report from the Executive Director, Resources, on the levels of sickness absence for the 6 month period of April - September 2014 and the actions being taken to manage absence and promote health at work across the City Council.

The Cabinet Member was satisfied that the performance was moving in the right direction and requested more quarter to quarter and year on year comparisons in future reports.

The meeting discussed the difficulties relating to work-related stress issues and recommended manager training, where required, in this area.

**RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources) notes the sickness absence data for the 6 month period of April – September 2014 and endorses the actions taken to monitor and manage sickness.**

20. **Agency Workers and Interim Managers - Performance Management Report Quarter 2 (1 July to 30 September 2014).**

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 Q2 period 1 July to 30 September 2014, comparing Q1 2014/15 with Q2 2014/15 expenditure. There was also data on interim manager spends for the same periods which were procured through National Framework Agreement RM692 along with any additional off contract spends across the authority.

The meeting noted that there was a slight decrease across the Council, except for the People Directorate, which was effected by issues regarding children's social workers.

The meeting noted that improved succession management arrangements might reduce the need for interim managers.

**RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources):**

- 1) Approves that the monitoring processes 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 Q2 period, Interim managers and any off contract spends**
- 3) Instructs officers to continue to work towards reducing expenditure on the use of agency workers.**
- 4) Approves that future orders are not accepted if no reason is given for the need for the agency worker**

21. **Performance within the Revenues Service for the period April 2014 - September 2014**

The Cabinet Member received a report from the Executive Director, Resources, on performance and developments within the revenues service during the period April to September 2014.

It was noted that:

- Council Tax collection rates were on target and also the target to reduce arrears by 40 per cent
- There was a significant increase in the number of cases referred to enforcement agencies
- Business rates collection had been effected by the government allowing payment over 12 months rather than ten
- Housing benefit overpayment debt increased but is being tackled following a service restructure (it is nowhere near the Government's threshold figure)

**RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources):**

- 1) Notes the performance of the revenues service for the period 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014;**
- 2) Agrees to receive a further report at the first meeting of the 2015/16 municipal calendar to provide an update for the period April 2014 to March 2015.**

**22. Performance within the Benefits Service for the period 1 April 2014 - 30 September 2014**

The Cabinet Member received a report from the Executive Director, Resources, on performance and developments within the benefits service for the period April to September 2014.

**RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources):**

- 1) Endorses the performance of the benefits service for the period 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014.**
- 2) Agrees to receive a further report at the first meeting of the 2015/16 municipal calendar to provide an update for the financial year 2014 - 15.**

**23. Proposed voluntary ban on the release of sky lanterns from Coventry City Council owned land hired for events, or events organised and/or funded by Coventry City Council**

The Cabinet Member received a report from the Executive Director, Resources, proposing a voluntary ban prohibiting the release of sky lanterns at Council run events, events that are undertaken on City Council owned land or funded by the Council.

**RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources):**

- 1) Approves the application of a voluntary ban on the use of sky lanterns at all City Council organised events or events that are undertaken on City Council owned land or funded by the Council.**
- 2) Requires that event contracts clearly stipulate at procurement and tendering stage that the use of sky lanterns are not permitted, and that this be communicated through the Assistant Director for Communities and Health and the Events Safety Advisory Group and enforced through the procurement process.**
- 3) Directs that signs prohibiting the use of sky lanterns be erected at appropriate locations on lands owned by the City Council.**

(Meeting closed at 2.48pm)