

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources
held at 10.00 am on Thursday, 15 December 2016

Present:

Members: Councillor J Mutton (Cabinet Member)
Councillor J Lepoidevin (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Other Members: Councillor L Kelly (Chair of the Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board)

Employees:

Resources: B Barrett, S Bennett, P Johnson, H Joyce, S McGinty, L Welton, C West, A White

Place: L Shannon, J Venn Morton

Public Business

19. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

20. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 October, 2016 were signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

21. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

RESOLVED that approval be given to exclude the press and public under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 for consideration of the private matter contained in Minute 29 below relating to “Complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman” on the grounds that that item involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A of that Act, as it contains information relating to the identity of an individual.

22. **Progress Report on Delivery of the Social Value Policy and Procurement Strategy**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of Resources on the delivery of the Procurement Strategy through the Procurement Board. It was a constitutional requirement that this be reported to the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources.

The Sub Regional Procurement Strategy 2015-2020 was adopted by the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources on 7 December 2015. The Social Value Policy was adopted by Full Cabinet on the 11 February 2014 and

incorporated the Public Service (Social Value) Act 2012 that came into force on 31 January 2013. The report detailed how the delivery of the Social Value Policy had been incorporated into the delivery of the Procurement Strategy and the outcomes that have been achieved.

The Cabinet Member questioned officers on aspects of the report in particular in relation to how duplication is avoided and the procedures that are in place to ensure invoices are checked before payment.

The Cabinet Member noted that the Finance and Corporate Service Scrutiny Board (1) had considered the report at their meeting on 30 November, 2016 and had not made any further recommendations in respect of the report.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member notes progress made against the Social Value Policy and Procurement Strategy and recommends that the Council continues to support the delivery against these mechanisms.

23. **Agency Workers and Interim Managers - Performance Management Report Quarter 2 (1 July to 30 September 2016)**

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources considered a report of the Executive Director of Resources which provided performance information on the use of agency workers procured for the Q2 period 1 July to 30 September 2016; which compared Q2 2016/17 with Q1 2016/17 expenditure; and which detailed Interim Manager and other agency worker spends for the same period.

Appendix 1 to the report showed the total expenditure over time on agency workers by Directorates up to and including Q2 2016/17 for spends with the Master Vendor supplier, Pertemps, including for interims. Appendix 2 to the report showed the justification of new orders placed by Directorates for agency workers during Q2 2016/17 which resulted in spend with Pertemps. Appendix 3 to the report showed equalities data for workers supplied through the Pertemps contract.

The Cabinet Member welcomed the general trend in relation to the use of agency workers and questioned officers on aspects of the report, particularly in relation to the hiring of casual/temporary workers and the possibility of the Council creating its own "pool" of such workers.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategic Resources:-

- 1) Approves that 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.**
- 3) Instructs officers to continue to work towards reducing expenditure on the use of agency workers.**

- 4) **Requests that officers provide an update in the next quarterly report on progress made to establish a City Council pool of temporary/casual workers**

24. **6 Month (April-September 2016) Cumulative Sickness Absence 2016-2017**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of Resources which provided information regarding the levels of sickness absence for the 6 month period April-September 2016. The report also detailed actions being taken to manage absence and promote health at work across the City Council.

In light of the general downward trend, the report recommended that future reports be submitted to the Cabinet Member on a half yearly basis, with the next report being a year- end report. The Cabinet Member requested that any change to the general downward trend be reported to him immediately.

RESOLVED:-

- 1) **That the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources notes the report providing sickness absence data for the 6 month period of April to September, 2016 and endorses the actions taken to monitor and manage sickness.**
- 2) **That future reports on cumulative sickness absence levels be submitted on a six monthly basis, and that the next report be a year end report.**
- 3) **That the Cabinet Member be advised immediately of any change to the current general downward trend.**

25. **Complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman 2015/16**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Public Health which set out the number and trends of complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) in 2015/16, the corresponding outcomes, as well as comparisons to the trends in 2014/15.

A corresponding private report detailing confidential matters relating to individuals was also submitted for consideration (Minute 29 below refers)

Nationally the LGO received 19,702 complaints and enquiries in 2015/16. In Coventry, the LGO received 109 complaints and enquiries relating to Coventry City Council. This was similar to the number recorded in 2014/15 (110 complaints). The report detailed complaints received by category and by service area.

Of the 109 complaints received, 22 were investigated, of which 11 were upheld. The report outlined details of those cases upheld, together with action taken on a range of actions to respond to the faults identified.

The Cabinet Member questioned officers on aspects of the report, particularly in relation to improvements to processes and training provided for officers.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources:-

- 1) Notes the Council's performance in relation to complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman**
- 2) Requests the Audit and Procurement Committee to review and be assured that the Council takes appropriate action in response to complaints investigated and where the Council is found to be at fault.**
- 3) Requests that future reports on Complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman be considered by the Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership**

26. Outstanding Issues Report

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of Resources that identified those issues on which further reports had been requested and were outstanding so that progress could be monitored.

RESOLVED that officers be requested to investigate if there is still an issue regarding the length of time it takes to carry out DBS checks for newly appointed social workers and if there is an unreasonable delay, to write to the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding this matter.

27. Any Other Items of Urgent Public Business

There were no items of urgent public business.

28. Coventry City Council's Workforce Strategy 2016-2020

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of Resources appended to which was the Coventry City Council's Workforce Strategy 2016-2020 for approval.

The Strategy outlines the way forward for the workforce over the next four years. It outlined the following key strategies:-

- **Planning** - Meeting the challenge of a fast-moving public sector environment where flexibility and adaptability will be key to ensuring the successful delivery of services. Ensuring our workforce, at all levels, reflects the city's diverse communities.
- **Supporting** – To have a committed, proud and engaged workforce, where stakeholders such as Trade Unions play an important part. A fair pay and reward strategy that is transparent and flexible. Employees are properly recognised for their hard work and good performance. A commitment to supporting employees on important issues like health and safety and wellbeing.

- **Enabling** – Supporting employees with rapid change in culture and mind-set to demonstrate a clear commitment to embracing digital innovation. Kickstart facilitates the workforce to adopt new ways of working, by working in shared space with new technology, increased agility and smarter working, with around 2,000 employees moving to a new building at Friargate in summer 2017.
- **Transforming** – Achieving the best possible leadership and management at every level through strong and committed leadership and using our behaviours framework. A flexible, talented and committed public service workforce who can work together across services and boundaries inside and outside the Council.

The Cabinet Member noted that the Strategy would be considered by the Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) at their meeting on 25 January, 2017.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources:-

- 1) **Approves the 2016-2020 Coventry City Council Workforce Strategy as appended to the report**
- 2) **Agrees that any comments or Recommendations received following consideration of the Strategy by the Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) at their meeting on 25 January, 2017 will be taken into account.**

29. **Complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman 2015/16**

Further to Minute 25 above the Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Public Health which detailed confidential matters in relation to complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources:-

- 1) **Notes the Council's performance in relation to complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman**
- 2) **Requests the Audit and Procurement Committee to review and be assured that the Council takes appropriate action in response to complaints investigated and where the Council is found to be at fault.**
- 3) **Requests that future reports on Complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman be considered by the Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership**

30. **Any Other Items of Urgent Private Business**

There were no items of urgent private business.

(Meeting closed at 11.15 am)

