

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) held
at 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 9 November 2022

Present:

Members: Councillor R Auluck (Chair)
Councillor J Blundell
Councillor R Lakha
Councillor J Lepoidevin
Councillor J McNicholas
Councillor S Nazir
Councillor E Ruane
Councillor T Sawdon

Other Members: Councillor R Brown, Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources

Employees:

Law and Governance: R Amor, V Castree, O Aremu, C Sinclair

Human Resources: G Haynes, J McGinley, S Ward

Apologies: Councillor B Gittins

Public Business

12. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

13. Minutes

(a) The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2022 were signed as a true record.

(b) Matter Arising – Minute 8 (HR Update – People Plan 2019-2022):
It was raised that the Board's request for information on the City Council's vacancy rate had not yet been provided. It was agreed that this information be emailed to Members as soon as possible.

14. Social Value and Procurement

The Board considered a briefing note which provided an update on the progress being made by Legal and Procurement Services with regards to the capture, management and reporting of Social Value, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and Contract Management.

In the Levelling Up white paper, the Government had signalled its intention to "legislate to put social value at the heart of government spending – weaving a thread of social improvement and civic responsibility through the UK Government's

£300bn annual expenditure on procurement”. The intention was that delivering Social Value would significantly contribute towards the delivery of Levelling Up.

Following the publication of the Council’s new Social Value and Sustainability Policy, there had been a clear strategic case for the need for social value to be embedded and become a core focus in our procurement. It had been agreed internally that ownership of the policy would sit with the Director for Business, Investment and Culture and would be aligned with the work undertaken by the Economic Development Team.

Notwithstanding, Legal and Procurement Services still had a big role to play in the development, implementation, management and reporting of social value through the following:

- Ensuring that the review of the Procurement Strategy aligns with the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government 2022 and the forthcoming Procurement Bill; and
- by maximising in contractual terms, the social value commitments which align to the Council’s Social Value and Sustainability Policy, other associated strategies and One Coventry Plan.

The Board questioned Officers on a number of matters including progress on the City Council’s aim to become a living wage employer, how much control the City Council had in terms of ensuring sub-contract employers meet the living wage criteria and what was the cost.

Following discussion, the Board asked for an update on the current status of the City Council’s aim to become an Accredited Living Wage employer.

RESOLVED that the Board:

- 1) Support the development of a suite of Themes Outcomes and Measures (“TOMs”) calculators for inclusion in all appropriate Council procurement activity in relation to goods, services and works as outlined in paragraphs 3.1.6 through to 3.1.11. in the briefing note.**
- 2) Support the proposal to establish a baseline of diversity data within the supply chain, targeted engagement and reporting process as outlined in paragraphs 3.2.2 to 3.2.11 of the briefing note, to deliver against the aims of the Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.**
- 3) Note the ongoing review of the Council’s Contract Management Framework and contract management provision to support robust monitoring and reporting of contractual performance.**

15. Recruitment & Selection and Tribepad - the Council’s Applicant Tracking System

The Board considered a briefing note which provided information on the Recruitment & Selection EDI monitoring data at the application, shortlisting and appointment stages of the recruitment process in respect of the three groups of employees who had been identified as being under-represented across the Council.

In 2019 the Council signed up to the West Midlands Combined Authority's (WMCA) Inclusive Leadership Pledge which asked senior leaders to commit to promoting diversity and to embedding inclusivity into our organisation's ethos and culture so that every employee had a fair opportunity in recruitment, promotion and progression.

In December 2020 the Council launched its Workforce Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and as part of the strategy the composition of the workforce was analysed. Details of the analyses were shown in the briefing note. The information gathered identified that there were three key under-presented groups of employees within the workforce, and that there was more work to do to ensure that the workforce better reflected the diverse communities that the Council served. This data provided a focus for the work going forward.

To support the Council's diversity & inclusion ambitions and to act as an enabler to this process, the Council had successfully procured a new ATS known as Tribepad in 2020. Through the implementation of the Tribepad system the Council was able to introduce an anonymised process whereby all personal information and any information which might identify an applicant is removed which ensured that applicants were shortlisted solely on the criteria for the role. According to the Greater London Authority (2020), evidence showed that ethnic minority job applicants were less likely to be successful based on the personal information they provide on application forms or CVs, such as their name and where they live.

Tribepad had enabled a step change in our ability to deliver anonymised recruitment as it encrypted candidate personal details until after interview invites had been sent. Hiring Manager self service facilities reduced duplication of work as Managers were able to complete tasks themselves in the system, rather than fill in forms to send to Resourcing to undertake the tasks. Managers could see at a glance any internal candidates whose jobs were currently at risk, or who were redeployees, and candidates with disabilities. In general, the facilities in Tribepad had helped to reduce time to hire and improve the recruitment processes. Positive feedback had been received from both candidates and hiring managers.

As part of the presentation, the Board were given a demonstration of 'Tribepad' showing the system from both an applicant and a manager perspective.

The Board questioned Officers and received responses on a number of matters including what the aim of anonymised recruiting was and how its success was measured. In response, the Board noted that the system helped in ensuring a fair opportunity for all and the recruitment of the best person for the job. It was acknowledged however that when it came to the interview process, work needed to be done and that was in hand through training and reviewing interviewee feedback.

In addition, the following were part of the ongoing recruitment and selection initiatives:

- Advertising on diversity job board
- Relaunching Council's Careers landing pages
- 'Recruiting for workforce diversity' training

- Diversity and Inclusion data monitoring using Tribepad

In respect of the recruiting for workforce diversity training, the Board asked that all Members be offered this training specifically for their role as school governors who sat on recruitment panels or those who are involved in the appointment to City Council senior manager posts.

RESOLVED that the Board note the contents of the Briefing Note and request that Members have the opportunity to undertake the ‘Recruiting for workforce diversity’ training.

16. **Work Programme and Outstanding Issues**

The Board noted the Work Programme.

17. **Any other items of Public Business**

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 3.40 pm)