Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) held at 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 11 January 2023

Present:

Members: Councillor R Auluck (Chair)

                             Councillor J Blundell
                             Councillor B Gittins
                             Councillor S Keough (substitute for Councillor J Lepoidevin)
                             Councillor R Lakha
                             Councillor J McNicholas
                             Councillor S Nazir
                             Councillor E Ruane
                             Councillor T Sawdon

Other Members: Councillor R Brown, Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources
                             Councillor P Hetherton, Cabinet Member for City Services
                             Councillor G Lloyd, Deputy Cabinet Member for City Services

Employees:

  Law and Governance: V Castree, C Sinclair

  Human Resources: S Newing

  Customer & Business   A Bellingeri, L Waller
  Services:

  Health & Well-being: Rachel Chapman

  ICT & Digital: A Simmonds, P Ward

Apologies: Councillor J Lepoidevin

Public Business

18.   Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

19.   Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2022 were signed as a true record.

Matters Arising

The Board noted that in respect of Minute 15 (Recruitment & Selection and Tribepad)
a) Recruiting for workforce diversity was being taken as a discussion item at the Member Training Panel
b) A City Council structure chart and West Midlands vacancy data, which had been requested had now been circulated to members.

20. **ICT and Digital Update**

The Board considered a briefing note and presentation which provided an update on the ICT and Digital service and Strategy.

Updates were given on the following:
- Overview of progress towards the strategy
- Assurance investment and return
- Benchmarking to other similar authorities
- How fit for purpose ICT and Digital was for internal and external communications
- Integration between hardware and users
- Direction of travel, in particular, where was the biggest investment needed?

The following examples of progress were given:
- 2 data centres which were a fundamental part of the ICT & Digital infrastructure
- Relocation of Secondary data centre
- Establishment of a new co-located data facility with a strategic partner
- Moved servers, networking infrastructure and critical network connections
- Tested and improved overall resilience
- No downtime during the changes
- The offer of greater resilience at a lover level running cost

The Board questioned Officers and received responses on a number of matters relating to the presentation including:
- Digitising historical records
- Sharing IT services

In addition, the Board asked officers for an update on progress on the implementation of a caseworker software programme for Members and following discussion, the Board agreed that this was a matter of priority and would make a recommendation to the Cabinet Member that this be considered as such.

Following discussion, the Board asked for further information on:
- Details of the ICT budget for technology
- A copy of the Customer satisfaction survey
- Details of any shared IT services
- Information on data collected and opportunities to use it centrally

The Board resolved:
a) **To note progress and future plans, including opportunities for engagement with scrutiny and for the digital inclusion workstream to enhance the lives of the City's residents through greater use of technology.**
b) **To recommend to the Cabinet Member for City Services that a Member casework tool be introduced as soon as possible.**

21.   **Digital Inclusion**

The Board received a briefing note and presentation which provided an update on the digital inclusion element of Coventry Connects.

In January 2022, initial information was shared with the Board on the emerging thinking around Coventry Connects. The briefing had introduced a number of different themes which would change the organisations approach to engagement with residents and identified digital inclusion as a specific programme focus. The presentation proved an update on progress.

The presentation included information on:
- The importance of digital inclusion
- Data on those most likely to be digitally excluded
- Connectivity
- Devices – developing projects
- Support and skills

The Board questioned Officers and received responses on a number of matters including
- Assistance for low-income families
- Working with partners and community groups

RESOLVED that the Board note the progress to date and future plans, including opportunities for engagement with scrutiny, for the digital inclusion workstream to enhance the lives of the City's residents through greater use of technology.

22.   **Work Programme and Outstanding Issues**

The Board noted the Work Programme.

There were no outstanding issues.

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

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 4.10 pm)