

CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - THURSDAY, 2 MARCH 2023

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET,
BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON THURSDAY, 2 MARCH 2023 AT 10:00**

Present

Councillor A Williams – Chairperson

H T Bennett	F D Bletsoe	P Davies	S J Griffiths
M L Hughes	M Jones	RL Penhale-Thomas	T Thomas
G Walter	AJ Williams		

Officers:

Lucy Beard	Scrutiny Officer
Debra Beeke	Group Manager – Human Resources and Organisational Development
Lynne Berry	Group Manager Housing & Community Regeneration
Meryl Lawrence	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny
Carys Lord	Chief Officer - Finance, Performance & Change
Jessica Mclellan	Scrutiny Officer
Alex Rawlin	Corporate Policy & Public Affairs Manager
Mark Shephard	Chief Executive
Kelly Watson	Chief Officer Legal, HR and Regulatory Services

53. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Paul Davies, Simon Griffiths, Martyn Jones, Ross Penhale-Thomas and Tim Thomas gave their apologies that they would need to leave the meeting early.

Invitees:

Councillor Huw David, the Leader of the Council gave his apologies that he would need to leave the meeting early.

54. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

55. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of a meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee dated 21 July 2022 be approved as a true and accurate record.

56. WORKFORCE, RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

The Group Manager – Human Resources and Organisational Development presented the report, the purpose of which was to provide Committee with information relating to the recruitment and retention of the council's workforce.

The Chair thanked the Group Manager – Human Resources and Organisational Development and Members discussed the following:

- What more could be done to raise awareness of the workforce challenges faced by the Council and management of expectations, due to a lack of resources to deliver the preferred quality and standards.
- Development of a Strategic Workforce Plan and Delivery Plan.
- The time elapsed between an application and commencement into a role.
- Delays attributed to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and references which are essential to safeguarding, renewals and transferability of DBS.
- Capacity in Human Resources (HR) and the importance of back-office functions in the smooth running of the Council, the operating model in HR and annual benchmarking.
- The working relationship between Directorate Group Managers and HR to ensure efficient processes.
- Concern regarding the age profile of employees and whether retired employees were returning via agencies, the possibility of an employee referral programme and surveys regarding the recruitment process.
- The Guaranteed Interview Scheme for Service Personnel, engagement with veterans and promotion of the Council as a good employer, its family friendly policy, good pension arrangements and career progression prospects.
- Challenges of recruitment to particular roles including Welsh speaking teachers and whether the Market Supplement Policy could assist with recruitment.
- The importance of consistent use of exit interviews in the Authority and meaningful analysis of the information gleaned.
- The funding arrangements and number of graduates recruited via the graduate schemes and plans to develop recruitment via apprenticeships.
- Working with schools, colleges and universities to attract people into social care and other careers in the Council, the prospect of attracting Ukrainian refugees to posts and hard to fill posts such as limited hour contracts in school catering.
- Retention, internal and external recruitment, succession and development planning and career progression.
- Advertisement of vacancies on the Council website, targeted recruitment and more inventive ways to advertise.
- The application process and use of the Market Supplement Policy and discussion regarding an all Wales pay evaluation and review of job descriptions.

The Chairperson advised that there were no further questions for the Invitees, thanked Invitees for their attendance and, advised that if they were not required for the next Item, they may leave the meeting.

RESOLVED: Following detailed consideration and discussions with Officers and Cabinet Members, the Committee made the following Recommendations:

1. In recognition of the value that veterans can bring to Council roles and the Council's Guaranteed Interview Scheme for Veterans that meet the essential criteria for a role, that consideration be given to how best to target veterans to encourage them to apply for vacancies.
2. That a review be undertaken to consider the time elapsed between applications to adverts for positions and the time for those new employees to start in their new posts.

and the Committee requested:

3. A written response confirming:
 - a. Whether any of the Council's graduates are funded from the Cardiff City Region (CCR) Graduate Scheme; and
 - b. If not, whether any funding would be forthcoming from the CCR Graduate Scheme to fund future graduate positions; and
 - c. How many graduates that are funded through the CCR Graduate Scheme work in local authorities.
4. A breakdown of time periods over which the 144 apprenticeships took place.

A breakdown of how many new employees completed their probationary period of employment and how many new employees left the authority within the first 12 months of their employment.

57. **CORPORATE PLAN DELIVERY PLAN 2023 - 24**

The Corporate Policy and Public Affairs Manager presented the report, the purpose of which was to present the Committee with early thinking on the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan 2023-24, evaluate options and consider timescales for development and publication.

The Chair thanked the Corporate Policy and Public Affairs Manager and Members discussed the following:

- Moving away from backward-looking measures to measures which drive forward transformation, trend data to demonstrate progress and a move toward Objective and Key Results (OKRs) to measure future success.
- The importance of a consistent approach towards the Red, Amber, Green (RAG) statuses and the necessary resources and tools to support the performance management framework.
- Putting in place measures that residents would like to see used, based on things important to them.
- How best to drive forward the new Ways of Working and next steps in the measurement of them.
- The importance of measuring performance in a proportionate and focussed manner.

The Chairperson advised that there were no further questions for the Invitees, thanked Invitees for their attendance and, advised that if they were not required for the next Item, they may leave the meeting.

RESOLVED: Following detailed consideration and discussions with Officers and Cabinet Members, the Committee made the following Recommendations:

5. That the plan should:
 - a. Move away from Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which look back at what has happened in favour of measures that drive behaviour to a transformative change, e.g.:
 - i) Business process measures
 - ii) Customer experience measures
 - b. Have the support of ICT colleagues to assist with the production of a quality programme which allows for a straightforward and prompt analysis of any measures of concern; and
 - c. Demonstrate, across all Directorates, a consistency of approach and understanding of the RAG status.
6. That consideration be given to the inclusion of OKRs which often provide context to KPIs and measures and to the inclusion of trend arrows which may demonstrate areas which have improved and areas which may have declined.
7. In recognition of the intention for the Delivery Plan to be resident focussed, Officers and Members be mindful that measures developed be what residents would consider important to them.

and the Committee requested:

That the Officers map out ideas and what other local authorities are doing to measure how to best drive forward best ways of working and present this to Members at the Members Development Session to be scheduled at the end of April 2023.

58. **DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT - PROGRESS REPORT AND POSITION STATEMENT**

The Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change presented the report, the purpose of which was to update the Committee on the actions taken to progress improvements to the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) service and provide information on the position to date.

The Chair thanked the Chief Officer – Finance, Performance and Change and Members discussed the following:

- The number of people waiting for DFGs and the reasons for the lengthy delays.
- The prospect of using third party organisations, such as Bridgend Care and Repair, to assist with the backlog of adaptation work and the new operating model allowing the Council to take autonomy over the process and start to make progress.
- Whether cases were triaged to prioritise the most complex cases amongst the most vulnerable and the necessary planning for larger adaptations.
- The Authority's policy on topping up DFGs, what happens to adaptations in social housing when a tenant moves out or passes away, numbers of DFGs awarded by tenure and the existence of a database of adapted properties in the Borough.

- Whether the Authority is at risk of additional costs due to assessments of need undertaken by occupational therapists (OT) and the instances of residents requiring temporary alternative accommodation whilst extensive works are carried out in their homes.
- Concerns about residents unable to be discharged from hospital whilst awaiting home adaptations and causing backlogs, as referrals must be received from an OT and any assessment must be undertaken in the home to ensure the appropriate adaptation.
- The importance of improved communications to ensure management of expectations and the development of a clear leaflet to address queries and confusion.
- Communication with planning and registered social landlords to ensure sufficiency of accessible properties within new housing developments.

The Chairperson advised that there were no further questions for the Invitees, thanked Invitees for their attendance and advised that they may leave the meeting.

RESOLVED: Following detailed consideration and discussions with Officers and Cabinet Members, the Committee made the following Recommendations:

8. The Committee noted that an information leaflet was being co-produced with Occupational Therapists advising DFG applicants of the contact details and process, and recommended that consideration be given to other ways in which communication with applicants can be improved; noting the need for the communication to be accessible to all applicants and to assist in managing their expectations.
9. That the information contained in the leaflet referred to in 10. above be made available on the Council's website.

and the Committee requested:

A breakdown of the number of DFGs awarded by tenure over the last three years.

59. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Scrutiny Officer presented the Committee with the Forward Work Programme (FWP) in Appendix A for discussion and consideration, requested any specific information the Committee identified to be included in the items for the next two meetings, including invitees they wished to attend, requested the Committee to identify any further items for consideration on the FWP having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 4.3 and presented the FWPs for the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees 1, 2 and 3 as Appendices B, C and D for coordination and oversight of the overall FWP.

She also advised that the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheet was attached as Appendix E to track responses to the Committee's recommendations made at previous meetings and the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheets for each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee were also attached as Appendices F, G and H.

Having considered the Forward Work Programme Update, the Committee indicated that they would like to monitor the proposed efficiency savings against schools delegated budgets, lessons learned from the Cost of Living Payment Scheme rollout and parking charges for blue badge holders.

The Committee requested that the challenges of recruiting Welsh speaking teachers into the County Borough be included in the scope of the report on Welsh in Education Strategic Plan and be considered for addition to the Annual Forward Programme at the next Scrutiny Planning Meeting for SOSC 1.

The Committee also requested that the progress of DFGs be reviewed by SOSC 2 with particular focus on Social Services and Health involvement.

The Committee expressed concerns regarding the length of time responses to some of its recommendations had been outstanding and the Scrutiny Officer advised that older items had been chased and Directors reminded of the need to provide timely responses.

There were no further items identified for consideration on the Forward Work Programme having regard to the selection criteria in paragraph 4.3, and this could be revisited at the next meeting.

There were no requests to include specific information in the items for the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee considered and approved its Forward Work Programme in Appendix A, subject to the above additions and requests, noted the Forward Work Programmes for the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees following consideration in their latest respective Committee Meetings in Appendix B, C and D, and noted the Recommendations Monitoring Action Sheets to track responses to the Committees' recommendations made at previous meetings in Appendices E, F, G and H.

60. **URGENT ITEMS**

None.

The meeting closed at 12:45