



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING : Monday, 13th July 2015

PRESENT : Cllrs. Lugg (Chair), Hampson (Vice-Chair), Norman (Spokesperson), Haigh, Lewis, S. Witts, Dee, Randle, Etheridge and Norman

Others in Attendance

Councillor David Norman MBE, Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources

Mr Jon McGinty, Managing Director GCC

Ms Sadie Neal, Head of Business Improvement, GCC

Ms Sarah Tilling, Senior Client Officer, Business Improvement, GCC

Ms Ruth Silk, Business Improvement Officer, GCC

Ms Jo Styles, Partnership Director, Civica

Mr Deane Greenouff, Director of ITO, Civica

Mr Paul Shawley, ITO Operations Director, Civica

APOLOGIES : Cllrs. Gravells, Field, Beeley, Hansdot, Pearsall and Toleman

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

16. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

17. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

There were no questions from members of the public.

18. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

There were no petitions or deputations.

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19. CIVICA ANNUAL PERFORMANCE - REVENUES AND BENEFITS SERVICE

The Chair welcomed Councillor Norman, Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources, and Ms Jo Styles, Partnership Director of Civica, to the meeting.

Ms Styles gave a presentation to Members to complement the Gloucester City Council Civica Revenues and Benefits Service Annual Performance Report for 2014-15.

Ms Styles outlined the following:-

- Goals of the Partnership
- Achievements against the goals
- Partnership principles
- Highlights of the performance of the Partnership including challenges in 2014-15
- Future plans

Members discussed the following matters:-

1. A Member queried how the introduction of Real Time Information (RTI) had impacted on the way applications were assessed. Ms Styles clarified the position. The Member then asked how the £660,471 in benefit overpayments caused by claimants failing to notify relevant changes in circumstances would be collected. Ms Styles explained that existing claimants would have their benefit adjusted to correct the overpayment. In the case of former benefit recipients the overpayment would be pursued as a debt.
2. A Member questioned how underpayments were dealt with. Ms Styles stated that RTI usually only identified overpayments, but that the number of underpayments were very small.
3. A Member referred to information presented to a recent Audit and Governance Committee when error rates for the Partnership had been reported. The Member sought clarification on the type of errors and asked for comparison figures for other authorities using Civica for their revenues and benefits service. Ms Styles explained that she did not have detailed information, but that some of the errors could be non-financial. Ms Styles agreed to contact the other authorities to see if they were willing to share their data with the Committee.

The Chair thanked Ms Styles for her presentation.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

20. CIVICA ANNUAL PERFORMANCE - IT SERVICE

The Chair welcomed Mr Deane Greenouff, Civica Director of ITO, and Mr Paul Shawley, Civica Operations Director, to the meeting.

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Mr Greenouff gave a presentation to Members to complement the Gloucester City Council Civica ITO Partnership Annual Performance Report for 2014-15.

Mr Greenouff outlined the following:-

- Summary of the service
- Highlights of the performance including management disciplines introduced
- Major incidents including lessons learned
- Monitoring of the Partnership

Members discussed the following matters:-

1. A Member queried if the Police investigation arising from the major incident in July 2014 had been concluded. Mr Shawley advised that the matter was not yet closed and that there had been no further hacking attempts. The Chair requested a Members' Briefing be issued when the Police had concluded their findings.
2. A Member asked why users could not reset iPad passwords themselves. Mr Shawley said that Civica were currently looking at tools to enable users to do this, but that he did not have a timeline for implementation of this function. Another Member noted that calls logged by the helpdesk in Leeds were then referred to the Gloucester office anyway and that this caused unnecessary delays. Councillor Norman agreed to look into this matter.
3. A Member suggested that iPad security had not improved despite the major incident in July 2014. Mr Shawley assured the Member that substantial work had been carried out to protect the Council's network and that further work on the virtual private network was scheduled for completion in August 2015.
4. A Member asked if the Council could use the system 'Good' as was used at the County Council. Mr Shawley advised the Member that the intention was to use 'Airwatch' at the City Council.
5. A Member commented that printing issues were unresolved. Mr Shawley responded that the Business Improvement Team was looking at an 'Airprint' solution. Another Member said that inability to print at home created problems and referred to initiatives in cyber security implemented by the Police. Mr Greenouff asked the Member to provide Civica with information on these initiatives.
6. A Member remarked that wi fi connectivity was patchy. Mr Shawley replied that the same wi fi system operated successfully in Council buildings and the Tennis Centre.
7. A Member reported difficulties in obtaining assistance from the helpdesk out of hours. Another Member remarked that their work commitments precluded them from being able to call the helpdesk during the working day. Mr Shawley replied that Members should call a '24/7 VIP' number. Members were unaware of this service and suggested that it should be publicised.

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The Head of Business Improvement reminded Members that support was provided at the start of key City Council meetings and that Members should approach the Civica representative if they had any issues with their equipment.

8. A Member asked when the transfer to an off site data centre would take place. Mr Shawley responded that migration was currently being planned.
9. A Member queried when the 'Intelligent Customer' role would be filled. The Head of Business Improvement informed the Member that a Business Analyst had been recruited and that the IT client role was currently being fulfilled using resources at the County Council.
10. A newly elected Member commented that he had received no briefing on IT security and was unaware of the major incident which had taken place in July 2014. Members discussed what training and information they had received when they had been issued with equipment. Councillor Norman agreed to look into this matter.
11. A Member queried what business continuity plans were in existence to cope with breaks in service. The Head of Business Improvement reported on recent 'away-days' with Council managers and Civica when business continuity plans had been reviewed. Mr Shawley added that mitigation measures were now in place to bring down the computer environment gradually should a power outage occur.
12. A Member requested an update on software and hardware upgrades. Mr Shawley commented that he was currently in discussions with senior management regarding software upgrades. With regard to hardware, Mr Shawley acknowledged the Member's remark and said that different options were being explored and that there was an intention to replace equipment if it negatively impacted on users.

The Chair thanked Mr Shawley and Mr Greenouff for their presentation.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES

- (1) That the out of hours telephone number for the IT helpdesk be publicised to Members.
- (2) That printing issues as discussed during the meeting be resolved as soon as possible and communicated to Members.
- (3) That security issues as discussed during the meeting be resolved as soon as possible and communicated to Members.

21. GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Councillor Norman presented the Council's Annual Corporate Performance report which showed progress against the current agreed indicators for the period April 2014 to March 2015 in relation to the Council's Corporate Plan 2014-17.

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Members discussed the following matters:-

1. A Member queried why fly tipping reported by Officers had reduced, when the incidents of fly tipping reported by the public had risen. Councillor Norman believed this was because residents were looking out for fly tipping and reporting any incidents as soon as they became apparent.
2. A Member noted that some of the dates in the report were incorrect. The Head of Business Improvement agreed to change them.
3. A Member queried the viability of the graph on Council Tax Collection on page 59 of the report. Councillor Norman acknowledged the Member's comment.
4. A Member observed that the 'Neet' rate on page 69 was below target although it was shown in the RAG rating as being green.
5. A Member questioned the fact that no consultations had used the Gov Metric system as shown on page 86. The Head of Business Improvement agreed to check this.
6. A Member asked why data on Community Builders shown on page 95 was being collected as it did not fall under the remit of the Council. The Head of Business Improvement advised the Member that the initiative was part funded by the City Council. The Member replied that the link between Community Builders and the Council should be made clearer. Councillor Norman acknowledged the Member's point.
7. A Member noted the data for Twitter interactions set out in 'Listening to our residents' on page 75 and commented that Twitter was not a 'listening' tool. The Head of Business Improvement responded that Twitter was used to raise awareness of service issues and availability.
8. A Member commented on the drop in the number of vacant retail units for quarters 3 and 4, as evidenced on page 71 of the report.
9. A Member asked for an update on plans for the cladding of the King's Walk Car Park as detailed on page 78 of the report. Councillor Norman explained that this work would be carried out after the Rugby World Cup, but in a different way to that originally envisaged because of budgetary constraints.
10. A Member commented on the red RAG rating for new affordable housing as depicted on page 103 of the report. The Head of Business Improvement indicated that the target of 40% was a national one and that in the current economic climate it was difficult for Gloucester to improve its position.
11. A Member noted that only 4.3% of staff participated in the Employee Volunteer Scheme shown on page 97 of the report and speculated whether staff had enough flexibility or time to volunteer. Councillor Norman responded that the scheme would be reviewed and re-launched. He added

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that he was confident that the new Managing Director would be supportive of staff involvement.

The Chair thanked Councillor Norman for his presentation.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

22. TASK AND FINISH GROUP TOPICS

Members considered future topics for task and finish groups which included ideas from Members who were not on the Committee. The following ideas were considered:-

- Seagulls
- Dog Fouling
- Flood Recovery monitoring
- Joint Scrutiny with Cheltenham Borough Council on broadband issues
- Asking residents what topics they would like the Committee to look at

After discussing the options in detail, the following was agreed:-

RESOLVED:

1. That Gloucester City Council would work with Cheltenham Borough Council on a joint scrutiny exercise to explore broadband issues.
2. That residents of the City would be invited to suggest future task and finish group topics.

23. CABINET FORWARD PLAN

Members considered the latest version of the Cabinet Forward Plan.

RESOLVED – That the Cabinet Forward Plan be noted.

24. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the latest version of its work programme and amended it in line with suggestions made by Members.

RESOLVED – That the work programme, as amended, be noted

25. UPDATE ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no updates on this occasion.

26. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

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Monday 14 September 2015 at 18.30 pm.

Time of commencement: 18:30 hours
Time of conclusion: 20:15 hours

Chair