

DEPUTY LEADER
8th October, 2012

Present:- Councillor Akhtar (in the Chair);

Apologies for absence:- Apologies were received from Councillor Gosling and Sims.

N30. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 10TH SEPTEMBER, 2012

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 10th September, 2012 be approved as a correct record.

N31. CABINET REPORTS

Consideration was given to the agenda of the Cabinet to be held on Wednesday, 17th October, 2012, which had been circulated and the contents noted.

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

N32. MEMBERS' ISSUES

Phil Howe, Director of Human Resources, provided updates on the following matters:-

- Expiry of the voluntary severance window on the 30th September, 2012 and an outline was given of the numbers who had expressed an interest for their final figures and those who were then wishing to proceed. All applications were being considered over the next few weeks.
- An update on the Care Enabling Service would be shared at the RMBC/Trades Unions Joint Consultation Committee on Friday, 12th October, 2012.
- The Employee Opinion Survey would shortly be circulated to all staff by electronic or paper means depending on the service and would run till the end of October.

Stuart Booth, Director of Finance, also reported on the benchmarking activity taking place for the Resources Directorate which, following submission to the Strategic Leadership team, would be presented to the Deputy Leader in November, 2012.

Colin Earl, Director of Internal Audit and Asset Management, provided an update on progress of shared services and the opportunities that may be afforded the Council in the future and confirmed that liaison was taking place with relevant authorities regarding the proposed demonstration in the town centre.

Jacqueline Collins, Director of Legal and Democratic Services, reported on the restructure of legal services and the three week consultation period and

provided a further update on the current position with regards to a Legal shared service.

Resolved:- That the information provided be noted.

N33. BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE\GOOD FOR ENTERPRISE

Consideration was given to a report presented by Richard Copley, Corporate ICT Manager, which detailed the proposed adoption of a 'Bring Your Own Device' (BYOD) Policy for the Council, which was an initiative which enabled Council employees to access their Council email, contacts, Intranet and calendar from a non-Council owned smartphone or tablet.

Further information was provided on the recent developments in technology and the options to allow employees to access Council systems from personal devices, the scope to how this could be achieved, the benefits in utilising personal devices, the Good for Enterprise App, security, legal and human resources considerations and ways in which savings could be maximised by ceasing to provide Council owned Blackberrys.

Discussion ensued on publication and guidance to Members and qualifying employees and cost to providing this initiative. Assurances were provided that there were certain terms and conditions that would have to be satisfied before this was extended beyond the current pilot group.

It was also noted that information would be provided to all Elected Members and that a drop-in session, ensuring that relevant officers were available, would take place on Wednesday, 31st October, 2012 before the Council Meeting.

Resolved:- (1) That the proposed 'Bring Your Own Device' policies be approved.

(2) That an extended trial of Good For Enterprise be approved as the authorised means for access to Council data from personal smartphones and tablets.

(3) That a further report be submitted on 'Bring Your Own Device', including a detailed financial impact assessment at the end of the trial.

N34. REVIEW OF COUNCIL TAX SINGLE PERSONS DISCOUNT - UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report presented by Stuart Booth, Director of Finance, which provided an update on the Council Tax Single Person's Discount review that was being carried out in conjunction with Northgate (our Revenue's software supplier) and Experian.

As a result of the review canvass letters were issued to the identified cases asking customers to declare their current household circumstances. Customers who failed to respond to this initial letter were sent a reminder letter twenty one days later.

To date the results of the canvass identified:-

- 2,979 discounts have been verified as being correctly claimed.
- 1,771 discounts have been cancelled. Of these, 1248 were cancelled as a result of the customer failing to respond to the initial canvass letter, a reminder letter and a further letter asking for contact before the discount was cancelled. The other 523 discounts have been cancelled following a declaration of a change in household circumstances by the customer.

The cancellations have resulted in an additional £635k Council Tax income being raised across the identified Council Tax accounts. Revised Council Tax bills have been issued requesting that relevant payments were made to bring their Account up-to-date. This figure was subject to change due to customers who have previously not made contact now making contact which may result in the Single Person's Discount being reinstated.

Work to finalise the outcomes from the review would continue over the next few months and a further update report submitted in due course towards the end of 2012.

Resolved:- That the report be received and the contents noted.

(THE CHAIRMAN AUTHORISED CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM IN ORDER TO ORDER TO PROGRESS THE MATTERS REFERRED TO)

N35. COMPLAINTS ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12

Consideration was given to the report presented by Dave Roddis, Performance and Quality Manager, which provided information about complaints made between 1st April, 2011 and 31st March, 2012 to the Local Authority, under the Corporate Complaint's Procedure, the Adult Social Services and Children's Social Services complaint regulations.

The report included details of the number of complaints made by customers and a summary of complaints received, main complaint issues and how services have been improved.

The report also included details on how complaint handling had been improved over the year and how it could continue to be improved further.

In total over the last twelve months the total number of complaints received by the Council had reduced from 1248 (2010/11) to 724, which was a 42% reduction

Overall 94% of all complaints were responded to within the statutory timescales, compared to 76% in 2010/11.

The positive position was noted and an evaluation of the process would be undertaken. This information would then be presented to the Cabinet for information.

It was also noted that in terms of complaints discussions were taking place regarding abusive telephone calls with appropriate training being rolled out to key staff.

Resolved:- That the report be received and the contents noted.

N36. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That a further meeting be held on Monday, 19th November, 2012 at 9.30 a.m.