

**DEPUTY LEADER  
9th September, 2013**

Present:- Councillor Stone (in the Chair); Councillors Gosling and Sims.

**N15. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 11TH JULY, 2013**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2013.

With regards to Minute No. N11(a) it was noted that the 1% pay offer was for all staff, but did not apply to Chief Officers.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2013 be approved as a correct record.

**N16. WAIVER OF STANDING ORDER TO AWARD THE CONTRACT FOR LOCAL WELFARE PROVISION (CRISIS LOANS) TO LASER CREDIT UNION LTD**

Consideration was given to the report presented by Zafar Saleem, Community Engagement Manager, which detailed how the six months contract was let to LASER Credit Union Ltd to deliver the loan element of the crisis support 'Fund for Change' from the 1st April, 2013 as part of introducing "Local Welfare Provision" pending a wider market procurement process.

Whilst some knowledge of demand and operation had now been gained, it was apparent that it was not yet possible to project the demand over a full year or the detailed on-going administrative requirements. This in part was due to expected increased demand in the run up to Christmas and over the winter months.

In light of this, it was proposed to extend the current contract to 31st March, 2014 and seek quotes for the service beyond that, subject to a waiver of Standing Orders. It was also necessary to confirm that whilst the loan fund was managed by LASER and loans from the fund were made by them, that the loan fund was the property of the Council.

At the end of June 475 loans had been made by LASER with a total value of £65, 807, but this had further been updated to the issuing of 766 loans with a current value of £105,000.

Discussion ensued on the level of demand, current figures and risks associated with non-repayment of the loan and how best to mitigate this going forward.

Resolved:- (1) That the delivery of the local welfare provision (crisis loans) for the period 1st October, 2013 until 31st March, 2014 be exempted from Standing Orders in accordance with Standing Order 38 (Exemptions) and Standing Order 49 (Tender invitation and receipt of tenders) and the contract be awarded to LASER Credit Union Ltd in the sum of £24,050.

(2) That the "Fund for Change" loan fund remains the property of the Council.

(3) That a further report be submitted to the next meeting on the way forward to address non-repayment processes.

#### **N17. POST RECOGNITION STRATEGY - INVESTORS IN PEOPLE (IIP)**

Consideration was given to the report presented by Phil Howe, Director of Human Resources, which provided details of how the Council had successfully achieved re-accreditation of the IIP standard effective from June, 2013 and valid for a period of up to three years.

The Council met 185 of the 196 evidence requirements enabling retention of Gold status.

The external assessor's report provided information on areas of strength and developments to enable the Council not only continue to maintain the IIP standard and Gold status, but to further improve, develop and maintain organisational development.

Resolved:- (1) That the actions to address areas noted for development from the external assessor's report (Appendix A) which are to be included in the Corporate Workforce Strategy, Strategic HR service plan and passported into relevant Directorate service/team plans be noted and supported.

(2) That Strategic Directors ensure their directorate areas for development are addressed in service/team plans and performance managed. (Individual directorate reports will be provided to Directorate Management Teams (DMTs) during August, 2013 and colleagues from Human Resources will be available to attend as necessary).

#### **N18. WORKFORCE STRATEGY REVIEW 2012-13**

Consideration was given to a report presented by Phil Howe, Director of Human Resources, which provided an overview of the impact of Human Resources policies, procedures and activities on the Council workforce during 2012-13.

The budget challenges facing the Council (and the need to achieve reductions in workforce costs) have required organisational redesign, changes to working practices and changes to Human Resources (HR)

policies. Successful management of workforce costs (£6.7 million reduction in 2012/13) had kept the number of compulsory redundancies to a minimum and reduced the impact of budget cuts on the delivery of front line services.

During the last year the Council IIP Gold status was reassessed and employees were asked to participate in the Employee Opinion Survey. Despite major changes across the Council over the last few years the number of grievances lodged by employees continued to be well below benchmarks whilst employee engagement and involvement remains positive and similar to the high levels of the previous survey.

A continued focus on key workforce activity had helped to maintain an engaged workforce, whilst successfully achieving organisational change. The report summarised the workforce activity in the last year, by the themes of the Workforce Strategy including:-

- Ensuring we have a modern and thriving Council.
- Developing leadership capacity through change.
- Developing our employees' skills for the future.
- Managing talent and attracting new talent as appropriate.
- Ensuring we have a fairly rewarded workforce.

Reference was also made to the promotion of the salary sacrifice schemes, which had generated savings for both employees and the Council.

Resolved:- That the continued high level of employee engagement/ involvement, key Human Resources activity and the £6.7 million reduction in workforce costs be noted.

## **N19. GOV DELIVERY COMMUNICATION SYSTEM**

Consideration was given to a report presented by Richard Copley, Corporate ICT Manager, which sought approval to purchase the Gov Delivery system, which was a cloud based communication system that would enable the Council to provide co-ordinated email, SMS, social media and RSS feeds.

As well as being able to disseminate proactive updates and alerts to customers about the Council in a very effective and economical way, it would also enable the distribution of marketing information to increase take up of services.

The system would allow the Council to collaborate with and share subscribers with other local authorities and government agencies, such as the Met Office and the Highways Agency. This collaboration helped to increase citizen take up rates and proactively encouraged digital registration and take up of services. As such, it would help the Council's strategy towards achieving channel shift, where users interact with the

Council through electronic interfaces.

The system would also enable the Council to consolidate currently fragmented email and mobile telephony contacts which were in place across the Council into the Gov Delivery system, allowing the Council to combine various databases of resident information which were currently in existence.

Resolved:- That the contract for the purchase of the Gov Delivery Communication System be exempt from the provisions of Standing Order 47.6.3 (requirement to invite at least 3 written quotations for contracts with a value of between £20k and £50k) and the contract be awarded to Gov Delivery.

## **N20. RESOURCES PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR 2013/14 QUARTER 1**

Consideration was given to a report presented by Anne Hawke, Performance and Improvement Officer, which summarised the quarterly performance for the period ending 30<sup>th</sup> June (Quarter 1) by the Resources Directorate against current measures and key service delivery issues across the areas of:-

- Procurement.
- Commissioning.
- Performance and Quality.
- Communications and Marketing.
- Policy and Partnerships.
- Financial Services.
- Human Resources.
- Internal Audit and Asset Management.
- Legal and Democratic Services.

A summary of the key points, including highlights and achievements and issues/risks was provided in relation to each of the areas.

Reference was also made to the secondary school lifestyle survey which was currently being analysed and would be presented at the relevant meetings shortly.

Discussion ensued on the promotion of the new Intranet and the need to make the Council's website more user friendly.

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

## **N21. CABINET REPORTS AND MEMBERS' ISSUES**

There were no issues to report other than to confirm that budget discussions would commence shortly to look at meeting the budget shortfalls and expected savings.

**N22. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Resolved:- That the next meeting take place on Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2013 at 9.30 a.m.