

**CORPORATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

HELD: Thursday, 5 December 2019

Start: 7.00 pm

Finish: 8.25 pm

PRESENT:

Councillor: V Cummins (Chair)

Councillors: J Finch (Vice-Chair) Mrs M Blake
C Coughlan G Dowling
K Mitchell J Monaghan
A Sutton

In attendance: Councillor S Gregson

Officers: Chris Twomey, Corporate Director of Transformation and
Resources
Helen Morrison, Customer Experience Manager
Alison Grimes, Partnership & Performance Officer
Carl Wallace, Financial Inclusion Team Leader
Tom Dickinson, Principal Solicitor
Julia Brown, Member Services/Civic Officer

38 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillor T Blane.

39 **MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no changes to Membership of the Committee.

40 **URGENT BUSINESS, IF ANY, INTRODUCED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There were no items of urgent business.

41 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor C Coughlan declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Agenda Item 10 - Financial Inclusion Strategy Review in respect of his employment in the Children and Family Wellbeing Service, Lancashire County Council.

42 **DECLARATIONS OF A PARTY WHIP**

There were no declarations of Party Whip.

43 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

44 PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no items under this heading.

**45 ITEMS FROM THE MEMBERS' UPDATED INCLUDED ON THE AGENDA AT THE
REQUEST OF A MEMBER**

There were no items under this heading.

46 MEMBERS ITEMS / CCFA (COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION)

There were no items under this heading.

47 FINANCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY REVIEW

The Financial Inclusion Team Leader provided the Committee with a presentation of the Council Tenants Financial Inclusion Strategy 2015-2018, which outlined the background, key aims and achievements.

He explained that the Strategy was developed for Council tenants to provide support, specific to changes due to Welfare Reforms in order to limit the impact on rent collection/arrears and to sustain tenancies.

The presentation provided information, which included the following:

Key Aims;

- Financial support and advice for new tenants/tenants
- Prepare for changes linked to Financial Welfare Reforms
- Identify financial solutions for tenants
- Signposting - Jobs / Training
- Promotion of Energy Efficiency Schemes
- Tackle digital exclusion

Key Achievements;

- Creation of additional Money Advisor Post
- Increase of locations/ Money advice drop-ins
- Any day direct debit pilot
- Referrals to Knowsley Credit Union (KCU)
- DWP funding of dedicated recourse for tenants moving to UC
- Referrals to More Positive together Programme
- Work with LCC and Community Resource Centres to provide digital support
- Introduction of Red, Amber, Green, (R.A.G) for New Tenants

Current Position;

- Council Tenant Financial Inclusion Strategy 2015-18 – Actions Complete
- Money and UC Advice Service for Council Tenants embedded within Income Management Team
- Referrals for Council Tenants to External Partners
- Financial Inclusion embedded within Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2021

- Linked to Digital Inclusion Agenda
- The Council also offer signposting residents to the following services;
- Citizens Advice Bureau – DWP Strategic Partner
 - West Lancs Debt Advice Service
 - South West Lancs Independent Community Advice Network (Evermoor Hub)
 - LCC- Welfare Rights Service
 - Lancashire Community Finance
 - www.westlancs.gov.uk – signpost to external support; Money Advice Service & National Debt Line
 - More Positive Together (Help to get back in work)
 - Council Tax Support
 - Birchwood Centre
 - Knowsley Credit Union (KCU)
 - Junk Food Café

Comments and questions were raised in respect of the following;

- Opportunities to receive same advice regardless of Tenancy type
- Under Occupancy (Bedroom Tax)
- Mental Health Support
- Rossendale Enforcement Agency
- Partnership to combat poverty
- CAB Digital Hub Facility
- West Lancs CVS – Infrastructure for Voluntary Service
- Early support – Pathway and Mechanism
- Identify future focus

The Chairman thanked the Financial Inclusion Team Leader for the presentation and Team for their achievements to date.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted and the scope of the review be endorsed as follows:-

- A. To Compliment and Strengthen the Council Tenants Financial Inclusion Strategy.
- B. To provide mechanisms for the early Identification of Vulnerable Tenants through provision of Council Tax Support Pack/ Literature / Signposting.
- C. To signpost and provide Information for Residents and Tenants on Mental Health Support available.
- D. To explore the Citizens Advice Bureau's - Appointment waiting time.
- E. Future Resources for maintaining / safeguarding of the Money Advisory Post/s.
- F. Provision of Supportive Debt Recovery.

48 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS Q2 2019-20

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director of Transformation and Resources as contained on pages 213 to 228 of the Book of Reports, which presented performance monitoring data for the quarter ended 30 September 2019.

The Partnership and Performance Officer provided an update and provided clarification on the points raised, including reference to the following;

- ES08: % locations inspected falling into categories A/B – Grounds Maintenance
- ES12 &13 % Flytips removed
- WL132 (Working days lost due to sickness absence) Impact from SORP review
- WL108 (Average answered waiting time for callers to the contact centre). The Customer Experience Manager provided Members with a presentation at Agenda Item 12 (Customer Contact Centre Call Handling – Performance Indicators)
- WL90 (% of Contact Centre calls answered)
- NI192 (Percentage of Household Waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting) LCC / Farrington Recycling Facility

RESOLVED: That the Council's performance against the indicator set for the quarter ended 30 September 2019 be noted.

49 CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTRE CALL HANDLING - PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

As requested from the previous meeting, the Committee received a presentation from the Customer Experience Manager, which gave an overview and update in respect of Customer Contact Centre call handling performance indicators, particularly in relation to WL108 average answered time for callers wait time and WL90 the percentage of calls offered that are answered.

Comments and questions were raised in respect of the following;

- Customer Services – Quality Service at first point of contact
- Currently 11.7 (FTE) staff across three access points
- Face to face-Customer Service Points 16%
- Response to web/email enquiries 14%
- Telephone Interactions 70%
- Launch of ServiceNow / Customer Portal – staff training
- Launch of third year Garden Waste/ Co-incide with ServiceNow Launch
- Wide range of Services resolved at first point of contact, including bulky

household waste collections, refuse & recycling, pest control, street cleansing and housing repairs to Council properties

- Additional resources from Agency staff utilised during peak periods
- ICT Issues
- Significant staff sickness
- Realign Management Team
- Performance monitoring; resolve and improve
- Route Optimisation – general enquiries
- Customer feedback / communication
- Review of virtual hold facility
- Review of working patterns & resources
- Revenues & Benefits – outsourced to BTLS (no control over call increase if customers cannot get through)
- Adverse weather; impact on call volumes/wait times
- Implementation of SORP
- Greater flexibility of resources to meet peak demand
- Collaborative working with Operation Teams to enable Customer Services to meet future demand
- Review of Revenue and Benefits Service
- Previous data and performance targets information

The Chairman thanked the Customer Experience Manager for her presentation.

RESOLVED: That the presentation and update be noted.

50

PUBLIC SPEAKING PROTOCOL - REVIEW

Consideration was given to the report of the Corporate Director Transformation and Resources as contained on pages 229 to 242 of the Book of Reports which was to review the changes to the 'Public Speaking – Protocol' for meetings of Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny Committees, Audit & Governance Committee and Standards Committee (Constitution 14.1-the "Protocol") as suggested by the Committee at its meeting held on 11 July 2019.

The Member Services / Civic Officer outlined the report and responded to comments and questions raised, particularly in relation to the extension of public speaking at Council meetings.

RESOLVED: That the recommendation of the Committee, set out in paragraph 4 suggesting revisions to the 'Protocol' be noted and the changes set out in Appendix 1 to the report as tracked changes, be endorsed and referred to Cabinet and Council for approval with the removal of reference to paragraph 4.1.4 'Extend public speaking to Council meetings and the meeting to commence at an earlier start time of 7.00pm in order to accommodate'.

51 WORK PROGRAMME OF THE COMMITTEE

RESOLVED: That the 2020 Work Programme of the Committee be noted.

.....
Chairman