

# **Council Meeting – 11 December 2018**

## **Report of Councillor Andrew Sully – Corporate Resources**

### **1. Corporate Performance**

#### **1.1 General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) / Data Protection:-**

- Work to implement the GDPR Compliance Action plan continues. A recent South West Audit Partnership Audit on post implementation of GDPR has given the Council a reasonable assurance rating although there is still work to be done in order to become fully compliant.
- A new temporary shared Data Protection Officer arrangement with South Somerset District Council is now in place. Jan Gamon (SSDC) will cover this role until April 2019.

1.2 The current Audit Plan for 2018/2019 is showing good progress. The Corporate Governance Officers Group are meeting this month (November 2018) to discuss drafting and agreeing a new Annual Governance Statement (2019/2020) for the new Council. This needs to be signed off by 31 March 2019.

1.3 The Quarter 2 Performance Update will be shared with the Scrutiny Committee in December 2018. Areas of concern are responsiveness to complaints, and the increased number of homelessness applications.

### **2. Customer Services**

2.1 The service continues to look at new ways of supporting our customer contact, and is upskilling both teams to do more in-depth support in key areas.

2.2 Calls are now being shared across West Somerset and Taunton Deane Councils – with the technology allowing calls to be redirected to the larger resourced team in busy times.

2.3 Housing repairs calls and IT Helpdesk calls are now being supported by this team.

2.4 The team are heavily involved in the work to support the content of new website.

2.5 The new Customer Hub in The Deane House is running well and we are continuing to refine the approach.

2.6 We are aware of the challenging resourcing levels in the team and need to keep this under review as we move into the next phase of our Transformation recruitment.

### **3. Facilities Management (FM)**

- 3.1 The FM Team are currently working closely with colleagues within Avon and Somerset Police in the lead up to the Police moving in and being operational on 10 December 2018. An operational Service Level Agreement is soon to be finalised.
- 3.2 Practical operational details for the new Council are well underway and we aim to launch our digital mailroom as part of the Transformational changes.
- 3.3 We will be supporting some policy considerations including 'How we use our buildings in future' and 'Pool Vehicles Policy' to ensure we meet our aspirations of agile working.

## **4. ICT/Technology**

- 4.1 The ICT Team continue to support the delivery of critical 'business as usual' and "Transformation" projects. Current key projects include:-
  - Transformation focussed work:- Firmstep, single security domain, new web site, New Intranet, information management, E5 Finance system, new device roll out, wifi upgrade;
  - Work to support the new Council:- Joint ICT usage policy, software licence transfers; and
  - Business as usual focussed work:- IT Health Check for West Somerset Publis Services Network compliance, server patching, 2<sup>nd</sup> / 3<sup>rd</sup> line support activities – as well as continuing to provide a responsive "helpdesk" service.

## **5. Members Case Management**

- 5.1 This pilot project has been extended to support Members through to the end of February 2018, when the new structure will take over.
- 5.2 Members are encouraged to contact Dianne Blackmore with any questions they need assistance with (contact details:- [D.Blackmore@tauntondeane.gov.uk](mailto:D.Blackmore@tauntondeane.gov.uk) 01823 785048).
- 5.3 Dianne will find the right person to answer your question, and will chase until resolved. Please make contact if you need help resolving any issue.

## **6. Human Resources (HR)**

- 6.1 The six new apprentices recruited in the last quarter have now started in post and completed their induction and we have also arranged for four of our existing employees to start apprenticeships. The apprentices are based in Building Services and will become: carpenters; plasterers; painters and decorators; plumbers and electricians. They are studying on either two or four year courses and will build the skill base in our workforce for the future. Funding for these courses is from the Apprenticeship Levy.
- 6.2 We continue to support the internal recruitment for the Commercial, Investment and Change function, Specialist posts, the external recruitment of Phase 1 vacancies and the new Chief Executive role. Each appointment then results in changes to the

payroll system and organisational structure together with the issuing of new statements of particulars. Additionally we continue to support unsuccessful candidates with advice on their options as they go through the recruitment process and our leavers.

## **7. Finance**

- 7.1 An updated Medium Term Financial Plan including up to date budgetary assumptions together with the proposed fees and charges for next year will be presented to the forthcoming Shadow Scrutiny and Executive during November and December.
- 7.2 Alongside our continuing financial activities we have continued to support a number of potential capital projects particularly those with a commercial and regeneration aspect including:-
- Firepool Project including new Hotel;
  - Coal Orchard, Taunton;
  - The Collar Factory, Taunton;
  - Somerset Flood Alleviation;
  - Taunton Station Regeneration;
  - The Deane House Accommodation Project; and
  - North Taunton Housing Project.
- 7.3 This work includes updating existing business cases for these capital projects to determine that they are affordable and meet investment criteria. The Finance Team have also continued to be involved in the current Leisure Contract Procurement exercise.
- 7.4 The Finance Team has continued to support the business transformation process and to support the preparation and delivery of financial processes for a new single Council.

## **8. Revenues and Benefits**

### **Revenues**

- 8.1 Capacity issues are impacting on workflows and we are focussing on backlog reduction before the end of the year.
- 8.2 The team will need temporary agency resource to assist and is also upskilling colleagues in Customer Services to support with calls.
- 8.3 Collection Rates are being monitored and we are slightly behind this time last year.

### **Benefits**

- 8.4 The Benefits service is stable and we are now preparing for the end of the financial year.

- 8.5 There are two reports going forward for approval in the very near future – the Council Tax Support Scheme and the Discretionary Payments Scheme.

## **9. The Mayoralty and Democratic Services**

- 9.1 Alongside the Lord Lieutenant of Somerset, The Mayor led the wreath laying at the War Memorial in Vivary Park, Taunton on Remembrance Sunday to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the First World War coming to an end.
- 9.2 This very poignant ceremony was observed by literally hundreds of local residents. It is probably not since the ending of the Second World War in 1945 that such a crowd has attended this event.
- 9.3 As Christmas approaches, the Mayor will be extremely busy attending numerous Carol Concerts – including her own on Thursday, 13 December 2018 at 6.30 p.m. in St Mary Magdalene Church, Taunton – as well as other festive events.
- 9.4 As usual the Mayor will be paying goodwill visits to the emergency services, the hospital and various other organisations during the morning of Christmas Day.

Councillor Andy Sully