

Attendance

Members of the Panel

Cllr Rita Potter (chair)
Cllr Alan Bolshaw
Cllr Craig Collingswood
Cllr Jasbinder Kaur Dehar
Cllr Zahid Hussain Shah
Cllr Paul Singh
Cllr Mrs Wendy Thompson
Cllr Martin Waite

Other Councillors

None

Staff

Fiona Davis	Head of Service (Regulatory and Governance)
Mark Taylor	Assistant Director – Finance
David Kane	Head of Finance (Delivery)
Janet Lowe	Human Resources Manager (Delivery)
Pat Main	Assistant Director and Business Change (Delivery)
Charlotte Johns	Head of Policy (Office of the Chief Executive)
Earl Piggott-Smith	Scrutiny Officer (Office of the Chief Executive)

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

<i>Item No.</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Action</i>
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MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

- 1. Apologies**
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Christopher Haynes, Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman, Cllr Milkinder Jaspal and Cllr Jasbir Jaspal
- 2. Declarations of interest**
There were no declarations of interest received.
- 3. Minutes of the previous meeting (20 June 2013)**
Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. **Matters arising**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2013 to be amended to record Cllr Zahid Hussain Shah as giving his apologies.

Deborah
Breedon

5. **Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2013/14**

Earl Piggott-Smith briefed the Panel on the future list of agenda items as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report. Cllr Waite asked that report on the options for the rationalisation of Council owned property is added to the work programme.

Resolved:

That the report be noted. That a report on the rationalisation of Council owned property be added to the 2013/14 work programme.

Deborah
Breedon

DISCUSSION ITEMS (Green)

6. **Budget and financial matters**

David Kane presented a report outlining the plans for budget setting and consultation for 2014/15 and future years. David Kane also briefed the Panel on the implications for the Council of Spending Review 2015/16 announced by the Chancellor on 26 June 2013.

David Kane recommended the re-establishment of a working group to review earmarked reserves. David Kane commented that the Council is awaiting more detailed information from Government about the impact of the planned 10 per cent cut in local government budgets for Wolverhampton. Cllr Thompson queried the amount of total school reserves and if they are ring fenced. David Kane confirmed that the reserves are £17.6 m and that the monies are delegated to schools.

Resolved:

That the report be received and that the earmarked reserves working group be re-established during 2013/14 with the previous members being invited.

Deborah
Breedon

7. **FutureWorks Programme – Progress Update and Final Business Case**

Pat Main presented a detailed update report on the FutureWorks programme, the final business case and the progress made since the contract was awarded to Agilisys in April 2013. Pat Main set out the benefits to the Council of introducing new technology and working practices needed to deliver the objectives set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

Cllr Bolshaw queried the work being done to consult with school about the plans. Pat Main explained that the Council has put in place mechanisms to ensure good communication links with schools. Pat Main reported that there was an acknowledgement that the Council provides a service to schools, and they are free to buy services provided by Council elsewhere. Cllr Mrs Thompson commented on complaints from schools about Council delays in getting errors in payroll details corrected and was important not to be complacent. Cllr Waite queried if a functional specification document had been produced. Pat Main reported that the new Agresso system provided by Agilisys is already in use in 100+ local authorities and that Agilisys's approach is based on a standard local authority template for the system that has been road tested with other clients.

Pat Main reported that a lot of work was done during the due diligence process to check that the new system and processes will deliver the required service improvements. In addition, some payments to Agilisys are linked to the successful achievement of contract milestones.

Pat Main reported that Agilisys will be providing system support during the initial implementation period only, and that there are plans in place for knowledge transfer to ICTS by the end of 2014.

Cllr Waite queried the length of the software licence. Pat Main reported that there is a five year licence with an option to extend. Cllr Waite queried the level of staff understanding of the reasons for reasons behind the 80 redundancies.

Pat Main reported that the detailed work had begun to explain the planned changes to staff and the new working arrangements.

Cllr Potter queried the provision of training to staff. Pat Main explained that the proposed new structure will be reported in September, in addition to plans for supporting and managing the change process. Pat Main explained that work is now underway to identify who needs to be trained; this will be reported back in September 2013.

Cllr Singh queried the experience of other local authorities who have used the system and the lessons learnt. Pat Main explained that Agilisys and the Agresso system had been given excellent references from people in authorities visited to date.

Cllr Waite commented on the importance of staff feedback and the value of early engagement. Pat Main stated that there are dedicated business change managers working across the Council to support the process.

Resolved:

That the report be received.

8. Information Requests and Complaints

Charlotte Johns presented a report to brief the Panel on the changes in working arrangements and the progress made in dealing with complaints and requests for information. Charlotte Johns outlined improved performance in between the period 2012-13 and 2013-14 for dealing with Freedom of Information (FOI) requests as a result of changes made. The current compliance rate for dealing with FOI requests was reported as 85.3% (Quarter 1 2013/14).

Charlotte Johns presented an analysis of complaints received and the action taken. Future reports to the Panel will include more detailed information.

Resolved:

That the report be received. The Panel welcomed the report and agreed to receive future quarterly reports on FOI requests and complaints with a breakdown of results against Directorates for comparison.

Charlotte
Johns

INFORMATION ITEMS

9. Staff Turnover 2012-13

Janet Lowe presented a report giving an update of labour turnover across the Council, comparing the results of 2011/12 with 2012/13. Cllr Waite commented that staff turnover figure while providing a useful barometer of the health of the organisation, did not measure the impact of organisational changes and reasons for staff leaving the organisation. Janet Lowe explained that the new HR system will include a section to record the reasons for staff leaving to give more useful information. The information will be included in future reports.

Resolved:

That the report be received.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

10. Exclusion of press and public

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Act set out below:

<i>Item No.</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Applicable paragraph</i>
	Equal Pay Claims	4

Part 2 – exempt items, closed to the press and public

11. Equal Pay Claims

Fiona Davis presented a reported on progress made in the settlement of equal pay claims relating to ex-employees and current employees, and the implications of Supreme Court judgement in the case Birmingham City Council v Abdulla. The Panel were informed of current settlement negotiations with solicitors representing claimants.

Resolved:

That the report be received.