

5 **Corporate Performance Report Quarter 4 and Year End 2014/15**

Charlotte Johns, Head of Transformation, presented the Corporate Performance Report outlining some of the trends in performance of the Council.

Cllr Bolshaw sought clarity on figures provided for the number of visitors to cultural venues. He queried why there was no target set for this measure and asked what constituted as a venue. The Head of Transformation explained that the performance indicator was designed to capture the importance of promoting Wolverhampton's heritage and cultural offer. She noted that this is a difficult area to monitor and that the Council tracks the number of visitors to its art galleries and museums. She added that there was a reduction in the fourth quarter's performance as this was after the Christmas period when there was a surge of activity. She explained that work was taking place to change the methodology for this indicator so that the quality of data can be improved. Cllr Bateman suggested the Council should be monitoring the number of hotel beds in Wolverhampton as a way of measuring visitor numbers. He noted that Centro could provide data about transport users, which could also be valuable. The Head of Transformation explained that the current indicators were chosen based on corporate priority of promoting cultural attractions. Cllr Brookfield noted that perhaps the issue was symptomatic of a bigger problem for Wolverhampton, namely that it the City is not promoting itself enough.

Cllr Angus raised queried the performance indicator for the prevalence of excess weigh in adults. The Head of Transformation explained that this indicator is baselined against national data, which is not yet available. She reassured the Board that Public Health has been collating local data as a way of monitoring the direction of travel in this field. Cllr Angus also voiced concern about the number of sick days lost to absence, and asked if there was benchmarking data to compare the Council's performance. The Head of Transformation explained that the indicator is currently not comparable with other councils' data due to the way the information is collated; however, the methodology for this indicator will change for 2015/16, so that benchmarking is possible. She added that there is a Sickness Management Board that considers information relating to absences and that this issue is also being considered by a Cabinet Member.

Cllr Findlay noted the issue of sickness absence, and asked what processes were in place for monitoring absence. The Head of Transformation explained managers operate a duty of care like other organisations. She noted that absence information is now recorded centrally rather than across different departments. She added that developments on the Agresso system will allow the Council to assess correlations between sickness leave and other factors such as agency staff.

A discussion followed about whether there was a link between the number of appraisals and sickness absences. The Head of Transformation explained that refreshed appraisal paperwork will address issues such as stress and wellbeing. She noted that the main issue with appraisals was that they have not been recorded centrally, not that they hadn't been happening. Cllr Brookfield queried how long it will take before the new appraisal system becomes fully operational. It will not be until later in 2015/16 that the data quality is higher. Cllr Brookfield added that there should be a rider about agency staff, so that appraisal data is not distorted. She also noted a wider issue of social work agency staff being able to move between regional

authorities offering the best pay deals and working packages. She noted that there were also issues about losing experienced social workers.

Resolved

- 1) That the Stronger City Economy Scrutiny Panel receive a report on cultural venues, footfall through transport links and hotel bed figures, and that panel respond back to Board about findings.
- 2) That the Scrutiny Board receive an update report on the First Impressions of the City review, and this item be added to the work programme.
- 3) That the Scrutiny Board receive an update report on looked after children and the Families R First programme.

6 **Complaints Report Quarter 4 2014/15**

Sue Handy, Head of Customer Services, presented the Complaints Report and drew the Boards attention to the last quarter and annual performance of 2014/15. She summarised the report noting the following key findings:

- The Complaints Team responded to stage one complaints well within their targeted timescale.
- There was an increase in the number of complaints recorded due to improved awareness of the complaints process and greater transparency.
- Focus groups with customers have been providing feedback in trend areas, which is then fed back to the relevant service area.
- There were over a hundred compliments in the third and fourth quarter of 2014/15; efforts are being made to monitor compliments through a central point
- A policy has been introduced to manage unreasonable complaint behaviours

Cllr Bolshaw queried the purpose of ward level data for the Complaints Team. The Head of Custer Services explained this information is used by the Equalities Team to better understand if vulnerable demographics in Wolverhampton are being included. This feedback is also used to improve service areas as it helps the Complaints Team identify trend areas. Cllr Simkins requested for greater Councillor involvement in the process.

Cllr Collingswood queried the role of the Councillor SPOC. This contact point is a trial in the People Directorate; Councillors can email a specific mailbox, call the complaints team or register an issue with councillor support officers. This allows data to be managed by central point and to be analysed in same way as customer complaint data. Corporate leadership and SEB have considered this proposal. The Head of Customer Services noted that there was a need not to create a two tier complaints system whereby Councillor complaints were fast-tracked ahead of other complaints. She also informed the Board that Wolverhampton Homes use a SPOC.

Cllr Collingwood also questions what sort of customer service training had been provided to front-of-house staff and whether standards were monitored. The Head of Customer Services explained that City Direct employees receive mandatory customer service training, which will also be rolled out to all staff in the new appraisals package. She added that this will be monitored by Agresso. She informed

the Board that the Complaints Team have been using mystery shoppers and customer satisfaction reporting to assess services.

Cllr O'Neill praised the quick response times of the Complaints Team. However he drew the Board's attention to the number of Ombudsman complaints and questioned whether there was a weakness in the system that had resulted in complaints being escalated to this level. He also raised the issues of an abandoned fridge in his constituency and long waiting times on the phone reporting it to City Direct. The Head of Customer Services explained that whilst the targeted waiting time is no more than eight seconds, at peak times there can be a higher volume of calls. This standard is monitored on a monthly basis to ensure City Direct is adequately staffed.

Cllr Findlay praised the ethos of the complaints report and the work of the focus groups with customers. However he echoed concern about the Councillor SPOC, and commented that officer-councillor relationships were very important. He also questioned how the Council will monitor vexatious complaints in a sensitive manner. The Head Of Customer Services explained there is a robust process in place for a customer complaint to be labelled as vexatious, often with the Managing Director making a decision on the case. If a customer complaint is labelled vexatious then the individual is written to and informed they will have a SPOC for a 12 months period, after which the situation is reviewed.

The Head of Customer services explained that the Audit Committee process internal complaint information, such as complaints made about an employee by a colleague. An update report of this information will be presented to the Confident Capable Council (C3) Scrutiny Panel on 22 July. It was suggested that the outcomes of this report be summarised by the Chair of the C3 Panel at the next Scrutiny Board meeting.

Resolved:

- 1) That Councillors be invited to future complaints groups.
- 2) That the future Corporate Complaints reports include timescales for complaint resolutions, and that the report contains feedback made specifically about the Corporate Complaints Team.
- 3) That internal complaints report presented at the Confident Capable Council Scrutiny Panel be summarised at next Board meeting by the Chair of the panel, Cllr Potter.

7 **Information Governance Quarter 4 Performance and Year End Report**

Martin Eades, Senior Information Governance Officer, presented the Information Governance Performance and Year End Report, noting the continuous improvements in the team. He explained that since March 2015 the Information Governance Team has been fully staffed with a new Records Manger in post.

Cllr O'Neill queried if it was possible to monitor how many FOIs had come from the press. The IG Team can monitor this information and will provide an estimated figure for the Board. The Senior Information Governance Officer added the team did not have to reply to FOI requests that were deemed vexatious.

Cllr Angus questioned why SAR performance in the People Directorate was lower than in other parts of the Council. The Information Governance Officer explained that this was due to the type of information requested often being more complicated and sensitive, and therefore in need of redacting. Councillors acknowledged this challenge and then discussed the issue of people 'fishing' for information. It was noted that in some circumstances the Council can refuse to provide information if, for example, it is commercially sensitive.

Cllr Collingswood queried the background of the Information Commissioner's (ICO) report into the Council's practice. The Senior Information Governance Officer explained that the ICO had investigated an information breach at the council and noted that training provision was poor. There are now robust measures in place to ensure all employees, including new starters, complete mandatory IG training. Workforce Development has included this training in a new corporate induction package, so that its importance is clear to new starters. The IG Board also monitors these issues.

Cllr Simkins commented that the Agresso system could help with real-time information sharing. The Head of Transformation noted the new Agresso system has a training tab, which allows managers to monitor completed training courses. She added that most mandatory training is completed online, with some paper exceptions for people without direct access to a computer. Cllr Simkins welcomed the move to a more efficient process and was informed that the newly appointed Records Manager is investigating better ways of managing the remaining paper records.

Cllr Brookfield commented that Councillors should also adhere to the training standards that employees meet. She was also concerned about the use of cloud storage systems, and stressed the need to make sure they were secure.

Resolved:

- 1) That number of FOIs from the press be included in the next Information Governance Performance Reports.
- 2) That the Scrutiny Board be provided with any financial costing information for processing requests.
- 3) That Information Governance team consider an updated and more robust Information Governance training package for Councillors