



# Confident Capable Council Scrutiny Panel

## Minutes – 17 April 2014

### Attendance

#### Members of the Panel

Cllr Rita Potter (chair)  
Cllr Alan Bolshaw  
Cllr Craig Collingswood  
Cllr Jasbinder Kaur Dehar  
Cllr Christopher Haynes  
Cllr Milkinder Jaspal  
Cllr Paul Singh  
Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman  
Cllr Mrs Wendy Thompson  
Cllr Martin Waite

#### Cabinet Member in attendance

Cllr Paul Sweet

#### Employees

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Pat Main     | Assistant Director, Delivery                    |
| David Garner | Electoral Services Manager, Delivery            |
| Mark Taylor  | Assistant Director, Finance                     |
| Deb Breedon  | Scrutiny Officer, Office of the Chief Executive |

### Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Jasbir Jaspal and Cllr Zahid Hussain.

---

## Part 1 – items open to the press and public

*Item No.*      *Title*

### MEETING BUSINESS ITEMS

#### **Chair's announcements**

The Chair welcomed Councillors to the final meeting of the municipal year.

2.      **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3.      **Minutes of the previous meeting (6 March 2014)**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair as a true record.

4.      **Matters arising**

With regard to item 5 - work programme update Cllr Milkinder Jaspal indicated that the scrutiny panel had requested a report on budget overspend at the close of 2012-13 financial year in relation to Education and Enterprise directorate and Property Services. Mark Taylor advised that Audit Committee had received an exempt report detailing the outcomes of the audit investigation including a series of recommendations, which have been or are in the process of being implemented.

5.      **Work Programme 2013-14**

Deb Breedon provided a report which reviewed the 2013-14 work programme for Confident Capable Council Scrutiny Panel.

Resolved:

That the work programme report be noted.

### DISCUSSION ITEMS

6.      **Update on the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration.**

David Garner presented the update report on the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration (IER); he detailed the current proposals for registration processes for local authorities, including local data matching, and the proposals for funding the transition phase.

---

In response to questions he advised that people with learning difficulties will have access to face to face advice from the electoral registration team and that an equality analysis is to be put in place to address the unique characteristics of the project to implement IER as identified by the Equalities team.

Cllr Alan Bolshaw referred to the data matching 'dry run' carried out in July 2013 and the 77 % of electors confirmed through data matching, he asked whether any particular demographic been identified as not engaging and where people were not engaging.

David Garner advised that the canvass had been carried out early last year and that he was expecting a higher response rate this year, more like 86%. The breakdown of data received later this year can be arranged ward by ward, and there is work being carried out to engage younger people to register, such as work with Wolverhampton City University (WCU) to exchange data with other local authorities through a data sharing agreement.

Cllr Martin Waite asked if local authorities were carrying out the data sharing under the rules set out by Government and whether they were using other solutions such as fuzzy logic. David Garner advised that they were using the national standard algorithm and that the software supplier had agreed a system with the Cabinet Office. He advised that other layers of data matching could be explored but that there is a need to consider costs. In response to a further question David Garner advised that data matching currently costs £500 per year and he advised that civil penalties of £80 are incurred when non-registration is identified, but that collection of the penalty can be resource intensive.

In response to a question from Cllr Alan Bolshaw, David Garner advised that the forms are available in a number of formats on request and that it was the same on the online portal. He further advised that there is more work to do to engage 22,000 - 23,000 students and that students can be registered in two places.

Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman referred to the national approach to raising awareness and the suite of engagement documents, paper, television and advertisements. Panel was advised of the communications team carrying out similar work to engage people to pass the message out to the community. Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman requested information back to the panel of any progress and snagging issues in the 2014-15 elections.

Resolved:

That the panel note the on-going implementation of Individual Electoral Registration and agree to receive a further update report on the progress

---

of implementation and any snagging issues.

7. **Future Works Programme Update Report**

Pat Main provided an update on the progress made on the FutureWorks programme as the new systems and business processes go live. In addition to the report a verbal update was given. Pat Main advised that the launch 1 April 2014 had been very successful:

- In relation to Delivery, Office of the Chief Executive, Wolverhampton Homes and West Midlands Pension fund access to Agresso's finance and HR self-service facilities and for updating personal details, booking leave, claiming expenses and managing budgets, an average of 880 users have logged onto the system each day since 1 April, with day one peaking at 2000 logged enquiries.
- Community and Education and Enterprise self-service is scheduled to be rolled out in June 2014.
- The Agresso system went live on 1 April 2014 for raising orders and paying suppliers; issuing invoices and chasing debts; collecting income; maintaining HR records
- Managing budgets (May onwards – ready for the quarter one budget reports).
- The payroll parallel run commenced.
- Mainframe systems were switched to read only for the majority of users.
- In relation to user support floorwalkers were available to support users at 40 locations.
- At 16 April a dedicated telephone helpdesk and website to log queries had received 1,014 requests, had resolved 627 and still had 387 in progress.
- 100% network availability was reported across the network.

Cllr Alan Bolshaw enquired in terms of schools who were buying in the payroll service if there had been any delays in processing the March payroll. Pat Main replied that she was not aware of any delays however, as a consequence of Agresso go live, there had had to be a very rigid cut-off date for the March payroll processing requiring all services (including schools) to submit their data in time for commencement of the parallel run.

In response to further questions about how this would affect the service level agreement (SLA) Mark Taylor advised that the timing was pertinent as currently a letter to all schools was being prepared to advise of the HR and finance services as some of the new HR competitors were not able to interface with Agresso, they have to engage with the Council to provide data about pensions. In response to questions relating to administration costs for letters to chase

---

data from competitors the panel were advised that the Council is adopting a commercial stance and would recover the costs, if they do not hit deadlines the Council will not bail out other services. Panel was advised that for the customers who have stayed with the Council as provider we want to provide the best possible service. Councillor Jaspal asked for an update on the take up of SLAs by schools for the financial years 2014/15 (for each individual SLA), including how this compares to the take up for 2013/14.

Councillor Martin Waite referred to the glowing report from Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) that the project was well delivered. He asked how the Council plans to leverage additional insight for the 'curious people' from the programme and how confident are we of realising the five year benefits forecast.

Pat Main provided a response, indicating that the Council now has capacity to access excellent management information, with lots more entry at source to avoid unnecessary re-keying and budget managers will be able to drill down into budget variations and model options. She advised that it was easier to see exactly what the budget holders are spending money on and how many commodities are being bought and when. Mark Taylor advised the scrutiny panel that procurement decisions can be improved at source avoiding poor decisions.

Cllr Martin Waite asked what more can be done to drive curiosity. Pat Main advised that budget holders will be held to account in terms of monitoring variations and that specialist heads of service will be driving the curiosity, for example, corporate procurement will be driving greater awareness of effective purchasing decisions and HR will have access to personnel data which at last will be all in one place. She indicated that the programme benefit assumptions are robust and have been discussed in detail with the lead managers and the finance team, resulting in a high degree of confidence that they are achievable.

Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman welcomed the Agresso system and the report detailing the progress, she asked if there was anything that is not yet working. Pat Main advised that the technology was working well, inevitably the business rules relating to a few specific transactions need adjustment but this was to be expected; she advised that users have been well trained and the main challenge now is to continue to support the culture change for employees during transition. The extensive training and awareness sessions before go live have paid dividends as there don't appear to have been any major shocks or surprises for users and so far no unexpected patterns in the enquiries received that need to be addressed. She advised that the payroll implementation was always expected to be a challenge as the new integrated HR/payroll system demands a lot more information than the mainframe system, therefore dual

---

processing is underway to help manage the risks.

Resolved:

1. To note the progress made in relation to the implementation of the Future Works Programme.
2. That an update on the take up of SLAs by schools for the financial years 2014/15 (for each individual SLA), including how this compares to the take up for 2013/14 be provided to Cllr Milkinder Jaspal.

8. **Chairs Summary**

Cllr Rita Potter personally thanked the members of the Scrutiny Panel for the work they have carried out during 2013-14, focussing on the oversight of major programmes and the core business of the Council. She thanked the Vice-chair, Cllr Wendy Thompson for her vital contribution to agenda planning meetings and Cabinet Members who had attended and responded to the panel's questions. She thanked Employees and witnesses who had prepared detailed reports and contributed to discussions, and also the Scrutiny Officer for her assistance and administration of the Panel.

Termination of meeting 19:10

---