

Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 17 February 2021

PRESENT:

Councillor Jordan, in the Chair.

Councillor Vincent, Vice Chair.

Councillors Buchan, Corvid, Derrick, Hendy, Mrs Pengelly, Tuffin and Wigen.

Also in attendance: Alan Knott (Policy Advisor), Andrew Loton (Head of Governance, Performance and Risk), Andy Ralphs (Strategic Director of Customer and Corporate Services), Sophie Chiswell (Service Manager for Contact Centre) and Craig Fritzsche (Service Manager) and Jamie Sheldon (Senior Governance Advisor).

The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 4.00 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the Panel will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made by Members in accordance with the code of conduct.

2. Minutes

Agreed the minutes of 25 November 2020 as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. Chair's Urgent Business

There were no items of Chair's Urgent Business.

4. Policy Brief

Alan Knott (Policy Advisor) provided the Performance, Finance and Customer Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the latest national picture in respect of policy announcements and legislation relating to this committee.

The Committee noted the report.

5. Corporate and Customer Services Review Update - presentation

Andy Ralphs (Strategic Director of Customer and Corporate Services), Sophie Chiswell (Service Manager for Contact Centre) and Craig Fritzsche (Service Manager) gave a presentation to the Committee upon the Contact Centre, the

Revenue and Benefits Services, Council Tax & Benefits Performance and the Registration & Coroners Service.

Key areas of questioning from Members related to –

- how the contact centre channel related to the other channels?
- what was the temporary period with staff absence referred to in the presentation linked to? Redeployment for Covid Emergency preparedness?
- what was considered to be the biggest drawbacks to remote working and how this would be considered going forward?
- how was the council monitoring staff stress levels linked to remote working for the contact centre?
- were mechanisms in place to support contact centre staff if they had had a upsetting/ stressful phone-call with a member of the public?
- how the council was supporting members of the public that would normally drop in to a council building with their enquiry and were less likely to call;
- were there future changes planned to the homeless accessibility linked to remote working?
- does the council have a mechanism for digital accessibility for people that may have visual disability or neural divergence?
- does the priority increase on a call the longer someone is waiting?
- how does the council work with credit unions and financial support charities?
- would the council offer an opportunity for new British Citizens to meet the Lord Mayor and have photographs in the Council House?
- had a request for financial support been submitted to the Government to help with citizenship ceremonies?

Agreed that future updates provided to committee upon the contact centre would include all methods of communication, including face to face contact, social media, email and call data in order to provide a better spectrum of information and issues.

The Committee thanked the contact centre staff and those in customer services for their work during the pandemic.

6. **Corporate Performance, Monitoring Report 2020/21 Quarter 2**

Andrew Loton (Head of Governance, Performance and Risk) presented the report to the Committee -

The Corporate Plan Performance report detailed how the Council was performing against its priority performance indicators that were agreed at the inception of the Corporate Plan.

It provided an analysis of performance as at the end of September 2020 against the Council's key performance indicators (KPIs), providing a detailed performance update against the Corporate Plan priorities.

This report formed part of the Council's Performance Framework and was a key part of our aim to achieve a 'golden thread' from the Corporate Plan and its KPIs and delivery plans, through to service and team level business plans, and ultimately to individual objectives.

This report focused on performance indicators that were under the remit of the Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny committee. The report included updates on a number of subjects, including; Street Cleanliness, Prevention of Homelessness, Staff Sickness and Council Tax collection.

Key areas of questioning from Members related to –

- traffic congestion on page 20 of the report – the date range wasn't clear, satisfaction had reduced yet the traffic had been less all year; would objective measures be compared to customer satisfaction? Was it localised to specific roadworks?
- was traffic data monitored to assess if it matched the original modelling undertaken?
- the staff engagement data was linked to 2018 – a more recent survey had been undertaken so should have been included in the report;
- comparison data with other council's should be included in the report;
- recycling and household waste data for 2020; page 23 – if the data could be broken down to commercial/ domestic/ and domestic that goes to the centre. Not clear how much waste diverted to general waste to the incinerator or being left and not being managed? Are people recycling less?
- page 24 of the carbon dioxide emissions – if KPIs had not been developed for these emissions when would they be agreed? It would be helpful to see the national average;
- with regards to people feeling safe in Plymouth it would be helpful to see a more demographic breakdown to assess if certain groups would feeling more or less safe and if intervention was required.

Agreed that –

1. Members would be advised as to what variables were measured and monitored in the highways department, specifically linked to highways and

traffic, and that this would be brought to committee at a future meeting;

2. comparison data with other local authorities and the national average would be provided in future reports;
3. a data request for household waste would be included on the panel's work programme, to include a separation of commercial waste, domestic waste and domestic waste that was sent to the recycling centre.
4. community cohesion data, including a split by Ward, would be added to an agenda for a future meeting, specifically regarding a more in depth of split of people feeling safe.

7. **Work Programme**

Members discussed the work programme for 2020/21.

It was agreed that the following item would be included as an agenda item for a future meeting:

- Progress report: Crematorium