

ORGANISATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 29 MARCH 2022

Present:

Councillor Stephen Clough (Chair) (in the Chair)
Councillor Heather Liggett (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Joseph Birkin
Councillor Philip Wright

Councillor Diana Ruff

Also Present:

S Gordon	HR & OD Manager
B MacArthur-Williams	Health & Safety Manager
S Lee	Assistant Director of Transformation & Communications
R Pope	Customer Services Manager
D Stanton	Governance Officer
A Bond	Governance Officer

OSC/ Apologies for Absence

57/2

1-22 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Kerry and J Funnell.

OSC/ Declarations of Interest

58/2

1-22 Members were requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest and/or other interest, not already on their register of interests, in any item on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

There were no interests declared at this meeting.

OSC/ Minutes of Last Meeting

59/2

1-22 RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the previous meeting of the Organisation Scrutiny Committee held on 1 February 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

OSC/ Scrutiny Review - ICT and Transformation

60/2

1-22 Interview with the Customer Services Manager

1. What Progress has been made towards full digital services?

Members heard that there had been a lot of progress made towards a full digital service, this included the addition of a number of self-service forms such as the one created to assist residents in self-isolation. There had been 7251 service requests through this form.

It was noted that the most used form of contact by residents was telephone,

followed by email and in-person meetings. Web chat had been implemented in December 2021.

Committee were informed that the Mill Lane site had transitioned to cashless payments only in January 2019. Residents were still able to make cash payments at alternative sites such as post offices and payzone outlets.

There were also a large range of alternative payment methods made available to residents. These included telephone and website payments, as well as a new automated telephone based payment service. These services were available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. No complaints had been received as a result of this transition to a cashless service.

Members heard that the ability to send fully encrypted texts and a hybrid mail service were currently being investigated.

2. How Easy and Intuitive are the Services we have introduced?

Committee were informed that advice and assistance was still available for those residents that required it but often this was only required for first time users.

Residents still had the option of paying in cash at other premises outside of Mill Lane.

3. How do we promote digital services and how are we measuring customer experience?

Members heard that customer satisfaction surveys across all access channels were due to be completed during 2022/2023. The services were also promoted and questions asked, during Citizens Panels. Residents also had access to a comments, compliments and complaints form that they were able to fill out.

Committee were informed that after completed a webchat, residents would have the option to complete a survey on their experience.

The Officer stated that a quality impact assessment was undertaken prior to the removal of the physical payments service at the Mill Lane premises and all residents that had made cash payments at the site were contacted and informed of the changes.

4. How are we ensuring that all customers can access digital services, and what are we doing to help those we can't?

Committee heard that internet access and the use of a self-help PC in reception at the Mill Lane premises, as well as the fact that internet access was available through DCC Libraries was actively promoted.

Customer services were also able to assist residents without internet access to create email accounts and complete online forms. This has been used in the past to assist residents in registering for free food during the Covid

pandemic and for accessing Universal Credit.

The Officer highlighted ten core services that residents contacted the council for and suggested that a video series on how to access these could be created.

5. What are the costs of implementation?

Members noted that the most extensive costs had been the implementation of the telephone payment service at a cost of £20,000 but this was needed in order for the organisation to be compliant with regulations.

There would also be a cost of £10,000 to implement the hybrid mail system but this would deliver savings of £30,000 this year.

6. What are the barriers to success?

Committee were informed that the primary barrier was getting the forms online and ensuring that the right forms were available for residents.

There had been no complaints or barriers for residents to date.

7. Do you have any other opinions/suggestions to improve digital services?

Members were told that the hybrid mail service would deliver significant savings and efficiencies. After this had been implemented, the implementation of a chatbot could be considered as this would reduce telephone time for Officers.

Committee discussed the interview and enquired as to whether the progress towards digital services would affect staffing levels. They heard that the service were not looking to make any redundancies but might consider succession planning once people leave the service.

Members noted that 734 residents had made cash payments this year at no charge to the resident.

The Officer informed Members that different ways to make payments were being actively promoted but if any residents were having issues then they were welcome to contact Customer Services.

OSC/ **Update on Apprenticeships/Degrees**

61/2

1-22

Members received an update on Apprenticeships and Degrees that were being completed by employees such as the Health & Safety Manager.

They heard that the Manager was completing an MBA (Facilities Management) that included eight modules, and eight assignments. Once this had been completed there would be an applied business report to undertake and present which is based on a 10,000 word dissertation.

As well as this, they would have to complete an apprenticeship. This would require the participant to identify key pieces of work that would benefit the

Council and then produce ten or fifteen fully evidenced mini projects that would be discussed at the end point assessment. The end point assessment would be facilitated by an external examiner.

The Health & Safety Manager informed members of the benefits that they were receiving from participating in the course. These included; developing strategic thinking, appreciating how Health & Safety impacts upon other Council services and departments, and an understanding of facilities management at a more structural level.

Members were informed that the MBA course would last a total of three years and that the apprenticeship would be completed within three and a half years.

OSC/ Scrutiny Review - ICT and Transformation

62/2

1-22 The Committee then considered all of the evidence which it had received during its review of the Council's ICT and transformation towards digital services.

Committee identified areas of good practice such as service areas performing well within their areas, in-house developed programmes and services and the support delivered to residents.

Members also highlighted a number of areas for improvement. These included a lack of a dedicated central budget for digital services, the opportunity for a greater partnership with Citizens Advice, and no cloud based system for staff.

RESOLVED – That the draft report on Committee's review be prepared and submitted to Committee for approval.

OSC/ Forward Plan of Executive Decisions

63/2

1-22 RESOLVED – That the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions be noted.

OSC/ Work Programme

64/2

1-22 RESOLVED – That the work programme be noted.

OSC/ Additional Urgent Items

65/2

1-22 There were no additional urgent items.

OSC/ Date of Next Meeting

66/2

1-22 The next meeting of the Organisation Scrutiny Committee would be held on Tuesday 10 May at 10.00 am.

OSC/ Venue for Next Meeting

67/2

1-22 The next meeting of the Organisation Scrutiny Committee would be held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, 2013 Mill Lane, Wingerworth, Chesterfield, S42 6NG.

