

POLICY REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 DECEMBER 2016

Present: County Councillor Howells(Chairperson)
County Councillors Hunt, Sanders, Thomas, Walker and
Goddard

43 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Jim Murphy was unable to attend as a result of being required to attend the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee which was meeting at the same time.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that Councillor Huw Thomas was attending the Committee remotely, as he was unable to attend the meeting. Technology was in place to support Councillor Thomas and he would be able to see and hear the meeting in action. This was the first time a Scrutiny Committee in Cardiff had been attended remotely.

44 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairperson advised Members that they had a responsibility under Article 16 of the Members' Code of Conduct to declare any interests and complete Personal Interest Forms, at the commencement of the agenda item in question.

45 : MINUTES

The minutes of the 11 October 2016 were signed as a correct record of proceedings.

46 : CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY

The Chairperson thanked the C2C staff for the tour that preceded this item and welcomed the following:

- Councillor Graham Hinchey, Cabinet Member Corporate Services & Performance;
- Isabelle Bignall, Assistant Director Customer Services and Communities .
- Rachel Bishop, Customer Services Manager
- Emlyn Nash, Corporate Customer Services Manager
- Lowri Morris, Assistant Contact Centre Manager

The Chairperson advised that having observed the frontline call centre service in action, the Committee had an opportunity now to examine how the Council was managing the gateway to customer services, progress in delivering both the Digital and Customer Services Strategies.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Hinchey to make a statement.

Councillor Hinchey thanked the officers for the tour of the centre. Digitalisation was the way forward and two years of investment into C2C had resulted in the development of advanced technology with multi-functional support systems. Staff

development was essential for improvement, along with the investment in staff and their wellbeing. PPDR's were being used as a tool to support staff and enhance their working environments whilst continuing to train and develop services to the customer.

The Committee received a presentation on Online Cardiff which outlined the following:

- Cardiff's Customer Strategy informs our Digital Strategy
 - 75% of customers would sign up for and use the personalised Council self-service account.
- Future Digital Services – What's next for Cardiff
- Online Successes – Council Tax
 - Parking Permits & Fines
- Online Activities
 - 75% of customers chose to request online rather than call in.
 - Viewing Planning Applications
- Cardiff's Online Presence
- Customer Visits
- Arrival Points to Cardiff.gov.uk
 - Majority of customers use Google search engine
- Website Translated
- Top 10 most visited sections – 2016
 - 19% Rubbish and Recycling
 - 16% Parking, Roads and Travel

The Committee received a second presentation on C2C, which outlined the following:

- Core Services
- Contact Volumes
- Customer Satisfaction
- People Management
- Challenge – Welsh Language Standards
- Forward Plan
- Welsh Contact Centre Awards – People Engagement Winner

The Chairperson thanked the officers for the presentation and invited the Committee to ask questions.

Members of the Committee were keen to establish the balance between digital online usage and call volumes for services. In response Officers explained that services for older persons were continuously advertised and provided them with a multi-channel choice. Work was on-going with colleagues at the Hub's to support and provide digital training for those customers that required the service.

It was recognised that for people who choose to use the digital service navigation tools were easily accessible and supported the customer's needs. 55% of service users accessed the Council's Website through the use of a mobile device. The Council's Staff App had been launched and staff were being encouraged to use this service which communicated information to employees across the organisation.

Members of the Committee drew attention to call waiting times and how this was measured. Officers advised that Key Performance Indicators were in place and the average response time was under a minute. The activity was monitored and a forecast could be made in relation to the peak waiting times. When peaks were triggered staff were rotated to support high demand and alleviate the pressure on both staff and customers.

The Committee asked why there were high levels of Housing Repair calls considering the level of housing stock in the city. Officers explained calls in relation to Housing Repairs did not always involve a repair and were often queries about Housing matters in general.

The Committee drew attention to the Quarter 2 Corporate Performance Report, the issues with the CRM roll out, and asked what the relationship was between the CRM and digital delivery of services at C2C.

Officers advised the Committee that Emlyn Nash was the Senior Responsible Officer and Project Executive for the service. CRM was enabling technology, which would not change the current online service provision. The current issues with CRM were being dealt with at the highest level through SAP and it would not interfere with the current C2C online support service. The delay was part of the data architecture system and would be resolved and implemented.

The Committee was advised that call volumes would be reduced as a result of an enhanced online support service. A Deep Dive project had taken place to analyse usages and population increases, but the call volumes had remained the same. A channel shift was recognised in waste issues especially in relation to missed collections, which was easier to log online than to make a phone call. The process for logging a missed bin collection was outlined to the Committee and was more complicated than expected.

In-Cab technology would alleviate current issues experienced by missed bin collections, with the joined up data being essential to develop a digital way forward in this service.

Members of the Committee asked about the cost of calls to C2C from mobile phones as some rates could be expensive. The Committee was advised that call costs from mobile phones depended entirely on the customer's contract with the mobile phone provider. However, all calls to C2C were on local rate, and if the issues could not be resolved C2C would call the resident back.

The Committee was concerned with some of the recommendations from the Wales Audit Office in light of the 2014 inspection. The organisation was not customer focused and fragmented and therefore was this holding back the progress of C2C.

The Committee was assured that staff had been appointed to support and drive forward customer services initiatives. PPDR's were in place to support employees and their development in the workplace. This was a complex organisation but sound managers were being developed to support the shift in culture change.

The Committee was provided with information on the staff dynamics at C2C and how they contributed towards social events. A change in culture was being developed throughout the organisation with officers promoting and encouraging change.

Members of the Committee asked about the complaints logged on social media and when would they be taken into account. In response the officers advised that complaints logged on Twitter were handled differently and dealt with by Communications. Twitter was not a formal channel for complaints to be made.

The Committee was keen to see that complaints against the Council logged on Twitter be recorded and dealt with in the same manner as any other correspondence.

RESOLVED: At the conclusion of the meeting the Committee discussed the evidence presented, following which they tasked the Chairperson of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee to write to the witnesses to thank them for attending the meeting and set out the comments made by Members (letter attached)

47 : ODP - REVIEW OF SCRUTINY

The Chairperson welcomed the following:

- Councillor Daniel De'Ath, Cabinet Member Safety Skills & Engagement.
- Davina Fiore, Director of Governance & Legal Services
- Paul Keeping, Scrutiny & Equalities Manager

The Chairperson advised Members the Committee had an opportunity to offer its views on draft proposed models developing out of the Performance & Governance Review of Scrutiny. The Scrutiny Review Project aimed to support good governance, good scrutiny, the future success of the Council and the City. The Review was aiming to deliver the best possible Scrutiny function for Cardiff, optimising the involvement and engagement of non-Executive Councillors that meets all existing and expected statutory requirements, the needs of the new Administration and the Council after May 2017.

The Chairperson invited Councillor De'Ath to make a statement.

Councillor De'Ath emphasised the importance of Scrutiny at Cardiff Council. The service, supported by Member engagement had developed an advanced Scrutiny Service which supported the City and its development. A change in culture had seen Scrutiny evolve in recent years with partnership working and development of Members Workshops to support changes in Scrutiny and ensure it is sound, and continues to play a major role in Council openness and transparency.

Davina Fiore outlined the process of the review to members of the Committee. The process had been addressed by Senior Management Team and Chairpersons of Scrutiny Committee's, including workshops with party whips. This was seen as an opportunity to provide feedback on a way forward with Cabinet Member Engagement, whilst adapting to change and circumstances. The balance of Scrutiny had to be analysed between formal Committee's and Task & Finish Groups. It was recognised that Members preferred Task & Finish Groups as that style of scrutiny was seen as being more in-depth. The balance of activity being should also be addressed, and how Directors fed into the process.

The Committee was provided with the following Models to consider:

- Model One: A "Standard" arrangement as currently in place;
- Model Two: A "Thematic" arrangement – where committees were arranged around the type of scrutiny they specialised in – such as Pre-Decision, Performance Monitoring, Policy Development, Partnership;
- Model Three: A "Single Committee" arrangement – where there was just one formal Scrutiny Committee and a range of informal activities arranged below it.

The Chairperson invited the Committee to ask questions.

Members of the Committee drew attention to the current capacity in relation to membership of Scrutiny Committee's. Task & Finish Groups had more buy in, however, these were scheduled for daytime which some members could not attend.

The Committee was advised that Task & Finish membership could be extended to Members not on a formal Scrutiny Committee. The times of the Task & Finish meetings could also be altered.

The Committee Members drew attention to the consultation process and asked that all Independent Members be involved at each stage. The Members asked about the Internal drivers for change and how this was being developed.

Members were advised that drivers were being established in response to demand and alternative ways of working. Cross-cutting mechanisms were being developed and the Policy Review & Performance Scrutiny Committee should take the lead on this, including the Public Service Board.

The Committee discussed proposals to enhance the Scrutiny function along with proposals to develop the Research element. Members of the Committee were keen to keep Social Services separate from Housing and continue with Adult and Community Services in order to monitor independent living services.

Members were advised the Council provided a Corporate Research Function that could support these services. A more robust research function could be established with a service level agreement in place to support this.

The Committee discussed the Councillor dynamics required to full fill the role. An ideal system was for Councillors to provide a 100% commitment to their duties as a Councillor without being pre-occupied by work commitments.

Current resources were addressed and the validity of the current Scrutiny provision in place. This could support the establishment of four formal Scrutiny Committee's with additional Task & Finish Groups. It was recognised that some Members felt Task & Finish Groups were more rewarding.

The Committee drew attention to performance issues and asked what mechanisms were being developed to ensure that culture change was being embedded into the organisation.

Officers explained SMART objectives were in place to support and fit in with the Directors PPDR's to drive forward the performance agenda.

Members of the Committee were concerned with the number of vacancies on Scrutiny Committee's and suggested that the membership on each Committee be reduced. It was recognised that one of the suggested Model's would enhance the Task & Finish Groups, which could open up opportunities for non-scrutiny members.

The Committee understood there were grounds for reviewing the Terms of Reference of Scrutiny Committee's and agreed that the principle of 4-5 Committee's remain in place.

The Committee was advised that a report on the proposed Scrutiny structure would be taken to Council in May 2017.

RESOLVED: At the conclusion of the meeting the Committee discussed the evidence presented, following which they tasked the Chairperson of the Policy Review and Performance Scrutiny Committee to write to the witnesses to thank them for attending the meeting and set out the comments made by Members (letter attached)

48 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 17 JANUARY 2017, COUNTY HALL

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