

EXTRACT of the MINUTES of a meeting of the POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on WEDNESDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 2018

Present: Councillor M Specht (Chairman)

Councillors R Ashman, N Clarke, T Eynon, P Purver, V Richichi, A C Saffell, S Sheahan and N Smith

In Attendance: Councillors J Geary, R Johnson and J Legrys.

Portfolio Holders: Councillors A V Smith MBE

Officers: Mr J Bright, Mr M Fiander, Mr G Jones, Mr M Murphy, Mr P Sanders, Mr T Shardlow, Ms K Smith (SLC Rail) and Mrs R Wallace

15. 2018/19 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Director of Housing and Customer Services presented the report to Members, and drew attention to the Intervention Plans in the appendix which contained remedial actions to address objectives or priorities where performance was below target.

Councillor S Sheahan felt that the information regarding the Customer Services Call Centre statistics was a little confusing and was concerned that the percentage of calls not being answered had risen from Quarter four. The Director of Housing and Customer Services explained that a Head of Service had been appointed to address the issues within the service and raise its corporate profile, and assured Members that improvements would be seen soon. He introduced Tom Shardlow, Head of Customer Services who would be presenting a report later in the meeting on the new Customer Services Strategy. Councillor S Sheahan felt that it would be difficult to measure overall customer satisfaction across all services.

Councillor S Sheahan asked the following questions regarding the performance indicators at page 20 of the report:

- He felt it was unclear what the first three indicators related to and it seemed that one of these targets had not been met yet had a green status. The Director of Housing and Customer Services explained that the indicators questioned related to the performance of the Revenue and Benefits Service in days taken to process new claims / change of circumstances notification, he agreed it could be explained more clearly. He also confirmed that the green status was a typographical error and would be corrected.
- Regarding the 'Housing Benefit overpayment collection rate' indicator, Councillor Sheahan felt that there was not enough information to explain the target, as 11 percent was a low figure. The Director of Housing and Customer Services explained that the arrangements made to collect the overpayments were normally a small amount each week and would therefore often take around 12 months to two years to claim the full amount back. He assured Members that it did not seem like much within this quarter but would rise throughout the year.

In response to a question from Councillor S Sheahan, the Director of Housing and Customer Services agreed to provide further information outside of the meeting regarding the 100 percent satisfaction rates of the housing repairs service. He was aware that customers were called after having a repair completed at their property and this was how the figures had been obtained.

Chairman's signature

Regarding the performance of the Leisure Centres, Councillor T Eynon asked for further information on lower income levels and why they were suffering in competition with other nearby gyms. The Head of Community Services explained that the main issue was the difference in gym size and the age / amount of the equipment available. The Leisure Centres had good but slightly ageing equipment which was very well used and there was simply not enough capacity available to compete with other new gyms in the area. Councillor T Eynon also felt that the current branding was not quite right as it did not represent the community accurately as there were few images of older people or those that did not have a perfect physique. She pointed out the difficulty in locating the health referrals page and she felt it was not designed well with no visuals. She believed strongly in the benefits of health referrals, as well as self-referrals and believed that if people had a good experience they would continue to visit the leisure centres and purchase memberships once the referral had been completed. The Head of Community Services commented that he used the Leisure Centres regularly and had witnessed the good work being undertaken by the health referrals, and the wide range of different types of users which he felt was down to the very proactive referrals team. He agreed that the branding did need to be addressed and this was something he would consider in conjunction with the Communications Team.

Councillor N Clarke raised concerns regarding the level of staff absence in the Customer Services Team and asked for further information in future reports to understand the reasons behind staff absence levels. The Director of Housing and Customer Services reiterated earlier comments regarding the issues around performance management within the Customer Services Team and that improvements were expected now the Head of Service was in post.

Councillor P Purver raised concerns regarding the level of long term sickness in Waste Services and asked if team members were fit to do the job after initially receiving the correct training. The Head of Community Services confirmed that all employees had the appropriate training with regular refresher sessions. He reported that the majority of the employees on long term sickness were absent due to their personal health and not always as a result of the nature of the job. In response to a further question, the Head of Community Services stated that the absences did put additional pressure on the team but they were generally covered by current employees undertaking overtime rather than agency staff.

It was moved by Councillor M Specht, seconded by Councillor P Purver and

RESOLVED THAT:

Comments made by the Committee be provided to Cabinet when considering the report on 9 October 2018.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.23 pm

Chairman's signature