

2015/2016 - Chief Executive's Office Portfolio Holder Update

Service Plan Performance

The ICT Service provides the underlying infrastructure and support services for nearly 600 users, including key council contractors who access our systems. In 2015/16 the ICT Helpdesk received over **14,000** calls and the service as a whole made over **400** planned changes to our systems, excluding new developments, whilst maintaining service availability of **99.42%**

The GIS team, which also has responsibility for Street Naming & Numbering (SNN), made over **30,000** updates the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) in 2015/16. The LLPG is the Council's master property database and is integrated into services such as Planning, Revenues and Benefits, Community Protection and Electoral Services.

SNN generated over **£48,000** of income in 2015/16 compared with an average of £6,000 when ICT took over the service in 2012. This increase is not only attributable to new developments, but to new processes which have been put in place to identify property changes and the introduction of a new charging structure.

Democratic Services is split between three core teams. Civic & Committee Services provides support to all Warwick District Councillors and manages the Council's public meetings, along with supporting the Chairman in their role as civic lead for the District. The electoral services team are responsible for managing of the electoral register (currently 102,000 electors) within the district and delivering all public elections that occur in the District. The Corporate Support Team (formally Document Management Centre) are responsible for the management of post and deliveries within the Council, cash receipting, management of requests for information to the Council and provide support to the Corporate Management Team.

HR has continued to support the FFF strategy and work with the organisation to realise its vision and work with its values. Present full time equivalent for the organisation is 462 a reduction of 12% from 2011/12; headcount is 523 a reduction of 11% from 2011/12. Staff turnover has increased by 2.57% from 2011/12. Our absence rates per employee have reduced year on year from 2012 to present date by 1.17%.

HR provides support to its customers for the following areas: HR Officers managing day to day issues with the council and support for restructures/policy guidance/recruitment and performance related issues. HR Support/Payroll as a combined area provide a consistent service for all personnel as part of the Employee Life Cycle. Learning & Development ensures Personal Development Plans are linked to the Corporate Training Plan and considers the priorities of the organisation to ensure skills and knowledge continue to be progressed through a variety of blended learning options. In the 2015 Employee Survey 61% per cent of respondents felt they were lead and inspired by managers, 76% live the organisations values and behaviours; 79% felt empowered and involved; 82% felt that performance management was measured and feedback used; 46% felt recognised and rewarded; 68% believed the organisation developed capability;

72% felt that we are always seeking new ways to improve; 77% felt the organisation had a plan for creating sustainable success. Working in partnership with other organisations has ensured opportunities to network and provide a wider contact base.

The Media, Design and Communication team are the key contact for our external messages and how we interact with our customers. They also provide the support for our new internal Intranet to ensure staff receive up to date messages and have 'quick' access to the services they need.

Risks

The ICT Service has three primary risks:

- The inability to recruit suitably qualified staff. The Desktop team no longer has any staff with an ICT qualification. This is in sharp contrast to the position 10 years ago when ICT could recruit graduates to the entry level helpdesk post. The service has also been unable to recruit suitably qualified developers to the application's team for many years. However, the biggest risk is to the infrastructure team where the salary differential between the Council and the private sector is at its greatest.
- The increasing sophistication of Cyber Attacks, as highlighted by the recent ransomware attack on Lincolnshire CC, poses a constant risk to the confidentiality, integrity and availability of council services and data. The time taken to upgrade and patch systems, including meeting the requirements of compliance regimes such as the PSN, is placing an ever increasing demand on the service.
- The demand to access council data from anywhere and on any device puts the confidentiality of council data at risk. The potential risk of unauthorised disclosure, which is reportable to the Information Commissioner, is shared with Democratic Services.

The primary risks for Democratic Services are:

- Not dealing with DP/FOI/EIR matters in appropriate way and timescales. This specifically a two part aspect for ensuring resources are available for recording and monitoring responses. There is also a wider matter for refreshing policies, procedures and training across the Council which was due to take place as part of the SAP.
- Decision/unauthorised decision. This risk was associated with the introduction of a new Council and ensuring adequate training and support was in place. This risk will now have reduced and should continue to do so.
- Physical Health and Safety Risks to staff in office, this is a risk associated with working directly with members of the public which is always increased when sensitive matters are under consideration. Examples of this include contentious matters at planning committee when extra resources are brought in to manage significant numbers of members of the public attending. Another example is for threats of physical action against staff members when people are aggrieved for not being able to

vote at elections. This became an actual situation in May 2015 with a threat to burn down riverside House.

- Recruitment and retention of Staff – although a risk to the Council overall the past 12 months for democratic Services this has been a significant issue for the team and has impacted on service delivery. The restructure of the team has changed this with all post established appropriately and are being recruited to. The last vacant post, created by a member of the team getting a new job elsewhere, should be filled by the end of June 2016.

The primary risks for HR/Media are:

- Loss of IT, due to the deadlines HR need to adhere to the loss of IT would have a major impact, loss of key records to enable us to inform payroll correctly related to pay/pensions/absence updates.
- Work on People Strategy not achieved and the impact of low morale and engagement in the organisation.
- Inaccurate/inappropriate communication for internal and external contacts could result in messages misinterpreted and impact on reputation of the organisation.

Workforce Planning

In 2015/16 the ICT Service was fortunate to only have a single vacancy which was successfully filled. However, it should be noted that this vacancy was filled with a non-qualified staff member and this continues the trend of recent years due to low salaries. (See also risks)

From 1st April 2016, the ICT Service took responsibility for the council's web site with the transfer of the Web Site Services Manager to the team.

During 2015/16 Democratic Services had a number of staffing matters to resolve. The year started with a view that the Chairman's Attendant would retire, this is now believed to be occurring in 2016/17. The team was restructured during the year, taking in the new Corporate Support Team. The Civic and Committee team had a 22.5 hour post Committee officer vacancy which following the restructure became a 37hour per week vacancy. Electoral Services were restructured to provide an increased permanent establishment which recognised the extra demands placed upon them through elections and more specifically Individual Electoral registration.

During 2015/16 HR has operated on an interim basis, this was reviewed and confirmed that this continued based on the resources required to support key change programmes across the Council linking to FFF within the next 2 years and the increasing demands of the change of a new payroll system. There was also a decision made to include the Media team within the function reporting to the HR Manager.

Budget

The ICT Service continues to reduce its budget despite inflationary pressure and recent pay awards. The ICT 2016/17 budget is £500,000 less than 2008/9, and the service has met the 2.5% saving on discretionary budgets in 2015/16 and the 5% reduction for 2016/17.

Expenditure from the ICT Asset Reserve is monitored to ensure that only necessary expenditure is committed. This, coupled with the desktop virtualisation strategy has reduced predicted expenditure from the fund by £100,000 over the first five years of the reserve.

However, due to global austerity, software suppliers have seen a reduction in profits as organisations delay purchasing new software. To combat this, suppliers are changing their licensing agreements and pricing to force organisations to move to a subscription model for licensing rather than purchasing licences outright. WDC has had to move to this model for desktop licensing and indications are that we will need to move to this model for servers. A 'guesstimate' of the impact of this has been included in the ICT Asset replacement program, but until new licences are purchased the final impact cannot be quantified.

Democratic Services Team has been through a year of transition where with the restructure, the team has increased its overall resources but at the same time delivered in excess of £40,000 of savings. The main budgetary pressure within the team remains to be Individual Electoral Registration and the costs associated with this. While grants are provided by the Government and sufficient budget is allocated within Warwick District Council the team will need to continue to review this with a view to reducing the cost as much as possible.

The HR area has continues to review how it offers its services to its customers. The introduction of a new Payroll Bureau has increased our budgetary spend on the contract required however reduced the resources required to support the payroll service and provided us with increased resilience. It has also impacted culturally across the organisation with the implementation of the Self Serve system enabling managers and staff to be more empowered. A positive example of this is a saving of £3,000 by not producing paper payslips.

The HR team has continued to support FFF projects across the organisation, advice and guidance on restructures and staff issues as well as proactively reviewing policies and guidelines. This has required an increase in resources to ensure the capacity was available to support the organisation moving forward.

Learning and Development has been identified as a significant contributor to the morale and motivation of staff to maintain and improve on the the skills, knowledge and behaviours of the people of Warwick District Council. The Budget for this key area has not been reduced to ensure training remains a key part of Service Plans and the 'People' aspect of FFF.

Media and Design & Print pro-actively manage their budget to ensure the framework is adhered to and provides value for money.

Projects

- **Completed**

- ICT – New Digital Strategy Approved
- ICT – PSN Compliance Achieved
- ICT – Participated in the Member/Officer ICT Working Group
- ICT – Provided the underlying infrastructure for the repatriation of CSC calls to WDC
- Achievement of Investors in People Bronze award
- Implementation of new Payroll Bureau and Self – Serve to ensure on-line access for some hr transactional services: payslips, absence management, expenses, overtime and timesheets
- Terms and Conditions harmonisation Part 1
- Continued embedding of Metacompliance as a tool to ensure significant policies/guidance are read and understood
- E & D Action Plan created
- Publication of the 2016 Electoral Register
- Complete the 2015 election Accounts
- Prepare for 2016 Election & Referendum
- Deliver a neighbourhood plan referendum
- Peer review of electoral Services

- **Planned**

- ICT – To develop and deliver with the ICT Steering Group the Digital action plan
- ICT – To migrate the council's telephony lines to Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) trunks
- ICT – To upgrade the corporate network
- ICT – To replace the council's Storage Area Network (SAN)
- Continued roll-out of Self Serve to include mileage claims. Preparation for new Payroll Bureau in June 2017
- Terms & Condition Part 2
- Salary and Benefits Review
- Transforming our Workplace in preparation for HQ relocation
- Introduction of E – Learning
- Updated People Strategy to highlight existing and new priorities
- Review of Print framework
- HR and Media Resources Review
- Boundary Review - To consider the Council's position in response to the agreed changes to the WCC divisional boundaries and implement any residual Parish/Town boundary changes as a result of the Community Governance Review
- Contracts - Procurement for new contracts to deliver ballot papers, postal ballots, polling cards and electoral canvas
- Committee Management System) To provide a paper identifying the potential savings against potential investment required to develop the workflow modules within the CMIS

- Complaints To introduce the new complaints policy, To amend the procedures for handling complaints within the Council
- Information Requests To complete the associated documents and process for data handling, and sharing. To investigate an improved reliance for handling requests within the Council.