

SELECT COMMITTEE

17 February 2021

Present – The Chair (Councillor Staveley) and Councillors Brockbank, Brown, Hull, Jaquin, Moorby, Shuttleworth and Solloway.

Officers – Chief Executive, Human Resources Manager, Communications, Customer Services and Partnerships Manager, Democratic Services Manager and Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer.

Start: 6.35pm

Finish: 19:56pm

Apologies for Absence –

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mercer, Sutcliffe and Harbron.

Confirmation of Minutes –

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held 9 September 2020 are approved as a correct record.

Public Participation – Request for Scrutiny – Customer Services Delivery Monitoring Beyond the Customer Services Team

Karen Darvell, Chairman of Stirton with Thorlby Parish Council addressed the Committee in relation to customer service delivery beyond the Customer Services Team. A document had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting which contained Ms Darvell's concerns in greater detail. The main question was how officer response times were monitored and whether they were satisfactory. Members agreed to discuss this as part of the Committee's overall work programme (Minute OS.461 refers).

Declarations of Interest –

There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes for Report

OS.459

Absence Management 2020-21

The Human Resources (HR) Manager submitted a report, which outlined Craven District Council's sickness absence statistics from 1 April 2020 to 30 September 2020.

The HR Manager provided a breakdown of long and short term absence statistics. Members noted that the target number of days lost per FTE was 4.25 days, the actual number of days lost per FTE was 2.7 days (57% below target).

Members were reminded that absence was considered long term if it lasted for more than four continuous weeks. Members noted that the number of days per FTE lost to long term absence had decreased by 54% compared to the same period last year. Members also noted the staff referrals to Oasis Counselling and the further 12 credits purchased. In addition, the Committee noted the reasons for short term absence, the number of days per FTE lost to short term absence was 163.2 this year compared with 300.2 for the same period last year. Members were advised that where necessary Occupational Health advice was

sought if symptoms causing short term absence reoccurred regularly. A breakdown of absence by service area was also provided, and as previously requested by Members, a breakdown of absence in Waste Management.

The HR Manager provided an update on the Covid19 impact on absence and summarised key statistics including the number of suspected cases which was 18 and the number of positive cases which was 7. The most common reasons for absence was shielding (41%) and self-isolating (37%). Members were informed that below 10% of staff had continued to work from the office for various reasons. Members were informed that lateral flow devices were to be used by staff at Airedale Business Park and that temperature checks were in place at all of its council offices.

Resolved – That the sickness absence statistics from 1 April to 30 September 2020 are noted.

OS.460

Customer Services Call Handling Performance

The Communications, Customer Services and Partnerships Manager submitted a report, which presented Customer Service's performance statistics for 2020/21 and improvements made to the service.

Members noted that the Contact Centre had been unaffected by Covid-19, the majority of Customer Service staff had been set up to work remotely and it continued to work well. Members were advised that Belle Vue Square reception had been closed during the national lockdown periods, however the reception had been made Covid-19 safe with the addition of screens, clear signage, removal of seating and a limit to the number of customers permitted in the reception area at any one time.

Members noted the restructure in Business Support and Customer Services. The Communications, Customer Services and Partnerships Manager advised that the restructure had been successful. The arrangement had enabled savings of £60k to be made in the Business Support service. In response to a query, clarification was provided that the reason two Customer Service staff members had left was not related to the restructure. Members also noted that Customer Services were on track to make the call handling target for 2020-21.

Members were informed of the additional work taken on by the team, some staff had been redeployed to make 'check in calls' to residents identified as being clinically extremely vulnerable and asked to shield both in the first lockdown in 2020 and the current lockdown in 2021. Members were also informed about the large increase in e-mail traffic to Customer Services, an increase of 520% compared to 2019-20.

The planned service improvements for 2021 were noted by Members, the potential introduction of citizen access to Northgate and the waste ESB System (in-cab technology).

Resolved – That Customer Service performance during 2020-21, improvements and future plans are noted.

OS.461

Work Programme

Members considered its work schedule for the remainder of the 2020/21 municipal year, in particular the request for scrutiny submitted by Karen Darvell, Chairman of Stirton with Thorlby Parish Council. Members discussed the scrutiny request in detail and it was

suggested that the Communications, Customer Services and Partnerships Manager liaised with the Lead Member for Internal Services and submitted a report to Select Committee on 14 April 2021 addressing key areas of concern, including options for monitoring officer response times and the response times for each service where applicable.

Resolved –

- (1) That the Work Programme for the remainder of the municipal year is noted.
- (2) That the Communications, Customer Services and Partnerships Manager submits a report to Select Committee on 14 April 2021.

OS.462

Date and Time of Next Meeting

- Select Committee Working Group (Building Control – Session Two) Wednesday, 17 March 2021 at 6.30pm

Chairman.