

SELECT COMMITTEE

17 July 2019

Present – The Chair (Councillor Staveley) and Councillors Brown, Harbron, Hull, Jaquin, Mercer, Pighills, Shuttleworth and Solloway.

Officers – Chief Executive, Human Resources Manager, Planning Manager (Development Management), Strategic Manager (Planning and Regeneration), Democratic Services Manager and Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Metcalfe, Moorby and Sutcliffe.

Start: 6.30pm

Finish: 8.05pm

Confirmation of Minutes –

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Public Participation –

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Declarations of Interest –

There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes for Report

OS.435

ABSENCE MANAGEMENT 2018-19

The Human Resources Manager submitted a report which presented Members with absence management statistics during the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.

The Human Resources Manager provided a breakdown of long and short term absence statistics. Members were informed that the number of days lost per full time equivalent (FTE) was 10.8 days, which was 27.1% above target. It was explained that this was an 18.7% increase in days lost per FTE compared to the same period for the previous year.

Members were referred to the graph that showed long and short term absences in each 12-month period since March 2016. The Human Resources Manager explained that the total level of absence had increased annually since March 2016, an increase of 19% in the last 12 months.

It was emphasised that short term absence had fallen each year from 4.3 days per FTE to 3.4 days in March 2019. However, long term absence had increased each year from 3.6 days per FTE in 2015/16 to 7.4 days in 2018/19.

Members were reminded that absence was considered long term if it lasted over four continuous weeks. Members were made aware that 25 staff had a period of long term absence between April 2018 and March 2019. Only 1 of the staff members was still absent. The Human Resources Manager advised that 27% of long term absence was due to two members of staff. A further breakdown of the statistics was provided by categorising absences by specific type.

One Member questioned whether there was a correlation between gaps in management and long term absence. The Chief Executive informed Members that monthly updates from all service areas was provided and assured Members of the monitoring processes in place.

After a lengthy discussion Members requested a further report to develop a better understanding of the reasons behind long term absence and the process followed. It was also suggested that consideration be given to alternative solutions that may reduce long term absence.

Resolved – That a further report is presented to the November meeting, to develop a better understanding of the reasons behind long term absence and the process followed.

OS.436

REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PERFORMANCE

The Democratic Services Manager submitted a report which presented Select Committee's Review of Development Control Performance.

The Democratic Services Manager advised that if agreed by Select Committee, the Review would be presented to Policy Committee on 17 September 2019, for final approval.

Councillor Brown presented a report at the meeting addressing what he perceived to be key areas of concern for inclusion in the Review. The Democratic Services Manager advised that Members had already been provided with an opportunity to comment on the draft version of the review. The Review had been presented to Select Committee for approval, subject to any minor amendments or additions being agreed. It was suggested that Councillor Brown addressed the concerns at Policy Committee on 17 September 2019.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Review of Development Control Performance, as presented to Select Committee, is agreed.
- (b) That the Review of Development Control Performance is presented to Policy Committee on 17 September 2019, for final approval.

OS.437

REVIEW OF PLANNING ENFORCEMENT AND BUILDING CONTROL

The Planning Manager (Development Management) presented a report outlining Key Performance Information (KPI). It was advised that the report was being presented to Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) on a monthly basis.

The report contained key statistics in relation to planning applications determined, speed of decision making, quality of decisions, enforcement and team performance.

The Planning Manager (Development Management) provided an update on improvements in performance, evident in the KPI report. Members were advised about the appointment of a Consultant Agency Planner which had contributed to improving the service greatly, particularly in terms of achieving targets.

Other key areas of discussion were:

- The need to review the format for presenting information and data contained in the KPI report, particularly in relation to decision-making.
- The importance of succession planning. There was also an acknowledgement of the need to provide ongoing support for more junior members of staff and the challenges sometimes associated with this.
- An update on staffing arrangements in the planning enforcement team.
- The challenges managing planning enforcement pro-actively given the limited resources available.

- Arrangements for future working group meetings, particularly in terms of information and evidence gathering.

Resolved – That the first session of the working group’s review into planning enforcement and building control takes place on 11 September 2019, immediately following conclusion of the Select Committee meeting.

OS.438

WORK PROGRAMME

The Democratic Services Manager submitted a report, which presented the most recent version of the Select Committee’s work programme for the 2019/20 municipal year.

Members noted that the Working Group meeting in relation to Building Control and Planning Enforcement was being held on 11 September 2019. In addition, a more detailed absence management report was being presented to the November Select Committee meeting.

Resolved – That subject to the above amendments, the work programme is agreed for the 2019/20 municipal year.

Minutes for Decision

There were no items for decision.

Chairman.