



## CORPORATE SELECT COMMITTEE

**Meeting: Monday 14 September 2015 at 6.30 pm in the Octagon Lounge, Pavilion Gardens, Buxton**

**Present:** Councillor Barrow (Chairman)

Councillors Boynton (substitute for J Wharmby), Douglas, Grooby, Hardy, Helliwell, Huddleston, Lomax, A. McKeown, R. McKeown, Perkins, Sizeland, Sloman and Young (substitute for G Wharmby)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Claff, Kemp, G Wharmby and J Wharmby.

Councillors Ashton and Thrane were also in attendance.

**16/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
(Agenda item 2)

Councillor Ashton declared an 'other' interest in agenda item 8, "Consultation on the proposal on the provision of courts and tribunal services in Midlands Region" (reason: wife is a magistrate)

**16/18 MINUTES**  
(Agenda item 4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2015 be approved as a correct record.

**16/19 CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL ON THE PROVISION OF COURTS AND TRIBUNAL SERVICES IN THE MIDLANDS REGION**  
(Agenda item 8)

Lucy Garrod and Amanda Lowndes representing HM Courts & Tribunal Services (HMCTS) were in attendance to outline the consultation proposals to the Committee.

HMCTS is undergoing a significant programme of reform over a 5 year period, with investment being made in modernising IT and the estate. The overall aim was to offer a more efficient service and to increase the number of interactions made electronically to reduce the requirement of people to attend court in person. This consultation was the early part of the estates reform in terms of right sizing the estate, and would not be addressing future reduction requirements. Buxton Court had been identified as being underused, but still needed to be maintained. Formal responses to the consultation were invited, which would be reviewed prior to a response documents formulated and



submitted to Ministers for decision. It was anticipated that the response document and decision would be published in December / January. The consultation document indicated that should Buxton Court close, then the workload would be moved to Chesterfield. In response to concerns expressed by members regarding the proposed move to Chesterfield, it was acknowledged by HMCTS that other locations could more sensibly link with Buxton, such as Macclesfield, Stockport, Manchester City Centre and Glossop, and that there would be no objection to where postcodes would be directed to. This confirmation was welcomed although there was concern that this was not set out in the consultation document. Members also expressed concerns that Stockport, Macclesfield and Tameside were also all subject to this consultation which had not been noted within the consultation document.

Concerns were expressed regarding the average journey times between High Peak and Chesterfield, particularly on public transport, where the journey time could be up to 2.5 hours for over 73% of people, according to the consultation document. Reference was also made to the inclement weather of the Peak District where roads were often impassable in the winter months. The effect of the longer journey times on participants was discussed, and the possibility that it may affect the vulnerable being able to put their views forward.

HMCTS advised that it was anticipated that the increased use of IT would reduce the need for people to attend court in person, including increased use of video and telephone links and online pleas for motoring offences. In response to a query regarding the response of the police to the consultation, particularly, as in Derbyshire, road traffic police are based in Ripley, HMCTS made reference to the increased use of live link from police stations to enable the police to give evidence without having to attend court in person.

Members of the Committee commented that the factual information within the consultation document about Buxton Court was flawed, particularly in respect of the disabled access, the number of consultation rooms and the utilisation data. HMCTS confirmed that the utilisation data was correct, but acknowledged that an error had been made regarding the description of the public lift which had been corrected and communicated to all those who received the original consultation, which was queried by members. The view was expressed by members however, that the statement of facts regarding the court should have been agreed prior to the consultation taking place, and suggested that the information should be re-drafted and re-circulated.

In response to a suggestion that Buxton Court should be upgraded, members were advised that the use of courts were dictated by the workload, and that the workload was diminishing due to changes in the way things were being dealt with.

In response to a query regarding the potential for joint working with DCC and other partnership opportunities available, HMCTS advised that contact would be made.

With reference to the impact on the staff should Buxton court close, members were advised that there would be re-deployment or redundancy options for staff, depending on individual circumstances. It was noted that to date, no compulsory redundancies had been made by the HMCTS.



RESOLVED:

1. That the representatives of HMCTS be thanked for their attendance;
2. That the Chief Executive and the Executive Councillor for Corporate Services be requested to submit a response to the consultation on behalf of Corporate Select Committee;
3. That a further response be submitted from the Council detailing how the proposals could affect the daily business of the Council.

16/20

**FOURTH QUARTER PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL REVIEW 2015/16**  
(Agenda item 5)

The Committee considered the Council's overall performance and financial position for the period ended 30 June 2015 ("First Quarter 2015/16") and considered a set of actions to address the issues identified within the report.

A summary was outlined in paragraph 3.3 of the report, and specific reference was made to the impact on the Pavilion Gardens of the repair work and the continued absence of the Gilbert and Sullivan Festival. Revenue Collection figures were praised and reference made to an unbudgeted dividend in respect of the Council's former Icelandic investments. Regarding performance, some results had been affected by the utilisation of resources through the election period. Items included within the action plan included improvements to creditor payments and to streamline procurement processes.

It was requested whether information could be included on the website around the total costs of responding to FOI requests. The Executive Member advised that plans were in place to publish responses to FOI requests on the website and undertook to include the costs of each response. Members were advised the costs of responding to FOI requests averaged out at £30 per request.

In response to a query concerning the timescale for creditor payments, the Executive Member advised that the timescale of 30 days was in place to support local businesses and was good practice.

RESOLVED:

1. That the First Quarter 2015/16 performance and financial position detailed in Appendices A and B and summarised at 3.3 of this covering report, be noted;
2. That the updated position against the approved Action Plan for the Fourth Quarter (Appendix C) be noted;
3. That the Executive be recommended to approve the actions detailed in Appendix D which have been identified to address the performance and financial issues highlighted in the report.



**16/21**      **CORPORATE PLAN 2015 – 2019**  
(Agenda item 6)

The Committee considered the Corporate Plan 2015 – 19 which sets out the Council's vision, aims and objectives and provides clear direction for the delivery of services and the achievement of positive outcomes for residents.

It was suggested that paragraph 6.1 be re-worded to reflect the low level of crime in the area.

Under Risk Assessment at paragraph 6.8, it was suggested that the risks be amended to reflect that there is a high risk of insufficient funds to deliver the plan and the risk of an inadequate workforce.

The importance of the Community Leadership Role was stressed, and it was suggested that the provision of services and community lead for the borough should be included as part of the vision, aims and objectives. The Leader agreed to consult Group Leaders.

It was suggested that there was opportunity within the document to highlight the council's partnership working and statutory duties in respect of community safety. Some of the targets, particularly around Woods Mill, were also challenged.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That, subject to the above comments, the Executive be requested to:
  - a. Recommend that Council approves the Council's vision, aims and objectives, influencing objectives and priorities;
  - b. Approve a process of internal and external consultation as set out in the report; and
2. That a working group be established to agree a new performance framework.

**16/22**      **SERVICE REVIEW OUTCOMES**  
(Agenda item 7)

The Committee considered a summary of the outcomes emerging from the service review process and details of the progress made with implementation.

The Executive Councillor thanked all involved in the process, with particular thanks to the Head of OD & Transformation.

In response to a query regarding further staff reductions, it was requested that clarification on this point be included on the table at paragraph 13.2. It was also suggested that bullet point 4 at paragraph 9.4 could be re-drafted to reduce the amount of jargon.

In response to comments made, the Head of OD & Transformation agreed to look into recruitment for the Neighbourhood Caretaker positions.



RESOLVED:

1. That the outcomes from the service review process as detailed in the report, including the staffing and financial implications, be noted;
2. That the progress made with the implementation be noted.

**16/23**      **WORK PROGRAMME**  
(Agenda item 9)

The Chair advised that a meeting of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny Committee was to be convened to examine the work programmes. The Executive Member for Corporate Services requested that Councillor Support and Development be included on the agenda, with specific reference to Chair's training and general scrutiny training.

It was requested that the proposed meeting of Asset Management Sub-Committee be convened after the next meeting of Corporate Select Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Select Committee Work Programmes be noted.

**16/24**      **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**  
(Agenda item 11)

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item because there may be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

**16/25**      **EXEMPT MINUTES**  
(Agenda item 12)

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2015 be approved as a correct record.

**16/26**      **PAVILION GARDENS, OCTAGON HALL CLOSURE – BUSINESS CONTINUITY OPTIONS**  
(Agenda item 13)

The Committee considered a report which outlined a number of business continuity options pending the closure of the Octagon Hall, and made a number of recommendations to the Executive.

The meeting concluded at 8.26 p.m.

CHAIR