

## **POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**(Committee Rooms 1/2 - Port Talbot Civic Centre)**

**Members Present:**

**27 July 2016**

**Chairperson:** Councillor D.W.Davies

**Vice Chairperson:** Councillor A.Jenkins

**Councillors:** A.Carter, Ms.C.Clement-Williams, M.Harvey,  
Mrs.D.Jones and Mrs.A.Wingrave

**Officers In Attendance** Mrs.S.Rees, Ms.C.Furlow, S.Burgess, S.  
Davies and N.Evans

**Cabinet Invitees:** Councillors P.A.Rees and A.N.Woolcock

---

1. **TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 29 JUNE 2016**

Members asked whether the Social Care Health and Housing Scrutiny Committee were monitoring the sickness absence on a regular basis. It was confirmed that this issue is a high priority for the Committee and it was raised at every meeting.

Following Scrutiny the minutes were noted.

2. **CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT OBJECTIVE - DIGITAL BY CHOICE - HIGHLIGHT REPORT - QUARTER 1 (APRIL 1 - 30 JUNE) 2016-17**

Members considered the Digital by Choice highlight report for Quarter one of 2016/2017 and were informed that this was the first time a report of this type had been reported to scrutiny. Members were informed a Digital by Choice Seminar will be scheduled for the autumn during which more information on progress will be presented to Members.

Members noted a recent incident when a resident of the County Borough had emailed the Council with a problem and only received a

holding reply. No email was received by the resident resolving the complaint. It was suggested that Members feed specific incidents through to the officers who will raise the issue at a Programme Board meeting scheduled shortly.

With regards to the increase in demand on Customer Services during quarter one, Members suggested that one of the messages that should be recorded on the telephone line is that people can order equipment and services online. This would result in shorter phone calls and fewer calls answered by staff and increased web activity.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

3. **CORPORATE STRATEGY SERVICE REPORT CARD - QUARTER 1 2016-17**

Members considered the Corporate Strategy Service report card and noted that the sickness absence figures were very low. They also congratulated officers on undertaking 100% of employee development reviews.

Members asked who was invited to the workshop that had been arranged in relation to the well-being assessment. It was confirmed officers from the Council and other partners were invited to attend.

Concern was raised in relation to only one application being received for the Armed Forces Community Covenant funding. Officers explained the funding is publicised widely but unfortunately the criteria to apply for funding does change regularly and it is difficult to find projects that meet the criteria.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

4. **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE REPORT CARD**

Members considered the Occupational Health Service Report Card for 2016/2017.

Members noted that in recent years there had been underspends in the budget and this is because of the restructuring of the budget. Prior to 2015, the unit invoiced internal customers for services provided, including accessing the externally purchased OH Physician service, charged at £127 per hour. Directorate budgets have now been consolidated into the OHU budget. Through implementing the

referral hotline service, increasing the number of nursing staff and the forthcoming implementation of the OuCH referral system, this has enabled the unit to reduce the externally provided service, enabling a reduction in budget.

Staffing levels were questioned and Members asked were they sufficient and it was confirmed that whilst staff are stretched on occasions they are coping. The introduction of OuCH will reduce administrative work and increase capacity within the team.

Members questioned the progress against some of the measures and asked why a number included N/A. It was confirmed that they were new measures and in future reports more in depth information will be included.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

## 5. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following matters:

### Cabinet Board Proposals

#### 5.1 NPTCBC Strategic Equality Plan 2015/2019

Members considered the above report which highlighted progress in implementing the Strategic Equality Plan.

Members questioned why the number attending training sessions were so low and officers confirmed that this was just a snap shot of training that had taken place in the previous year but the training has been ongoing for many years and many more staff had been trained over the period.

Members noted the situation in relation to the pay gap and it was questioned whether the gap could be closed. Officers stated that the gender pay gap is reducing, however, whilst the lowest paid employees in the Council are female, and the highest paid employees are male, the gap will continue to exist. The Council's gender pay gap is slightly smaller than the national average. Some research into the Council's gender pay gap is underway and it will be reported to Members at Personnel Committee in the Council's Equality in Employment Information report in September 2016.

In response to a question on whether hate crime has increased since the referendum it was confirmed that it had not.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

## **CHAIRPERSON**