

Performance/Administration Cabinet Committee

Thursday, 17 March 2016

7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Leslie Hills (Chair)
Cllr Julia Burgoyne (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: John Caller
 Brian Francis
 David Hurley
 John Knight
 Lyn Milner
 Peter Scollard

Stuart Bobby Director (Corporate Services)
Ben Turner Corporate Performance Manager
Jackie Baker Assistant Revenues & Benefits Manager
Chris Wakeford Committee Services Officer (Scrutiny)

23. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Colin Caller and Cllr Narinder Singh Thandi. Cllr John Caller and Cllr Lyn Milner attended as their respective substitutes

24. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2016 were signed by the Chair.

25. Declarations of interest

No declarations were made.

26. Data Quality Policy: Review 2016

The Corporate Performance Manager provided Members of the Performance / Administration Committee with a copy of the draft Data Quality Policy for review.

To reflect the changes that have recently taken place in relation to the introduction of the new Corporate Plan's Performance Management Framework, and other relevant amendments, it was felt to be prudent to bring the revised Data Quality Policy back to the Performance / Administration Committee for discussion and subsequent approval by the Lead Member, in line with the adopted process outlined in the policy.

The Committee considered the Data Quality Policy in depth. Following questions from Members, the Corporate Performance Manager and Director Corporate Services highlighted the following:

- The Performance Management Framework has been refined and now contains measures that provide better value.
- GBC's Data Quality Policy is considered more comprehensive than other Local Authorities.
- Regarding the shared service with Medway; the same suite of Performance Framework Indicators are used for both Authorities. Data security is ensured by using both Authorities Firewalls.

The Data Quality Policy was discussed by the Committee and approval was taken by the Lead Member for Performance & Administration.

27. Universal Credit Update

The Assistant Revenues & Benefits Manager presented Members of the Performance and Administration Committee with an update on the impact of Universal Credit (UC) on Gravesham Borough Council since its introduction on 18 May 2015.

GBC went live in Tranche 2 of UC rollout on 18 May 2015. The remaining Jobcentres and local authorities either went live with Universal Credit in Tranche Three (21 September 2015 – 30 November 2015) or will go live in Tranche Four (7 December 2015 – 25 April 2016).

A Delivery Partnership Agreement (DPA) was signed between Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) up to 31 March 2016. It details how GBC will work in partnership with the DWP to deliver UC services locally. It details what costs the DWP will pay GBC for delivering this service.

GBC have an agreement in place with the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) for them to deliver Personal Budgeting Support to any customers in receipt of UC who need help in managing their finances.

UC is designed to replace:

- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (JSA(IB))
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit
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However, so far UC has only been rolled out to single customers claiming JSA(IB)

The following statistics (updated since the report was published) confirm the impact of UC on Gravesham Borough Council so far:

- 136 UC notifications received from customers claiming housing costs
- 13 Council Tenants HB cancelled

- 13 Private Tenants HB cancelled
- 1 Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) processed for a UC customer
- 52 Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme manual notifications received

It is currently planned to transfer all claims to the DWP between 2018 and 2021, but recently there has been some suggestion that this may not be completed until more like 2024.

Following questions from the Committee, the Assistant Revenues & Benefits Manager highlighted the following:

- The Assistant Revenues & Benefits Manager is currently not aware of any hardship cases in Gravesham as a direct result of UC.
- Supported/Exempt Accommodation will remain with Local Authorities. GBC have 9 different privately owned Supported Accommodations schemes, there are also some Housing Associations Supported Accommodations schemes in the Borough.
- GBC have only received and paid one Discretionary Housing Payment from a Universal Credit claimant.

The Chair felt that it would be beneficial for Members to have training every few months to keep abreast of Revenues & Benefits information.

The Committee noted the Universal Credit update.

Close of meeting

The meeting ended at 8.15 pm