



AGENDA ITEM: 8

SUMMARY

Report for:	Finance and Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	3 September 2014
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Performance Report Quarter 1 – Legal Governance, Democratic Services and People
Contact:	<p>Cllr Neil Harden, Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services (in respect of Legal Governance and People) Cllr Andrew Williams, Leader of the Council (in respect of Democratic Services)</p> <p>Author/Responsible Officers:</p> <p>Steven Baker, Assistant Director (Chief Executive’s Unit)</p> <p>Mark Brookes, Group Manager (Legal Governance) Jim Doyle, Group Manager (Democratic Services) Matt Rawdon, Group Manager (People)</p>
Purpose of report:	To provide Members with the performance report for quarter 1 in relation to Legal Governance, Democratic Services and People.
Recommendations	That Members note the report.
Corporate objectives:	Resources and Value For Money; Optimise Resources and Implement Best Practice.
Implications:	<u>Financial</u> None.
‘Value For Money Implications’	<u>Value for Money</u> Monitoring Performance supports the Council in achieving Value for Money for its citizens.

Risk Implications	Risk Assessment completed for each service area as part of service planning and reviewed quarterly.
Equalities Implications	Equality Impact Assessment completed for each service area as part of service planning and reviewed quarterly.
Health And Safety Implications	None
Consultees:	Cllr Neil Harden, Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services
Background papers:	Annex 1 : Quarter 1 Performance Report Annex 2: Updated Operational Risk Register

- Members will find attached to this report the Corvu performance data for Legal Governance, Democratic Services and People, together with the Operational Risk Register, in relation to quarter 1 of 2014/15. The performance data does not reveal any major areas of concern which need to be particularly drawn to Members' attention. Set out below is some supplementary information about performance and activities of the services during quarter 1 which may be of interest to the Members of the Committee.

PEOPLE GROUP

- This report includes the performance information relating to those services which make up the People Group i.e. Human Resources, Organisation Development & Training, Communications & Consultation and Community Partnerships.

HUMAN RESOURCES (HR)

Corporate projects & HR transactional work

- HR continues to be heavily involved in many of the Council's critical projects, in particular; the Office Consolidation Project and the Electronic Document Management System (EDRMS). The team has supported 18 employee relation cases, processed 16 new starters and 27 leavers.

Mental Health First Aid Programme

- The Council now has a trained community of 30 mental health first aiders. The first session of mental health awareness training is due to be delivered on 3 September to the members of Corporate Management Team and Group Managers.

Policy Development

- All Council employment policies have been reviewed to update them in light of employment law changes and amendments to job titles.

COMMUNICATIONS & CONSULTATION

Corporate projects – Communications Support

6. The Communications Team is supporting the 'Hemel Evolution, Dacorum - Look No Further' project and the new 'Recycle for Dacorum' waste collection service which comes into effect on 24 November 2014.

Press Enquires and Press Releases

7. The team responded to 79 press enquiries and submitted 26 press releases

Website

8. Work to improve the navigation and transactional elements of the website continues. The vacancy for the web content communications officer has been filled and the new post holder will start this month. The purpose of the role is to work with the Council's services to improve the data and web structure to increase the functionality of the Council's website. This is a critical role considering the customer experience, channel shift, and digital inclusion aims.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Get Set, Go Dacorum

9. The Council's application to Sport England for the Community Sports Activation Fund was successful and the Council was awarded the full £250,000. This will release £45,000 from Dacorum Borough Council, £17,500 from Sportspace and a further £77,250 of in-kind support from local Voluntary Sector organisations.
10. The three year project is now called Get Set, Go Dacorum and commences on 22 September 2014. The project will aim to use sport and physical activity as a mechanism for dealing with some of the social problems that are experienced in some wards in the Borough and will involve working in partnership with over 20 partner organisations.
11. A launch date has been set for 20 September in Randalls Park, Highfield and preparations are underway with the partners. More information regarding the launch will be available in the next few weeks. The lead officer on this project is Claire Lynch who is the Team Leader for the Partnerships Team.

Volunteer Management

12. The Volunteer Management Policy was approved by Cabinet in June. Internal volunteer management training is now being developed and will be offered to current volunteer managers.

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP)

13. Two graduates have been appointed and will start this month. The first placements will be supporting the Get Set, Go Dacorum Project and the Neighbourhood engagement project.

LEGAL GOVERNANCE

14. Legal Governance continues to be heavily involved in many of the Council's critical projects. In particular, significant legal support is being provided in relation to the Gade Zone regeneration project. Following the selection of the preferred development partner the team are leading on negotiations to settle the terms of the development agreement. The team are also supporting the Council House New Build project by acquiring sites and dealing with associated planning agreements.
15. The Legal Governance and Housing teams won an important housing case in the Supreme Court relating to joint tenancies. This case was vital to how all Councils manage their housing stock in the future and has received national legal press coverage.
16. Legal Governance supported the Planning, Development and Regeneration Team in successfully defending a High Court challenge to the Council's Core Strategy. In a judgement handed down on the 12th June. The Judge found in favour of the Council and dismissed both grounds of challenge. The Council was also awarded the full legal costs of the challenge.
17. Legal Governance also provided legal advice and assistance In the first quarter to four Development Control Committees, one Licensing and Health & Safety Enforcement Committee, four Housing Appeals, and three Cabinet meetings.
18. The team completed 39 Right to Buy sales (26 houses and 13 flats) in the first quarter.
19. The team frequently represent the Council in the courts and tribunals, leading on injunctions, prosecutions and defending employment tribunal cases. The following cases may be of particular interest to Members:
 - The team successfully prosecuted a person who owned an unlicensed House in Multiple Occupation ('HMO') and secured a conviction and fine of £10,520;
 - Successfully obtained a possession order of a council house where the tenant assaulted a neighbour; and
 - Successfully obtained a declaration through the County Court regarding the width of a footpath in Wilstone and an undertaking from the landowner not to carry out any unauthorised work to the path thereby settling a dispute which had been ongoing for 25 years.

GIS and Freedom of Information

20. CadCorp have been selected as the supplier for a new Geographical Information System, which will provide the means for the Council to share data internally and with the public and our partners. The new product will now be implemented with an operational system going live in January 2015. In sharing data more widely it will improve the quality of our own data, reduce telephone and written requests for information between departments, partners and the public as well as enhancing our decision making process. It will provide one version of accurate data to many users to ensure that the Council reports are consistently correct.
21. Freedom of Information ('FOI') and Data Protection ('DPA') requests remain steady. In the first quarter the Council managed to complete 96.93% (158/163) of FOI requests within the target time and 100% of DPA requests.

Licensing

22. A new agreement has been signed between Licensing and the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA), to bring voluntary regulation to direct debit charity collectors working in Hemel Hempstead town centre. The PFRA now operate a booking system for direct debit collections in the town centre, with the Council retaining responsibility for cash collections. The agreement includes limits on frequency and numbers of collectors, to prevent the town centre from being saturated during the upcoming redevelopment works. The agreement should also mean that a wider range of charities will have the chance to collect in Dacorum, and enables the Council for the first time to act on complaints from members of the public.
23. Under the agreement, charities and corporate collectors are obliged to follow a 'rule book' setting out permitted conduct for collectors, and breaches can result in censure or sanctions, including exclusion from future collection slots, or monetary penalties.

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Member Support Services

24. During Quarter 1, Member Support managed and organised the following:
- Published 37 agendas
 - Completed 32 sets of minutes
 - Spent 33 hours at evening meetings
 - Processed 20 public speakers at Committee
 - Processed 12 Portfolio Holder Decisions

Member Development

25. The target set for Member training in 2014/15 has been set for each Councillor to attend at least three training sessions. Unfortunately there were no training sessions held during the first quarter. There was a break between April and May in order to accommodate the election. During this time though, all Councillors were asked to complete a self-assessment questionnaire.

26. The questionnaires were analysed and a list of requested/required areas of training was considered by the Member Development Steering Group. Once topics had been approved to help populate the training programme, officers booked the training providers. A completed programme has now been circulated to all Members in 'Members News'.
27. The programme for this financial year is now full and already many sessions have been provided with good attendance figures.
28. The Member Development Steering Group will soon be looking at the Members Induction plan for 2015, following the elections and arrangements for Members Personal Development plans for the same period.

Electoral registration

29. The Electoral Registration Team has completed the preparations for the implementation of Individual Electoral Registration. All Dacorum residents were sent a letter during the week ending 16 August 2014 which explained the new registration system which amounts to the biggest change to the electoral registration system in nearly 100 years.
30. The letter explains that a new, more secure, system of Individual Electoral Registration is being introduced to replace the old system (which dates back to the Victorian era) where the "head of the household" of a particular property registered everyone living in that property. Now, each individual living within a particular property will be responsible for registering themselves.
31. Almost 83% of Dacorum residents will automatically move onto the new electoral register. However, some residents will need to take action to join or remain on the register, which they will now also be able to do for the first time by registering online.

Operational Risk Register

34. Risk CE_RO7 has been deleted as this duplicated CE_RO5. This was agreed by Members at the last meeting. Otherwise, there are no other changes to the operational risk register to bring to Members' attention.