



AGENDA ITEM:

SUMMARY

Report for:	Finance and Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	7th March 2017
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Quarter 3 Performance Report – Legal Governance and Democratic Services
Contact:	<p>Cllr Neil Harden, Portfolio Holder for Residents and Corporate Services</p> <p>Author/Responsible Officers:</p> <p>Mark Brookes (Solicitor to the Council)</p> <p>Jim Doyle, Group Manager (Democratic Services)</p>
Purpose of report:	To provide Members with the performance report for quarter three in relation to Legal Governance and Democratic Services.
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 Corporate Services
Background papers:	Annex 1: Quarter 3 Performance Report Annex 2: Quarter 3 Operational Risk Register

1. Members will find attached to this report the Corvu performance data for Legal Governance and Democratic Services, together with the Operational Risk Register, in relation to quarter 3 of 2016/17.
2. Members will also note that the only Operation Risk which falls within this area is CE_R01 Failure to deliver successful elections.

LEGAL GOVERNANCE

3. 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 Forum/Gade Zone regeneration project.
4. The team have now completed the leases in the Forum to Hertfordshire County Council, Dacorum Community Trust, Dacorum Credit Union and are near to completion on the lease for the Citizens Advice Bureau.
5. The team have been working with the property and planning teams to negotiate and finalise terms with the Council's development partner (Gade Zone Developments Limited) to bring forward the delivery of residential development surrounding the Forum. Heads of Terms have now been agreed with Hill Development and work is progressing to finalise contractual and sale documentation.

The Legal Team

6. The Legal team frequently represent the Council in the courts and tribunals, leading on injunctions, prosecutions and defending employment tribunal cases and judicial review proceedings. In the last quarter the Legal team :-
 - Obtained one anti-social behaviour injunction
 - Obtained a temporary injunction preventing gypsies from carrying out development in Bovingdon.
 - Advised on a Judicial Review claim relating to the proposed Berkhamsted Multi Storey Car Park (claim now formerly commenced in the High Court which the team will be defending)

7. The Legal team have now been granted accredited training provider status by the Bar Council (the body responsible for supervising Barristers) and the team will now be advertising to recruit a trainee barrister for a 6-12 month period to provide support on anti-social behaviour, homelessness and other council litigation. The trainee scheme will be reviewed after the first year to decide whether to continue it going forward.

The Licensing Team

8. The new taxi rank (5 cars) is now operational outside of Crazy Fried Chicken and has been well received by the taxi trade.
9. The enforcement team have carried out enforcement operations on taxi drivers and pubs but no particular compliance issues have been identified.

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

Elections/Electoral Registration

10. 2016/17 Electoral register was published on time and in line with statutory guidelines. The team then moved on in January 17 to the annual rolling renewal of postal vote identifiers (PVIs), made up of the signature and D.O.B, for just less than 2000 of those registered to vote by post.
11. Preparations are now well underway for the forthcoming Herts County Council elections in May 2017.

Member Support Services

12. During Quarter 3, Member Support managed and organised the following:

- Published 26 agendas
- Completed 25 sets of minutes
- Spent 49 hours at evening meetings
- Processed 41 public speakers at Committee
- Published 15 Portfolio Holder Decisions
- Published 11 Officer Decisions
- Representation at 6 Community Association meetings
- 11 Mayoral visits to parishes including - Ambulance Service, Mayor to Sunnyside Rural Trust and many community centre visits.

13. The Town & Parish Conference held on the 25th of November 2016. This year every Town & Parish Council was represented, partners such as HAPTC attended and Herts County Council gave a presentation on its highways work. Many departments across the council took part in the service marketplace which was a great success. The whole event went extremely well and received great feedback.

Member Development

14. Seven Member Development sessions took place during this quarter, with 63 attendances which equates to a 0.8 average per councillor. Sessions included Constitution training, Speaking with Confidence, an Anaerobic Digestion Plant visit, a Materials Recycling Facility visit, Speed Reading, the budget and a Licensing Update, all provided as either a result of the member requests following the Personal Development Plans or were deemed appropriate/compulsory by the Member Development Steering Group.

15. During this quarter the following attendances were seen:

- 18 councillors didn't attend any of the courses provided
- 15 councillors attended 1 course
- 12 councillors attended 2 courses
- 3 councillors attended 3 courses
- 0 councillors attended 4 courses
- 3 councillors attended 5 courses
- 0 councillors attended 6 courses
- No one attended all seven

Mayoral Support

16. It would be fair to say that the move to the Forum has proved disruptive for this most traditional of services but it has gradually settled in to the new surroundings, practices and procedures.

Much of the focus of the early part of the year has been on arrangements for the Mayor's Civic Function which are at an advanced stage. A substantial contribution towards the cost of the event is being made as a result of the Mayor's efforts to organise sponsorship and involve local businesses and organisations.