



RESOURCES COMMITTEE

8 September 2015

PRESENT:

Directors

John Hamilton (Chair)
 Sheila Bouitieh
 Elizabeth Bird
 Robert Buckley
 George Clark
 Mick Davison
 Kathryn Ferdinand
 Tracy Harrison
 Joachim Moussouanda Mouanda

Advisers

Jon Mallen-Beadle	Managing Director
Neil Bouch	Director of Customers and Communities
Kevin Johnson	Head of Customer Services
Jennifer Aston	Support Services Manager
Kelly Davies	Finance Manager
Stuart Gibson	Governance and Risk Officer

12 MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting of the committee held on 5 May 2015 were approved as a correct record.

13 MATTERS ARISING – WREKENTON HUB

The Company was now working with the Council and operating the library element within the HUB. A six monthly evaluation would be carried out and the outcome of this would be reported to the committee.

14 CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

The committee received updated Contract Procedure Rules, which have been amended to ensure that they meet the new public sector procurement directive that became law early this year.

The main changes from the previous Contract Procedure Rules include:

- A contract should be awarded based on the “most economically advantageous tender”

- Where an external advertisement is made for contracts over £25,000, advertisements must also be placed on the governments “contracts finder” website, in line with new EU small procurement regulations
- Emphasis on the European Union rules on procurement
- Submission and opening requirements for electronic tenders

RESOLVED – That the Board be recommended to approve the amended Contract Procedure Rules.

15 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS – FIRST QUARTER 2015/16

The committee received an update on the management accounts for the first quarter of the financial year 2015/16.

The Management Accounts Revenue shows a surplus for the first quarter of £292,000. This is due to slippage on vacant posts and overhead budgets where spend will not be realised until later in the year.

The £197,000 under spend on employee costs is mainly due to slippage on vacant posts. Some of these posts were new posts that the company received additional management fee to fund, as the posts could not be advertised until the funding was agreed they were not filled for the start of the year.

The overhead costs are under budget by £97,000 to the first quarter. This is mainly due to budgets that are traditionally not spent until later in the year and lower utility bills during the summer months. It is being forecast that overheads will come in £37,000 over budget for the year due to the Health & Safety SLA which was not budgeted for, however a vacant post within the Health & Safety team is being held to fund the SLA so there will be a corresponding under spend on employee costs.

The overall position for repairs at the end of the first quarter is an under spend of £361,000. Although the position at the end of the first quarter would suggest that spend is on target there are a couple of areas of concern. Mears responsive repairs and relets are both overspent, this is partly due to Mears completing work they received last financial year for which the budget has now transferred to Construction Services. Construction Services budget have underspent which partly offsets the over spend, but this area will need to be monitored closely to ensure it comes in on budget by the year end.

Spend on the painting programme is currently underspent for both Mears and Construction Services. Mears are currently on site and it is being expected that spend will increase and be back on budget during the next quarter as works progress over the summer months. Construction Services aren't due to start their painting programme until the end of July, however they are confident they can complete the full programme this year, therefore the Company still expects this to spend to budget.

The committee asked if it needed to be concerned about the cost of some repairs going up by 8% whilst there was only a 2% inflationary increase in schedule of rates. It was noted that this would be a mix of repairs and if it continued going forward it would be a concern, however it was too soon to speculate at the moment.

The committee asked why the Company was still waiting for the detail of the work that had been completed by Construction Services and for an indication of when the Company would have this. It was noted that this was due to a number of ICT issues at the start of the year that were still being worked through. It was anticipated that actual data would be provided by the end of the third quarter.

RESOLVED – That the update on the management accounts for the first quarter of the financial year 2015/16 be noted.

16 SICKNESS ABSENCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

The committee received an update on general human resources initiatives and developments from April to June 2015, including sickness absence and learning and development activity.

The total sickness absence for the period equates to 1.62 days per person, compared to 2.00 days for the same period last year, which is a decrease of 19%.

Short term absence for the period was 0.82 days per person. This compares with 0.76 days for the same period last year and represents an increase of 7.32%.

Long term absence for the period was 0.80 days per person this compares with 1.24 days for the same period last year. This represents a decrease of 34.48%

The biggest cause of absence for the period was stress with 168.50 days lost compared to 171.5 days lost last year, a decrease of 1.57%.

Of the 168.50 days of stress related absence 115 days was reported as non-work related stress. This equates to 67.87% as non-work related absence and 32.13% work related absence.

Of the 168.50 days lost to stress related absence, six employees reported non-work related stress and four employees reported work related stress.

The Company has held five short term sickness absence review meetings in the period with four first written cautions being issued following these meetings. Six long term absence review meetings were held in line with procedure two in the period.

The committee also received details of sickness absence benchmarking, the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Absence Management Annual Survey Report 2014, health and wellbeing, work life balance, bullying and harassment, recruitment, the Child Care Scheme, the ITrent System, learning and development activity, the behavioural framework and Investors in People.

RESOLVED – That the update on sickness and human resources initiatives be noted.

17 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

The committee received an update on the following health and safety activities for the period 1 April 2015 to 30 June 2015: -

- Corporate Health and Safety Groups

- Partners activity
- Accident reporting
- Asbestos management
- Fire safety management
- Legionella Control
- Fire alarm systems and sprinkler system
- Out of hours
- Emergency lighting
- Non domestic gas boilers
- Bin chute fire shut off tests and inspections
- Cyclical repair and maintenance
- Lift maintenance
- Company construction related activities

RESOLVED – That the update on health and safety activities be noted, subject to the committee receiving updates on the following: -

- Confirmation that risk assessments from Crowhall Towers, Tennyson Court and Newbold Court had been completed.
- Confirmation that the last two water hygiene inspections/treatments had been completed by Construction Services.
- Confirmation that the 31 outstanding fire alarm tests had been carried out to multi storey blocks and sheltered housing communal areas and the risks of not carrying these out.
- Lift maintenance performance – was this improving on last year.

18 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY UPDATE

The committee received a summary of equality and diversity work within the Company in the first quarter of 2015/16.

The Company continues to collect a range of information about its customers to ensure it understands the makeup and needs of the communities it is working in. The Company has now collected information from over 40% of customers on sexual orientation and religion which will allow it to start using this information to monitor and compare services.

A joint meeting of the BME, LGTB and Disabled Persons' Forums has been reviewing the Single Equality Scheme to ensure it is up to date and relevant based on current legislation and Company priorities. It is proposed to change the name of the scheme to the 'Equality and Inclusion Scheme' as it will refer to digital and financial inclusion information. The group will continue to meet on a regular basis until the document is finalised.

During the period, the Company has worked in partnership with Gem Arts and Gateshead Council to deliver arts projects in senior schools around hate crime.

The Company has continued to undertake a range of activities to make it more LGTB inclusive, both as an employer and a service provider.

RESOLVED – That the progress activity relating the equality and diversity carried out in the first quarter of 2015/16 be noted.

19 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the committee would be held on Tuesday, 3 November 2015 at 2pm at Gateshead Civic Centre.

20 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining business in accordance with Category 1 of the Company's Access to Information Rules.