

Meeting Date: 15th July 2014

Public/Private*: Public

Title: **Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder's Report –
Councillor Dr Les Tickner**

Electoral Registration

The European and Carlisle City Council elections were held on Thursday 22nd May. Voting in the European election took place across the whole of the City Council area and there was voting in the City Council election in 17 of the City Council wards. There was also an election in the Dalston Parish Council area. There were 118 polling stations in operation on polling day. The count for the City Council elections was held on the Thursday night and the European count was held on the Sunday evening. The elections and the counts were delivered successfully.

Individual Electoral Registration was introduced with effect from 10th June and arrangements are being made to facilitate this change within the City Council. The matching of the City Councils electoral register with the records of the Department of Works and Pension records is scheduled to take place on 10th July which will be followed by further work to try and match records with data held by the City Council. Electors will then receive a letter in mid august to inform them whether they have been matched and need to take no further action with regard to registration or that they have not been matched and need to submit a registration form with supporting personal details.

Building Services

Civic Centre Refurbishment

Work has begun on refurbishment of floors 3 and 4 – both occupied by the County Council, completion of floor 3 is expected on 11th July with floor 4 to follow-on with completion anticipated by the end of August. This will complete the programme of refurbishment which began with the reinstatement work following the floods in 2005. All floors will have been re-wired and the partitions removed to create an open-plan layout.

West Walls

The project to preserve the old city wall at Town Dyke Orchard began in year 2005 / 06 and approximately 75% of the wall has now been repaired and re-pointed. The stretch of wall currently being restored is in poor condition and is being underpinned with new stone blocks. This work is being done by Kevin Harkness from the building maintenance team and it will take most of the summer to complete the current section.

Organisational Development

The Ethical Governance programme for the new Civic year has started with workshops for newly elected Members and members of committees. A series of workshops for managers and supervisors has been developed to support the Management Competency Framework and these will take place from July 2014 to January 2015.

A health check session for Members will be held before Council on 9 September from 4.30pm to 6.30pm in the Flensburg committee room. The City Council's Occupational Health Nurse will be offering blood pressure, cholesterol and blood glucose checks. Members will also be able to have their body stats assessed and get information on a wide range of health topics.

Information Management

Recent counts for information requests (From 29 March 2014 to 16 June 2014):

- Environmental Information Regulations requests received - 25
- Environmental Information Regulations requests responded to - 23
- Freedom of Information Act requests received – 151
- Freedom of Information Act requests responded to - 158
- Data Protection Act subject access requests received - 1
- Data Protection Act subject access requests responded to – 1
- Data Protection Act s29/s35 requests received - 16
- Data Protection Act s29/s35 requests responded to – 15

Legal Services

Legal Services underwent their annual Lexcel inspection on 6th June. Lexcel is an international best practice standard for law firms and in-house legal departments.

The section passed the inspection, with 9 areas of good practice. The assessor commented that the legal services department has continued to work to a high standard in terms of quality.

Only two months prior to the inspections, the team implemented the IKEN system with a view to becoming paperless and has, therefore, had to adapt all its systems accordingly. It is particularly pleasing, therefore, to receive a good report from the Lexcel assessor, who noted in her report that she was excited to see how the department develops over time in light of this new system, which allows a multitude of reports to be drawn up and analysed.

Indeed, the department are already noticing the benefits of the system which has improved efficiency, time recording and reporting.

Licensing

The football World Cup has commenced and as reported previously, in mid May the Government published a Statutory Instrument where they extended liquor licensing hours during the time when the England team were playing. Many licensed premises have taken advantage of these extensions. The Police have reported no problems in connection with the games.

We are commencing the seventh year of the Carlisle & Eden Best Bar None Awards. This is a national scheme that was set up under the Community Safety Partnership (old CDRP) and is open to all liquor licensed premises in the two Districts. The awards seek to

establish a standard of excellence within licensed premises in both Carlisle and Eden. The aims of the scheme are:

- To reduce the incidents of crime and disorder associated with the consumption of alcohol
- To promote Carlisle and Eden as a safe and professional environment in which to live, work, visit and socialise
- To identify and reward responsible operators
- To share good practice with others in order to raise standards

Digital and Information Services

There is a large amount of effort being put into developing the HR application process to ensure we achieve all the benefits from our investment. The recruitment module will go live in December; this includes the facility to apply for jobs via the Internet. This will automate the whole recruitment process. Staff and members will be able to make overtime and expense claims online as well from January. A new time and attendance application is being implemented which will integrate with the HR application.

Following the implementation of these modules work will start on the performance management and learning and development modules.

Detailed planning meetings have taken place with British Telecom, our partner in the provision of public Wi-Fi in the city centre. This exciting project will allow BT to use council assets, e.g. lamp posts, to provide Wi-Fi to users of the city centre.

The prototype online forms for the reporting of environmental issues is gathering apace as more detail about the business processes involved are identified. It is hoped that by late August we will be demonstrating the new functionality available to customers and the benefits of developing customer-centric applications.