

Meeting Date: 8th September 2020

Public/Private*: Public

Title: **Finance, Governance & Resources Portfolio Holder's Report –
Councillor Gareth Ellis**

HR AND PAYROLL

- Since the last Report the team's focus has now moved to getting staff returned to their job role whilst they can – always with the preface of where people can work from home they should. This has seen some 60+ staff in vulnerable and/or extremely vulnerable categories being referred to Occupational Health. We continue to assist with communications, FAQs, guidance and reporting to relevant Government Departments as well as internally to SMT. Twice monthly updates via Microsoft Teams with North West Employers continues and the Head of HR is Chairing the next Cumbria HR Leaders Network Meeting in September. The HR & Payroll Team continue to work from home, and we have successfully run 5 payrolls from outside the Civic, so the systems are holding up well
- We are hoping we can begin the work started earlier in the year to make better and more efficient use of the I-Trent system – specifically for recruitment and logging time
- The Member led Task And Finish Group is progressing really well on the revised Attendance Management Policy and the Team are grateful for the Member involvement. Next meeting scheduled for 19th August.
- Recruitment activity has commenced again – 95% of interviews being scheduled online and we are seeing a 5/6-fold increase in the number of applicants. Key recent appointments include the Head of Planning Policy and Head of Digital & Technology

ICT UPDATE

- All RBS Laptops now issues to RBS Staff
- RBS Capita System Upgrades implemented for COVID support and grant payments
- SIEM Security Monitoring now operational
- Assisting staff returning to Council's Offices

- Windows 1909 upgrade testing ongoing
- Firewall upgrade 22nd August
- Restructure – ongoing
- Head of ICT appointed

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

OD have delivered virtual training for Managers as part of the Management Competency Standards Training, very successful and excellent feedback.

The virtual Wellbeing Day went well and sessions were recorded to allow Staff to view at a time convenient to them. Over 100 participants on the day, which we were pleased with and feedback regarding presentations has been very good.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT – LEGAL SERVICES

Recent counts for information requests (From 24th June 2020 – 17th August 2020):

- Environmental Information Regulations requests received - 6
- Environmental Information Regulations requests responded to - 10
- Freedom of Information Act requests received – 87
- Freedom of Information Act requests responded to - 75
- Data Protection Act requests received – 2
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ELECTORAL REGISTRATION

The Annual Canvass is well underway and approximately 9,000 of the 15,000 properties have not responded to the Canvass Communication B letter, which requires confirmation or further information. These properties will receive a Household Enquiry Form and a pre-paid envelope at the beginning of September and following that if no response is received, a telephone communication where possible.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

The Council is continuing to monitor the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and is submitting returns to MHCLG on a monthly basis outlining the actual and potential financial losses being incurred. The Council is also continuing to work closely with other authorities around Cumbria to understand the impact on wider issues such as Council Tax and Business Rates.

The budget process for 2021/22 has now begun with the MTFP, Capital Investment Strategy and Asset Management Plan being considered elsewhere on this Agenda.