

CABINET – 18TH OCTOBER 2018

Report of the Overview Scrutiny Group

ITEM 9 REVENUES AND BENEFITS SERVICE – FUTURE OPTIONS

Purpose of Report

To consider the comments and recommendations of the Overview Scrutiny Group in relation to the delivery of the Revenues and Benefits Service post 2020 when the current outsourcing contract comes to an end.

Recommendation of the Overview Scrutiny Group

That the Cabinet be informed that the Group supports the recommendations as set out in the report of the Head of Customer Experience.

Reason

Having considered the report and asked questions of the Lead Member for Performance of Major Contracts and the Strategic Director of Corporate Services on the matter, the Group concluded that it would be appropriate for the Cabinet to approve the recommendations set out in the report.

Meeting Discussion

Following questions from the Group, the Lead Member for Performance of Major Contracts and the Strategic Director of Corporate Services provided the following responses:

- (i) The option of bringing the service back in house would require a significant amount of work and investment. An IT hosting solution would need to be procured whereas Capita already had systems in place and had the resilience in their team to ensure the continuity of the service.
- (ii) The option to join the shared services scheme was discussed and the Group was advised that there was some work to do in understanding the service level agreements in place and the existing agreements between the Councils.
- (iii) Risk and resilience were considered the most important considerations when looking at the future of the service. A larger, shared arrangement was considered the preferred option as that offered flexibility and better opportunities for managing risks and provided a resilient basis for the service delivery.
- (iv) Capita was noted to have made genuine efforts to improve their performance recently and the hope was that would continue. Extending the current contract was perceived to be the lowest risk option which was considered preferable. There was an option to extend the contract for up to 5 years but the shorter period would also be feasible.

- (v) Capita's financial position had improved as they had consolidated some of their assets and raised capital to help the business keep running. Their position was now considered stable. There was also a contingency plan in place as there was for all major contracts to ensure business continuity should the existing contractor become unable to provide the service.
- (vi) The Council would be piloting a flexible working scheme that included home working and would look at the security measures in place to protect data sharing. It was expected that the shared service partnership already had a system in place to meet security requirements and the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

Scrutiny Committee Procedure 11.12 sets out the procedure by which a report of a scrutiny committee should be considered by the Cabinet.

Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

The information on this in the Cabinet report is not affected by the recommendation of the Overview Scrutiny Group.

Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

Financial Implications

There are no further financial implications associated with the recommendation of the Overview Scrutiny Group.

Risk Management

There are no specific risks associated with the recommendation of the Overview Scrutiny Group.

Key Decision:	Yes
Background Paper:	Overview Scrutiny Group Minute 22 2018/19, 15th October 2018
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