

REPORT TITLE:	Discharge of Roles and Responsibilities since the last meeting of the Council
REPORT AUTHOR:	Councillor Silvia Dacre
AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY:	Resources
DATE:	23 March 2022

Employment and Skills

Inspire Update (note cross over with Cllr Scullion's briefing)

We have now appointed two new Clients Support Officers to help with the growing demand of local residents wanting help to find work and access training. Also, we have recruited a new Marketing Officer to help promote the services and the partners support, and also to build strong case studies to show the real impact of the Inspire Programme.

Activity is increasing and new events will be launched over the coming weeks to help people with a range of barriers these will include:

- A mix of wellness and confidence events, a mix of getting ready for work events, focus groups – volunteering, skills, job searching, talking about self)
- Volunteering / work experience events. What, where and how to get a role
- Work ready events. What type of things can you do to get yourself ready for work
- Starting your own business, job events, sector events, cv, application forms workshops

Closer working has been established with Maximus who deliver the DWP Restart Programme so we can add extra support to those who have more complex barriers. Work is planned with the partners to attend the local food banks to provide support and also attend the planned Fuel Poverty Events to give help around debt recovery and links to local training provision. DWP have requested a Recovery Plan to show how the programme will deliver all its remaining targets due to delays in group activity because of the covid 19 restrictions. This has been agreed with all the Partners and submitted to Wakefield, who are the Accountable Body.

Employment Hub 2 (note cross over with Cllr Scullion's briefing)

Employment Hub now has **334** people registered and offers a broad range of support for employed and unemployed people of any age.

- Since January, we have focussed our energy on supporting local businesses with their recruitment, many of whom have experienced difficulty recruiting as a consequence of Brexit and the pandemic. We have been able to support with the full process, assisting with writing job specifications, advertising roles on recruitment websites and social media and shortlisting candidates. Here is what one company we have supported recently said about us:

Testimony example: *"Brad and the team at The Employment Hub are fantastic! They have been a great support and advertised a Business Admin Apprenticeship role for us, they screened candidates and kept us informed at all points. We ended up finding an apprentice from a candidate sent through from The Employment Hub, the apprentice has now started and she is a really good fit for the business and will excel in her role. Thanks again to Brad and the team."*

- We have brokered an agreement with Calderdale Cares for Us to offer Career Coaching as part of their offer to key workers. The purpose of this is to support those who are already in work but have aspirations to develop their career within the organisation they work for or change direction and begin a new career. The service launched in the middle of February, and we have had lots of interest.

ISCAL

On 28 March 2022, Cabinet will receive a report providing an update on progress to date regarding activity at ISCAL and development planning. The report will set out a proposal for consideration regarding the next stages of business planning to put ISCAL on a sustained and sustainable footing that ensures it delivers effective services for people with Learning Disabilities and other employability support needs. In year Future Council savings have been met.

Delivery update

Recent referral routes:

- 4 x referred from the Employment Hub,
- 5 x self-referrals
- 1 x referred from new ground
- 1 x referred from staying well (upper valley)
- 1 x referred from Adults (Council)
- 1 x referred from QRNC

The core staff are still working in bubbles and are eager to come back full time. They are looking forward to restarting the allotment scheme at Ryburn House. ISCAL have also begun work with a local company, John Winters based in Mytholmroyd, they have a labour-intensive process that they can't keep up with and reached out to ISCAL for help, we have managed to secure the work for nine months producing piping style bags for storing fluid, approximately 4800 a month. They have supplied us with the machinery and all the materials required to complete the job for them.

ICT infrastructure

Since my last Report was compiled for Council on 9th February the main update is that Budget Council approved investment in:

- Cyber security to create a dedicated cyber security staff resource to secure the Council's data and systems in light of heightened cyber security risks
- Recruitment to the Service Desk to ensure users are supported in timely and appropriate way now that we are a Digital Council.

Digital transformation & Strategy

Further investment was approved at Budget Council to support:

- Development of a review framework to prioritise needs of systems with Directors to ensure resource and investment is focused in the right areas at the right time, and to identify whether an internal system or third party procured system is most appropriate.
- Digital Transformation project delivery.

Work continues with a new Digital Calderdale presence, to replace the existing Digital IT Strategy. There is already progress in some of proposed key workstreams, with work being undertaken to link directly into the Inclusive Recovery Plan workstreams.

- *Connectivity*
 - An All-Member briefing took place in February to update Members on the £20 million CityFibre Gigabit which has now seen civil works commence. As the rollout commences, ward councillors in affected wards will be notified and updated so they are fully aware of the works and impacts.
 - Fixed wireless broadband (BDUK (Building Digital UK) Contract 3)) has seen mast go live in Todmorden and Barkisland, with Hebden Bridge next online (all serving line of sight within 10km)

- Calderdale as part of the Superfast West Yorkshire Board (lead by WYCA) have begun the scoping and initiation of Project Gigabit ((a Government funded programme of work to provide full national Gigabit Infrastructure coverage)) by beginning to establish a partnership agreement between WYCS, LA's and BDUK/DCMS).
- Digital Council
 - engagement work with colleagues of the Integrated Economic Recovery Board, to ensure that Digital Calderdale activity is captured within the appropriate workstreams so opportunities at a place level are maximised.

Digital Transformation supports core organisational change as a lead in the Systems element of the PAS (People, Assets and Systems) strategy including:

- Ongoing support with ASC on their systems evaluation programme
- Initial engagement with CYP on support of a systems evaluation programme
- Continued technical support of Customer Access Team innovation such as:
 - Text messaging/Virtual Assistants
 - Online Incident reporting

Software Development teams continue support the key lines of business systems and continue to collaborate with services and partners to swiftly deliver amendments to our systems to support business and citizens.

Examples of system developments in in the last period are as follows:

- Benefits System
 - Together Housing transition from 48 to 52-week tenancies
 - Automating GDPR processing on Benefits system
- Business Rates System
 - BIDs System development
 - Supporting Small Business Relief – Post 01 Apr 2017 RV and liability change
 - Extended Retail relief 2022
 - Transitional Relief 2022
 - Production of data extracts for BEIS
 - Annual Billing testing and preparation.
- Council Tax System
 - Council tax annual billing 2022

- Integration of new web forms for council tax
- Provision of training data for contact centre staff training.
- Energy Rebate £150 payment for most council tax properties in bands A to D. System development to identify and manage payments.
- Adult Social Care – CIS System
 - Ongoing work on the Implementation of PAMMS, a third-party reporting tool that will allow Calderdale (and other Local Authorities in the region) to share data with each other in relation to details of the services that their clients are receiving
- Children’s Social Care – CASS System
 - Support of recent OFSTED inspection and capturing OFSTED comments
 - Adoption Access identified as next priority
- Financials System
 - Automation of quarterly Adults Health and Social Care reports. These are currently completed manually and are very labour intensive
 - Automation of quarterly Rent, Shop Rent, and Market Rent reports
 - Financial year-end preparation
 - More automation of Income reports

The Systems Integration team continue to support a range of services in digital improvements aimed at improved customer experience including redevelopment of online reporting forms.

All these successes come from strong collaboration across Council Services using successful transformation methodologies and agile development principles.

SUB-TITLE Performance management, transformation, and business intelligence

Our performance and business intelligence colleagues are now preparing the collection and analysis of Q4 data for which will form the basis of our full 2021/22-year reports as part of our corporate performance framework and its associated Super Key Performance Indicators. This will be reported to Cabinet and Scrutiny in due course, late spring in line with cyclical reporting schedules.

Our Transformation team have recently commenced support to colleagues in our Safeguarding Children’s Partnership to improve the multi-agency governance, accountability, and responsibility to help deliver improved outcomes and statutory responsibilities for Calderdale. The aim of this work being to streamline partnership structures, reduce duplication, identify gaps, and clarify roles and responsibilities, to

ensure that local partnership working is effective in contributing to the delivery of our Vision 2024. The team also continue to work closely with colleagues in our Adults Social Care teams on their transformation programme to identify areas of process improvement for customer enquiries and incoming email workflows.

SUB-TITLE Finance

Council has now approved its budget and council tax for 2022/23- and three-year plans which will be updated when the next version of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy is presented to Council in October. Although these plans will inevitably change, they provide the baseline for future financial resilience for the Council.

The Council tax team are working with colleagues in ICT, Customer Services, and others to put processes in place to start to pay the energy rebate (£150) to households in band A-D properties from early April for those who are currently paying their council tax by direct debit as we have their bank account details to be able to make these payments as quickly as possible.

At the same time the Finance service continues to work with colleagues in Business & Skills and the Business Grants team to pay the Omicron Hospitality & Leisure grants and the latest round of Additional Restrictions Grants. All these payments will need to be completed by 31 March although the assurance and reconciliation processes will continue for some time after that.

The business rates team are also working with ICT and Business & Skills to implement the Covid Additional Relief Fund for businesses outside of hospitality and leisure which have not been able to access other forms of government support.

SUB-TITLE Legal and Democratic services

Inevitably the pace of preparation for the May elections has picked up and an announcement will be made shortly about the innovative approach to be taken to the count venue. It will be an interesting experience for us all!

One other major event to mention is the Platinum Jubilee which will take place between June 2nd and June 5th. Planning is well advanced to ensure that the Borough properly acknowledges the monarch's contribution to the country over the past 70 years.

SUB-TITLE HR&OD

My thanks to the Contracts & Payroll team, HR systems team and the management group for their hard work and sheer determination in ensuring that all our staff, schools and academies received the 2021/22 pay rise and backpay with only 3 days to implement. This was no mean feat but our staff, as we know, are exceptional when faced with a challenge. A number of Council's, quite understandably, failed to implement the pay award in time for the final year end. It would have had significant implications for our staff and the council had we not been able to implement the pay award in the current financial year, including increased National Insurance payments for both the council and employees, reclaim of grant funded salaries, pension statement issues/delays etc. We are incredibly lucky to have a team who have cancelled their annual leave and worked additional hours to implement the pay award to ensure there was no detriment to employees and the Council. My sincere thanks to them for their hard work in doing this but in also continuing to do all the other year end work that is required and doing so whilst working from home remotely.

Apprenticeships – the Recruitment and Resourcing team are currently advertising a number of apprenticeships available throughout the different directorates. We have promoted these opportunities within our schools, academies, care leavers (Pathways) and in difficult to reach, under-represented communities. This new cohort will help to ensure we bring in new talent to the organisation and help to workforce plan in areas where we are struggling to recruit and retain staff. A number of our existing staff are being trained through our career apprenticeships which not only better skill and equip our staff to do their current role, but also prepares them for more senior roles. In addition several staff are looking at a change in career, for instance into Social Work. This enables the Council to retain and retrain staff in difficult to recruit to positions. It will also help us to backfill and workforce plan early to ensure we are able to provide vital seamless services when our existing staff reach retirement. Our new and exciting recruitment campaign will spotlight a number of these staff who have agreed to be filmed to talk about their change in career path and their experience of working for Calderdale as an employer.