

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Jobs, Regeneration and Assets Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 18 January 2016
Report of: Director of Planning & Sustainable Development
Subject/Title: Civicance Ltd – Progress Update
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Arnold

1.0 Report Summary

1.1 This report provides Members of the Committee with the background information on the transfer of Building Control and Planning Support Services to the ASDV of Civicance Ltd. It also provides an update on the operation and performance over the initial period.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is requested to note the progress made by Civicance Ltd since its inception in April 2015, including its operation and performance.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 As part of the Council's move towards being a "Commissioning Council" Civicance Ltd as one of the Council's new Alternative Service Delivery Vehicles (ASDVs) is key to the delivery of a range of services and "outcomes" for local residents. It is important to ensure that these are achieved through the ongoing monitoring of the Contract.

4.0 Wards Affected

4.1 N/A

5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 N/A

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 Civicance receives a Management Fee for the delivery of service to be renegotiated annually with the Council. In addition Civicance also "buys back" a range of services from 'CoSocius' including ICT services, Oracle and payroll support. The latter was to ensure a smooth transition into the new way of working and continuity of service to

users. Civicance will consider in future years if it wishes to continue to buy these services from the company as it does at present or seek an alternative provider.

7.0 Legal implications (authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

7.1 Civicance has a 7 year contract with Cheshire East. The contract commenced on 1st April 2015.

8.0 Background

8.1 In January 2015 Cabinet approved the transfer of the management of a range of services to the new ASDV. The company called Civicance Ltd was formally established in April 2015 with a Board including two Cheshire East Council representatives. Civicance Ltd is part of the Council's wider drive to become a "Commissioning Council".

8.2 The services and some 47 staff formally transferred to Civicance Ltd on the 1st April 2015. The key service delivery areas are:

- Building Control
- Local Land Charges
- Planning Support, liaison and customer interface
- Street Naming and Numbering

8.3 The Contract contains a range of elements and key performance measures to provide the services required by the Council. These are set out in the Service Specification Schedule which helps form the basis by which the Council can measure the effectiveness of Civicance and whether it is delivering.

8.4 Perhaps unlike other ASDVs, Civicance was set up to reduce additional expenditure as a result of competition from other external services and factors (such as proposed changes to land charges) with a potential threat which could lead to additional costs of some £892K over 5 years.

8.5 Appendix 1 provides details of the performance from April to September. This shows a busy period of activity across the main service areas. Raising the profile of Civicance as a company through extensive marketing; building relationships with the local business and development community and improvements in planning application registration have been just some of the key headlines over the first 6 months of the company. Measurement against key indicators shows strong operational performance in most areas.

8.6 Financial performance is on track albeit Building Control income is down (due to competition) but Land Charge income remains strong.

9.7 As part of the monitoring of the Contract, regular meetings are held with Civicance to review progress. A number of further initiatives and improvements are planned over the coming year.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Performance Update Report

10. **Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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