

<b>Committee(s):</b> Finance Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 15 November 2022
<b>Subject:</b> Chamberlain's Business Plan – Quarter 2 update	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	3, 5, 8 & 10
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	N
<b>If so, how much?</b>	N/A
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	N/A
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	N/A
<b>Report of:</b> The Chamberlain	<b>For information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Caroline Al-Beyerty – Chamberlain & CFO	

## **Summary**

The Chamberlain's department has made good progress on its Business Plan approved by this committee at the meeting on 9 November 2021. This report outlines key progress against Chamberlain's departmental objectives. Progress has been against a backdrop of a high number of vacancies and outcomes delivered with enormous effort and commitment from people within the department, at a level which is not sustainable going forwards. Recruitment has now been completed in most teams, although staff progression has resulted in a greater number of vacancies in Financial Services, requiring careful management and prioritisation of workloads. The recruitment campaign for these vacancies has been launched.

## **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the report.

## **Main Report**

### **Current Position**

1. Highlights from the last three months include:

2. **Financial Services:**

- Completion of City Cash 2020/21 audit.
- Production of the draft 2021/22 accounts for all three funds.
- Analysis to support the Star Chambers and Member Bilaterals for overspending departments or those that have not yet embedded fundamental review proposals and/ or Target Operating Model.
- Review of capital programmes in flight including Major Projects – update provided to this committee ahead of budget timetable.
- Building budget estimates 2023/24 for service committees on principles agreed by Finance and Policy & Resources Committees following discussions at Resource Allocation Sub Committee Away Day in the summer.

- Overview of the five year medium term financial plan for City Fund and City's Cash.
- Recruitment campaign launched, focusing on bringing in new talent as well as providing internal opportunities through lateral development and progression.

#### **Financial Shared Services:**

- The City has completed administration of the Covid Additional Restriction Relief (CARF) scheme providing relief totalling nearly £58m to approximately 11,800 businesses including offices and public car parks.
- The Council Tax Team continue to deal with the £150 Energy Rebate Grants on behalf of Central Government. The Team have administered 1393 grants totalling £208,950.
- The Housing Benefit Team have administered the 2<sup>nd</sup> tranche of the Household Support Fund. The City received £63K in funding and has spent £56.6K providing much needed support to vulnerable residents and those experiencing financial hardship.

#### **3. Corporate Treasury:**

- All the vacancies in the Treasury and Investments Team have now been filled and we are on boarding the new starters.

#### **4. Chamberlain's Office:**

- All vacancies in the Chamberlain's Court have now been filled and additional resource added via a Court Assistant on a fixed term contract for to allow for extra work created by the implementation of the new Freedom Applications system.
- Recruitment campaign for a new Chamberlain's Project Manager is now live.
- The Departmental Business Plan for 2023/24 is progressing and will be presented to Finance Committee alongside Budget Estimates Report.

#### **5. Internal Audit and Counter Fraud:**

- Successful recruitment campaign, resulting in offers made to two candidates.
- Completion of 7 Internal Audit reviews, 22 follow-up Audits and 2 Corporate Risk assurance reviews.
- Update reports made to 9 Audit Committees during the past 3 months.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

6. Strategic implications – Strategic priorities and commitments are expressed in **Appendix 1**.
7. Financial implications – The high-level summary Business Plan at **Appendix 1** has been drawn up on the basis of a 12% reduction in the departmental budget compared to 2022/23.
8. Resource implications – Any changes to resources will be identified and delivered through the move to the Target Operating Model.

9. Legal implications – None.
10. Risk implications – Key risks managed by the department are included in the draft high-level summary Business Plan at **Appendix 1**.
11. Equalities implications – The department has a separate Equalities and Inclusion Plan which aims to improve the department's Equalities position for employees. Where appropriate the department will complete Equality Impact Assessment for upcoming changes.
12. Climate Implications – Under the Climate action strategy the departments Corporate Treasury function is responsible for delivering Scope 3 emission actions related to our financial investments.
13. Security implications – There are no security implications to the proposals put forward in the Chamberlain's Business Plan.

#### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Chamberlain's Business Plan update

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