

## Scrutiny Committee 12 November 2019

### Item 6 – Portfolio Holder Presentation

Questions Asked in advance by Councillor Cumbers and Responses provided:

- 1. You advised that 15 insurance claims have been handled over the last 12 months. Were these by, or against, MBC. ?**

*These were a mixture of claims against MBC and where we are putting a claim in ourselves. In total 8 remain open of which only 3 are against MBC. The other 7 were closed / defended without any payments made.*

**Can you provide some information about the claims e.g. Total value and the reasons?**

*Examples of claims against MBC are slip, trip fall at one of our assets such as country park or at one of our HRA properties. Some of the areas MBC are claiming are for things like the broken glass door in reception or the shattered window in the Cleves. For the 8 open claims still from 2017-18 the estimated value is circa £21k with the addition of one potential subsidence claim which hasn't been given a value. Of this the excess totals £16k that would have to be covered by MBC and the remainder being covered by insurance.*

**Were the claims and their causes reported to members? Are such claims reported as a separate item in the Annual Accounts?**

*Claims aren't routinely presented to members as the majority are low value and the volume isn't that high for a local authority. Where there were concerns these would be reported to the Portfolio Holder initially. For any claims outstanding where it had been settled a provision would be made in the accounts.*

- 2. I understand that MBC is committed to supporting armed forces personnel and veterans as part of the Armed Forces Community Covenant. Does the workforce strategy action plan include any reference to employing former armed forces personnel ?**

*No the WFS does not make specific reference to the Armed Forces Covenant . The WFS is more about our aspirations for the future. We have a reservists policy which outlines the time off we give to people.*

- 3. Procurement – can you explain what is meant by 29 procurements being Melton Specific ? How hard does MBC try to ensure that contractors from elsewhere use local labour when feasible?**

*Members may be aware that the Welland Procurement Unit which is hosted by MBC delivers procurement advice and support to a number of local authorities (Blaby, Wellingborough, East Northants, Rutland, South Kesteven, Newark & Sherwood) as*

*well to MBC itself. Of all the procurements being support 29 of those are specifically related to MBC contracts and services.*

*In terms of using the local labour market the Council has always worked hard to ensure that local suppliers are able to access opportunities advertised by us. The Social Value Act (2012) has reinforced this work. All procurements valued at over £25,000 are now advertised as widely as possible and the 'Doing Business with the Council' pages on the website are regularly reviewed to provide help and support. Where possible and legal / procurement rules allowing we can put into tenders the request for large contractors to use an element of local workforce which would then be checked / challenged through contract management by officers.*

- 4. Scrutiny members were quite shocked re the sundry debtors – the value and some of the actual debtors. Eg BID owed £3000 in March and it still owed the money in September. Why doesn't MBC demand that money immediately and threaten legal action as BID does with their business payers ?**

*A £3,000 invoice to the Melton BID is raised on a quarterly basis, this relates to a BID administration fee. Melton BID currently owe £0.0 and the next invoice is due to be raised on 01/12/19.*

- 5. Re the Debt, especially the Sundry Debtors, Scrutiny members believe Scrutiny should receive regular updates. Will you be updating Cabinet on a regular basis which would be available to all ? Or could you update Scrutiny separately ?**

*It is suggested that regular updates are provided to Cabinet, however, a separate update could also be provided to Scrutiny if needed.*