

ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP – SECTION 113 AGREEMENT

Committee: Council

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[R210]

1.0 ISSUE

- 1.1 To approve a shared management team and a Section 113 agreement with Norwich City Council.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are requested to:

- (i) note the report;
- (ii) instruct officers to negotiate and enter into a Section 113 agreement with Norwich City Council so that the services of Anglia Revenues Partnership staff can be shared;
- (iii) give approval for the ARP management team to start working with Norwich City Council immediately to carry out any necessary work prior to the 1st April 2017 that will assist with the commencement of the agreement.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On the 19th March 2015 the Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) 2015 Joint Committee decided that the Partnership would be closed to any new full partners or members of the Joint Committee for the time being.
- 3.2 The 2015 Joint Committee has all Revenues and Benefits functions delegated to it from its 7 partner authorities and the ARP operates as a single officer core providing equal service provision for all partners across these functions.
- 3.3 The Joint Committee has subsequently agreed that, where it benefits the 7 ARP partners, the ARP will work in partnership and/or provide services to other Councils with regard to specific elements of their services but not their whole service. This will mean that the ARP can build resilience and generate efficiencies to meet the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 3.4 On the 20 September 2016, the Joint Committee agreed that, subject to formal approval from each Council, a Section 113 agreement leading to a shared management arrangement with Norwich City Council should be put into place.
- 3.5 Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables Local Authorities to enter in to an agreement as follows:

“a local authority may enter into an agreement with another local authority for the placing at the disposal of the latter for the purposes of their functions, on such terms as may be provided by the agreement, of the services of officers employed by the former, but shall not enter into any such agreement with respect to any officer without consulting him.”

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 Recent developments mean Norwich City Council will be taking their Revenues and Benefits service out of the current partnership arrangement with Local Government Shared Services (LGSS) with effect from 1st April 2017.
- 4.2 The service will be brought back in house which will mean that the Senior Management Team for LGSS Revenues and Benefits will no longer manage Norwich City's service after the 31 March 2017. The transfer back to Norwich will include two operational managers for Revenues and for Benefits but, no head of service function.
- 4.3 Norwich City Council approached the ARP to discuss the potential for the ARP to provide support for the service when they bring it in house. The support would involve providing mentoring and coaching for the operational managers and to provide strategic management services for Norwich City Council, essentially to act as the Head of Service for them.
- 4.4 The current Revenues and Benefits employees already work in Norwich City Council and so transfer will only involve handing the Management of the service from LGSS to ARP on the 1st April 2017. It will however be necessary to acclimatise the ARP management team to the current statistics and ways of working at Norwich so that it can be proactive in understanding any priorities for Norwich City Council Service from the commencement of the service and so, it is recommended that approval is given for the Management team to start working with Norwich City Council before April where necessary to effect as seamless a handover as possible.
- 4.5 Norwich are also interested in joining the Enforcement Agency operated by ARP at a later date (once their existing contract expires) and in looking at ARP providing other services through trading and partnership.
- 4.6 A negotiated section 113 agreement will enable partnership working without the need for Norwich City Council to become members of the Joint Committee and in the future may lead to trading and other partnership opportunities. A Section 113 Agreement will offer the following: -
- Efficiencies of £80,000 per annum;
 - The potential for the provision of chargeable services later;
 - A future potential partner for the Enforcement Agency leading to additional efficiencies;
 - The continuance of robust strategic and operational management.

The term of the agreement will be ongoing, with a full financial year's notice required by either party to terminate.

4.7 The Officers representing the 7 partner authorities Operational Improvement Board have agreed steps to reinforce the existing structure to support the Strategic Managers in managing an 8th local authority. This will mean that we retain the resilience that we need for the existing partners.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 Risk

There is always a risk in spreading resources more thinly however, the management team will operate at a strategic level and in the main will be able to remove duplication and offer all 8 Authorities a single solution. The risk is mitigated by steps introduced by the Officers representing the partner authorities.

5.2 Financial

Initially Norwich City Council would be contributing £80,000 towards the cost of the shared management team.

Subsequently Norwich City Council has stated that they would be interested in ARP providing/sharing other services such as:

- Resilience services (processing, Appeals etc.)
- Project management (larger projects)
- Fraud and Compliance services
- Enforcement Agency Services

5.3 Legal

The Section 113 agreement will be negotiated by the Operational Improvement Board (in consultation with Members) and will be agreed by the Councils' legal teams.

It is acknowledged that under s113, officers directly affected by the agreement shall be consulted. However, the staff involved are initially management level from Breckland District Council and therefore it has not been necessary to carry out any consultation with ECDC staff.

It is proposed that for future contract opportunities for ARP, these are approved by the Joint Committee, unless the Council's Section 151 Officer in consultation with the member representative on the ARP Joint Committee determines it should come before Full Council.

6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 None

Background Documents

Location

Room 105
The Grange
Ely

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