Minutes of the meeting of the Transformation Programme Sub-Committee held in Committee Room 2, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on Monday 8th February 2016 at 10:00am

P R E S E N T

Councillor Anna Bailey (Chairman)
Councillor Sue Austen
Councillor Lisa Stubbs
Councillor Jo Webber

OTHERS PRESENT

Trevor Bowd – Principal Auditor
Tracey Harding – Tourism and Town Centres Manager
Richard Quayle – Director (Support Services)
Adrian Scaites-Stokes – Democratic Services Officer
Hetty Thornton – Performance Management Officer

11. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions received from members of the public.

12. **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mike Bradley.

13. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

14. **MINUTES**

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd November 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

15. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made no announcements.

16. **VISIT ELY WEBSITE**

The Sub-Committee received a report, reference Q194 previously circulated, that sought approval to proceed with the delivery of a new Visit Ely website to promote tourism and support the Council's new commercial agenda.

The Tourism & Town Centres Manager advised the Sub-Committee that a website for tourism had been sought for ten years. Currently the Visit Ely website was a sub-domain of the main Council website. It was now looking outdated and was overloaded with text. It was also difficult to update it and integrate it with modern social media as well as having complicated navigation. Gaining a new website would give opportunities to become more commercial, a target of the Service Delivery Plan. It was expected that the new website could generate income of around £10,000 in the first year. This would be produced not just through advertising but by the possibility of offering micro-sites for other businesses. Work had been ongoing with the Economic Development team to create a suitable site.

Some 'soft' testing had taken place and an estimate of likely costs made. If the new website was obtained for around £5,000 then this could be covered within budget. An alternative site would be around £8,000, so additional funding might have to be found. Additional costs would include annual hosting of the site. For comparison, the current budget was £2,500 annually.

This proposal would mean a separate website from the Council's with a different look. This issue was currently a work-in-progress and it was expected to take 6 months to get the new website up and running. Next year more development would be done to further enhance the services provided.

A new officer would have to be recruited to take responsibility for the new website. This post would offer more support for the team, which was based on face-to-face customer service, and would concentrate on the online service, including social media.

Councillor Jo Webber wanted to know whether the new site would refer to the Council and promote the Council's own facilities. Would it also allow for booking of events online? The Tourism & Town Centres Manager stated online booking would be available but the details of how people could pay would have to be worked out with the Finance Department. This would happen later, as the first priority was to get the website up and running.

Councillor Anna Bailey thought it would be helpful if the budget of £5,000 could cover the cost of the new website, but the project should not be restricted by that budget. It was more important to get the right platform, which could be updated in the future. So if something slightly better cost more, then this should not be discarded due to cost. Was the next stage to go out to tender? The Sub-Committee was informed that the offers received would be reconsidered and one selected to proceed with.

It was resolved:

That officers be instructed to proceed to engage a web designer to provide a new website for Visit Ely.

17.   **FRAUD PREVENTION – ENHANCED CHECKING**

The Sub-Committee received a report, reference Q195 previously circulated, that provided an outline business case detailing the proposed project to enhance identity checking within the Council.

The Principal Auditor advised the Sub-Committee that the report sought approval of the outline business case for obtaining identity checking software, which worked, for example, by checking the biometrics behind passports. It could be possible to sell the service to external organisations. This was part of a wider county-wide fraud project and would provide two years free use of the software, with an option to continue its use afterwards.

Councillor Lisa Stubbs joined the meeting at this point, 10:15am.

The Principal Auditor continued by stating that machines would check passports and the information would be held within this organisation. The machines could be useful for a number of the Council departments, such as Human Resources, Housing, Licensing and Customer Services.

Some external organisations would also find them useful, for example, local landlords had to ensure that people renting their properties had the right to do so but did not have access to the national database to check. So there might be an option to sell the service provided by the new software, but this would be discussed county-wide.

Councillor Anna Bailey thought that an understanding of how it fitted in with risks and data protection was needed. This issue ought to come back after the second year, to decide whether to continue with the service, which would cost approximately £3,000 per year. The new software would enable the Council to modernise the service it provided with the possibility of commercial opportunities. The price structure would have to be considered and more research done to inform that decision.

Councillor Jo Webber was pleased that officers were now more commercially aware and were keen to exploit potential opportunities. The proposed new software could be used by Customer Services to enhance its service. It would also give the chance for other teams within the Council to get more support and would make them more robust. This new service should be reviewed after the two years were completed to check how it had performed.

It was resolved:

That the attached Outline Business Case to install software to enhance ID checking across all services be approved and once intelligence is gathered, after the installation, to offer this service to external organisations (option 3).

18. **TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME – QUARTER 3 PROGRESS REPORT**

The Sub-Committee received a report, reference Q196 previously circulated, that detailed progress of projects within the Transformation Programme.

The Performance Management Officer advised the Sub-Committee that some projects had been re-profiled due to the ongoing Information Technology (IT) Review.

Councillor Anna Bailey was concerned that, overall, last time the report was presented most projects were 'green' [on target] but now most were 'orange' [concerns]. It appeared that too many were dependent on other projects. The report should scope out the needs of the projects, state if the dates were wrong or show where there were resource problems. Highlighting these could help address those problems and understand the knock-on effects elsewhere. It was worrying that so many projects were inter-dependent.

The Performance Management Officer explained that there were a limited number of project managers and this would be pointed out at the next Management Team meeting. This meant that potentially some projects would not meet their targets. Most were dependent on the IT Review, so decisions or firm arrangements on other projects could not be made. Therefore, the IT, website and intranet projects should be concentrated on.

Self-Service System
The 'go live' date had been delayed as Firmstep were undertaking an update on the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. A 'soft' launch had been completed but nothing more could be done until the update was in place. No finishing date for this had been received from Firmstep.

Councillor Jo Webber was not impressed with Firmstep's performance. Councillor Anna Bailey was also not satisfied and questioned when the work would be completed and whether that company was paid on a monthly basis. This may need escalating up the organisation to the Director, Support Services, to demand attention. This situation needed to be reported back to the Sub-Committee. The Performance Management Officer was still working to a start date in February. The Director, Support Services, confirmed that Firmstep were paid annually. The IT Review would give the Council the opportunity to work with other partners who had their own CRM system, which would give some leverage.

New Council Website
The Performance Management Officer reminded the Sub-Committee that the business case had been agreed at its last meeting. Staff and Members had been engaged to see what they wanted from the new website. The work would be centred on the website and the intranet, as the back end needed to be sound if the website was to work properly, which is why both were being done together as they both needed to be robust and fit-for-purpose. A Project Initiation Document and business case would be presented to the next Sub-Committee meeting.

Councillor Anna Bailey asked whether the Council had to have SharePoint and whether the website could continue if it could not be used. The Performance Management Officer stated that it was recommended to have SharePoint and the reasons would be explained within the business case. This would also set out the options to be looked at.

Web Chat
This was on hold for the time being and had to wait for the new website, although it could be developed now. The capabilities of Web Chat had to be researched. The initial idea was for the Planning Department to have its own, but now it would be amalgamated with other services.

Councillor Jo Webber thought Web Chat could be used by Customer Services and other staff, as it would be a good addition.

Social Media
Spirus, the Council's new communications team, were taking over this project. This had not yet commenced but was in their Plan. This would be shown to the Sub-Committee at its March meeting.

One Stop Shop
The Department of Work and Pensions would not have their staff in Reception, as there was not enough room to accommodate them. If the situation changed they might come back to us in six months. Attempts had been made to explore other organisations to share the Council offices but nothing had yet emerged, but this would continue to be looked at.

Councillor Jo Webber informed the Sub-Committee that the Customers Services Team Leader was dealing with this, in conjunction with the Customer Services Manager, Director Support Services and the Performance Management Officer, and was looking at particular types of service relating to the enquiries the Customer Services team received.

The Director, Support Services was looking at the relationship between the Anglia Revenues Partnership staff and East Cambridgeshire staff and whether one service could be provided by all staff in Reception. This could lead to financial savings but without any redundancies.

Community Engagement
The Community Project and Engagement Officer was leading on this, with help from the Director, Commercial and Corporate Services. It had been used to identify campaign proposals, after research had been completed. Fundamental issues to be tackled would be taken to the project team for consideration, such as dog fouling which was an issue at parish level, so this could mean working with the parishes.

Councillor Jo Webber thought that the Council's website ought to be used to highlight such issues. Campaigns to deal with these issues needed to be specific and short.

Councillor Anna Bailey considered it important that the campaigns be around matters that people were concerned about. Evidence was needed and provided to the relevant people so that the issues could be dealt with. For example, the performance of Veolia should be monitored and problems of service had to be dealt with properly.

Councillor Lisa Stubbs knew that parishes undertook surveys and these, alongside historical data, should be used to explain the situation to people.

The Performance Management Officer offered to provide more information at the next Sub-Committee meeting.

Knowledge Bank/Geographic Information Systems (GIS)/My Ward
The Performance Management Officer advised that all these matters were dependent on IT and currently had no project managers, so advice was sought from the Sub-Committee on what to do next. The My Ward application should be easy to set up but GIS, if delivered externally, would need someone in-house who understood the system.

Councillor Anna Bailey thought these were part of the requirements for the next Council website. The problem appeared to be with resources. The My Ward application should only be about pulling information in from other sources, with different views for Members and the public.

Councillor Jo Webber reckoned all these were linked together to the website project, under the direction of the Customer Services Manager. This was a lot of work for one person to do, along with her other duties, so she would need additional support.

The Director, Support Services, acknowledged that there were some aspects of interdependency so this might delay some projects until a second stage.

Service Scorecards
The Performance Management Officer stated that performance management would become more e-based so that Service Leads could update their data. The timescales for delivery were difficult but it could be married up with SharePoint. This would be part of phase two of the internet project.

Councillor Anna Bailey did not think this was a priority issue, as other management systems were already in place.

Member Tablets
Tablets had been rolled out to a few Members and Management Team for trialling. There did not appear to be much appetite from Members for tablets but this needed to be checked. The trials aimed to test connectivity, particularly in rural areas. In the short-term there was not expected to be any dividends but in the long-term there should be.

Officers had connectivity problems initially but these had mostly been fixed. This should not be rolled out too early before the problems had been solved.

Automatic Paper and Manual Systems
A visit had been arranged to Melton Mowbray to see how they managed their systems.

Councillor Anna Bailey thought this was supposed to have been completed and the Sub-Committee needed to see a business case to decide whether to roll this out and whether tablets were wanted.

Personal Computer and Desk Space Review
Tablet requirements had to be identified and the possibility for 'hot desking'.

Unified Comms
This was a tricky issue and would be included within the IT review. This would mean a massive culture change across the organisation and plans had to be made on how to engage the staff and Members.

Collaborative
This would be reported to the next Sub-Committee meeting.

Workforce Strategy
The Workforce Strategy would be ready by the end of March, with draft work already done.

Policy Review
This was in progress to be ready for implementation in 2016/17.

IT Infrastructure Review
The Director, Support Services, advised the Sub-Committee that four options were being considered for delivery of the IT service. Some upfront investment would be needed but savings of up to £130,000 per year were being identified. The proposals would go to the Management Team to discuss.

The Performance Management Officer needed to raise the profile of the Transformation Programme and would recommend to the Management Team that a focus be made on the website and intranet projects.

The progress was noted.

19. **TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME – PROGRAMME PLAN**

The Sub-Committee received a report, reference Q197 previously circulated, that set out the re-profiled Programme Plan.

The Performance Management Officer advised the Sub-Committee that the programme had to be re-profiled because a lot of it depended on the outcomes of the ICT Review. The changes had been highlighted within the Programme Plan.

The Programme Plan was noted.

20. **TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME – RISK REGISTER**

The Sub-Committee received a report, reference Q198 previously circulated, that showed the higher level risks and issues across the Transformation Programme.

The Performance Management Officer asked the Sub-Committee whether it wanted this to be a standing agenda item. The Risk Register showed the high level risks and stated that each project would have its own risk register. This would be reviewed every week and be re-assessed. One of the main risks to the Programme was the lack of capacity within the Council to progress the projects. Another was that there was no money ring-fenced to fund the projects. If there was no clear funding identified then the risk was that no funding would be found.

Councillor Anna Bailey thought business cases for the projects could be brought forward which asked for extra money and explained the benefits of the projects, so where was the risk?

The Performance Management Officer could put forward a blueprint for a project which could have money sidelined for it, but a business case would also have to be done.

Councillor Lisa Stubbs was concerned that if money was allocated what would it be used for. The Performance Management Officer explained that bids could be made against that money. The Sub-Committee had to be aware of the risk that projects might not get funding. This needed to be looked at strategically.

Councillor Jo Webber acknowledged that sometimes money was put aside and had to be bid for, but officers' mindsets had to change if no money was set aside.

Councillor Anna Bailey did not think that the Register needed updating every time. Risks should be included in the project plan but was necessary at the programme level.

The Risk Register was noted.

21. **FORWARD AGENDA PLAN**

The Sub-Committee received a copy of its forward agenda plan, previously circulated.

Councillor Jo Webber thought meetings held later in the day would be more convenient. Councillor Sue Austen stated that she could not attend meetings on Monday, Thursday or Friday afternoons. It was agreed to move the meeting start time to 4:30pm for future meetings.

The Forward Agenda Plan was noted.

It was resolved:

That future meetings of the Transformation Programme Sub-Committee commence at 4:30pm.

The meeting closed at 11:35am.