

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4

Minutes of the meeting of the Regulatory and Support Services Committee
held in the Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely
on Monday 7th December 2015 at 4:30pm

P R E S E N T

Councillor Anna Bailey (Chairman)
Councillor Christine Ambrose Smith
Councillor David Ambrose Smith
Councillor Mike Bradley
Councillor Julia Huffer
Councillor James Palmer (as Substitute for Councillor Peter
Cresswell)
Councillor Carol Sennitt
Councillor Jo Webber

OTHERS PRESENT

Liz Knox – Environmental Services Manager
Emmanuel Orekogbe – Accountant (Treasury Management)
Nicole Pema – Human Resources Manager
Richard Quayle – Director (Support Services)
Adrian Scaites-Stokes – Democratic Services Officer
Hetty Thornton – Performance Management Officer

46. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions received from members of the public.

47. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sue Austen, Vince Campbell, Peter Cresswell and Hamish Ross and from the Director (Regulatory Services).

48. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN¹

Councillor Peter Cresswell was duly proposed and seconded. With no other nominations forthcoming, Councillor Cresswell was thereby appointed as Vice Chairman.

It was resolved:

That Councillor Peter Cresswell be appointed as Vice Chairman of the Regulatory & Support Services Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

¹ On account of Councillor Hamish Ross having resigned as Vice Chairman and as a Member of this Committee.

49. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

50. **MINUTES**

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12th October 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

51. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman informed the Committee that for the second year running this Council had been the third most improved Council for recycling in 2014/15. Since 2013 the recycling rates had increased from 33.4% to 56.6% and the Council had gone from being the 257th best amongst 320 up to 26th. This was a huge improvement and massive thanks should be given to the Waste Team for this.

52. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRESS**

It was resolved:

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the item nos. 8 and 9 because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Categories 1 & 3 Part 1 Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as Amended).

Members of staff in attendance, not connected with the following two items, left the meeting whilst they were discussed.

53. **EARLY RETIREMENT**

The Committee received an exempt report (Q139, previously circulated) which detailed action taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of urgency in connection with the early retirement request of a member of staff.

The Human Resources Manager explained the action taken, on approving an application for early retirement, and its financial implications which was expected to be cost neutral over five years.

It was resolved:

That the content of the information report be noted.

54. **APPOINTMENTS, TRANSFERS AND RESIGNATIONS**

The Committee received an exempt report (Q140, previously circulated) which provided details of staff appointments, transfers and resignations.

The Human Resources Manager went over the details of the staff changes and explained about the new indicators within the report to highlight deleted posts within the Council.

In response to Councillor Mike Bradley's questions, it was noted that only four posts had been deleted and not five as stated and that there appeared no particular reason why certain members of staff had left.

It was resolved:

That the content of the information report, with the amendment that only 4 posts had been deleted, be noted.

The following items were open to the public and the staff members returned to the meeting.

55. **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

The Committee received a report (Q141, previously circulated) which provided end of year performance reports and new Service Delivery Plans 2015/2016 for Human Resources.

The Performance Management Officer advised the Committee that this was an end-of-year report with a new Service Delivery Plan for Human Resources for 2015/16. The Council had seen a change with a restructure, which was why this Plan was late. It contained some new performance measures but there were no baseline figures available. The Plan had been developed against the five Corporate Objectives and included projected figures.

Councillor Jo Webber pointed out that the recommendation should read "That Regulatory and Support Services Committee note.." This amendment was agreed by the Committee.

Councillor Mike Bradley queried the difference between the National Living Wage and the Living Wage and what the current rates were. The Plan also stated that cross-working was not applicable, but thought shared training courses and other activities were cross-working. The Human Resources Manager advised the Committee that the National Living Wage would replace the current one from 1st April, whereas the Living Wage was a rate set independently which organisations could sign up to. Councillor James Palmer informed the Committee that the National Living Wage started at £7.85 per hour up to £9.15 per hour over a five-year period.

It was resolved:

That the outputs for 2015/2016 be noted (where available) and the new performance measures for 2015/2016 be approved.

56. **BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

The Chairman moved agenda item number 9 to this point in the meeting for consideration.

The Committee received a report (Q145 previously circulated) which updated Members on the Committee's financial position for 2015/16, based on current predictions for both revenue and capital expenditure.

The Accountant (Treasury Management) advised the Committee that there had been no change to the financial situation since the last report. The projections were still an overspend on the revenue budget and a capital outturn of £735,000. Net expenditure had increased from £6.2 million to £6.6 million.

Councillor Anna Bailey noted that the finances had not materially changed and asked that future reports could highlight any changes.

It was resolved:

- (i) That the projected over spend of £34,832 compared to its approved revenue budget of £6,254,889 be noted;
- (ii) That the projected capital outturn of £735,000 as previously reported be noted.

57. **REVIEW OF HOME WORKING POLICY**

The Committee received a report (Q142, previously circulated) which reviewed the Council's Home Working Policy to ensure that home working arrangements were consistently being applied, working effectively and that the scheme continued to comply with relevant legislation and/or guidance.

The Human Resources Manager advised the Committee that since the introduction of the scheme thirteen requests had been received for home working, on an ad hoc occasional basis, and all had been approved for a twelve-month period.

Councillor Christine Ambrose Smith was surprised that not more staff had requested to work from home, as it was a more productive use of time. It was important that there was not a total absence of staff, so they could speak to colleagues. Moving forward, this was the way the Council should be working and should include using 'hot desks'.

Councillor Mike Bradley thought that the perspective of the managers should be added to the review, as they would need to monitor their staff when using the scheme. Councillor Anna Bailey agreed that it would be good to hear from the

managers. It had taken a while for people to come forward to use the scheme and wondered why that was and whether there were any information technology (IT) problems. This could be picked up in the IT Service Review. This scheme should be reviewed in another six months.

The Human Resources Manager stated that there had only been one comment from the staff and this resulted in the need for a culture-change.

Councillor James Palmer asked the Performance Manager how the scheme had worked, as she had used it. The Performance Manager had been reluctant to use the scheme as no Council equipment had been supplied, so she had to rely on her own laptop which was slow.

It was resolved:

That (where available) the outputs for 2015-2016 be noted and the new performance measures for 2015/2016 be approved.

58. **HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY**

The Committee received a report (Q143, previously circulated) which introduced the East Cambridgeshire District Council's Health & Wellbeing Strategy for implementation.

The Environmental Services Manager advised the Committee that the Strategy had been a consequence of the Stage 2 Sports Review, which had been considered by the Commercial Services Committee, and the responsibility of public health being handed back to local authorities in 2013. The Cambridgeshire Strategy covered the years 2012 to 2017 and had six priorities. It was recognised that this meant an increased role for the district councils, so this Council's Strategy aimed to demonstrate how it would contribute to the overall Strategy. It aligned with the main Strategy and highlighted what this Council would deliver. It set out a statement on the predicted outcomes and visions to enhance the opportunities for healthy lifestyles.

The health of East Cambridgeshire residents was generally good but with an aging population consideration had to be given on how their needs would be met. The Action Plan had specifically looked at the Council's Service Delivery Plans and had transferred relevant targets across. It set out what this Council would do, with clear goals and targets. These were linked to the Corporate Objectives and the main Strategy. To raise the profile of health issues the Management Team should be asked to consider including a Health and Wellbeing section in the standard report template.

Councillor Jo Webber acknowledged that there were areas of child poverty and obesity in the district and wondered whether there were any opportunities to highlight these 'hot spots' and push the parish councils to help. This was a particular problem that ought to be targeted.

The Environmental Services Manager stated that these areas had been initially looked at and the County Council would have to be contacted to see what information they had a parish level so it could be targeted to improve health.

Councillor Anna Bailey thought deprivation indicators should be obtained to show the areas affected. Time needed to be taken to understand the national indicators and how they related to the parish areas. Then the parish councils could be written to about the Strategy and those areas, to ask whether they would take action.

The Environmental Services Manager would amend the Strategy, under priority 6, to account for this suggestion. It would also be amended, as the Council was no longer working with United Care. The Council needed to look at how it worked with the parish councils regarding people's smoking and weight issues.

Councillor Christine Ambrose Smith considered the Council to be well placed overall but wondered why emergency admissions for people suffering falls was so high. Councillor Anna Bailey informed the Committee that there was a focus on falls at county level. The Environmental Services Manager did not know the specific issues relating to this but thought this would tie in with the re-introduction of the handyperson service, which would help identify relevant issues and address them.

Councillor David Ambrose Smith queried whether the businesses in Littleport had been engaged in the "Healthier Options Members" scheme and about the situation of Anti-Social Behaviour in Littleport. Apparently four businesses had signed up to the scheme and this was expected to rise to ten by the end of the month. The Safety Partnership already targeted Anti-Social Behaviour and further information would be obtained from the Council's Community Safety Officer.

Councillor Anna Bailey suggested that once the Strategy had been signed off a copy be provided for the Health and Wellbeing Board, along with the Action Plan. This would need to be updated regularly with updates sent to the Board. The Environmental Services Manager said this fitted in with Priority 3 and the Action Plan would be brought back to Committee on an annual basis.

It was resolved:

- (i) That the Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2015-2018, as amended, be approved;
- (ii) That the action plan to the Strategy be approved;
- (iii) That Management Team give consideration to amend the Standard report template to include a section on Health & Wellbeing.

59. **UPDATE ON PROGRESS OF THE TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME**

The Committee received a report (Q144, previously circulated) which provided an update on the Transformation Programme.

The Performance Management Officer reminded the Committee that on 15th September it had agreed the governance arrangements for the Transformation Programme Sub-Committee and the reporting framework. Its inaugural meeting had been held and had looked at a number of updates, including a new self-service project, a completed WiFi project, plans to develop a new website and on Information Communications Technology (ICT) and SharePoint.

It had been tricky to find project managers to run the projects, as many of the staff lacked the necessary skills. So a number of workshops had been held, with over 50 staff attending, to address the issue. A number of staff subsequently wanted to take on more related courses.

The ICT Review had caused some dates in the Transformation Programme to be re-profiled and this was set out in the monitoring Report at Appendix A.

The Director (Support Services) reminded the Committee that this was the first attempt at reporting back to the Committee and asked whether the level of information was right. The Programme Plan showed a Red Amber Green (RAG) system, to give some predictions on the projects' status, and some comments.

Councillor Anna Bailey advised the Committee that if any Member was interested in more details on a particular subject details were available as the report was just an overview. The RAG system was very useful.

Councillor Christine Ambrose Smith noted that tablets were being trialled and asked whether the intention was to provide them to members within 12 months, thereby doing away with paper agendas. Some Members may need a push to accept using the tablets, as working with them should become the default situation.

The Director (Support Services) stated that the proposal was to put the technology in place and stop having printouts as an option. This would be a policy decision to be taken by Members. He was one of those trialling the use of tablets, which he used with a screen and keyboard. This was the first stage and there had been a few bugs to overcome. Members would be trialling them at the next stage.

It was resolved:

That the Committee note the Transformation Monitoring Report (Appendix A).

60. **ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP TRADING COMPANY UPDATE**

The Director (Support Services) provided an orally update on the intention to set up an Anglia Revenues Partnership Trading Company.

The Director (Support Services) advised the Committee that the number of concerns raised by the Committee would be addressed in the Draft

Shareholders Agreement, drawn up by an independent company. Once this had been agreed it would be passed to the Council's Legal team to check over. The concerns raised included:

- Each Council partner would have 250 shares each;
- Profits would be split equally;
- A business plan would be created to provide control and this would have to be agreed by the shareholders;
- The Partnership would have to work to the agreed business plan;
- If the business plan materially changed then this would have to go back for agreement by the Members on the Joint Committee;
- The Directors would not be able to amend the Trading Company's Articles, or create or buy additional shares;
- New work, projects, loans or partnerships would be controlled by Members.

The Directors would not be remunerated and could be removed or added by Members as they wished. If a Director was unavailable to attend a meeting another could substitute for them.

Councillor Anna Bailey wanted to know what would happen if two partner Councils joined together. It was revealed that they would retain their 250 shares each, making 500 in total.

Councillor Mike Bradley asked about the voting percentages threshold when making decisions. The Director (Support Services) would have to check this but suspected decisions would be made by a majority verdict, though this needed further clarification.

Following Councillor David Ambrose Smith's comments, the Committee was informed that the successful Bailiff Service had attracted attention from four other potential client Councils interested in using that service. Previously the private company used had generated 21 complaints, whereas using the in-house service had only received 1 complaint. So higher collections rates were being achieved but with less complaints.

61. **FORWARD AGENDA PLAN**

The Committee received its Forward Agenda Plan.

The Chairman advised the Committee that the Staffing for the Waste Team item originally scheduled for the January meeting had been deleted. The agenda plan, with this change, was duly noted.

The meeting closed at 5.27pm