

## **Service Improvement & Efficiency Committee**

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Minutes of a meeting of the **Service Improvement & Efficiency Committee** held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich on **10 September 2018** at **10.00 am** when there were present:

Mr G Peck – Chairman

Mrs J K Copplestone  
Mr G K Nurden

Mr C Harrison  
Mr S Riley

Mrs J Leggett  
Mr D C Ward

Also in attendance were the Head of Corporate Resources, the Head of Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer, the ICT and Facilities Manager, the Committee Officer (DM) and, for part of the meeting, the Senior Committee Officer.

### **4 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs L H Hemsall and Mr F Whymark.

### **5 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **6 COLLABORATIVE WORKING**

The Chairman updated Members with the latest position on collaborative working. The process of recruiting the new Managing Director was now underway by the Joint Appointments Panel under the guidance of the two councils' recruitment advisors. A number of applications had been received and an initial long list of candidates selected. These candidates would be shortlisted for invitation to attend a 2-day selection assessment on 27/28 September, including an evening social event to meet Members of both Councils. The Joint Appointments Panel would then select its preferred candidate with the two councils being requested to endorse the appointment of the recommended candidate. The date of the meetings of the two councils was still to be confirmed. It was hoped the new post-holder would be in post by the end of January 2019.

### **7 MEMBERS' ICT PROVISION**

Members had been invited to comment on the current ICT provision available for Members and on ideas for the potential future approach to support Members in their roles with effective ICT. The ICT and Facilities Manager reminded Members that a decision had been made to introduce iPads for

Members in 2015 in the light of Government advice regarding security for access to corporate emails and avoiding use of non-managed devices and with a view to achieving cost savings. Over the 4-year period, it was estimated that £30,000 of savings would have been made.

Members then discussed a range of issues with the current ICT provision as detailed below. Some Members of the Committee felt the current provision was clunky and not user friendly. The ICT and Facilities Manager commented that the current system and the controls in place were designed in accordance with a template of requirements to meet central government guidelines. Changes could be made to current settings and protocols for Members but these had to be balanced against any potential risks and additional costs. A decision had been taken to supply all Members with the same device to enable a consistent approach to supporting the devices. A key principle of the Blackberry app was that it was self-contained and therefore provided the desired levels of security. Some Members were of the view that the controls in place were too restrictive and not necessary when the majority of material accessed was in the public domain. These controls were disproportionate and inflexible. Reference was however made by another Member to recent breaches of data in large organisations and that they had no issues with the current provision.

**Printing** – there were frustrations that Members did not have the facility to print directly from their iPad but could, in some instances, circumnavigate this restriction by forwarding documents to other devices. The ICT and Facilities Manager explained that this facility could be enabled but had to be balanced with potential risks. Members commented that most of the documents circulated were already in the public domain and measures could be taken to deal separately with exempt papers. There was however still the issue of confidential content contained in emails. It was felt there was scope to explore changes to the software to facilitate printing by Members.

**Passwords** – there was general frustration that the password controls were too restrictive, in particular, the small timeframe allowed before a password had to be re-entered and that 2 different passwords were required. The thumbprint recognition software also appeared to have its limitations. The ICT and Facilities Manager undertook to look at relaxing the timeframe allowed before needing to resubmit a password and other options to provide Members with more efficient access.

**Sharing data (calendars) with other devices** – a number of Members wanted to be able to synchronise information on other devices, in particular, calendar invites and emails. This was a particular issue for those Members serving on more than one authority and not being able to synchronise calendars. There was unlikely to be any confidential information within the calendar of meetings and Members could see no reason to not facilitate this.

**Collaborative Working** – having regard to collaborative working, some Members commented that the IT provision for Members at South Norfolk appeared to be more user friendly and flexible and enabled Members to use a device of their choice, be it a tablet or laptop. There was a question as to the extent to which the South Norfolk system complied with current Government advice and it was understood this was currently being looked at by their IT team. It was agreed to hold further officer discussions with South Norfolk regarding their current IT provision for Members.

In the short-term, it was felt there were a number of adjustments which could be made to improve the user experience of the current iPads, with a view to a more in-depth review of the system before May 2019.

### **RESOLVED**

that the ICT and Facilities Manager report back to the next meeting of the Committee with further information on the issues detailed above, in particular,

- Passwords
- Printing from iPads
- Synchronising data – particularly calendars and emails
- IT provision at South Norfolk

with a view to a more extensive review of Member IT provision before May 2019.

## **8 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Members agreed that the current demands on the Committee were such that 8-weekly meetings would suffice (not the current 4-weekly meetings) and that the following future dates should remain in the calendar for future meetings:

29 October 2018, 14 January 2019 and 18 March 2019

*The meeting closed at 11.30 am*