

Service Improvement & Efficiency Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the **Service Improvement & Efficiency Committee** held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich on **23 April 2018** at **10.00am** when there were present:

Mr G Peck – Chairman

Mrs J K Copplestone Mrs J Leggett Mr G K Nurden Mr S Riley

Also in attendance were the Head of Corporate Resources and the Committee Officer (JO).

34 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Everett, Mrs Vincent and Mr Whymark.

35 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Minute no: 32 – Collaborative Working

A Member confirmed that he had found that the best means of seeking advice from Planning Officers was to either visit or telephone the department, rather than contacting them by email. The next review of the Planning department interim arrangement would be in approximately three months' time.

36 COLLABORATIVE WORKING

The Committee was advised that the Feasibility Study report was on schedule to be presented to both Councils in July. A draft version of the Feasibility Study would be available for the informal joint meetings to consider week commencing 11 June 2018.

The final report would cover the existing areas of transformation and growth, as set out in the progress report, as well as focusing on the following four new areas.

- Shared commercial opportunities
- Governance arrangements to support a shared officer team across both

Councils.

- Potential shared contract opportunities through joint procurement.
- Working more effectively with partners together to strengthen both authorities' relationship and influence with key public organisations.

The Head of Corporate Resources confirmed that it was not envisaged that sharing services would lead to significant compulsory redundancies and legal advice was being sought about a proposal from Unison regarding a formal agreement to this effect. He added that the Councils already had in place protocols for redeployment if any posts were deleted. It was also noted that Broadland had a very good work/life balance policy, which made it an attractive local authority to work for.

The Head of Corporate Resources confirmed that the Feasibility Study contained a plan for engagement with key stakeholders, such as public bodies, MPs, parish councils and businesses across both districts.

In response to a query, it was confirmed that there were differences in the decision making process at each Council and that more autonomy was given to officers at Broadland to implement changes in their work processes. This type of working had been encouraged by the introduction of Systems Thinking interventions programme that had been rolled out across the Council in recent years. It was noted that any new collaborative venture would create its own new culture over time. The Committee was advised that a new Chief Executive could be in post by early 2019.

37 WORK PROGRAMME

A Member suggested that Members' ICT should be reviewed; as it was not as user friendly as it could be and he did not feel it supported him sufficiently in his role as a Councillor.

It was agreed that instead of a review it would be more effective to identify the current expectations and issues with Members and then hold a workshop session, to address them. It was, therefore, confirmed that SIEC Members would speak to their respective Groups and collect and collate a list of Member expectations and issues with ICT. These would then be passed on to the ICT Department, so that a workshop session could be arranged.

The meeting closed at 11.18 am