

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a remote meeting of the Service Improvement and Efficiency Committee of Broadland District Council, held on Tuesday 6 April at 6pm.

Committee Members Present: Councillors: G Nurden (Chairman for the Meeting), P Bulman, S Catchpole, S Holland, D King, I Mackie, M Murrell, S Prutton and D Roper

Cabinet Members Present: Councillor: J Emsell,

Officers in Attendance: The Director Resources, Assistant Director of Governance and Business Support (Monitoring Officer), Assistant Director Chief of Staff, Programme Manager, Strategy and Programme Manager, Democratic Services Officers (JH, JO)

25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mackie, Cllr Murrell and Cllr J Thomas. The Chairman and the Committee sent their condolences to Cllr Thomas, who had recently suffered a bereavement.

26 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Service Improvement and Efficiency Committee held on 17 March 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

Minute No: 21 - Social Prescribing

In response to a query regarding the funding of Citizens Advice, the Assistant Director Governance and Business Support (Monitoring Officer) confirmed that she would respond to this question outside of the meeting.

In answer to a question the Chairman confirmed that it had been recommended to Cabinet that it would be more appropriate to retain the current iPads and wait and review the new software provision to assess if this solved the IT issues that had been raised by members.

27 SPARK TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME UPDATE

The Assistant Director Chief of Staff introduced the report which provided an update on the major projects that were currently being progressed as part of the SPARK Transformation Programme.

The joint website development was progressing and on target with editors from each Directorate continuing to review and migrate content. More detail about progress with the website project would be provided in the following agenda item.

The Assistant Director Governance and Business Support (Monitoring Officer) informed members that the joint email project was red status, due to a key vacancy in the IT Team that was proving hard to fill. Officers were now working to a revised date later in the year for the roll-out to staff, with members progressing in April/May. Migration of systems and services into a new single domain was progressing well, however, and was at green status.

The development of one network of IT infrastructure across both Councils was at amber status, as the timelines for the implementation were still to be finalised with the contractor.

Work on the strategic approach to systems transformation, which would combine back office software for both Councils into one system was at amber status. A final review report had been completed and would be presented to members in due course.

The development of a business intelligence framework was at green status. Work on the development of principles, data standards and pilot studies would be undertaken before being rolled out across both Councils.

The New Ways of Working Programme was at amber status. Reopening to customers would commence on 12 April 2021 and would be initially only in exceptional circumstances where face to face meetings were absolutely necessary. In the longer-term the programme would be looking at how new ways of working impacted on requirements for utilising office space.

The customer satisfaction/experience project was at green status. A draft customer strategy and charter had been completed and a survey was in pilot status that would utilise customer feedback to improve services in the future.

A project was underway to look at an alignment of both Councils complaints procedures, to ensure that a consistent and robust approach was taken to handling complaints. It was anticipated that a draft joint policy would be presented to the Corporate Management Leadership Team later in April.

Organisational Development was at green status. The strategic aim of the project was to become an employer of choice. Training had been arranged by consultants Myers-Briggs to support leadership development. The project aimed to get the best out of staff and to ensure that managers were fully equipped to do so. The Council also had a broad spectrum of over 100 online staff development courses delivered through Skillgate.

Procurement of the Waste Contract was at green status. A decision to award the contract was anticipated in September 2021.

A review of the Council depots was being developed to assess if they were fit for purpose. A condition survey for Frettenham had been completed and a critical decision path plan was being developed.

The best in class housing programme was due to go live on 8 April 2021.

In response to some queries from the Chairman the Committee were advised that the new ways of working project would include consultation with staff, members and customers to ensure that the risks and benefits were clearly identified and to ensure that there was no detrimental effect on the level of service provided by the Council.

The Assistant Director Chief of Staff also informed members that there were arrangements in place for the smooth transition of her areas of responsibility, when she left to take up a post elsewhere later in the year.

In respect of complaints, the Committee was advised that each Council had different policies and procedures in place neither of which were better than the other, but it was felt that having a new approach in line with best practice would be beneficial.

The Committee was informed that SPARK was not an acronym, but the name of the overarching transformation programme. This would be made clearer in future reports.

In answer to a query about office accommodation the Committee was advised that agile working, which was a mixture of working from home and in the office was beneficial for the work/life balance of staff and had proven very popular. Moreover, performance and the delivery of services had improved during the pandemic and had made it self-evident that the new ways of working would be the way forward for the One Team.

Members were also advised that process and procedure was being looked at as part of the organisational development project, which aimed to develop the best in class for staff and for customers. Similarly process, policy and procedure was considered for a wide range of the projects that made up the Transformation Programme.

The Chairman emphasised that he would like to be reassured that members were consulted and involved in the process before major transformational decisions were made.

In response the Assistant Director Governance and Business Support (Monitoring Officer) confirmed that the Service Improvement and Efficiency Committee received regular updates on the Transformation Programme, as did Portfolio Holders and that any decisions would be subject to member sign-off.

The Director of Resources added that the reason that the O365 rollout was initially being made available to members was as a result of the consultation and feedback received via the member IT survey.

In respect of the review of the depots, the Committee was informed that it was too early in the process to provide a timeline for the report stage, but that an update could be brought to the next meeting.

AGREED

To note the content of the report with regards to the progress made with the programme.

28 JOINT WEBSITE PROJECT UPDATE

The Programme Manager introduced the report, which provided Members with an update on progress with the project to develop a new joint website for Broadland and South Norfolk Councils.

Since the project update in October, over 50 staff across all service areas had received training in the use of the new content editing system, in order to edit and publish to the new website. Editors had been reviewing existing content to determine what should be migrated across to the new site and what needs to be amended or created. Staff were also identifying what content was applicable to customers of one Council only and what content was applicable to both Councils' customers.

Editors had also been provided with guidance on how to write in plain English, apply a consistent style and for the content to be accessible, in order to meet central Government requirements for all public sector organisations.

The software supplier had completed branded templates for the content editing system, which would be followed by testing and review between 6

to 15 April. During this time three all-member sessions via Zoom would be held to take members through the website and seek feedback. Key elements being looked at would be content, templates and functionality.

Member involvement in the testing and review phase was being sought and subject to final changes and configurations, it was planned to go live with the new website on 2 June 2021.

In response to a query about accessibility for people with dyslexia, it was confirmed that the website would be compliant with 'double A' web content accessibility guidelines.

AGREED

Members to note progress with the website project so far.

(The meeting concluded at 8.05pm)

Chairman