

# **Commercial, Trading and Customer Focus Committee**

**Minutes of a meeting of the Commercial, Trading and Customer Focus Committee of South Norfolk Council held on Wednesday 26 January 2022 at 2.00pm.**

**Committee Members Present:** Councillors: C Hudson (Chairman), D Burrill, B Duffin, J Easter, T Holden, W Kemp, T Laidlaw and T Spruce.

**Apologies:** Councillor: F Curson

**Cabinet Members in Attendance:** Councillors: R Elliott and K Mason Billig

**Officers in Attendance:** The Director of Resources (D Lorimer), the Assistant Director for IT/Digital and Transformation (C Lawrie), the Assistant Director of Individuals and Families and the Strategy and Programme Manager (S Carey)

## **35 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

## **36 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Commercial, Trading and Customer Focus Committee, held on Wednesday 8 December 2021 were approved as a correct record.

## **37 SPARK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Strategy and Programme Manager introduced the report, which provided the Committee with an update on the major projects currently being progressed through the SPARK Transformation Programme. The Committee noted that five projects were on track with a green status and six on amber with minor delays, but no major issues. Four further projects had also been completed.

The Committee noted that phase one of the joint email migration project had been completed. Work had begun with phase two of the project looking at the wider Office 365 applications Share Point, Teams and OneDrive.

In respect of the One Network, the project was progressing well with preparation for the physical move of the servers taking place at the end of the month. A further update would come before members at the next meeting in response to a question raised by a member regarding whether the project would meet its January deadline. The Assistant Director for IT/Digital and Transformation confirmed that it was still on track and work would continue to make sure the movement of the physical servers progress well.

The Strategy and Programme Manager explained that the Business Intelligence and Governance project was progressing well. Officers were currently working on a final report which would contain the completed Proof of Concept work.

Lastly, the Strategic Approach to Systems Transformation project had seen a lot of systems implemented including the Finance Cash Receipting System and Planning and Regulatory IT, which came before members at the last meeting. Members noted that the Planning and Regulatory IT project had appointed a new lead sponsor. A further update was given on the Joint Finance system where the Committee noted that a staggered approach was being taken to help with workloads. This would see South Norfolk Council move on the 14 February and Broadland District Council move on the original date of the 1 April 2022. A further system business case would be considered by the Committee later in today's meeting.

In answer to a query regarding the Future Office Accommodation Programme updated timescale that could see an increased budget spend. Members were advised that the original project aims had been delivered with the assistance of the consultants, which resulted in the list of possible options. Following the meeting of both retrospect Committees, two sets of recommendations had been made which officers had continued to work on and provide further information. The Committee noted that alongside this the Joint Accommodation Working Group had continued to meet and discuss options. The Director of Resources also gave updates on the surveys which had been carried out on the proposed building and explained that work had also started on investigating the costs of a developing a new building. The Chairman added that future dates were currently being investigated with the intention of a joint briefing being held with formal meetings of the two Committees after.

#### **RESOLVED:**

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

### **38 JOINT WEBSITE – PROGRESS SINCE LAUNCH**

The Assistant Director for IT/Digital and Transformation introduced the report which had been requested by members at the last meeting. The report

detailed the progress made with the joint website as well as customer feedback. Members noted the objectives and achievements of the project:

- Joint design which maintained the two council's identity
- A single platform to focus resources
- Easier navigation for customers to find content on the Website
- Connections between back-office systems and the main site

The Committee noted that since the launch of the new website the team had been gathering feedback through the customer satisfaction survey and digital mailbox. Of the qualitative data received the majority of it was positive with key areas highlighted including the navigation of the website, the functionality of the 'My Area' section and the ease of access to information.

The Chairman noted that 70 per cent of the responses of the customer satisfaction survey were made through the website. The Assistant Director for IT/Digital and Transformation confirmed that searches through search engines were the most popular form of access to the website.

In answer to a question about any negative feedback received regarding the joint website since its launch. Officers confirmed that to date no negative feedback had been received relating to that area.

The Chairman thanked officers for their report and the work of the wider team, which delivered the new joint website.

**RESOLVED:**

To note the progress made towards the delivery of the identified project benefits since launching the new joint website with Broadland District Council.

**39 WORK PROGRAMME**

Members noted the Work Programme. Following the discussion earlier in the meeting officers confirmed that the Accommodation Review would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee once further work had been completed.

Officers also confirmed that the Committee System was currently going through the procurement process and a report would come before the Committee once this had been completed.

**40 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was;

**RESOLVED:**

To exclude the public and press from the meeting under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended)

#### **41 SINGLE IT SOLUTION FOR REVENUES & BENEFITS**

The Assistant Director for Individuals and Families introduced the exempt report, which presented a business case for a joint Revenues and Benefits IT solution.

It was explained that moving to a single solution would realise significant financial savings for both Councils in the form of reduced software licensing and annual support costs.

A single solution would also increase resilience across the service and the alignment of working practices, which in turn would improve the overall customer journey offered to residents and businesses.

It was confirmed that if agreed the Council would go through a full procurement process to secure the best product.

**RESOLVED: to recommend to Cabinet,**

to support the recommendations set out in the exempt report

(The meeting concluded at 2.29pm)

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Chairman