



CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich, on Tuesday 1 November 2022 at 6.00pm.

Cabinet Members Present: Councillors: S Vincent (Chairman), T Mancini-Boyle (Vice-Chairman), J Copplestone, J Emsell, J Leggett and F Whymark.

Other Members in Attendance: Councillors: S Holland, G Nurden and S Riley

Officers in Attendance: The Managing Director (T Holden), Director of Place (P Courtier), Chief of Staff (Monitoring Officer) (E Hodds), Assistant Director of Finance (R Fincham), Assistant Director ICT/Digital and Transformation (C Lawrie), Assistant Director – Community Services (S Phelan), Strategy and Planning Lead (R Webber), Democratic Services Manager (C White).

48 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 20 September 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

49 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised Members on the views expressed by the Committee when it reviewed the Cabinet Agenda on 25 October 2022, as each item was considered.

50 SERVICE IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY COMMITTEE

Cabinet received the Minutes of the meeting of the Service Improvement and Efficiency Committee held on 17 October 2022.

Minute 10 - *Minute no: 4 – Collaboration Work Group.*

The Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Organisational Development drew members' attention to the above minute and advised members that following a meeting with the Leader a further report would be made to the next meeting of the Committee on progress with the Collaboration Working Group Report and that members of the Working Group would be invited to attend the meeting.

51 FIRST CLASS CUSTOMER SERVICE – CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE, PHASE ONE

The Assistant Director for ICT/Digital and Transformation introduced the report, which proposed initiating a discovery phase to explore the delivery of a first-class customer experience, via a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system.

She advised Cabinet that recommendation 2 in the report should be amended to the following:

- 2. To utilise Broadland District Council's contribution of £49,500 from the Earmarked Reserves agreed by Cabinet on 26 April 2022 on consultancy resource to support in the development of a full outline business case.*

Cabinet was informed that as part of the One Team collaboration, work had been undertaken to consolidate the Council's systems and as customer demand continued to increase this now needed to focus on how the Council delivered services.

The ICT and Digital Strategy set out a commitment to use technology in order to transform the delivery of services, so that they were more effective and efficient. It was, therefore, proposed to explore if digitising services via a CRM would free up capacity to do more value added services with less.

The Discovery Phase outputs would provide a full costed business case and work programme for the delivery of a CRM and would be brought back to Cabinet for determination upon its completion.

The Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Organisational Development noted the importance of improving customer service and that this project would assess how the Council was currently performing, how this could be improved and the put forward a full business case for introducing a CRM.

In response to a query the Assistant Director for ICT/Digital and Transformation confirmed that the £49,500 would include the cost of a full business case.

In response to a query about systems being used by other local authorities and if the business case would identify any preferred software, the Assistant Director for ICT/Digital and Transformation advised members that there were two types of CRM; Enterprise and

Low-Code. Enterprise software was for large complex organisations, whilst Low-Code was an approach that required little to no coding in order to build applications and processes. The Discovery Phase would explore which system was appropriate for the Council. The business case would not recommend a software provider, as a procurement process would need to be undertaken if a decision to go ahead with a CRM was made.

In answer to queries about the examples of the benefits of a CRM cited in the report and the procurement route Assistant Director for ICT/Digital and Transformation confirmed that some of the examples in the report were county councils and that the benefits for Broadland would be better explored through the Discovery Phase. Examples of how a CRM could improve customer choice were through additional contact channels (online portal, chat, etc.), which did not require costly human intervention, could replace poor work practices and provided efficiencies. In terms of the procurement route a direct award approach would be taken using the Council's Procurement Framework.

The Leader confirmed that when the full business case was presented to Cabinet it would include the benefits that could be realised for the Council.

In response to a question about the total cost of the project the Assistant Director for ICT/Digital and Transformation that the figure of £110,000 in the report was based on the procurement and configuration phase for the CRM.

The Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised the meeting that the Committee had been broadly in favour of going ahead with the Discovery Phase. Some concerns had been raised that the implementation of a CRM might result in residents no longer being able to contact the Council by telephone; but members had been reassured that this was not the case.

In response, the Leader emphasised that if a CRM system was introduced all communication channels to the Council would remain open.

Following a show of hands it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

1. To agree to initiate the discovery phase as the first phase towards establishing the current state, the future state and the underpinning technology to inform a fully-costed business case for investment to deliver a First-Class Customer Service; and
2. To utilise Broadland District Council's contribution of £49,500 from the Earmarked Reserves agreed by Cabinet on 26 April 2022 on consultancy resource to support in the development of a full outline business case.

Reasons for Decision

To explore the introduction of a CRM in order to provide an improved customer experience and meet the Council's strategic objectives.

52 PEER REVIEW FEEDBACK AND ACTION PLAN REPORT

The Managing Director introduced the report, which presented an overview of the Local Government Association Peer Challenge, which took place between the 11 and 15 July 2022.

The Peer Team had conducted a sector led review of the Council and provided pointers in areas where the Council could improve its performance.

As a result of the review a report had been produced that provided a number of recommendations and from this feedback an Action Plan for their implementation had been developed. In accordance with the Local Government Association's guidance the Peer Challenge Report and associated Action Plan should be published within six weeks and the Peer Team should be invited to return in six months' time to review progress with the recommendations.

Cabinet was informed that the Peer Team had been very complimentary about the work being undertaken across both Councils and what they had achieved through collaboration.

Recommendations had been made where areas for improvement had been identified, but as they had noted, this should be borne in the context of a Report that the lead Chief Executive in the Peer Team had said she 'would be envious of receiving at his Council'.

The Leader noted that the Review was a snapshot in time that looked at where the Council currently was and where it was going. The Report had identified where the Council was doing well and where it was not doing so well, so that these areas could be looked at and improved. However, this was in the context of a very positive overall report. The review also took place at a time when the move to a single building was being looked at, which meant that there had been some uncertainty for both members and officers.

The Leader proposed the recommendations in the report and noted that following its adoption the Action Plan would go to a Broadland and South Norfolk all member workshop in order to provide input and feedback to enhance and develop it for implementation.

In seconding the proposal the Portfolio Holder for Finance informed the meeting that she was proud of the report and that the Council was seen as a partner of choice across Norfolk and that it was considered to have sound financial management.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development noted how positive the Report was and how it had identified Broadland as a Place Leader. The work and investment into the Food Innovation Centre, had also been commended. She thanked the Managing Director and all the staff for getting Broadland in such a favourable place and that the Report confirmed that collaboration had been the correct route for the Council to take.

The Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Organisational Development suggested that undertaking a Peer Review at a time when the Council was preparing to move to new premises, as well as coming out of the pandemic and moving forward with collaboration was a brave thing to do that underlined the confidence that the Council had in the way it was progressing.

The Portfolio Holder for Communities, Housing and Planning noted how positive the report was in many areas, such as collaboration, housing allocation and the Help Hub, which was singled out as a best practice example of strategic working. The report also highlighted that further opportunities for partnership working would become available when the move to the Horizon building was completed. He emphasised that, as recommended in the Action Plan, the Council should better publicise the excellent work that it is doing.

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Excellence echoed many of the comments already made and noted that it was a very positive Report, which had identified a 'huge ambition for place' across both districts, as well as a strong track record of delivery by the Council.

In summary, the Leader advised the meeting that he was immensely proud of the Council and the One Team and the levels of service that they provided despite being faced with significant challenges. In particular, the excellent work to support residents and businesses during the pandemic and that the Council had come out of this much stronger than before. He also noted that the Council had not been particularly good at publicising the very good work that it did and this was an area where improvements could be made and that by implementing the constructive recommendations made by the Peer Review Team, both Councils could make even greater improvements in the services they delivered across their respective districts.

Following a show of hands it was unanimously:

RESOLVED

1. Approve the publishing of the Peer Review Report, and;
2. Adopt the Peer Review Action Plan.

The Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised the meeting that the Committee had made an alternative recommendation 2, which proposed that an all-member workshop be arranged to consider the Action Plan, as some of the recommendations were not clear in respect of resource, finance and structure. Members had also requested that progress with the Action Plan be reported back to the Committee.

In response, the Leader pointed out that an all-member workshop was to be held to consider the Action Plan and that the subsequent development and delivery of the Action Plan would be brought back to Cabinet for approval, which would accord with the recommendation that had been made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Managing Director added that the recommendation by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for an all-member workshop had been very helpful and would be a good

means of unpacking the report for the wider membership of both Councils and assessing how the recommendations in the Action Plan could be taken forward and implemented.

Reasons for Decision

To commit to the recommendations in the Action Plan in order to further develop, enhance and improve the performance of the Council.

53 FRETtenham DEPOT AWARD OF REDEVELOPMENT CONTRACT

This item was deferred to the 29 November 2022 meeting of Cabinet.

54 FORWARD PLAN

Cabinet noted the Forward Plan.

(The meeting concluded at 6.42 pm)

Chairman