

Digital Innovation and Efficiency Committee

**Minutes of the Meeting Held on 12 September 2018
10:00am, Edwards Room, County Hall, Norwich**

Present:

Mr T FitzPatrick (Chairman)

Mr E Colman

Mr S Eyre

Mr G Middleton

Dr C Jones

Mr D Rowntree

Substitute Members Present:

Mr T Adams for Dr M Strong

Mr P Duigan for Mr T Smith

Michael Chenery of Horsbrugh for

Mr J Fisher

1. Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence was received from Mr J Fisher, Dr M Strong and Mr T Smith.

2 Minutes

- 2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 July 2018 were confirmed by the Committee and signed by the Chairman.

3 Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4 Items of Urgent Business

- 4.1 There were no items of urgent business.

5 **Public Question Time**

5.1 There were no public questions.

6 **Local Member Issues/ Member Questions**

6.1 There were no Local Member Issues/ Member Questions.

7 **Chairman's Update**

7.1 The Chairman reported on the launch of Building Mobile Britain which was seeking to work with national and local government, as well as industry groups, to overcome the challenges of improving mobile networks. Deputy Chair Cllr Graham Middleton & Geoff Connell (Head of IMT) attended the launch where Norfolk's approach to improving coverage was referenced verbally and in a case study as National best practice. An article about this matter which also referenced MP Henry Billingham had recently appeared in the local press, including Lynn News.

7.2 The Chairman also reported on plans for the launch of the Norfolk Enterprise Festival which would be hosting Norfolk-based entrepreneurs, start-ups and micro businesses from around Norfolk. He said that the festival would include plenty of inspiring activities within the stunning setting of the Westacre Estate.

Everyone was encouraged to visit the website for the festival at:

<http://norfolkenterprisefestival.co.uk/>

8 **Finance Monitoring**

8.1 The annexed report (8) by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services and Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services was received.

8.2 The Committee received a report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services and Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services that provided the Committee with information on the budget position for services reporting to Digital Innovation and Efficiency Committee. The report also provided information on the use of reserves and details of the capital programme.

8.3 In introducing the report, the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services drew the Committee's attention to the revenue budget reduction in 2018 – 19 of £1.179m, of which £0.898m would be managed through the termination of the existing DNA contract in autumn 2018, and the additional savings to be realised via the Voice and Data contract in a full operational year, and £0.281m related to the cost neutral transfer of the budget held by IMT in relation to Liquid Logic support to Adults Services.

8.4 **RESOLVED**

That the Committee note:

1. The 2018 - 19 revenue position for this Committee.
2. The 2017 - 18 to 2020 – 21 capital programme for this Committee.
3. The 2018 – 19 reserves position for this Committee.

9 **Strategic and Financial Planning 2019-20 to 2021-22**

- 9.1 The annexed report (9) by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services and Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services was received.
- 9.2 The Committee received a report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services and Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services that explained the actions that the Committee was taking to support the Council to set a balanced budget for 2019-20. The report also sought Members' views on the Committee's approach to developing savings for 2019-20.
- 9.3 Members' attention was drawn to the proposed savings within IMT that arose from exiting the HPE contract and from a restructuring and headcount reduction (management and technical support costs) and the reduction in IMT admin and licence budgets that were mentioned in table 5 of the report. Members were assured that these savings would not have an adverse impact on service delivery or prevent IMT from exploring opportunities for providing apprenticeships for people looking to work within the IT industry. The Council would continue to be able to focus on digital innovation and on ways to exploit emerging technology to facilitate the transformation of public services across the county and to help generate technology-driven financial efficiencies in the Council's operations and activities. Because the Committee was not scheduled to meet in October 2018 Members were asked to recommend the proposed savings to Policy and Resources Committee from today's meeting.
- 9.4 Members drew attention to the indicative savings by Committee that were set out in table 4 of the report. Members asked that this table include an additional column to show the share of proposed savings as a percentage of each committee's total budget when it was reported to other committees. This was considered necessary for Members to be able to gain a wider understanding of the overall approach within the Council to developing savings proposals for 2019-2020 and the budgetary pressures that would fall on committee budgets.
- 9.5 **RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

1. **Note the Council's budget assumptions and the budget planning principles for 2019-20 which have been approved by Policy and Resources Committee (paragraph 3.3 and 3.4 of the report);**
2. **Note the forecast budget gap of £94.696m (table 3 of the report), which reflects the changes from the 2018-22 Medium Term Financial Strategy, and the resulting indicative savings targets for the Committee over the period 2019-20 to 2020-21 (table 4 of the report);**

3. Note further key areas of risk in relation to 2019-22 budget planning for the Committee's budgets, including any additional pressures and the robustness of existing planned savings as set out in section 5 of the report, noting that any changes may impact on the overall budget gap and will require additional offsetting savings to be found;
4. Agree the proposed approach and key themes to focus on in developing savings proposals for 2019-20 to 2021-22, including how the principles of the Council's Strategy, Norfolk Futures, will inform and shape budget planning activity set out in section 5 of the report, having regard to the existing savings for 2019-20 and beyond which were agreed as part of the 2018-19 budget round (table 1 of the report);
5. Note additional detailed savings proposals in order to help close the forecast 2019-20 to 2021-22 budget gap (section 5 of the report);
6. Note the budget planning timetable (section 6 of the report).
7. Approve the proposed savings for 2019-20 Budget Round for recommendation to Policy and Resources Committee in October (table 5 of the report).

10. **IMT Performance Indicators**

- 10.1 The annexed report (10) by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services and Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services was received.
- 10.2 The Committee received a report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services and Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services that provided operational dashboard information based on the eight vital signs performance indicators that fell under the remit of this Committee. All IMT indicators were reported as on target (green).
- 10.3 The Committee was informed of two further indicators that were recorded at this committee periodically and then passed onto Policy & Resources Committee. These were Better Broadband for Norfolk Coverage and 4G Mobile telephony coverage. These indicators were currently at 92% (1% higher than reported against a target of 90% for 2018/19 Q1) and 83% respectively (which was the baseline measure). Work continued to review what other data might be appropriate to report to committee. Items under consideration included digital inclusion indicators which continued to be developed as a vital signs indicator.
- 10.4 Members congratulated the Head of IMT and other officers on the step changes that they continued to make to provide Members with improved and up to date performance management information for the vital signs performance indicators that were within the remit of the Committee.
- 10.5 Further details regarding the operational measures that were being taken to improve performance (for issues such as IT telephone response times) were said to be available from officers on request. Customer satisfaction with web access was addressed by the Committee as a separate issue at item 13 on the agenda.
- 10.6 **RESOLVED**

That the Committee note the information provided in the report.

11 Use of Technology by Highways

- 11.1 The annexed report (11) by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services was received.
- 11.2 The Committee received a report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services that explained how the Highways Service were exploiting digital and technological innovations that delivered efficiencies, service improvements and a better way of working. The report provided examples of these technological developments and highlighted areas of work that were being considered for the future.
- 11.3 Members were pleased to hear about an initiative that had been taken in conjunction with Tarmac to use digital data collected from gully cleaning records, flood risk maps and reported drainage deficits to determine a risk based approach to the frequency of gully cleaning operations. This initiative had been shortlisted for the national Highways Maintenance Efficiency award which would be known in October 2018.
- 11.4 Members were informed that the issue of who was responsible for the maintenance of street lights was a difficult one for the public to understand. Some street lights were owned and maintained by District, Borough, Parish or Town councils. It was suggested that where members of the public had problems with street lights or other illuminated street furniture then they should be encouraged to report the matter by completing an online fault reporting form that could be found by following the web link set out below:
- <https://norfolkstreetlighting.amey.co.uk/>
- If the street light was maintained by another organisation, then on completion of the form the information would be forwarded on their behalf.
- 11.5 It was pointed out that the next phase of work for the installation of a further 13,000 street lamps with more energy efficient LEDs would start in December 2018 and run until the end of December 2019.
- 11.6 The initiatives that were being taken in some parts of North Norfolk to allow the public to pay for parking with a smart phone were welcomed. It was suggested that Cromer should be considered within the upcoming review into the Better Parking Strategy as an area of Norfolk where local authorities could look to provide an innovative approach to parking using new technologies.
- 11.7 The Committee placed on record thanks to Nick Tupper (Assistant Director- Highways & Waste) and Grahame Bygrave (Highways Service Manager) on their work in keeping Members updated on the potential opportunities to improve the

Highways Service using new technology and asked to receive a further update report sometime in the new year.

11.8 **RESOLVED**

That the Committee note the information provided in the report and ask for a further update report sometime in the new year.

12 **Fibre Broadband for new build developments**

12.1 The annexed report (12) by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services and Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services was received.

12.2 The Committee received a report by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services and Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services that was intended to provide an update on progress with fibre Broadband for new build developments since the matter was last discussed in January 2018.

12.3 Members spoke about how house buyers as well as Local Planning Authorities had a pivotal role to play in encouraging and supporting developers to future-proof their developments and maximise their value by installing faster gigabit connections using fibre to the premises where possible. Members said that in addition to encouraging developers to future proof their developments the County Council should actively promote public demand from potential house buyers for reliable, high speed broadband connectivity on new developments.

12.4 **RESOLVED**

That the Committee direct NCC IMT and Planning officers to continue to work with the Norfolk Strategic Planners group to ensure the updated Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework requires fast broadband connectivity for new developments using Fibre to the Premises wherever possible.

13 **Website satisfaction**

13.1 The annexed report (13) by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services was received.

13.2 The Committee received a report and a presentation by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services that gave Members the background to the changes and factors which were impacting website satisfaction on an ongoing basis. Appendix 1 to the report gave a breakdown of areas of the website with most feedback. The presentation would be made available on the committee pages website.

13.3 During the presentation the following key points were made:

- The Digital Content Team in Customer Services, part of Community and Environmental Services, was responsible for the content on

www.norfolk.gov.uk and for associated websites such as Norfolk Museums and the Norfolk Record Office.

- The Digital Content Team used a web based product which presented the smileys on the website, and by clicking them meant a rating of good, average or poor. A significant number of those who responded (over 70%) did not progress further than clicking one of the faces. Of those that did continue, 11% were commenting on a policy or service, as opposed to the website itself.
- Good quality information about bank holiday open times, and the hazardous waste amnesty information provided some noticeable peaks in positive satisfaction. There were some issues around the school admissions log on, caused by confusion over the My Norfolk account, and a peak in negative feedback in August, where school transport and what could be recycled seemed to feature prominently.
- School term dates was one of the most viewed areas of the website overall, and had a lot of positive feedback, but the way the information displayed on mobile devices was confusing some customers so the Digital Content Team were currently looking at ways to address that.
- Some customers had also said they wanted the information to save directly to the calendars on their devices, so the Digital Content Team were also looking at ways to make that happen.
- In 2017 the Digital Content Team had relaunched the museums site and when building it had used some of the lessons learned from www.norfolk.gov.uk to make some improvements.
- In April 2018 after a bit of a push on events content on museums, there was a 88% satisfaction with the Museums Service website. The Digital Content Team was now looking at ways to feed some of this back into www.norfolk.gov.uk, where the more visual museums approach might work well, an early example of this was fostering, which had been restructured last autumn.

- 13.4 Members discussed the corporate purpose to which the public responses about council decisions or services might be put and the importance that the Council gave to these responses in relation to other forms of public consultation. It was agreed that Members of the Committee should be provided with a link to the “have your say” section of the corporate site for their consideration. This could be found at:

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/what-we-do-and-how-we-work/have-your-say>

Officers would be happy to receive feedback directly about the “have your say” section of the corporate site or more formally at the next meeting.

13.5 **RESOLVED**

That the Committee note the content of the presentation (see Appendix 4 of the report) and approve the proposals for ongoing website satisfaction improvement.

14 **Forward Plan and decisions taken under delegated authority**

- 14.1 The annexed report (14) by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services and Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services was received.
- 14.2 It was noted that no decisions had been taken under delegated authority since the previous meeting.

14.3 **RESOLVED**

That the Committee amend the forward work programme so that it includes an update on the use of technology by Highways being taken to a future meeting sometime in the new year.

The meeting concluded at 12.40 pm

Chairman