



Corporate Select Committee
Minutes of the Meeting Held on 27 January 2020 at
10 am in Edwards Room, County Hall, Norwich

Present:

Cllr Karen Vincent (Chair)

Cllr Nigel Dixon
Cllr Colin Foulger
Cllr Terry Jermy
Cllr Chris Jones

Cllr Brian Long
Cllr Sandra Squire
Cllr John Timewell
Cllr John Ward

Substitute Members present:

Cllr Phillip Duigan for Cllr Ian Mackie
Cllr Tony White for Cllr Stephen Askew

Also in attendance:

Cllr T FitzPatrick, Cabinet Member for
Innovation, Transformation and
Performance
Steve Blatch, Joint Chief Executive at North
Norfolk District Council, the lead CEX on the
One Public Estate Partnership

1 Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr S Askew, (Cllr A White substituting), Cllr E Colman, Cllr I Mackie (Cllr P Duigan substituting) and Cllr R Oliver.

2 Minutes

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2019 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

3 Declarations of Interest

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4A Items of Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

4B Holocaust Memorial Day

The Committee stood for one minute to reflect on the causes and consequences of the Holocaust and to remember the victims of genocides throughout history.

5 Public Question Time

5.1 There were no public questions.

6 Local Member Issues/Questions

6.1 There were no local Member questions.

7 One Public Estate Partnership Norfolk

7.1 The annexed report (7) by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services was received. The report informed the Committee about the development of the One Public Estate (OPE) Partnership for the Norfolk area and outlined the current status.

7.2 Steve Blatch, Joint Chief Executive at North Norfolk District Council, the lead CEX on the One Public Estate Partnership, explained the value of working together in partnership across the public sector and taking a strategic approach to asset management. He said that the OPE was about getting more from collective assets whether that was from major service transformation such as health and social care integration; unlocking land for new homes and commercial space; delivering more integrated, customer-focused services or creating new opportunities to save on running costs or generate income. There were many examples from across the county of the success of this work although some projects were subject to delay through a lack of funding or because of the particular difficulties that were associated with joint working with NHS bodies.

7.3 The Committee noted that Norfolk's OPE partnership brought together:

- the County Council
- District Councils
- Several NHS bodies
- The Police and the Fire and Rescue Service

7.4 The partnership had explored opportunities to:

- Work together
- co-locate services
- bring forward development sites that might otherwise remain undeveloped.

7.5 In reply to detailed questions from Councillors about the OPE projects that were currently taking place it was pointed out that there was insufficient money from the sale of the current Fire Station in North Walsham for it to be relocated to a site on the outskirts of the Town.

7.6 It was pointed out that briefings with relevant stakeholders were held at appropriate points within each of the OPE projects. Feedback was welcomed from stakeholders including parish/ town councils, partners, staff, members, users, interest groups and businesses. The OPE programme was waiting to hear if it had achieved phase 8 funding. Funding issues had meant that some projects were having to be developed in a piecemeal way.

7.7 Councillors were informed that OPE provided practical and technical support and revenue funding to councils to deliver ambitious property-focused programmes in collaboration with central government and other public sector partners. It enabled public sector partnership to work collaboratively on land and property initiatives, generating new jobs and homes, creating more joined-up public services to local communities, and delivering savings for the taxpayer. The programme had grown through incremental phases of funding. It was anticipated that a phase 8 of the programme maybe announced early 2020.

7.8 **The Committee RESOLVED to:**

- **note the work of the partnership**
- **support the ongoing direction of the Norfolk partners.**

7.9 **The Committee RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND to Cabinet:**

- **That, because of the gains still to be realised from the One Public Estate Partnership in Norfolk, the Cabinet should be asked to look at finding ways to continue its work should Government partnership funding be withdrawn.**

8 **Strategic Asset Management Framework**

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

8.2 The Committee was of the view that while strategic asset policy and action plans should centre on what was deliverable in the next 5 years the framework should also provide an indication of what it was aimed to achieve in the next 10 years.

8.3 It was expected that there would need to be three or four meetings of the Working Group that it was recommended the Committee set up and that some of its meetings might need to be held over a complete working day.

8.4 **The Committee RESOLVED**

- **To set up a Working Group to help in the development of the new Strategic Asset Management framework.**
- **To delegate the nomination and make-up of the Working Group to the Chair of the Committee.**

- **That draft terms of reference for the Working Group and the timescale for the completion of its work are agenda items for the first meeting and the subject of a report back to the Committee.**

8.5 Cllr B Long asked for it to be recorded that he had abstained in the vote to set up a Working Group.

9 **Energy Efficiency (including Re:fit)**

9.1 The annexed report (9) by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services was received.

9.3 During discussion Councillors were informed that the ongoing and future projects mentioned in the report were aimed at serving the Council's ambitions to reduce its green-house gas emissions, seek opportunities to derive income from the property estate and reduce the holding costs of the estate.

9.4 In reply to questions, the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services agreed that the Council should explore what further savings would accrue to the Council from the conversion of street lights to LED lighting at the earliest opportunity. It was noted that street lighting was delivered by way of a PFI agreement. There were some 37,000 street lights that had not been converted to LED lights and that current plans were to reduce this number to 32,000 street lights.

9.5 **The Committee RESOLVED**

- **To respond positively to any Government proposals and consultations on energy saving or micro-generation.**

9.6 **The Committee also RESOLVED to RECOMMEND to Cabinet**

- **That the Council explores funding options (by financial borrowing where necessary) to facilitate a change to LED lighting at the earliest possible opportunity for all remaining street lighting where it is considered financially viable to make the change.**

10 **Digital Infrastructure and Strategy**

10.1 The annexed report (10) by the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services was received.

10.2 Examples of progress with the digital Infrastructure Strategy were included in a presentation given to the Committee.

10.3 The Committee was asked to consider the current scope of delivery of the strategy and what involvement it wanted to have in the development of the 10-year strategic technology roadmap.

10.4 **The Committee RESOLVED**

- **That Councillors should be offered a wide range of digital skills training to improve and support their needs as Councillors.**
- **That the method of investment in case management systems should be addressed as part of a future Councillor training workshop.**
- **That a further report on progress with the Digital Norfolk Strategy should be brought to this Committee in six months.**

11 **Local Service Strategy**

11.1 The annexed report (11) by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services was received.

11.2 The Committee noted that all the public sector organisations operating in Norfolk had shown a commitment to use the network of 47 libraries across Norfolk as the starting point to bring core services together proactively and to target services in the places where they were most needed in market towns, Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn.

11.3 Steps were being taken to improve information on websites about the accessibility of public buildings, so disabled users know in advance whether they will be able to access the service/site.

11.4 **The Committee RESOLVED**

- **To support the proposals for the second phase of the Local Service Strategy which will focus on taking a layered approach to service delivery on a locality by locality basis.**
- **To work proactively with District Councils to identify opportunities for physical building consolidation, with a focus on libraries as community hubs, to fit with local priorities and existing plans.**
- **To develop a clear universal offer for each of those buildings focusing on improved information, better co-ordination of local resource, and offers to meet different age groups.**
- **To agree joint priorities and areas of focus where we can work collaboratively to deliver real results for residents.**
- **To receive an update report in May 2020.**

12 **Corporate Select Committee Forward Work Plan**

12.1 The annexed report (12) by the Executive Director of Strategy and Governance was received.

12.2 **The Committee RESOLVED**

- **To endorse the areas of focus for the Corporate Select Committee set**

out in the report.

- **To agree that the work programme includes an update on the Local Service Strategy at the May 2020 meeting.**

The meeting concluded at 12.45 pm

Chair