

Digital Innovation and Efficiency Committee

**Minutes of the Meeting Held on 22 January 2018
10:00am, Edwards Room, County Hall, Norwich**

Present:

Mr T Garrod (Chairman)

Mr D Bills
Mr S Eyre
Mr T Fitzpatrick

Dr C Jones
Mr T Smith
Dr M Strong

Substitute Members Present:

Mr V Thomson for Mr E Colman and
Mrs C Walker for Mr D Rowntree

Also in attendance:

**Guests of the following mobile
phone operators:**

Three
Vodafone
EE Telefonica/02
Mobile UK

(For ease of reference, items appear in these minutes in the order in which they appear on the agenda. This was not necessarily the order in which these items were considered at the meeting).

1. Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies for absence was received from Mr E Colman and Mr D Rowntree.

2A Minutes

2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 November 2017 were confirmed by the Committee and signed by the Chairman.

2B Matter Arising- Norfolk Library Service

2B.1 The Assistant Director, Community, Information and Learning, agreed to provide Dr M Strong (and other Party Spokespersons) with an explanation of the rationale for not offering voluntary redundancy, after asking for expressions of interest,

within the Norfolk Library Service and to provide sample text from letters sent to staff.

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.

5A Public Question Time

5A.1 There were no public questions.

5B Local Member Issues/ Member Questions

5B.1 There were no Local Member Issues/ Member Questions.

6 Chairman's Update

6.1 The Chairman welcomed Mr T Smith to his first meeting of the Committee and paid tribute to the work of Ms S Squire whom Mr Smith had replaced.

6.2 The Chairman said that he had accompanied the IMT and Social Care team on a visit to Adastral Park to explore the possibilities of assistive technology which would inform a report on Assistive Technology in March 2018.

7 Finance Monitoring

7.1 The annexed report (7) by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services and Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services was received.

7.2 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 & Efficiency Committee for 2017-18. It provided information on the revenue budget including any forecast over or underspends and any identified budget risks. It also provided an update on the forecast use of reserves and details of the current and draft future capital programme.

7.3 Members were informed that the Committee was on target to achieve a balanced net revenue budget for 2017-18.

7.4 The Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services agreed to include more detail about each of the budget headings at table 1 (the net revenue budget and forecast outturn) when this matter was next reported to the Committee.

7.5 Members asked that the next monitoring report make particular reference to the current position regarding expenditure on grants for Better Broadband for Norfolk. Members also asked for the monitoring report to refer to the implications for reserves of the withdrawal or renewal of any further contracts (such as the exit from the HPE contract in November 2017) aimed at a refresh of the Council's existing computer hardware estate.

7.6 **RESOLVED**

That the Committee note:

1. The forecast out-turn position for this committee.
2. The current capital programme for this committee.
3. The draft capital programme for IMT from 2018 - 21 which will be taken to the P&R Committee in January and then on to full council in February 2018.
4. The current planned use of the reserves and the forecast balance of reserves as at the end of March 2018.

8 **Strategic and Financial Planning 2018-19 to 2021- 22 and Revenue Budget 2018-19**

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 was informed that the proposals in the report would inform Norfolk County Council's decisions on council tax and contribute towards the Council setting a legal budget for 2018-19 which set its total resources targeted at meeting the needs of residents.

8.3 The Committee was informed about IMT savings that arose from exiting the HPE contract and about the saving that might be available in future from a potential restructuring and headcount reduction (management and technical support costs).

8.4 The Committee discussed how the digital transformation agenda would drive efficiency savings throughout the County Council. Reference was made to the income generation that would result from ensuring IMT services to schools, and other external clients, fully reflected both the direct and indirect costs incurred by the County Council. It was noted that the use of new digital technology did not imply the withdrawal of other forms of communication with the Council.

8.5 The Committee noted that the Government had given an undertaking to introduce a standard level of achievement in the use of digital technology for all children and that further details about this Government initiative would be shared with Members of the Committee when they became available.

8.6 **RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

- 1) Note the new corporate priorities – Norfolk Futures – to focus on demand management, prevention and early help, and a locality focus to service provision as set out in section 2 of the report.
- 2) Agree the service-specific budgeting issues for 2018-19 as set out in section 5 of the report.
- 3) Note the Committee's specific budget proposals for 2018-19 to 2021-22, noting the findings of public consultation in respect of the budget proposals set out in section 8 of the report.
- 4) Note the findings of equality and rural impact assessments detailed in section 9 of this report and in doing so, note the Council's duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to:
 - Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 5) Agree to any mitigating actions proposed in the equality and rural impact assessments;
- 6) Note the recommendations of the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services, and:
 - a. Recommend to Policy and Resources Committee that the Council's budget includes an inflationary increase of 2.99% in council tax in 2018-19, within the council tax referendum limit of 3.0% for 2018-19;
 - b. Note that the Council's budget planning includes an increase in council tax of 3.0% for the Adult Social Care precept in 2018-19, meaning that no increase in the Adult Social Care precept would be levied in 2019-20.
- 7) Agree and recommend to Policy and Resources Committee the draft Committee Revenue Budget as set out in Appendix 4 of the report including all of the savings for 2018-19 to 2021-22 as set out for consideration by Policy and Resources Committee on 29 January 2018, to enable Policy and Resources Committee to recommend a sound, whole- Council budget to Full Council on 12 February 2018.
- 8) Agree and recommend the Capital Programmes and schemes relevant to this Committee as set out in Appendix 5 to Policy and Resources Committee for consideration on 29 January 2018, to enable Policy and Resources Committee to recommend a Capital Programme to Full Council on 12 February 2018.

9 **New Social Care System**

- 9.1 The annexed report (9) by the Executive Director of Adult Social Service was received.
- 9.2 The Committee received a report and Power Point presentation by the Executive Director of Adult Social Services that informed Members of the progress of the Social Care System Replacement (SCSR) programme and outlined the benefits and future development.

9.3 The presentation included a demonstration of the services “Liquid Logic” (the replacement for the Care First System) could be expected to provide on-line, including examples of how the system provided for integrated working and data sharing with NHS and other public sector partners. The Committee was informed that the Adults and Finance Go Live took place on schedule and after live testing, was released to staff on 22 November 2017. The Children’s, Early Help and Finance project continued to move forward to plan. The fourth round of testing started on 27 December 2017 and the Go Live was due to take place by the end of April 2018.

9.4 In reply to questions, Members were informed that the introduction of “Liquid Logic” was a key core system change for NCC. There had been almost no issues with migrated data or system function prior to the Adults and Finance Go Live and staff feedback had been largely positive.

9.5 **RESOLVED**

That the Digital Innovation and Efficiency Committee note the progress on delivering the new Social Care Record System for Adult Social Services, Children’s and Finance and agree to receive a further report at the May 2018 meeting of this Committee.

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.

10.3 The Committee received its third performance management report for the IMT Department. The report included operational dashboard information based on the eight vital signs performance indicators that fell under the remit of this Committee, none of which had met the exception criteria.

10.4 Members were informed that the IMT vital sign indicators were all ahead of target except for incidents revolved within SLA which was less than 1% off target and the calls abandonment rate which was significantly in excess of the target. The abandonment rate for calls to the IMT service desk had changed due to a trial approach of switching off the answerphone to improve first time resolution and customer experience. It was explained that the customer experience had remained high at 6.5 out of 7 and first time fix had improved significantly. In order to reduce the abandonment rate the IMT Department had recruited and was training two new technical apprentices.

10.5 In response to a question regarding the likelihood of signing up significantly more My Norfolk Portal users, it was explained that there were only two main transaction areas currently available. But this was set to increase significantly from April 2018, including areas such as services for libraries, museums and school admissions.

10.6 **RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

- 1. Note the information provided in this report.**
- 2. Note the performance data/information relating to the Committee's remit, in addition to the 8 vital signs that are set out in this report, which the Committee would wish to review on a regular basis.**

11 Local Planning Processes and Broadband Provision

- 11.1 The annexed report (11) by the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services and Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services was received.
- 11.2 Members spoke about how the availability and reliability of high speed broadband connectivity on new developments was now a key consideration for house buyers. Members spoke about how Local Planning Authorities (LPA) 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 (FTTP) where possible.
- 11.3 **RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

- 1. Note current LPA policies and lobby to update where necessary to ensure that high speed broadband is promoted.**
- 2. Encourage FTTP over FTTC to maximise connection speeds and futureproof the installation.**
- 3. Work with broadband companies to ensure highways policies and procedures speed up deployment and encourage further investment.**
- 4. Ask for a progress report at the next meeting about the action that the Norfolk District Councils are taking as LPAs to ensure that residents can access high speed broadband when they move into new developments.**

12 Mobile Telecommunications

- 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 During discussion with guests from the four main providers of mobile networks in the county (EE, Telefonica/O2, Three and Vodafone) and their representative trade body Mobile UK, and a guest from the Norfolk Chamber of Commerce, the following key points were made:
- This meeting was intended as an initial meeting to investigate what plans were already in place to make improvements in mobile phone coverage and how the Council might be able to accelerate the process.

- A more detailed follow up meeting with the mobile phone operators about commercially sensitive subjects would be held at the end of the committee meeting.
- The Chairman agreed that the follow up meeting would be open to the Labour and Liberal Democrat Spokespersons on the Committee.
- The guest from the Norfolk Chamber of Commerce spoke about the limitations of current mobile phone coverage levels (some 11% of Norfolk's businesses had found that they could only get 2G signals). The limitations on coverage levels, signal strength and channel availability had a significant effect on the growth of a sustainable local economy for Norfolk, particularly in rural areas.
- The guests from the mobile phone operators spoke about the role that local planning authorities could play in helping to achieve a transformation in mobile telecommunications. They spoke about how local planning authorities should look to change their view of mobile phone operators and provide more clear planning guidance and policies in relation to mobile phone services. They spoke about how mobile phone operators were sometimes overburdened by planning restrictions. They said that the services that mobile phone operators provided should be viewed as a vital component of society for education, home working and community cohesion and resilience, particularly in rural areas like Norfolk. At present many planning authorities in England as a whole had too narrow an understanding of the work of mobile phone operators.
- In reply to questions, the guests explained their current and anticipated future level of investment in mobile phone technology in Norfolk and for across England as a whole, their network sharing arrangements, the geographical range of telecommunications signals in rural and urban areas and how the use of mobile phones indoors in "no or limited service spots" would be boosted by fibre installation in homes and businesses across the county.
- The Head of IMT informed the Committee that the County Council had begun work on a commission that had identified the potential use of some 500 public sector owned structures, such as council offices, fire towers, wind turbines and existing telecommunications masts that could be used for mobile telecommunications. Of these sites, some 200 might be particularly suitable to the providers to mount new infrastructure in the "not-spots" of the county where coverage was lacking. A survey was currently being undertaken using multiple typical handsets to test all major networks on issues such as quality of service, signal strength and contention levels. The survey would be undertaken on A & B roads, market towns and significant tourism areas of the county. The survey was commissioned to help residents and businesses to make better informed buying decisions and to help the County and the mobile network operators identify which existing public owned structures could be used to host equipment. The results would be reported to the next meeting of the Committee.
- In reply to questions it was said that with the roll out of Norfolk's street lighting contract and the installation of new forms of street lighting further opportunities for improvements in mobile voice and data connectivity would emerge. The role of Highways and Network Rail Networks in assisting with mobile phone communications was also discussed.

- Members suggested that a list should be kept of large landowners in the county who might be willing to provide land for mobile telecommunications.
- Dr Strong asked to be provided with contact details for enquires regarding services provided by 02.

12.3 RESOLVED

That the Committee note the information provided by the mobile network operators and in the light of the comments that have been made in the meeting ask officers to explore further what the Council could do to facilitate improved mobile voice and data coverage and performance across Norfolk.

13 Forward Plan

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

13.2 RESOLVED

That the Committee agree the forward plan.

The meeting concluded at 12.10 pm

Chairman