

Corporate Affairs Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Minutes of the Meeting Held on 18 March 2009

Present:

Mr A Adams	Mr C Jordan (Chairman)
Mr J Baskerville	Mr P Morse
Mr J Collop	Mr J Pitt-Pladdy
Mrs I Floering Blackman	Mr T Tomkinson
Mr P Hacon	Ms J Virgo
Mr P Harwood	Mr A White
Mrs S Hutson	

Substitute Members Present:

Mr C Joyce

Cabinet Members Present:

Mr H Humphrey Human Resources, Finance, Property and Corporate Affairs

Also Present:

Mr W Nunn The Leader of Breckland District Council (BDC)
Mr T Holden The Chief Executive of BDC

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs B Lashley (Mr C Joyce substituted), Mr C Hull, Mr M Wright, Mr S Dorrington and Mr A Williams.

Mr J Gretton also sent his apologies with regard to Item 8 'Breckland Local Strategic Partnership'.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2009 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Matters of Urgent Business

There were no matters of urgent business.

5. Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

6. Local Member Issues

There were no local member issues.

7. Cabinet Member Feedback on Previous Review Panel Comments

There was no Cabinet Member Feedback.

8. Breckland Local Strategic Partnership

- 8.1 The Panel received and considered the annexed report (8) which provided members with the results of the questionnaire looking at the Breckland Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).
- 8.2 The Chairman welcomed Breckland District Council's Leader, Mr W Nunn, and Chief Executive, Mr T Holden, to the meeting. Mr Nunn and Mr Holden gave a presentation on the Breckland LSP (attached as Appendix A).
- 8.3 During a discussion subsequent to the presentation, the following points were noted:
 - The value of LSPs is that they are able to deliver what the County or its partners cannot deliver on their own. Partnerships should be an alliance of the willing to collectively deliver – they must have shared outcomes from a shared agenda.
 - Mr Holden said that whilst second homes money was a useful adjunct, it was only useful if projects could be delivered on the ground and BDC, along with partners, had delivered at a local level. Next year consideration would be given to a range of targets to build on sustainable communities.
 - With regard to the current funding of £900,000 for the Thetford Healthy Towns, Mr Holden said that the matched funding of £900,000 required would come from a variety of sources such as the hours delivered through the partners and growth point funding etc. The Healthy Towns funding was a discrete amount of money for Thetford and it is concerned with delivering things that make a difference – some of which will be delivered under the PCT and will be communicated through the PCT; the LSP is made stronger by the fact that partner organisations deliver on the ground.
 - Mr Nunn said that some projects shared targets and there was collective working to deliver projects, but the concept of collective targets without clear ownership and accountability should be avoided.
 - It was noted that one priority area identified by BDC was 'improving homes' and Mr Holden said that the question to be asked was whether this was worth doing around partnerships or whether other partners who are not part of the LSP would be better placed to undertake this work.
 - The question was asked how members could be made aware of what was happening within the LSPs and whether there were mechanisms in place to report back the outcomes of LSP projects to Members and the public. Mr Nunn said that the Breckland LSP provided a forum to enable partners to deliver and it did have member involvement within the forums. The forums

ensure that the LSP and its partners are delivering and the minutes were available to anyone to view. Mr Holden confirmed that the Breckland LSP did engage with the public and in terms of the Governance arrangements, these were completely consistent with what they should be.

- Mr Holden said that the statutory guidance for LSPs was not prescriptive around what an LSP should look like and the relationship between the LSPs would be different – the statutory guidance allowed for this to happen. The LSPs were independent and where there was a cascading of targets this would happen by a process of agreement. Norfolk County Council (NCC) could not enforce a prescriptive model for LSPs in Norfolk. Statutory guidance was quite clear regarding funding – the Breckland LSP is not a statutory body and therefore BDC remains the accountable body for those elements of funding it provided, equally other accountable bodies equally retained this responsibility with regards to its funding committed to the LSP .
- Mr Nunn advised that BDC had allocated £200,000 to the Breckland LSP because they had recognised that there were targets that would be better delivered through a wider partnership and BDC hoped to act as a catalyst for projects to be delivered so that agreed political targets would be met. This money, along with money from other partners was used to deliver collective targets.
- It was suggested that elected members should be involved in LSPs rather than officers. Mr Holden said that at some point there had to be an interface between members and officers to deliver. Partners such as the PCT, voluntary sector and the Police also come together to hear from Members what they wished to happen. BDC is a member-led authority and by bringing partners together the Council is able to deliver more than the sum of the individual parts.

8.4 The Chairman expressed his thanks to the Chief Executive and Leader of BDC, on behalf of the Panel. The Chief Executive and Leader of BDC then left the meeting.

Resolved:

8.5 The Panel confirmed that the scrutiny of the Breckland LSP was now complete and whilst agreeing in principle that the next partnership to undergo the scrutiny process should be the Broadland Alliance LSP, they agreed that this decision should be deferred until after the next meeting which would follow the County Council elections. The Panel requested that the next scrutiny report should include less papers and a minimum of 12pt font size.

9. Norfolk People Feel They Can Influence Things

9.1 The Panel received and considered the annexed report and Terms of Reference (9) by the Director of Corporate Resources.

9.2 Members noted that the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee had requested the CAO&S Panel include this scrutiny topic on its forward work programme.

Resolved:

- 9.3 The Panel considered the report and Terms of Reference for the 'Norfolk people feel they can influence things' scrutiny and agreed that these should be deferred until the next meeting of the Panel which would follow the June County Council elections.

10. Efficiency Savings Programme

- 10.1 Members received the annexed report (10) by the Director of Corporate Resources which provided a progress review of the Efficiency Programme and achievement against the Council's 2009-2009 efficiency targets.
- 10.2 Members heard that the North Elmham integration pilot was going well but there had been problems with reconciling baseline data.
- 10.3 Members were advised that the informal Member Steering Group met regularly and if the Group did not remain informal then County Council rules would apply which would mean the Group would have to be proportionally represented. It was suggested that the informal Member Steering Group should be renamed the Leaders Efficiency Steering Group.
- 10.4 The increased energy costs during 2008 had reduced substantially since January 2009 and it was suggested that the report should indicate this reduction.
- 10.5 It was noted that the savings target of £382,852 appeared to relate to school transport whilst the Home to School Transport efficiency savings showed a forecast of £250,000. It was further noted that there appeared to be no fleet savings. The question of whether 14 – 19 year old delivery was being factored into these transport savings as some children were being offered taxis to attend schools as part of the school admissions procedures. The Head of Efficiency agreed to provide further information concerning these queries.

Resolved:

- 10.6 To note the progress of the Council against its efficiency targets as set out in the report.

11. Planning, Performance & Resources Monitoring Report

- 11.1 Members received the annexed report (11) by the Director of Corporate Resources which included an update of planning and performance issues.
- 11.2 Members were advised that the score for the value of orders processed through iProc should show a red triangle.
- 11.3 It was noted that there had been a refresh of the sickness absence figures for the third quarter and this now showed an average of 6.67 average numbers of days employee sickness rather than 6.05. However, this is not a deteriorating picture.

Resolved:

- 11.4 To note the report and agree that no actions needed to be taken.

12. Forward Work Programme: Scrutiny

- 12.1 Members considered the outline programme for scrutiny.
- 12.2 It was suggested that there needed to be a refocus of scrutiny items to be considered by this Panel following the County Council elections and that the 'Effective Use of County Buildings' should be considered again by the Panel following the outcome of the LGR as well as continually being reviewed by NPS. Members noted that NPS had found the review very useful and would continue the process of review on an area and service basis.
- 12.3 As part of the refocus of scrutiny items consideration could also be given to removing those scrutiny reports received by the Panel on a regular basis and placing them in the overview section.

13. Corporate Property Asset Management Plan

- 13.1 Members received and considered the annexed report (13) by the Cabinet Member for Human Resources, Finance, Property and Corporate Affairs and the Managing Director of NPS Property Consultants Ltd which provided a summary of key findings and future actions to be undertaken in the context of the NCC property estate.
- 13.2 With reference to the rationalisation of office accommodation in King's Lynn and the move to Priory House, members heard that Cabinet had approved the acquisition of Priory House and it would be available from September. This would enable a rationalisation of County Council properties in King's Lynn.
- 13.3 Members suggested the following amendments to the report:
- that the initiatives 'Rationalise office accommodation in King's Lynn with move to Priory House', 'Pilot the creation of managed office workspace', 'Review and update office accommodation standards' and 'Publication of office space utilisation and unit cost statistics' should form one priority;
 - remove the comment 'School buildings have been excluded because they already receive DCSF grants that can address a significant proportion of backlog' as this is inaccurate.
- 13.4 As NPS are paid agents of the Council a member suggested that higher level member involvement was required. In response, the Cabinet Member for Human Resources, Finance, Property and Corporate Affairs said that there was a scheme of hierarchy for disposals. The Director of Corporate Resources and Cultural Services confirmed that the capital programmes were received twice yearly by this Panel.

Resolved:

- 13.5 Subject to the above amendments, members agreed to endorse the updated Corporate Property Asset Management Plan.

14. Financial Management Improvement Programme

- 14.1 Members received and considered the annexed report (14) by the Director of Corporate Resources which provided an update on the progress of activities within the Financial Management Improvement Programme.

Resolved:

- 14.2 Members confirmed that the original actions had been completed and that the Financial Management Improvement Plan was closed. Members agreed that a report setting out improvements to meet the requirements of the new Use of Resources framework be presented to a future meeting, following completion of the current self assessment and initial feedback from the Audit Commission.

15. Compliments and Complaints during 2008/09

- 15.1 Members received and considered the annexed report (15), by the Head of Democratic Services which presented the number and spread of Corporate Compliments and Complaints dealt with by the Council in the period April to September 2008.

Resolved:

- 15.2 To note the report and the figures relating to complaints for the period April to September 2008.

16. Chief Executive's Department Service Plans 2009-12

- 16.1 Members received the annexed report (16), by the Director of Corporate Resources which summarised how the Chief Executive's Department would contribute to delivering the Council's Corporate Objectives during 2009-12.

Resolved:

- 16.2 To note the report and the draft key activities for 2009-12.

17. Interim Report on Evaluation of Impact Leadership Programme

- 17.1 Members received the annexed report (17), by the Head of HR which provided an interim update on the evaluation of the investment and effectiveness of the Leadership Development Programme (Impact).

- 17.2 Members offered their congratulations to the facilitators, participants and managers involved in this programme and noted that a key factor in the success of the programme was the support of managers across the organisation.

The meeting closed at 12.04pm.

Chairman




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APPENDIX A – Breckland LSP Presentation

Presentation to
NCC
Overview and Scrutiny Panel
18 March 2009


Councillor William Nunn – Leader
Trevor Holden – Chief Executive
Breckland Council



William Nunn and Trevor Holden
Breckland Council

Scope

- Why Partnerships?
- Statutory Guidance
- Breckland – A Case Study
- Added Value
- Conclusions\Results
- Questions



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Breckland Council

Why Partnerships?

“Our success has really been based on partnership from the beginning”

Bill Gates



William Nunn and Trevor Holden
Breckland Council

Statutory Guidance



William Nunn and Trevor Holden
Breckland Council

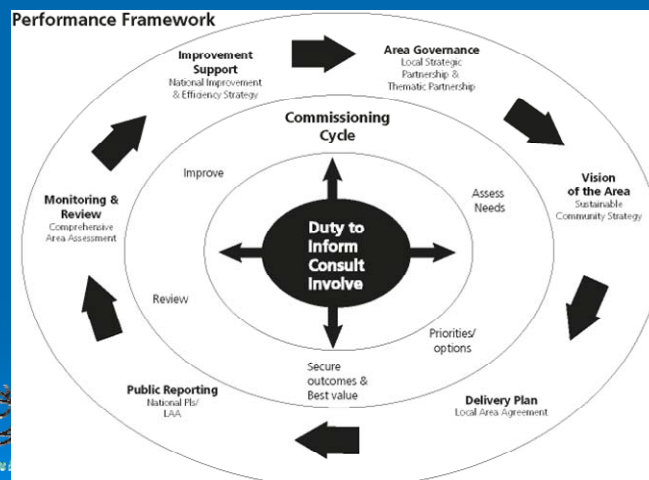
Governance and Engagement

- LSPs are not statutory bodies
- Voluntary partnership
- Sustainable Community Strategy
- LAA
- Representation
- County and District LSPs
- Duty to involve



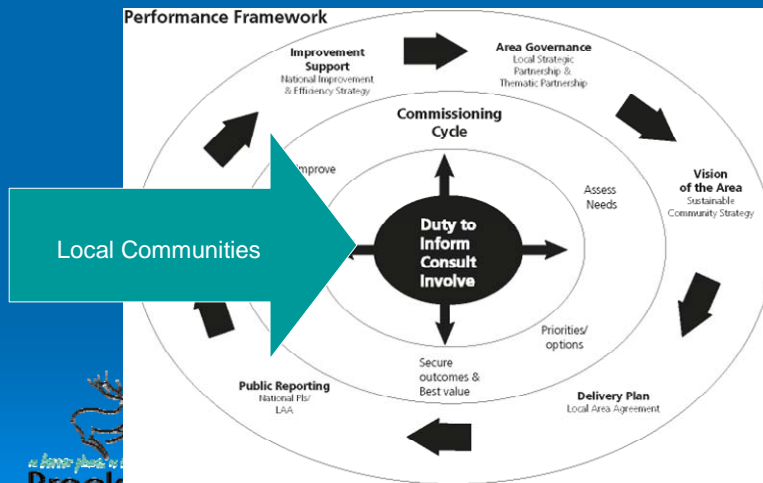
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Community Leadership



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Community Leadership

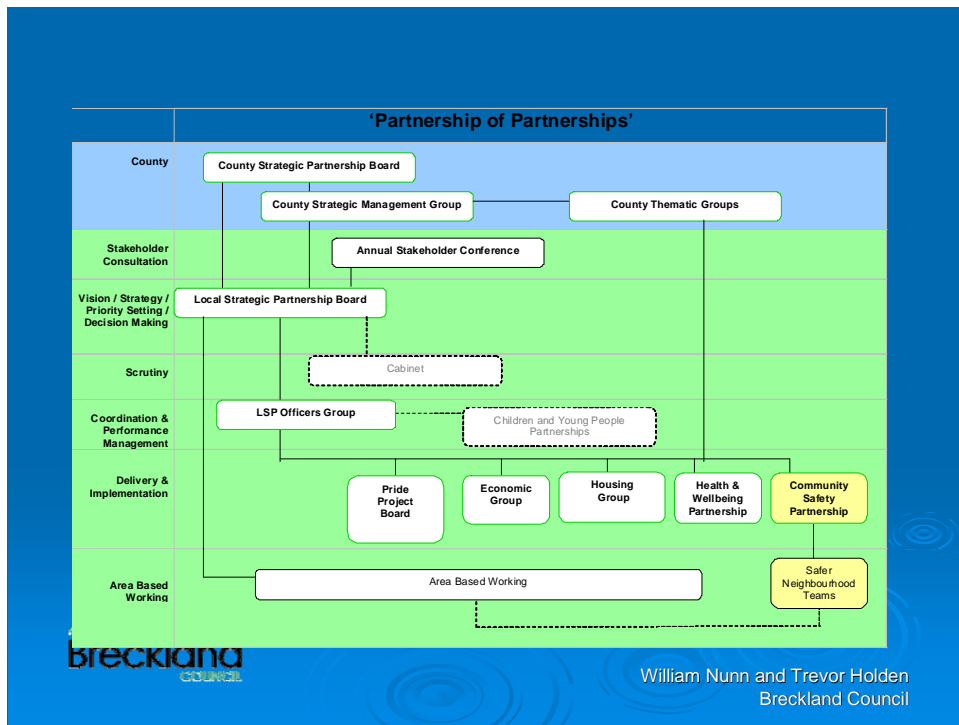


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Breckland Council

Breckland LSP A Case Study



William Nunn and Trevor Holden
Breckland Council



Breckland – A Case Study

Six priority areas:

- Developing safer and stronger communities
- Improving homes
- Promoting and developing a thriving economy
- Improving the health and wellbeing of local people
- Ensuring the accessibility of all services
- Environmental sustainability



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Breckland Council

Current Funding

- Breckland £200,000
- Second Homes Council Tax £ 77,547
- Fire Service £ 15,000
- Thetford Healthy Towns £900,000
- (Match funding required) £900,000

- Partnership Total £2,092,547



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Recent Projects

- BELA 2 grants (£15,000) – ICT grants up to £500 match funded for small businesses
- Pre- ESOL (£5,000) – community based to develop language skills to empower the migrant community to access services etc
- Train the Trainer (£2,000) – developing community champions within migrant communities to ensure professional & consistent advice to the communities
- ICT Training (£2,000) – Introduction to ICT & bespoke 1-1 training at workplace



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Recent Projects

Falls Prevention – preventing falls on vulnerable adults using health connectors trained by Voluntary Norfolk

Healthy Town Status – Thetford £900,000 investment



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Recent Projects

Pride Project Group

Cleaner, Safer, Greener Charter (1st in Country to be district wide) Endorsed by ENCAMS

Pride Awards (200 + nominations)

Breckland's Got Talent contest

BLISS (Breckland Local Independent Shop Stars) initiative 80+ business signed up



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Does it Add Value?



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Added Value

- ✓ Significant inward investment
- ✓ Delivery at very local level
- ✓ Contributes to LAA targets
- ✓ CAA



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Breckland LSP

Any Questions?



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