

Business and Property Committee

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 5 March 2019 at
10:00 am in the Edwards room at County Hall**

Present:

Mr B Stone (Chairman)	Mr A Jamieson
Mr T Adams	Mr T Jermy
Mr J Ward	Mr M Kiddle-Morris
Mr R Brame	Mr I Mackie
Mr F Eagle	Mrs C Walker

1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed Members to the last meeting of the Committee; he thanked Members for their role on the Committee which he had enjoyed Chairing; he thanked Officers for their hard work in preparing agendas and reports
- 1.2 Mrs C Walker echoed the sentiments that Officers had been consistent and had been “first class in their role”; she thanked them for their help

2. Apologies and Substitutions

- 2.1 Apologies were received from Ms C Bowes, Mr J Timewell, Mr C Smith and Mrs K Vincent

3. Minutes

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2019 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman

4. Members to Declare any Interests

- 4.1 Mr A Jamieson declared a non-pecuniary interest as Member on the Norse Group Board
- 4.2 Mr I Mackie declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to item 12 as Chairman of Audit Committee

5. Urgent Business

- 5.1 No urgent business was discussed

6. Public Questions

- 6.1 No public questions were received

7. Member Questions

7.1 No Member questions were received

8. Verbal update from Members of the Committee regarding Member Working Groups or bodies that they sit on

8.1 An apprenticeships update from Cllr C Clancy was circulated; see appendix A

9. Decisions taken under delegated authority

9.1 The Committee received the report giving an update on decisions taken under delegated powers by Officers

9.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- The Chairman felt that a total of all disposals would be helpful; the Head of Property **agreed** to send this to the Clerk to attach to the minutes
- The benefit of preschools to the Council was queried; the Head of Property confirmed that preschools were often run by charitable groups or private organisations; Policy and Resources Committee adopted a policy to apply a charge to them

9.3 The Committee **NOTED** the delegated decisions

10. Finance monitoring

10.1.1 The Committee discussed the report containing information on the revenue budget position for services reporting to the Committee for 2018-19, use of reserves and details of the capital programme.

10.1.2 The Senior Accountant introduced the report to Committee:

- Opportunities for capitalisation had been identified to record an underspend in the revenue account
- There had been a change to the budget due to the charge of depreciation at the end of the financial year; this did not affect the net position
- There had been a change to the County Farms net capital
- Property had seen an underspend with a lesser use of reserves needed

10.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- The Senior Accountant gave clarification on use of reserves to smooth the cost of reducing the property portfolio; this would apply when savings from coming out of buildings were not fully realised within a financial year and reserves were used to cover the gap; not as many of the reserves were needed as originally forecast
- The capitalisation planning process had evolved in-year through reviews; the budget for 2019-20 had been prepared by considering which capitalisations were achievable and some would be deferred to reduce use of reserves
- It was noted that some areas of Economic Development were not mentioned in the paper; the Senior Accountant replied that not all Economic Development projects came under the category assessed in this report and **agreed** to send detail on other projects to Members after the meeting
- The Chairman noted an extensive report covering Economic Development came to the meeting in January 2019 including projects not in the report under discussion which came under a different accounting system or financed by

external funding

- 10.3 The Committee **NOTED**:
- a) The 2018 – 19 revenue position for this Committee
 - b) The 2018 – 19 to 2020 - 21 capital programme for this Committee
 - c) The 2018 - 19 reserves position for this Committee

11. Performance Management

- 11.1 The Committee received the report based on the revised Performance Management System implemented from 1 April 2016, giving data against the 2018/19 Vital Signs list
- 11.2 The Committee **REVIEWED** the performance data, information and analysis presented in the body of the report and determined that the recommended actions identified are appropriate

12. Risk Management

- 12.1.1 The Committee discussed the report providing the latest departmental level risks falling under the remit of the Committee as at March 2019, following the latest review conducted in late January 2019
- 12.1.2 The Risk Management Officer introduced the report to Members:
- Risk RM14200, “failure to meet NCC carbon reduction target”, had closed; a meeting would take place in March 2019 with key stakeholders to discuss planned energy management projects to set a future carbon reduction target
- 12.2 The Following points were discussed and noted:
- Since converting, Academy schools were no longer included in County carbon reduction figures; since 2009 ten additional elements were included in the figures and others were removed such as the Academy schools’ data. The Risk Management Officer **agreed** to circulate information on the impact of removal of Academy Schools on the carbon reduction figure
 - The Head of Support and Development (Community and Environmental Services) reported that the two biggest users of carbon in Norfolk were schools/academies and street lighting; street lighting had undergone a large improvement programme which has enabled significant energy/carbon savings
 - The Chairman highlighted appendix B of the report which showed estate management of County Farms was complete and no longer regarded as a risk
- 12.3 The Committee **CONSIDERED** and **AGREED**:
- a) the reconciliation report in Appendix A of the report, which is designed to detail any significant changes to the Committee’s corporate and department level risks
 - b) details of the current risks for this Committee to consider, managed on the corporate and departmental risk registers as reported in Appendix B of the report
 - c) The list of possible actions, suggested prompts and challenges presented for information in Appendix C of the report
 - d) The background information to put the risk scoring into context, shown in Appendix D of the report

13. France (Channel) England Programme - annual update

- 13.1 The Committee received the report and heard a presentation (included in the agenda

report) giving an annual update on the France (Channel) England (FCE) programme:

- Funding came from pre-financing from the European Union
- The Programme Monitoring Committee met twice yearly to examine results of project implementation
- The Management Authority, Norfolk County Council (NCC), supervised management and implementation of the programme and delegated functions to the Joint Secretariat for day to day running of the programme
- 26 staff were based at County Hall and facilitators were throughout the UK
- The minimum requirement for a partnership was one English and one French partner; projects had to fit into one of the 5 objectives shown on page 51
- The total invested in projects across the whole partnership area was £16.2m
- “Increase” was a new project with Clarion Housing to train and support social housing residents to set up micro businesses
- Proposals for projects could be submitted up to June 2020
- A tourism project was being led by Norfolk to the value of £16m to extend the tourism season and attract different visitors
- As no taxpayer money was involved in the projects, Brexit risks did not extend to them; the Management Authority (NCC) could be at risk post Brexit and discussions were underway to look at management of risks around programme closure and the future of cooperation with partners
- If a deal was agreed or article 50 was extended, it would be “business as usual”; work was underway around what would happen in the event of a “no deal”

13.2 The following points were discussed and noted

- The Programme Manager for the Interreg VA FCE Programme **agreed** to send details on the Market Towns project, “Go Trade”, to Mr F Eagle
- The Programme Manager for the Interreg VA FCE Programme confirmed that NCC staff working on FCE worked solely on this and were paid by FCE funding
- The Programme Manager for the Interreg VA FCE Programme confirmed that anyone with suggestions for a project could contact Helene Pasquier, Programme facilitator for Norfolk, or Sallyann Stephen, Deputy Programme Manager for project development; she **agreed** to send contact details to Mr A Jamieson
- The transition period once the Managing Authority was no longer a Member of the EU was queried; the Programme Manager for the Interreg VA FCE Programme clarified that “no-deal” scenarios were being worked through
- There was a Treasury guarantee for UK partners covering the entirety of their project if an agreement letter had been signed
- The Programme Manager for the Interreg VA FCE Programme clarified that ‘Go Trade’ included a shared market branding to reach a wider audience; she **agreed** to circulate further information on this project to Members after the meeting

13.3 The Committee **DISCUSSED** the presentation and **DETERMINED** there were no issues they would like to explore further; Members requested further information as detailed above

14. Apprenticeships Training Agency pilot and next steps - Development of Apprenticeships Norfolk Network

14.1 The Committee discussed the report giving an update on progress with the Apprenticeships Training Agency pilot and progress to date with upscaling the model

14.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- The Employment and Skills Manager reported that, as the Apprenticeships Training Agency was now recruiting and retaining young people, Officers were researching ways to upscale to a larger cohort including potentially through use of social financing and the Apprenticeship levy
- Mrs C Walker thanked the Employment and Skills Manager and her team for their work to develop the Apprenticeships Training Agency project
- The Employment and Skills Manager reported that some young people were supported by NCC, presenting an opportunity to make savings through reducing access to services by supporting them into better economic opportunities
- The Agency worked with other organisations by being an umbrella agency to signpost or link young people with local support organisations as appropriate

14.3 The Committee:

- **NOTED** the progress to date with the pilot ATA project
- **ENDORSED** the direction of travel to develop and upscale the model to a wider cohort

14.4 Cllr Clancy spoke about his briefing to Members shown at appendix A to the minutes:

- it was apprenticeship week, therefore there would be increased publicity around apprenticeships to increase their profile among young people and employers
- Cllr Clancy discussed the importance of increasing the profile of apprenticeships nationally
- Mrs C Walker noted recent coverage on local radio about apprenticeships highlighting them as an alternative route to gain a degree

15. Disposal acquisition and exploitation of properties

15.1 The Committee considered the proposals in the report aimed at supporting Norfolk County Council priorities by exploiting properties surplus to operational requirements, pro-actively releasing property assets with latent value where the operational needs can be met from elsewhere and strategically acquiring property to drive economic growth and wellbeing in the County.

15.2 Members discussed the disposals and acquisitions outlined in the report:

- i) Disposal of Herondale, Bridewell Lane, Acle to Norse Care Ltd
 - the Head of Property confirmed that the sale of the asset was required to meet best value criteria; more accurate savings and costings could be provided further down the disposal process
 - Mr Jamieson thanked Officers for bringing forward this disposal, noting its importance in supporting the Council's commitment to caring for the elderly
- ii) Sale of the freehold interest in Hethel Engineering Centre to Hethel Innovation Ltd
 - Valuation on the site had changed since this was last brought to Committee; evaluation of the site had been carried out with Hethel Engineering and with two external agencies to reach a more accurate market value
- iii) Freehold transfer of 17 care homes to Norse Care Ltd
 - The lack of covenant on the sites, to protect their use, was queried; the Head of Property clarified that once the assets reached the end of their useable life as a care-home, NorseCare could sell them and reinvest the money in expanding provision; having a covenant on sites would limit their ability to do this
- v) 15 former highway landholdings
 - The site at Stow Bedon was queried; Mr F Eagle clarified that this site was not the area used for visitor parking on the Pingu Trail

15.3 The Committee

- (i) **AGREED** to the disposal of Herondale, Bridewell Lane, Acle to Norse Care Ltd and **AUTHORISED** the Head of Property to agree the terms of the disposal in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee/Portfolio Holder and report the agreement at a subsequent Committee/Cabinet meeting
- (ii) **AGREED** to the sale of the freehold interest in the Hethel Engineering Centre to Hethel Innovation Ltd for £2,700,000
- (iii) With 8 votes for and 2 abstentions, **AGREED** to the freehold transfer of the 17 care homes (listed in the table) to Norse Care Ltd at £1 each and **AUTHORISED** the Head of Property to agree the details of the transfer in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee/Portfolio Holder
- (iv) Formally **DECLARED** the land adjoining East Harling Fire Station (3042/013) surplus to County Council requirements and **INSTRUCTED** the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee/Portfolio Holder is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent Committee/Cabinet meeting.
- (v) Formally **DECLARED** the 15 former highway landholdings as listed in Appendix 2 surplus to County Council requirements and **INSTRUCTED** the Head of Property to dispose of the land parcels. In the event of a disposal receipt for each land parcel exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee/Portfolio Holder is authorised to accept the most advantageous offers and report the fact at a subsequent Committee/Cabinet meeting.
- (vi) Formally **DECLARED** Land at Hardingham Road, Hingham surplus to County Council requirements and **INSTRUCTED** the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee/Portfolio Holder is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent Committee/Cabinet meeting.
- (vii) **AGREED** to the leasing of Loddon Library Annexe, Church Plain (7066/027) to Loddon Parish Council for 15 years at a rent of £6,000 per annum on the terms agreed.
- (viii) **AGREED** to the leasing of part of the site at Roydon Primary School to UK Power Networks for 99 years to accommodate a new electricity substation.

16. Exclusion of the Public

- 16.1 After hearing the public interest test, the Committee **AGREED** to exclude the public under section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that items 17 and 18 involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information

17. County Farms Estate Management Update

- 17.1 The Committee received the report by the Head of Property

- 17.2 A Labour representative would be nominated to attend the meeting on the 17 April
- 17.3 The Committee:
- (i) **NOTED** the general update.
 - (ii) **APPROVED** the proposed tenancy changes that will take place this October.

18. Exempt minutes

- 18.1 The Committee **AGREED** the exempt minutes of the 15 January 2019

The Meeting ended at: 11.17

**Mr Barry Stone, Chairman,
Business and Property Committee**



If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language, please contact Customer Services on 0344 800 8020, or Text Relay on 18001 800 8020 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

Apprenticeship Briefing for Cllr Clancy for B &P meeting 5/3/19

Members will be aware that there is a report on the agenda today to update on progress with the Apprenticeship Training Agency supporting vulnerable young people to access and sustain an apprenticeship.

My update will focus on the latest data released recently which is also reported within the Performance Report.

The data covers the period Aug 18- Oct 18 shows a fall in the number of apprenticeship starts in Norfolk from 2080 in 2017/18 to 2030 in 2018/19 a decrease of 2%. However nationally starts have increased by 15% in the same period.

In terms of the age breakdown starts for 16-18-year olds (760) have fallen by 13% compared to 2% nationally, 19-24-year olds starts (560) are down by 8% whilst nationally starts are up by 11%. Starts in Norfolk for 25+ (710) saw an increase of 24%, nationally starts were up by 43% for this age group. (some of these figures will have been rounded up in the ESFA reporting process)

Focusing on the levels, starts at Intermediate Level (Level 2) dropped by 6% (900), nationally the fall was 2%. Advanced (Level 3) saw a drop of 6% (800) against a national increase of 13% whilst higher level apprenticeships (level 4 and above) saw an increase of 26% (330), nationally figures had almost doubled at a 99% increase.

Part of the challenge in Norfolk is that there are not enough higher and degree level opportunities which need to be seen as progression from levels 2 and 3. Stimulating employer demand is dependent on being able to access training locally which is largely focussed on levy paying organisations of which there are not vast numbers in Norfolk.

NCC continues to work in partnership on a number of strategies to increase the number of starts with a particular focus on 19-24 and 25+ levels 2 and 3, including

- Supply Chain Development
- Celebration event
- Health and Social Care Bid to support SME's

Members will have received an invitation to the celebration event at the UEA on Thursday evening which will be a fantastic way of celebrating the achievements of apprentices and to hear of some of their experiences along that way. Finalists in the Norfolk Apprenticeship of the Year competition have been invited to bring along their family, friends and employers to share in this occasion. If you have not already accepted the invitation and would like to come along then do please contact Jan who will organise a place for you.

This is a great way of raising the profile of apprenticeships and the benefits they can bring to both the employer and the individual.

Cllr Clancy