
BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

**Held on Wednesday, 19 September 2012 at 10.00 am in
Norfolk Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

PRESENT

Mr P.J. Duigan (Chairman)
Mr T R Carter (Vice-Chairman)
Mr S.G. Bambridge

Mr W.P. Borrett
Mr T. J. Jermy
Mrs S.M. Matthews

Also Present

Mrs B Canham

In Attendance

Jane Osborne
Roger Wilkin
Maxine O'Mahony
Fiona Inston
Ralph Burton
Kathryn Ralphs
Joanne Linton

- Committee Officer
- Interim Housing Manager
- Director of Commissioning
- Licensing & Business Support Manager
- Strategic Property Manager
- Senior HR Advisor
- Service Delivery Manager

51/12 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

52/12 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Steward and Skull.

Cllr Brenda Canham, the new Member for Thetford Abbey was in attendance and was welcomed by the Committee.

53/12 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

With regard to Item 7, Shared Services – Breckland ICT with Norfolk County Council, the Chairman and Cllr Borrett made Members aware that they were Members of Norfolk County Council.

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54/12 LOCAL JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE : 12 SEPTEMBER 2012

The Chairman explained that an addendum of technical Health & Safety documents would be included in the Health & Safety Policy and would be available on The Biz. With the agreement of the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee and HR, it would not be necessary for the technical documents to be brought to the General Purposes Committee unless any areas of concern were raised with regard to a particular document.

RESOLVED to adopt the unconfirmed Minutes of the Local Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 12 September 2012.

55/12 LEASE CAR SCHEME - SAVINGS FEASIBILITY

Ralph Burton, Strategic Property Manager went through the key points of the report which outlined the options for generating savings from the Lease Car Scheme at Breckland District Council.

He explained the cashable and non-cashable savings as detailed in the report which would be made if the recommendation was approved that the Lease Car Scheme was removed.

Concern was raised by a Member that there were no figures available with regard to the non-cashable savings and whether they would make the proposal the better deal to consider. The Strategic Property Manager stated that the difference in savings of the two options would be off-set by the savings made from the non-cashable elements and he explained how the subsidies, mileage allowances and costs were worked out.

In response to questions in relation to pool cars and specialist vehicles, the Strategic Property Manager stated that there were no pool cars available in Breckland Council or specialist vehicles.

Members were made aware of comments made by the Vice-Chairman of the Local Joint Consultative Committee one being with regard to an alternative scheme available which the Strategic Property Manager had agreed he would look into.

RESOLVED that :

1. Option 3 be authorised and the Lease Car Scheme be removed
2. HR initiate a review on all essential user staff plus those that will cease being lease car users (when their contracts end) to ensure the designation is correct for each post
3. HR to investigate re-introducing the Council's assisted

car purchase scheme, updating the scheme where appropriate

56/12 SHARED SERVICES - BRECKLAND ICT WITH NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

Maxine O'Mahony, the Director of Commissioning gave background information to the proposal on behalf of the Interim ICT/Customer Services Manager who was unable to attend, and Johanne Linton, ICT Team Leader presented the report.

All the key points of the proposal were as detailed in the report, some of which Members raised questions about. Both the Director of Commissioning and the ICT Team Leader clarified a number of the key points which covered, if the proposal was recommended for approval there would be a Governance Board; there would be improved resilience of service in all areas of ICT; opportunities for staff career progression and development; an exit clause and that the proposal was based on a 3 years savings model.

With regard to staff and Members who might see the change as a perceived loss of control, the Director of Commissioning explained that it would change the way that ICT was delivered and ways of working.

Those Breckland staff concerned had visited Norfolk County Council and they saw the proposal as an opportunity for career progression and development as well as one of resilience.

The Breckland ICT Team were thanked for the work they had done in the last year and some Members spoke about the superb service they had received from Norfolk County Council in the past.

RECOMMEND to Cabinet that :

They agree Option 2 – Enter Shared Services arrangement with Norfolk County Council for delivery of ICT services and,

1. Pursue shared services with Norfolk County Council for the delivery of ICT commencing 1 November 2012 subject to committee timetable/approval
2. Request approval to move to the next stage of taking a paper to full Council & Cabinet

57/12 STREET TRADING

The report was presented by Fiona Inston, Licensing and Business Support Manager which provided an update on the outcome of the recent statutory consultation process and recommended a revision of existing street trading provisions and an extension of a street trading consent scheme to the whole district.

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In response to a question in relation to picnic sites in the district being exempt as they often had mobile food vendors vehicles in them and the comment received from the Highways Agency with regard to the picnic site on the A11 at Roudham, the Licensing and Business Support Manager stated that each case would be looked at individually.

The annual fee of £408 for the initial grant or renewal of a Street Trading Consent was thought by some Members could cause difficulty to some start-up traders and that monthly instalment payments should be considered. The Licensing and Business Support Manager advised that she had spoken with Finance about that option but would speak further with them on what was involved. The Chairman was concerned about over complicating the system and made the suggestion that a half yearly fee be considered, to which a Member added that if a 6 monthly fee was brought in, it should be more than half the £408 fee.

At the General Purposes Committee held on 25 July, 2012 it had been asked if there was a possibility of having a reciprocal arrangement with Breckland Council's district neighbours so there would be no need for traders to be re-inspected by Breckland if they had been inspected by another authority. Whilst the Licensing and Business Support Manager stated that this had been looked into and a Member made it clear that he wanted to see a willingness to discuss with neighbouring authorities that certificates from other authorities were considered as this would be something that Breckland Council would be happy to do.

A Member questioned whether it would be more efficient if traders were given the incentive of a reduced fee for attending the Authority at an agreed time, which would then free up Officer time. Whilst that option had been fully considered, the Licensing and Business Support Manager explained that a mobile team was being encouraged for the district, and to make appointments for traders to attend the Council officers, would mean Officers having to return back to the office and would over complicate the system, and added that Officers wanted to visit traders on site to see their working environment.

The application process was explained to Members when asked whether inspections would be by appointment or surprise visits, and that a common sense approach would need to be taken with regard to different types of traders e.g those who were mobile, to which a Member felt that traders should be told in advance as to when a charge would be applied to them and not by a surprise visit.

The Licensing and Business Support Manager would take their suggestions to the Group she sat on which was the Norfolk Chief Environmental Health Officer Group.

**Fiona
Inston**

RESOLVED that the General Purposes Committee required the Licensing and Business Support Manager to make the Executive Member for Planning and Environmental Services aware of the General Purposes Committee desire for an agreement with other authorities, and for the portfolio holder to respond to the Committee either in person or by letter.

RECOMMEND to Council that :

1. *Approve in principle the designation of all streets in Breckland as 'Consent Streets' for the purposes of Street Trading***
2. Agree the Street Trading Standard Conditions as set out in Appendix 2 of the report
3. Agree an annual fee of £408 for the initial grant or renewal of a Street Trading Consent (subject to annual review)
4. Authorise the Executive Member for Planning & Environmental Services to vary the fee structure as appropriate
5. Authorise the Licensing and Business Support Manager in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning & Environmental Services to agree a fee of £0 for the grant or renewal of a Street Trading Consent for local charitable fund raising activities, as defined in section 3.1.4 of the report
6. Recommend to full Council that existing street trading restrictions in Thetford and Watton be rescinded as at 28 February 2013 and all streets in Breckland be designated as Consent Streets in accordance with section 3 and Schedule 4 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 with effect from 1 March 2013
7. A further report be brought for consideration by Members in the event of problems being identified following the introduction of the revised scheme

***Please note that Recommendation 1, "approve in principle the designation of all streets in Breckland as 'Consent Streets' for the purposes of Street Trading", has since been approved by Council on 20 September 2012.*

58/12 PAVEMENT LICENSING POLICY

The Licensing and Business Support Manager presented the report which provided an opportunity to implement a pavement licensing policy to deal with current issues with table and chairs and to formalise the enforcement regime associated.

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The process and mechanism for non-compliance was explained to Members and the Licensing and Business Support Manager was asked to provide the General Purposes Committee with information on the process carried out with regard to enforcement.

**Fiona
Inston**

The Licensing and Business Support Manager was asked to seek clarification about whether the Planning Department would require applicants to submit a planning application with regard to highway properties and to communicate the outcome back to Members.

**Fiona
Inston**

RECOMMEND to Council that :

They approve the Policy attached in Appendix One of the report subject to the addition of the words, "by an authorised person" with regard to the enforcement regime to pavement licences, therefore it should read,

The following enforcement regime will apply to pavement licences **by an authorised person.**

59/12 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 of the Schedule 12A to the Act.

60/12 FUTURE OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

This item was withdrawn prior to the meeting.

61/12 PROPOSED RESTRUCTURE OF HOUSING SERVICE

Roger Wilkin, Interim Housing Manager presented the report which sought comments upon proposals for restructuring the Council's Housing Service and stated that the consultation and responses had genuinely shaped and influenced the proposals and that dialogue with staff continued. He was very confident that the proposal was a structure fit for purpose and would deliver the level of savings required.

The Interim Housing Manager stated that the mechanism for reshaping the personnel structure would be done in a timely manner and without disruption but there could be some delays with regard to the configuration of the IT changes and advised of the risk register and control measures that would be implemented if required.

It was evident from some of the responses from staff following the consultation they had considered the service when making their

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comments, and a Member felt the process had been more engaging with the ability to change and he genuinely felt that there would be an improvement in the service which would save money and therefore should be encouraged.

RECOMMEND to Cabinet that :

It supported the Housing Service restructure as set out in Appendix 2 of the report

62/12 NEXT MEETING

The arrangements for the next meeting on 14 November 2012 at 10.00 a.m in the Norfolk Room were noted.

The meeting closed at 12.00 pm

CHAIRMAN