

BRECKLAND COUNCIL
FOREST HEATH DISTRICT COUNCIL
EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
ST EDMUNDSBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL
FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL
WAVENEY DISTRICT COUNCIL
SUFFOLK COASTAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

ANGLIA REVENUES AND BENEFITS PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE

**Held on Monday, 7 December 2015 at 10.00 am in the
Level 5 Meeting Room, Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford IP24 1BT**

PRESENT

Mr D Ambrose Smith (Chairman)	Mr S. Edwards Mr I Houlder
Mr C Seaton (Vice-Chairman)	Mr R Kerry
Cllr M Barnard	
Mr P M M Dimoglou	

Also Present

Cllr L Every

In Attendance

Jo Andrews	- Strategic Manager (Revenues)
Rob Bridge	- Corporate Director (Fenland)
Arthur Charvonja	- Strategic Director
Paul Corney	- Head of ARP
Davina Howes	- Head of Families & Communities
Julie Kennealy	- Executive Director (Commercialisation)(S151 Officer)
Adrian Mills	- Strategic Manager (Benefits)
Richard Quayle	- Director (Support Services)
Sarah Barsby	- Communications Manager (BDC)
Teresa Smith	- Democratic Services Officer

40/15 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

41/15 APOLOGIES

None.

42/15 URGENT BUSINESS

None.

43/15 DECLARATIONS

None.

Action By

44/15 PERFORMANCE REPORT (STANDING ITEM)

(a) Operational Performance

The Head of ARP presented the report and said a new document management system had been implemented across most of the partner Authorities.

Councillor Kerry asked when Suffolk Coastal would be using the new system. The Head of ARP confirmed that all partners would be using the new system by mid-January 2016.

(b) Balanced Scorecard

Members were happy with the format and content of the report.

(c) Financial Performance

The Executive Director of Commercialisation (BDC) presented the financial report and highlighted a surplus of £182,000. The Quarter 3 report would provide an insight as to how this would be allocated.

45/15 ARP JOINT COMMITTEE PARTNERSHIP BUDGET

The Executive Director Commercialisation (BDC) informed Members that the Operational Improvement Board felt that the budget information did not account for a number of issues which included expected changes to the financial climate. In addition there was no allowance for the setting of a Mid-Term Financial Plan.

It was suggested that an additional meeting be held in January 2016 so that a Medium Term Financial Plan could be put together and shared with Members. It was felt that given the complexity of changes it would be useful for all partners to understand the financial implications and to have clear targets. The Budget would also be linked to the Service Delivery Plan.

Councillor Barnard asked what the formula was for the enforcement costs. The Head of ARP explained it was calculated on the number of liability orders presented to bailiffs and then distributed accordingly via each partner Authority. The figures were assessed each year.

All Members agreed to have an additional meeting in January 2016 to discuss the budget.

46/15 SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN

The Head of ARP presented the report and said that strategic elements had been brought together into the Service Delivery Plan. The document harnessed the development strategy, linking to both Revenues and Benefits and the Trading Company, and how these would move forward.

The Chairman felt that education for Members was important across all authorities and would like this added as an item in the Service Delivery Plan.

The Head of ARP said the risk register would be presented to Members every six months and was reflective of issues within the Service Delivery Plan.

RESOLVED that:

1. The progress in respect of the September 2014 Service Delivery Plan be noted;
2. The revised service Delivery Plan be approved;
3. The contents of the report be noted;
4. The Risk Register be agreed.
- 5.

47/15 WELFARE REFORM UPDATE (STANDING ITEM)

The Strategic Manager (Benefits) ARP presented his report and said that following the Autumn Statement it was expected that there would be a full roll-out of Universal Credit by 2021. It had also been announced that the anticipated changes to the Tax Credits had been postponed and therefore did not cause any impact.

Members noted the report.

48/15 ENFORCEMENT AGENCY UPDATE

The Strategic Manager (Revenues) ARP informed Members that the Enforcement team continued to do well and had collected £500,000 to date.

Performance statistics had been provided comparing data between the Enforcement Team against an external Bailiff company. It was stressed that the team had only been in operation since July 2015 and it would be difficult to compare the data until the team had been in operation for a full financial year.

The Chairman suggested that the figures provided were rounded to the nearest pound. He also mentioned that it would be useful for Members to see the number of cases versus the value of collection.

Councillor Houlder asked if there was any shortfall in the fees. The Strategic Manager (Revenues) said that it was law that the fees were collected first.

Members were happy with the format that had been supplied and would like to see this included in future agendas.

49/15 ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP TRADING COMPANY - PROGRESS UPDATE

The Executive Director Commercialisation (BDC) informed Members that a lawyer had been commissioned and Senior Officers had agreed the draft Shareholder Agreement. It was anticipated that the draft document would be circulated to all partner Authorities shortly.

She introduced Sarah Barsby, Communications Manager (BDC) who gave a presentation on ways in which the Anglia Revenues Partnership Trading could raise its profile as a provider. A draft brochure was circulated which identified the unique selling point of ARPT

The Chairman thanked the Communications Manager for the presentation, and asked if ARP were the largest partnership. The Head of ARP confirmed that it was the largest partnership, but the third largest provider.

Action By

Councillor Dimoglou said that customers would only be interested in what other customers thought about ARP and felt that there would be a lot of power behind references within the brochure. The Communications Manager agreed and said that testimonials would be added along with case studies to the brochure.

The Corporate Director (Fenland) asked how the booklet would be used, and suggested that a stand was present at various events.

The Communications Manager said it was a very important comment and the brochure would form part of a bigger communications and marketing strategy. This would form the next piece of work.

The Corporate Director (Fenland) added that timing was very important and said that with changes afoot with Revenues and Benefits in the future, Councils would begin to ask questions and seek alternative ways of working.

The Chairman asked Members to provide feedback through their Directors to the Executive Director Commercialisation.

50/15 FORTHCOMING ISSUES (STANDING ITEM)

The Head of ARP reminded Members of the additional meeting in January 2016 to discuss Budgets.

Members were informed that ARP were providing a consultancy service to South Holland and East Lindsey Councils on the Revenues and Benefits strategic function. Members were in agreement with this undertaking.

51/15 NEXT MEETING

The arrangements for the next meeting scheduled for the 22 March 2016 at 10:00am in Level 5 Meeting Room, Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford were noted.

The meeting closed at 11.00 am

CHAIRMAN