

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

LOCAL JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

**Held on Tuesday, 1 June 2010 at 10.00 am in
Dereham Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

PRESENT

Employers' Side

Mr R.G. Kybird
Mrs S.M. Matthews
Mr K. Martin
Mr D R Williams JP (Chairman)

Staff Side

Mark Broughton
Richenda Farman
Dale Wilder

In Attendance

Lucy Powles	- Human Resources Manager
Trevor Holden	- Chief Executive
Maxine O'Mahony	- Director of Organisational Development
Robert Leigh	- Marketing and Communications Manager
Dominic Chessum	- Marketing & Communications Officer
Diana Dring	- Committee Officer

12/10 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

After being duly proposed and seconded it was

RESOLVED to re-elect Mr Williams as Chairman

13/10 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

After being duly proposed and seconded it was

RESOLVED to appoint Dr Z Waterford as Vice-Chairman, subject to her confirmation (as she was not present at the meeting).

14/10 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2010 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

15/10 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Zandra Waterford, Lisa Green and Lesley Heywood.

16/10 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None.

17/10 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The Marketing & Communication Officer gave a report and presentation on the Council's Digital and Social Media

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Development Strategy. Cabinet had approved the strategy in May 2010 to ensure the social media and website refresh project were kept on schedule and to provide training to protect staff using social media websites.

The Digital Strategy involved the creation of a new Council website and a Council presence on various social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. The Social Media Usage Policy and Guidelines ensured;-

- Control is held by the Communications Team
- Council branding is used on on-line sites
- Content is structured and uses appropriate 'tone of voice'
- Council policies and guidance was followed e.g. the Information Security Policy and Guidelines produced by ICT.

Social Media was particularly useful for staff working in departments such as Communities and Environmental Services. Although optional for staff to use social media as part of their job, it provided an additional tool to help staff engage and consult with residents.

The use of staff personal accounts on work computers would be subject to Manager approval and staff would operate within the existing Information Security Policy and Guidelines. Staff could already access the internet for personal use on a limited basis in their own time or with permission of their manager. Staff would be able to go on personal social media websites during their breaks as per the existing ICT policy. Lockdown would be in operation for inappropriate internet use and disciplinary action could follow. Use would be restricted during purdah in the lead up time to elections.

Staff training in using social media would be provided and would include clear guidance regarding the ICT security policy, which was also included on initial induction training. The training would include a 'jargon buster' session to help with definitions of new words and phrases. The training would help staff manage and minimise any risk.

Councillors did not fall under these policies as they were covered by the Members Code of Conduct.

The Marketing and Communications Manager explained that the Council would be investing in a social media monitoring tool which would help the Communications team to check any sites where a Breckland related issue arose. The team would be able to intervene and respond to comments on sites where considered appropriate e.g. for unauthorised use of the Breckland logo or if incorrect information had been put out.

A member of the Staff Side expressed disapproval that the policy had already been approved by Cabinet before being presented to this meeting and it was questioned which key staff would be using social media.

The Marketing and Communications Officer responded that key

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staff would be those whose work would benefit by using social media e.g. community services staff working with the public. The approval form required for permission to use social media would filter relevant users but it was not expected that great numbers of staff would be involved.

The Chairman requested that the use of social media be reviewed in 6 months to monitor usage and a report be taken to this committee.

A member of Staff Side commented that although there were apparently no budget implications there were obviously time implications for staff. He asked whether training would cover the ICT policy particularly the liability risks to staff.

The Marketing and Communications Officer explained that staff training would include the purpose, protection of self and the Council and how to use it. On-going training included review of usage and guidance on more productive use. The Staff would be reminded that their comments were intractable once they were placed on a site.

In response to a question regarding restrictions in terms of access and availability of sites to a wider sphere such as friends of friends, it was stated that this would depend on the use at the time e.g. if used for a conference it would be locked down to those on the conference. ICT policy should be brought in to cover usage.

Capita would decide whether their staff would have accounts but it would be expected that they would follow existing procedures regarding planning comments/issues on a social media websites.

The issue of Web Editors leaving and responsibility for this falling to the Communications team was raised by a member of Staff Side. In response it was stated that staff were being trained in data cleansing to ensure information on the website was up to date.

In response to a question by a member of Staff Side regarding the potential of meetings being webcast in the future site, it was stated that this could be possible but would depend on IT capability and whether Members' would want it. The chairman expressed the view that he would not like to see public meetings on the web.

A question was raised about staff using the sites to advertise events or place photographs particularly of children. The Chairman asked about the policy relating to this and how it would fit into the security policy.

The decision having already been made by Cabinet to approve the policy, the Chairman asked that the Committee's comments be taken forward. In particular, the issue of how social media use would fit with the ICT security policy.

RESOLVED that the use of social media be reviewed by this Committee in 6 months time.

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RECOMMEND to the General Purposes Committee that the comments made by the Local Joint Consultative Committee on 1 June 2010 be taken into account particularly the issue of how social media would fit in with the ICT policy.

18/10 BRECKLAND AND SOUTH NORFOLK COUNCILS SHARED SERVICES BUSINESS CASE

The Chairman asked whether members still wished to consider this item since South Norfolk Council's recent decision that they no longer regarded Breckland Council as their preferred partner of choice for shared services and consequently the business case was no longer relevant. Staff Side felt it was still relevant as they would like to enquire whether there were any other individual shared services likely going forward.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) informed the meeting that although formal notification had not been received from South Norfolk regarding the withdrawal of interest in shared services, it was expected. He expressed his disappointment as great savings would have been involved which would have helped the Council's shortfall in funding. However, Breckland had not lost its appetite for shared services and there were other lines of enquiry going forward e.g. with Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) and other authorities.

Staff Side questioned how further services could be incorporated with the ARP as a dedicated revenue benefits partnership. The CEO responded that the existing ARP framework could possibly be extended to include more services such as back office work. He felt it advantageous to work with an existing model and partnership with good working relations. Exploratory discussions were being held with Forest Heath District Council.

The Chairman commented on the amalgamation of statutory services which were distances apart and that the Council might need to look at central or localised services.

The CEO said that it was too early to look at other options and that much of the savings would be based on co-location and a single management structure. Local accountability was essential which was down to the Members of the Council. If delivery of services was outside the district it would not impact on knowledge or ability to deliver a local service.

A member asked about expanding the scrutiny function to which the CEO responded that this would be a factor but the council would need to work together with Forest Heath. There was a need to look at broadening the current partnership and potentially deepening other services.

The CEO added that there had been a palpable sense of relief from staff when they were informed that South Norfolk had withdrawn from shared services with Breckland. He warned that the Council will have to reign back how services were delivered

and that staffing was a secondary consideration to the service. There would have to be a level of changes when 60% of the Council budget was about staff. A clearer view of staff cuts over the next few years will be available in the autumn. The Council needed to make sure the impact on staff and community services was minimised.

The Chairman commented that cuts would depend on the forthcoming budget in June but there was uncertainty as to their level and severity. He considered that the Council had been mindful in providing efficient services so that the cuts might have a less severe effect in Breckland than in other areas. He wanted to revisit this subject as an agenda item in 6 months when the picture would be clearer.

RESOLVED that the effect of budgetary restraints on staffing be considered by this Committee in 6 months.

19/10 NEXT MEETING

The arrangements for the next meeting on 8th July were noted.

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The meeting closed at 11.15 am

CHAIRMAN

VICE-CHAIRMAN