

**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**AUDIT COMMITTEE**

**Held on Friday, 5 November 2010 at 10.00 am in  
St George's Room, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

**PRESENT**

Mr G.P. Balaam

Mr R.G. Kybird (Vice-Chairman)

Mr C.R. Jordan (Chairman)

**Also Present**

Mr P.J. Duigan

Mr M.A. Kiddle-Morris

**In Attendance**

Margaret Bailey

- Senior Accountant Capital and Treasury

Julie Britton

- Senior Committee Officer

Mark Stanton

- Head of Economic Development

Simon Best

- Project Manager

Alder Tye

- Senior Resource Efficiency Facilitator

**67/10 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 1)**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr R Childerhouse, Mr P Hewett, Mr D Myers and Mrs L Monument.

**68/10 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 4)**

Mr M Kiddle-Morris and Mr P Duigan.

**69/10 REV ACTIVE PROJECT BUDGET AND RISKS REVIEW (AGENDA ITEM 5)**

Mr M Kiddle-Morris, the Executive Member for the Economic and Commercial Portfolio, introduced Mr Simon Best, the Project Manager and Mrs Alder Tye, the Senior Resource Efficiency Facilitator who were in attendance to provide Members with a more detailed presentation on the REV Active project. He was pleased to announce that REV Active had been one of the finalists in the 'Creating the Future Awards' 2010 hosted by the Homes & Communities Agency which he felt deserved recognition and praise.

The Head of Economic Development was required to attend Audit Committee meetings to update Members on the REV Active project every six months for the life of the project.

The REV Active initiative was a Council led flagship resource efficiency project targeting small to medium enterprises (SMEs) to reduce their costs through the efficient use and management of their water, waste and energy. The £3 million project had received funding from Europe, Local Authorities including Breckland Council and private sector businesses.

**Action By**

**Action By**

The project was currently being delivered within budget. Previous under-spend against profile had been reversed and the deviation from overall profiled spend had decreased since the end of June 2010.

The project under-spend equated to a proportion of the aerial thermal imaging work that had not been completed due to unsuitable weather conditions and the late recruitment of some project staff. The expenditure was likely to increase as the thermal imaging had been programmed for the month of December and it was hoped that the flyover would be completed by Christmas, again, this was dependant on the weather conditions.

The REV Active project was subject to review by the REV Project Board which met quarterly and followed Prince 2 project principles.

The Head of Economic Development handed the meeting over to Mr Simon Best and Mrs Alder Tye. A presentation was provided.

The project provided direct, hands-on assistance for businesses to cut costs through utilities management and improved efficiency. Businesses would be able to save money whilst acting in a greener way. It was hoped that through this project an environment would be created where local business communities could share ideas, best practice and benefit from working together

From Thetford to Norwich, REV ACTIVE was a three-year package of free, confidential and impartial support for small and medium-sized businesses along Norfolk's A11 corridor.

The project focused on businesses with higher energy bills so that long term rewards could be gained.

Case studies were shown of three businesses in the area; these were classed as ambassadors for the project.

The Head of Economic Development explained that REV Active was not only about helping businesses to reduce costs, it was about building relationships and helping them as much as possible to make key changes to their business by introducing and recommending other money saving initiatives. Each of these changes had identified business savings as well as carbon savings. This methodology took the pressure off busy managers who could not spare the time to find out how much they were paying for their energy costs etc.

REV Active also advised and offered free grants that were available.

Mr Best felt that this initiative fitted in well with the Government's own agenda of focusing on smaller businesses. The Chairman urged the Team to try and find a way to relate this project to local enterprise partnerships (LEPs). The Head of Economic Development said that he would like the RT Hon Eric Pickles and the RT Hon Dr V Cable MP to support this project.

A Member asked about the risk strategy. In response, Members were informed that the Team wanted the project to grow and expand but there was an exit strategy in place.

**Action By**

Another Member asked whether the project would expand in time to cover other areas. The Head of Economic Development explained that the funding that had been made available had been based on a certain spatial area but in time it was hoped that the REV Active project would broaden out so that many more businesses in the area could benefit from the assistance available.

A Member felt that the Project team should ensure that the project kept in line with the new Coalition Government's way of thinking; take into account European low carbon Policy agendas; and look out for other useful opportunities such as bringing on board other agencies etc.

All the aforementioned matters to be reported to the Audit Committee in six months time.

The report was otherwise noted.

**70/10 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 6)**

The next ordinary meeting of the Audit Committee would be held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2011 at 10.00am in the Norfolk Room.

The meeting closed at 11.40 am

CHAIRMAN