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**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE**

**Held on Tuesday, 1 March 2011 at 9.30 am in  
Norfolk Room, Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham NR19 1EE**

**PRESENT**

Mr W.H.C. Smith (Chairman)      Lady Fisher  
Mr P.D. Claussen

**Also Present**

Mr P.J. Duigan

**In Attendance**

Stephanie Butcher	- Principal Officer Licensing and Business Support
Monica Coffey	- Customer Programme Manager
Adam Colby	- Senior Business Improvement Officer
Mark Finch	- Head of Finance
David Green	- Corporate Projects Manager
Stephen James	- Policy and Performance Manager
Robert Leigh	- Assistant Director, Communications and Communities
Maxine O'Mahony	- Director of Corporate Resources
Helen McAleer	- Senior Committee Officer
Simon Stubbs	- ICT Project Manager

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**16/11 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Chairman advised that he would have to leave the meeting at 10.30. He therefore requested that certain items be brought forward on the agenda for discussion before he left, and this was agreed.

**17/11 MINUTES**

The following points were noted:

The Emergency Planning Manager had advised that quotes were currently being obtained for a generator at Elizabeth House.

The new website had launched on 19 January 2011. It had since been affected by a virus which had caused it to be off-line for a while. It was clarified that the virus had been aimed at the off-site web host server and not directly at Breckland Council.

The VM Ware had been purchased and was up and running.

The Chairman asked if the Hometrack system had been

**Action By**

purchased. It was thought that the funds were not available until the next financial year. The Senior Business Improvement Officer would check that.

**Adam  
Colby**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**18/11 APOLOGIES**

None.

**19/11 URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**20/11 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No declarations were made.

**21/11 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING**

Mr P Duigan was in attendance.

**22/11 CUSTOMER SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Lady Fisher presented the plan which she said was a good snapshot of the existing service and outlined the improvements made. The next step would be to sort out integration with South Holland.

The Customer Programme Manager explained that the plan showed what was done in the Customer Contact Centre (CCC) and the Customer Service Centres (CSCs) and the intention was to extend this to the whole Council. The objectives were clear. Information from the public and the Council's systems would be utilised to maximise the potential of the CCC.

The Chairman asked if the data provided by the CCC was being analysed and utilised to push services forward and the Policy and Performance Manager confirmed that they had made a start by collecting data on calls received following letters generated by the ARP. They would be meeting with ARP to discuss changes to the letters to reduce the number of calls. As ARP paid the CCC to take their calls it was in their interest to reduce them.

A Member suggested that there was an opportunity for the CCC to offer to take calls for the DWP on the new 'single benefit' recently announced by the Government.

With regard to Capita, the Customer Programme Manager advised that they were awaiting sign-off of scripting which would allow more information to be provided at the first point of contact. It was up to individual service areas to keep the CCC informed of any changes to ensure that the information they provided was up-to-date.

There was a need to change the way in which money was taken for SERCO services. Currently they charged the Council £8 for every

**Action By**

cheque. Members felt that Council policies should influence the way services were provided on behalf of the Council. The Senior Business Improvement Officer suggested that the CCC could be used as a client manager to monitor the service received.

The Chairman said this requirement needed to be added into the document.

Members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO CABINET** that the Customer Service Improvement Plan be adopted subject to the inclusion of a requirement to use the gathered data to client manage partners and other out-sourced services.

**Monica Coffey**

**23/11 ICT INSOURCING**

The Corporate Projects Manager and the ICT Project Manager gave a brief update on the current situation.

Steria ICT staff were two thirds of the way through the consultation process and bi-weekly meetings were being held.

High risk contracts had been identified and would either be extended or novated. Where that was not possible new contracts would be negotiated.

The Helpdesk would use an in-house system developed by the Business Improvement Team on the new version of Lagan. This was aimed for release one month before the transition date, although the new version of Lagan would go-live in the Customer Contact Centre on 7 March 2011.

The project was due for completion before the end of April and the Chairman expected a seamless transfer and no slippage.

The Director of Corporate Resources advised that the Corporate Projects Manager was now programme managing several ICT projects.

The item would remain on the agenda until the project was completed.

**24/11 OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATION FOR AMALGAMATION OF BISC AND CPWG**

The Senior Business Improvement Officer presented the report which had compared the Business Improvement Sub-Committee and the Capital Programme Working Group to see if they could be combined to provide one body to oversee all capital spend projects for the Council.

The Chairman was happy with the proposal as it was something he had suggested some years previously. At that time it had not been a viable option, but now it was. He asked who the responsible officer would be.

The Head of Finance would assume that role. He asked Members to review the draft Terms of Reference. In response to a question he confirmed that the new Committee would have responsibility for managing risk.

**Action By**

The Chairman was not in favour of quarterly meetings. It was pointed out that this would fit in with performance monitoring. The new Committee would have a structured strategy with identified projects and a forward work programme. It was suggested that the meetings remain six weekly until a new work plan was in place.

However, the Chairman felt that there were other items that needed to be kept under review. He felt that the Business Improvement Team and Finance should be joint leads for the new Committee. He also felt strongly that as an entrepreneurial Council, Marketing should be included on the agenda. There had already been cases where projects had failed to realise potential benefits because of a lack of marketing.

Members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO CABINET:**

- 1) the formation of a new Sub-Committee combining and replacing the Capital Programme Working Group (CPWG) and the Business Improvement Sub Committee (BISC); and
- 2) approval of the Terms of Reference set out at Appendix 1 of the report.

**25/11 PROJECT PROGRESS**

(a) Licensing and Business Support

The Senior Business Improvement Officer presented the report.

The project had been due for completion in October 2010. This target had not been met and although the programme was now live, various work streams had not been completed. The reasons for this failure were explained. The current position of all work-streams was set out at Appendix 1 to the report and the benefits assessment in days per annum was set out at Appendix 2.

The Principal Officer Licensing and Business Support reminded Members that in her original report in 2009 she had set out the requirements to comply with EU Directives with regard to an on-line self-service system and an on-line service register. These requirements had not yet been met.

There were still some benefits to achieve and Members were asked for their views on the way forward. Three options were provided.

1. Do nothing  
Accept the issues with the Licensing team in anticipation these may improve. Determine who will be responsible for the outstanding deliverables within the programme and who will implement these.
2. Close the project  
Close the programme and formally complete a project closure document.  
This will not meet the programmes original aim and objectives and the business case on which it was started.

**Action By**

3. Close the project and migrate outstanding deliverables to STPs  
Migrate the outstanding deliverables into Service Team Plans. These can be revisited at such time as resources permit this to be finalised. In some instances the remaining deliverables could be completed in isolation by the team should the team be static in its resource.

The expected benefits could still be realised.

The Chairman did not want to lose the work already done but he did not want the Business Improvement Team (BIT) to spend any more time on the project. The Assistant Director, Communications and Communities advised that the main requirement was to complete the data migration, which could be done without support from the BIT but which would require the release of funds to employ temporary staff to complete the job by the end of March.

The Head of Finance thought that funds could be found from under-spends in other areas of the budget.

**Recommendation**

The implementation of option 3 – Close the programme and migrate outstanding deliverables into Service Team Plans.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (1) Option 3 of the report would be implemented; the project would be closed and outstanding deliverables would be migrated to the Service Team Plan; and
- (2) Funds would be identified to employ temporary staff to complete the data migration.

***The Chairman left the meeting.  
Mr Claussen assumed the Chair.***

Once the data migration was completed the Corporate Projects Manager would work with the Assistant Director, Communications and Communities to program work on the other outstanding work-streams. Mobile working, Partnership working and trading would all be progressed then.

The Principal Officer Licensing and Business Support was asked how long it would take to set up a partnership and she advised that it would take 12 to 18 months. She thought that she would need to start scoping potential partners within the next three to four months or risk missing the window of opportunity. She was therefore tasked with producing a report setting out future marketing strategy.

The Senior Business Improvement Officer asked if it would be feasible to explore the possibilities of working in partnership with ARP.

**Stephanie  
Butcher**

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**26/11 FINANCIAL UPDATE**

The Head of Finance presented this item.

The table showed the revised budget figures broken down to show the amount already spent and the amount needing to be carried forward to complete each project. In total £359,820 would be carried forward for released projects. There were three unreleased projects, not yet approved by the Sub-Committee.

The Head of Finance had reviewed the progress of various projects and suggested that £57,000 should be released from the ICT Strategy Projects budget for project management. That would leave £220,000 for Strategic Projects which would need to be identified and then a recommendation should be made to Cabinet to roll that budget forward.

The Director for Corporate Resources pointed out that the budget for Member's ICT Refresh would not be spent until after the elections. Various possible solutions had been identified and the overall cost of that project was not yet known, therefore the £87,000 would also need to be carried forward. She suggested that the two ICT Project Managers should identify where the money should be spend.

It was noted that a budget for general refresh would need to be included in the programme for release in the next financial year.

It was **RESOLVED** that £57,000 should be released from the ICT Strategic Projects budget for Project Management.

**Kevin  
Rump,  
Simon  
Stubbs**

**27/11 MEMBERS ICT OPTIONS**

The Senior Business Improvement Officer presented the report which was for information only and would be considered by the Joint Audit and Scrutiny Panel on 2 March 2011.

The report reviewed options for replacement IT equipment for Members from May 2011. It provided an overview of how each option met requirements and gave a breakdown of the associated costs.

The report was noted.

**28/11 ARP - ICT AND TELEPHONY**

The ICT Project Manager gave a verbal update on the project.

The Mitel telephone equipment was in place and would go live on 7 March 2011. Chip PCs were also all in place, ready for when St Edmundsbury joined the ARP Partnership. Transition to the new servers would take place at the end of the financial year. The Disaster Recovery system had been tested and was fit for purpose.

At Dereham the Voice-over IP would go live the following week and would improve functionality. Work was progressing well.

All staff had been trained on Version 8 of Lagan, which would also go live

on 7 March 2011, but training for other systems was not yet in place. The new version of Lagan would allow 20 officers to take calls at the same time.

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**29/11 NEXT MEETING**

The arrangements for the next meeting on 12 April 2011 were noted.

The meeting closed at 11.05 am

CHAIRMAN