

47/11 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 3)

(a) (1) - Business Improvement Sub-Committee

(a) Actions from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 March 2011

Referring to the penultimate action at bullet point no. 6, the Deputy Chief Executive advised that the Marketing & Communications Manager would be asked to report to the next meeting in regard to what the Council did in terms of marketing. The Chairman felt that there were three areas of the Council that could be marketed:

- Licensing
- optimisation of Council Tax; and
- the Contact Centre

He suggested that the said Officer should provide Members with some idea of marketing requirements as he could not see how an entrepreneurial council could be complete without such marketing services. He felt that an options paper would be useful as it would provide Members with an idea of how to proceed.

A Member agreed that Licensing would be a good product to market.

The Deputy Chief Executive stated that the Council was not set up to deliver a Marketing Strategy or a Business Development Strategy as the authority did not have the resource or the expertise at this present time.

(b) Members' ICT Options (Minute No. 40/11)

The Council's E-Champion advised that all new Members had received their new IT equipment and were now connected.

(c) Steria Insourcing Project (Minute No. 41/11)

The ICT Support Manager advised that a final exit meeting was being held on 8 June 2011 to sign off the contract. The ICT Project Manager explained that although it had been a seamless transfer, there were still a number of contracts to come forth.

(d) Finance (Minute No. 42/11)

The recommendation to carry over the unspent funding of £548,837 had been approved at the Cabinet meeting on 31 May 2011.

(e) To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 April 2011

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(b) (2) - Capital Programme Working Group - 9 November 2010

- The Chairman highlighted the £1m street lighting budget that had

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Dominic Chessum

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been approved and wanted assurance what the implications would be on the Capital budget.

- At section 4, it was agreed that the post project review for Thetford Market Place could be removed as it had been completed.
- The *making good paper* for the post project review at Elizabeth House was still awaited; the retention would be paid once the certificate had been received.
- The project update for the Asset Management System had gone live and the data from the manual system had been transferred. Both systems would be running alongside each other for the next six months. The post project review had been completed and had been signed off and therefore could be removed.
- The funding to secure a tenant in one of the Council's commercial properties had been released from the Capital Programme for a replacement roof and therefore could be deleted from the report.

48/11 ACTIONS ARISING (AGENDA ITEM 4)

A number of matters had been discussed under Minute No. 47(a) above.

(a) Emergency Generator

The Chairman had heard that the wind-speed would decrease in the future which could, in turn, create severe power fluctuations by 2015. He felt, therefore, that there was a greater need for a back up generator to be installed at the Council.

The Emergency Planning Officer advised that she had had a very good meeting with Kings & Barnham (organised by Asset and with ICT in attendance) to look at the different options for the provision of a back up generator for Elizabeth House. She explained, however, that the cost of supplying a smaller unit to power part of the building was not cost effective due to additional electrical works that would be required. Figures were provided for the different options, with a quotation of £33,957.40 plus VAT for a generator to provide power to the whole of Elizabeth House. It was highlighted that additional costs would be incurred, for example, for planning permission, provision for a hard standing, installation of the unit to the hard standing, on-going maintenance, and fuel costs.

The Assistant Director of Finance explained that further quotes would be required at that level to adhere to Standing Orders.

It was further explained that a Health & Safety Assessment of the bunker (including water hygiene management) had been undertaken by Norfolk County Council with a list of recommendations (e.g. fire risk assessment, PAT testing) if it was to be considered as a Work Recovery Area for business continuity purposes. The bunker, although currently limited, had a back up generator, telephones, wireless router and broadband connectivity. The facility could accommodate up to 25 people depending on the layout, and could

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support an Incident Management Team and critical services staff in the event of an incident affecting Elizabeth House. Business rates of £3k and the costs of regular generator maintenance were currently paid for from within the Emergency Planning budget.

The Emergency Planning Officer asked for guidance on the way forward as she felt that the bunker, if all tests were carried out, could be used for business continuity. In response to a question, Members were informed that business continuity was on the Risk Register as a medium risk at present. It was explained that under the Civil Contingencies Act the Council had a statutory duty to have business continuity management in place to ensure continuity of critical services in the event of a worse case scenario.

A Member felt that a further quote for a generator was required as he thought the quote from Kings & Barnham was too expensive. He also felt that monies should not be wasted on the bunker when the Council already had a perfectly good building in Elizabeth House. In response to a question about how much workspace was available at Breckland House in Thetford, Members were informed that four floors were probably used.

The Chairman advised that the cost of bringing the bunker up to a working standard would have to be one of the main factors to consider and urged the Council not to be complacent as accidents could happen. He felt that the Emergency Planning Officer and the Asset Management Team should work together on this and the rates should be reviewed. It was not good practice to pay £3k per annum to stand empty.

After further discussion, it was suggested that the bunker should be passed over to the Overview & Scrutiny Commission for a more in-depth discussion of what the Council's requirements were for business continuity. Asset Management would have to be involved as part of the deliberations.

The Emergency Planning Officer advised that the bunker, if refurbished, could be marketed for other opportunities such as a training facility.

It was agreed that this matter should be brought back to the next meeting.

**Ralph
Burton,
Teresa
Cannon,
Councillor
Philip
Cowen,
Teresa
Smith,
Steve
Udberg**

49/11 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 7)

Mr G. Bambridge and Mr P. Duigan.

50/11 CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE (AGENDA ITEM 8)

(a) Capital Programme 2010/11 - 2011/12

This report was valuable information for Members to note as the carry-over request had already been agreed by Cabinet on 31 May 2011. The funding for the three key ICT projects had not yet been released.

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A Member referred to the Licensing Systems and asked if the funding being carried forward would be used for what it was intended for. The ICT Project Manager stated that the data migration was almost complete and the carried over Capital monies related to a set of deliverables which would be discussed under agenda item 12.

(b) Available Funding

No update provided.

(c) Capital Strategy

The Capital had been moved to the Cabinet meeting in January 2012 to bring it in line with the budget setting.

Members input would be welcomed.

51/11 GOVERNANCE REPORT ON CAPITAL PROGRAMME (AGENDA ITEM 9)

The Assistant Director of Finance explained that this was the Governance report that the Capital Programme Working Group used to receive before the Business Improvement and Project Sub-Committee was formed. The report contained progress reports at various stages to ensure that projects were being delivered within budget. The key column to note was called the 'watch list'; this required further review by the Sub-Committee and would be brought back on a regular basis for Members to manage.

52/11 RELEASE OF FUNDING (AGENDA ITEM 10)

The Assistant Commercial Property Manager stated that the Street Lighting Replacement Programme was in the Capital Programme but the allocation of funding required the Sub-Committee's agreement.

Within the district, Breckland had responsibility for over 2,200 footway street lighting columns. The priority was to replace the 827 concrete and timber columns on a four year rolling basis. The cost to replace each column was, in the worst case scenario, £1200. Tenders would have to be invited for the contract.

In terms of risk, street lighting had been identified as a risk and was on the Risk Register at a score of 2.

The Council would also be undertaking condition surveys on the remaining steel and aluminium street light columns and would form a separate project. Should all the steel columns need replacing, a further £1.7m revenue budget would be required. This additional budget would need full Council approval as it was outside the current Capital Programme.

As this project required significant investment, the Assistant Director of Finance suggested that the Sub-Committee be provided with a six monthly progress report.

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A Member asked if the Council, when installing these new columns, could ensure that they blended in with the street scene in specific areas

Another Member asked if the wooden columns had any value and if they did who would benefit. The Building Services Manager advised that this, as well as the previous request, would be reflected in the contract.

In response to a question as to whether all street columns were still required, Members were informed that this would be up to the Town Council to decide. The Chairman pointed that he had mentioned about co-ordinating the street lighting review with the Police so that low crime areas had less lighting.

Following further discussion, the Chairman was satisfied with the report subject to the names of personnel affected being written in full in future, and it was

**Margaret
Bailey**

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the funding amount of £1m be released from the Capital Programme over a four year period as follows:
 - £400,000 in 2011/12; and
 - a further £200,000 per annum in the following three years.
- 2) the Sub-Committee be provided with a six monthly progress report;
- 3) the Sub-Committee be provided with a project end report 2014/15 (exact date to be agreed); and
- 4) a post project review be provided within three months of project end.

53/11 CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTRE - SINGLE BENEFIT (AGENDA ITEM 11)

The ICT Consultant explained that he was putting together a short review on a number of projects which would put the Contact Centre in a better light. He highlighted what was being covered.

The Chairman knew that the Council was obligated to put everything on-line as it was cheaper but had concerns that not everyone had access to a computer which he considered not to be best value for customers. With this in mind, he felt that the Customer Service Centres should be retained.

The ICT Consultant stated that the Contact Centre was one of the best he had seen. He would try and get better control over all channels (such as face to face, IT etc) and, with this in mind, further research would be carried out with the Council's customers.

The Chairman said that an options paper was being prepared in relation to ICT.

One of the biggest issues at present was Member roll out and the Chairman asked if this was still within budget. In response, the ICT

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Consultant explained that it would be close. In terms of Member roll out, there was some order now in relation to out of hour's service and they were happy with the service being provided.

As far as the options paper was concerned, a draft was being prepared for the end of the month which would set out the pros and cons. The ICT Consultant was having great difficulty in getting information from South Holland; however, Compass Point would be putting forward a proposal by the end of the week; this would be just one option, another option included building on the ARP Partnership. Further discussion would be had with the Chief Executive about preferred options. The Chairman asked if the Customer Contact Centre and the ICT options, once received, could be joined. The ICT Consultant pointed out that this was not something his agency would normally cover; however, he would be reviewing the ICT in both authorities to gauge strengths and weaknesses as this would deliver cost benefits by merging the infrastructure; and with a single ICT Strategy, services and resources could be shared between authorities.

It was noted that Breckland Council's Information and Security Policy had been updated.

A Member could recall when the Contact Centre first opened that the advice back then had been that it would sit well with ICT. Members were informed that there were no synergies between the two; there were greater synergies between the Web and the Contact Centre; the Web, as a function, did not sit well with ICT.

Referring to video conferencing, a Member asked if some of the Committee meetings, such as planning, could be streamed on the Web. In response, the ICT Consultant stated that as far as he was aware this was not on the programme although he did know of some authorities who had bought such equipment which he could approach for further information.

With regard to Contact Centre footfall, a number of options were being considered, such as different opening hours and putting some calls through to the Service Centres to create greater productivity.

In response to a question about whether the One-Stop Bus was used in the towns, Members were informed that it was currently being trialled in the towns as it had not been popular in the villages. The funding was due to run out in July/August 2011 so a decision would be required as to whether the Council carried on with the bus.

The report was otherwise noted.

54/11 LICENSING - MOBILE WORKING (AGENDA ITEM 12)

The ICT Project Manager provided Members with a list of deliverables which gave an indication as to where the Council was at within the original PID.

Referring to mobile working, the ICT Team had managed to prove the concept of mobile working in-house. Breckland Council would be the first

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in the country to put barcodes on taxi plates. The next step was to purchase a scanning device. The BES Server licences for blackberry devices had been set up and the Lalpac Enterprise had been enabled and configured. However, this had been temporarily switched off until the scanner had been purchased.

The Chairman asked if the Staffing issues within the Licensing Team had been resolved. The Assistant Director of Commissioning explained that the Principal Licensing officer was still on long term sick leave; therefore, the reliance sat with the next Senior Officer. Further to this, Environmental Health which Licensing came under was still without a Manager; however, he was pleased to announce that an interim Environmental Health Manager should be in place by the end of the week to assist with this type of work going forward. Officers were coping well in the circumstances and were keeping the day job going.

The ICT Project Manager pointed out that some work could still move forward.

Another outstanding deliverable – data migration – was almost complete and Officers were now starting to use on-line records.

The Chairman felt it was pointless moving forward with mobile working until the new structure was in place. Members were informed that one of the tasks for the new Environmental Health Manager was to look at licensing to assess whether the structure was correct before any trading took place.

In response to a question in relation to the scanner type, the ICT Project Manager explained that he was considering a jacket with a built in scanner that covered the Blackberry device. He would also be looking at developing the apps on the device.

A Member said that he could recall a similar test being done on a benefit claim at someone's home and asked for some research to be carried out as to where the Council was at then with such mobile devices.

Referring to connectivity, it was noted that the majority of licensing work would be in the towns where the coverage was good.

55/11 LICENSING PROPOSALS (AGENDA ITEM 13)

The Assistant Director of Commissioning and the Senior Business Improvement Officer would soon be meeting with Officers of Forest Heath District Council who were very keen to discuss Breckland's Licensing proposals in detail. South Holland District Council that also used the Lalpac system was also being looked at. There were savings to be made whatever route was taken - trading or shared services.

Members would be kept informed of any progress.

**Kevin
Rump**

The meeting closed at 11.00 am

CHAIRMAN