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**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AND PROJECTS SUB-COMMITTEE**

**Held on Tuesday, 30 August 2011 at 9.30 am in  
St George's Room, Elizabeth House, Dereham NR19 1EE**

**PRESENT**

Mr W.H.C. Smith (Chairman)      Mr A.C. Stasiak

**Also Present**

Mr S.G. Bambridge                      Mr P.J. Duigan

**In Attendance**

Phil Adams	- Interim Environmental Health Manager
Margaret Bailey	- Senior Accountant Capital and Treasury
Brian Cox	- IT Consultant
Sue Daniels	- Electoral Services Manager
Mark Finch	- Assistant Director of Finance
Joanne Linton	- ICT Support Manager
Helen McAleer	- Senior Committee Officer
Maxine O'Mahony	- Director of Commissioning
Dylan Powles	- Customer Contact Manager
Kevin Rump	- ICT Project Manager
Ben Wood	- Business Development Manager

**Action By**

**64/11 MOBILE WORKING**

This item was taken first as the Interim Environmental Health Manager was in attendance via the Video Conferencing facility.

He advised the Sub-Committee that the Licensing project was moving forward. An interim Team Leader had been appointed and the team were working with the new Lalpac system.

The ICT Project Manager said that the hardware for mobile working had been installed and configured the previous week and was being tested. It enabled the team to scan bar codes on licences and taxi plates, etc. Phase two of the mobile working project would enable updates to be made in the field, but this required input from Lalpac which had not yet been delivered.

The Chairman asked if the mobile working facility could be rolled out to other areas of the Council and the ICT Project Manager explained that the system had been designed specifically for Licensing. However, it was configurable with Lalpac's assistance in development. He noted that Lalpac had been taken over by Idox which might offer integration to other products.

**Action By**

The Interim Environmental Health Manager thought that it was important to ensure that the system was working well and efficiencies were developed before it was rolled out to other areas or third parties. It was expected that mobile working would be fully up and running within the financial year. He pointed out that both the Licensing team and the Business Improvement Team had put in a lot of work and had gained a lot of experience from implementing the project.

The Chairman thanked him for the update and said he was happy with the progress.

**65/11 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)**

The Chairman asked what progress had been made with the draft report about the Customer Contact Centre's involvement with the Single Benefit. The Customer Contact Manager advised that further information was awaited from the ARP. The Chairman was concerned that there might be significant staffing implications and the Director of Commissioning agreed but said that more information was needed as proposals were still in draft.

It was clarified that Members had not yet received training on WebEx or Video Conferencing. It was also confirmed that Skype did not meet Government GCSX requirements.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(a) Actions Arising

Marketing

The Marketing item would be brought back to a future meeting once the newly appointed Business Development Manager had had time to look at it. He would present suggestions and options rather than a fully worked up strategy.

**Ben Wood**

**66/11 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr S Askew.

Mr A Stasiak noted that he would have to leave the meeting at 10.30.

**67/11 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 3)**

None.

**68/11 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 4)**

No declarations were made.

**69/11 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 5)**

Mr Bambridge and Mr Duigan were in attendance.

**70/11 CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE (AGENDA ITEM 6)**

The Senior Accountant Capital and Treasury updated Members on the budget for the year. Of the £3 million allocated, about £1 million was spent or committed. The Corporate Management Team would be challenging the future programme to ensure that the budget was spent.

**Action By**

The Chairman noted that Thetford and Snetterton were not included in the list and the Senior Accountant Capital and Treasury advised that they were not part of the current programme. A bid was being developed as part of the current capital budget setting process and would be presented to Members for approval in due course. The Chairman highlighted the requirement to budget for Thetford and Snetterton.

The IT Consultant said that there was a need to get the IT Strategy produced and approved as it would provide a steer for the future. It should be ready within the next two months.

The Chairman pointed out that the Customer Contact Centre was also not on the list. He asked how the move to one contact number was progressing and the Contact Centre Manager advised that the technology was available but work was being done to determine its effect. A report would be presented to the Sub-Committee when the information was available.

**Dylan  
Powles**

On another matter, Mr Stasiak asked Officers to ensure that when Match Funding was granted to an organisation there should be a sign erected at the premises to publicise the fact that the Council had provided financial support.

**Maxine  
O'Mahony**

The Assistant Director of Finance advised that there were a number of proposals in the pipeline which could use up all of the available funding. Some of the schemes needed further work and certain schemes, like disabled grants, had to be factored in even though they did not provide a return or produce earnings.

The report was noted.

**71/11 PROJECT APPLICATIONS (AGENDA ITEM 7)**

(a) **Replacement Electoral Services Software**

The Electoral Services Manager presented the report and explained that the current system had limitations which had been highlighted at two previous elections. The limited functionality had caused major issues and considerable downtime. The system lacked the flexibility to deal with forthcoming changes brought about by the introduction of the Police & Crime Commissioners Bill, the Localism Bill and a programme of other legislative changes.

The proposed replacement system would provide full integration and also offer opportunities for shared services as it had the ability to process data at other locations. It also had a better support package which would ensure a quicker service for both residents and Members.

The Chairman asked if South Holland would contribute towards the costs of the replacement system and the Electoral Services Manager advised that it was proposed to bed the system in at Breckland first before looking at sharing it with South Holland.

The Chairman felt that it would be best to wait until the IT Strategy was finalised before deciding which projects should be prioritised. The

**Action By**

Director of Commissioning agreed and also thought that more details were needed. It was suggested that the report be deferred until the IT Strategy was approved.

The Business Development Manager noted that there was a lot of ad-hoc work taking place and that once the Strategy was in place it would provide a framework to determine which projects should progress.

After further discussion it was agreed that the report should be deferred.

*At the end of the item Councillor Stasiak left the meeting.*

**72/11 FRONT OFFICE OPTIMISATION (AGENDA ITEM 8)**

The Customer Contact Manager presented the report which sought to increase value for money by enabling increased focus on value added activities; particularly first point of contact resolution. He had identified four areas for improvement:

- 1) Communication was the key issue. It was therefore proposed that each department should nominate an individual to act as a point of contact with the Contact Centre's Liaison Officer and that those individuals should take part in monthly meetings with the Liaison Officer.
- 2) The data collected by the Customer Contact Centre (CCC) needed to be analysed and used to improve performance, particularly with regard to 'avoidable contact'.
- 3) All departments of the Council needed to be encouraged to utilise the service of the CCC. It was hoped that the Business Improvement Team (BIT) could provide assistance with that.
- 4) The job descriptions of the Reception staff should be brought up to date.

The Chairman explained that he had asked for the report because he was concerned at the lack of progress. The decision to create the CCC had been taken a long time ago, but certain areas of the Council were not utilising it and therefore the projected savings and benefits had not been realised. He was keen for the BIT to create a strategy to maximise the optimisation of the CCC.

The Business Development Manager agreed that this needed to be monitored. A lot of work had already been done and the available data needed to be analysed. A benefits realisation methodology was also needed.

The Chairman was keen that progress should be made and asked how that could be achieved. He wanted to identify responsibilities and set a timescale for completion.

The Director for Commissioning suggested that the CCC should be a standing item on the project plans for the Business Development Manager, so that the CCC would always be on his agenda. The BIT would need to look at all the Council's departments and identify suitable back office functions.

**Action By**

Mr Bambridge noted that the 80/20 rule applied. Most queries could be dealt with in the CCC but there was resistance from Managers. It was up to the Executive and Managers to ensure that the decision taken six years ago was complied with.

The Director for Commissioning said that she would ensure that points 1, 2 and 4 would be actioned. She would work with the IT Consultant and the Contact Centre Manager on a further report on point 3, with more information, which would be presented to CMT at the earliest opportunity so that a decision on future focus could be made.

The Chairman reiterated the need to ensure that progress was made. As the meeting was no longer quorate no formal recommendation could be made. However, the Chairman's personal recommendation to CMT and Cabinet was that progress should be made on Front Office Optimisation.

The meeting closed at 10.50 am

CHAIRMAN