

BRECKLAND COUNCIL
FOREST HEATH DISTRICT COUNCIL
EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
ST EDMUNDSBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL
FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL
WAVENEY DISTRICT COUNCIL
SUFFOLK COASTAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

ANGLIA REVENUES AND BENEFITS PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE

Held on Tuesday, 12 January 2016 at 10.00 am in the
Level 5 Meeting Room, Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford IP24 1BT

PRESENT

Mr D Ambrose Smith (Chairman)	Mr S. Edwards
Mr C Seaton (Vice-Chairman)	Mr I Houlder
Cllr M Barnard	Mr R Kerry
Mr P M M Dimoglou	

In Attendance

Rob Bridge	- Corporate Director (Fenland)
Arthur Charvonia	- Strategic Director (Waveney & Suffolk Council)
Alison Chubbock	- Chief Accountant (BDC)
Paul Corney	- Head of ARP
Julie Kennealy	- Executive Director (Commercialisation)(BDC)
Jill Korwin	- Director (FH & StEds)
Andy Radford	- Finance (East Cambs)
Teresa Smith	- Democratic Services Officer

1/16 APOLOGIES

None.

2/16 URGENT BUSINESS

None.

3/16 DECLARATIONS

None.

4/16 ARP JOINT COMMITTEE PARTNERSHIP BUDGET

The Executive Director Commercialisation (BDC) reminded Members that the Operational Improvement Board (OIB) felt strongly that ARP finances required a strategic approach. The current yearly budget setting, did not account for a number of issues; including expected changes to the financial climate and a detailed business plan which would outline how financial changes would be dealt with.

Members were informed there was a balanced budget for 16-17, which would allow time to put together a detailed business plan for future years.

The Executive Director Commercialisation (BDC) provided Members with a presentation on the approach of the financial plan.

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The base budget had not removed the ability to redirect resources into the trading company. An Investment fund had been accumulated by retaining surplus from previous years. It had been previously agreed that £10,000 per authority would be transferred to ARP Trading as a working capital.

There was a balanced budget for 2016-2017, however there was a shortfall of £500k which needed to be found for 2017-2018.

The Corporate Director (Fenland) noted that changes in Universal Credit nationally this could result in a reduction of staff. This needed to be managed carefully otherwise there could be a costly redundancy bill which had not been accounted for. This would be included in the business plan to focus on the impact of staffing and funding levels.

The Executive Director Commercialisation (BDC) said that the Investment Fund would be used to look at how technology could create more efficient ways of working.

Members were informed of success in commissioning work currently being done for other councils that will generate income and that there are other negotiations taking place with these councils and others for future consultancy work. ARP had generated new business through existing networks, however new ways to generate new business would need to be explored.

Councillor Seaton said networking had worked well, but to move forward there needed to be a robust marketing campaign.

The Chairman said whilst he would agree to the OIB spending the budget, Members might not always agree with what it had been spent on. The Executive Director Commercialisation (BDC) said that ARP would move towards a business approach, and Members could hold the OIB to account.

Councillor Holder said the Finance Officers for each Authority reported to individual Councils and Cabinets on a regular basis, therefore Members would be kept informed.

The Corporate Director (Fenland) said that the Marketing and PR of ARP for 2017-2018 should be considered now. ARP needed to advertise at various conferences coming up such as the LGA, CIPFA and IRV. If OIB agreed what the plan would look like and waited for Members agreement at the next planned meeting, opportunities could be missed. Directors would liaise with Members individually to gain agreement.

The Executive Director Commercialisation (BDC) said that a timetable would be agreed and presented back to Members.

The Corporate Director (Fenland) asked if the Business Development Post and the £60k for ARPT were still included in the budget. It was agreed this was the case.

The Chairman thanked the Executive Director Commercialisation (BDC) for the clear and concise presentation.

The Finance Director asked if the budget would be in further decline beyond 2020. The Executive Director Commercialisation (BDC) said it was difficult to

predict the budgets so far ahead due to the constant change in the financial climate.

Members agreed for the OIB to work towards an opportunistic business plan.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- 1) The partnership budget for 2016-17 be approved;
- 2) The full 2015-16 underspend be contributed into the ARP investment fund;
- 3) Authority for future release of budgets from the investment fund for specific projects be delegated to OIB and all spend to be reported to Joint Committee at the next available meeting.

5/16 NEXT MEETING

The arrangements for the next meeting to be held on Tuesday 22 March at 10:00am in Level 5 Meeting Room, Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford, IP24 1BT were noted.

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The meeting closed at 10.40 am

CHAIRMAN