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BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday, 25 May 2016 at 10.00 am in
Norfolk Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham

PRESENT

Mrs K. Millbank (Chairman)	Mr R. R. Richmond
Mr M J Nairn (Vice-Chairman)	Mr J.D. Rogers
Mr P.J. Duigan	Mrs A M Webb
Mr A.P. Joel	Mr P S Wilkinson (Substitute Member)
Mr J Newton	

Also Present

Councillor M. Chapman-Allen	Mrs J Hollis
Mr S H Chapman-Allen	

In Attendance

Jo Andrews	- Strategic Manager (Revenues)
Helen McAleer	- Senior Democratic Services Officer
Paola Sabatini	- HR Manager

Action By

10/16 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

The Chairman noted that she had been expecting the revised Health & Safety Policy and she asked for it to be included on the next Agenda.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

11/16 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ashby, Bishop, Darby and Gilbert. Councillor Wilkinson was present as Substitute for Councillor Ashby.

12/16 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

No declarations were made.

13/16 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

None.

14/16 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 5)

Councillors M Chapman-Allen, S Chapman-Allen and Hollis were in attendance.

15/16 LOCAL JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE: 12 MAY 2016 (AGENDA ITEM 6)

The Minutes of the Special Local Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 12 May 2016 were adopted. The recommendation at Minute No 5/16 was noted and would be considered under Agenda Item 9.

16/16 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 7)

The arrangements for the next meeting to be held on 6 July 2016 were noted.

17/16 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (AGENDA ITEM 8)

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

18/16 ENFORCEMENT AGENCY INCREASE IN ESTABLISHMENT (AGENDA ITEM 9)

The Strategic Manager (Revenues) ARP presented the report and explained the background to the Enforcement Agency service which had been set up in 2015. It had exceeded expectations in terms of the amount of money collected and more staff were requested to enable the service to take on more work. It was made clear that the costs of additional staff would be more than covered by the amount of fees collected.

Councillor Duigan asked about complaints and it was noted that there had only been two compared to over 20 received by another provider over a similar period.

Councillor Nairn asked about the size of the current service and the prospects of additional work. It was confirmed that the service covered the whole of Norfolk and other geographical areas of the seven partner authorities of the ARP Joint Committee.

Another organisation was employed to deal with 'out-of-area' cases and those where ARP were unsuccessful.

The fees charged by the Agency were set by the Government. In cases of large debts an additional percentage of the amount recovered became due. All surplus in fees was returned to the Council and split between the partner Authorities.

Action By

The Chairman considered that it was an excellent service which was providing a surplus for the Council and receiving less complaints than previously.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) authority be delegated to the Operational Improvement Board to appoint up to eight additional members of staff where they were satisfied that the increase was justified by robust data; and
- (2) authority be delegated to the Operational Improvement Board to negotiate the terms of the ARP Enforcement Agency entering into arrangements to collect debts for councils which were not members of the ARP 2015 Joint Committee.

The meeting closed at 10.17 am

CHAIRMAN