

Environment, Development and Transport Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th October 2015 at 10am at County
Hall.

Present:

Mr R Coke (Chair)

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|----------------|----------------------------|
| Mr R Bird | Mr B Iles |
| Dr A Boswell | Mr T Jermy |
| Mr B Bremner | Mrs J Leggett |
| Mr J Childs | Mr I Mackie |
| Mr S Clancy | Mr W Richmond |
| Mrs M Dewsbury | Mr J Timewell (Vice Chair) |
| Mr T East | Mrs C Walker |
| Mr C Foulger | Mr M Wilby |

1 Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Mr B Spratt, (substituted by Mrs M Dewsbury) and Mr A White (substituted by Mr W Richmond).

2 To Agree the Minutes of the Meeting Held on 18th September 2015

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on the 18th September 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendments:-
- 2.2 Members asked that the numbers for the votes taken regarding the recycling recommendations be recorded in the minutes. As follows:

3) To approve the following service changes as a package capable of delivering in combination savings estimated at £280,000:

With 10 votes For and 6 Against and 1 Abstention

- Making three sites at Ashill, Heacham and Morningthorpe part time, i.e. closed Monday to Wednesday inclusive (saving £50,975).

With 9 votes For and 8 Against

- Reducing summer opening hours by one hour (closing at 5pm) with the exception of Mile Cross (saving £80,000).

With 10 votes For and 6 Against and 1 Abstention

- Increasing the charge we currently make for tyres to £4 per tyre in 2015/16, to be reviewed annually and maintained in line with the cost of dealing with tyres (cost neutral service).

With 8 votes For and 8 votes Against and 1 Abstention, the Chairman cast his extra vote For and the Committee Agreed:

- Close Docking Recycling Centre, Norfolk's smallest site, in 2016 (saving £70,000 and subject to consultation).

4) To maintain the existing DIY waste policy and agree a new distance service standard for Recycling Centres as follows:

(a) With 9 Votes For and 8 Against

Approve continuing the current approach to the amount of DIY type waste materials we accept for free and the charges we make for larger amounts.

(b) With 9 Votes For and 8 Against

Agree a new distance service standard with the aim that over 90% of residents are within a 20 minute drive of a recycling centre where economically practicable.

5) To consider and advise on the potential for rationalising the network in the future and standardising recycling facilities by increasing the number of large modern sites with full recycling and re-use facilities, as replacements for the older small sites which provide limited facilities:

a) With 9 Votes For and 8 Against

The redevelopment or relocation of Sheringham Recycling Centre and the relocation of Mayton Wood Recycling Centre, to provide larger facilities, subject to a further business plan.

b) With 9 Votes For and 8 Against

To provide a single, larger Recycling Centre to replace the existing Wymondham, Ketteringham and Snetterton sites (subject to a further business plan).

c) With 9 Votes For and 8 Against

To close the Bergh Apton Recycling Centre, subject to the location of a replacement for the existing Mile Cross Recycling Centre in Norwich.

d) With 9 Votes For and 8 Against

To consider reducing the network to around thirteen sites.

Following a vote the Committee **RESOLVED** to **NOT-**

- Close all sites on bank holidays. **(8 votes For and 9 Against)**
- Consider a longer term goal of rationalising the network to seven sites. **(8 votes For and 9 Against)**

- 2.3 Mr S Clancy requested that in reference to point 9.6 of the minutes, recommendation 5)b, that the capital investment amount of £2m to £3m required to construct the possible new site mentioned in the report be included in the minutes.

- 2.4 In reference to point 9.2 the Chairman informed the Committee about the meeting he had attended regarding Docking Recycling Centre closure.

The people who attended the meeting from Docking were not pleased with the decision to close the recycling centre and had raised some valid points regarding the effect of the closure on traffic conditions surrounding Heacham, which officers had agreed to look into.

The Chairman had acknowledged that the closure was an inconvenience for the local area however, the decision would not be altered as the cuts were necessary and the Docking recycling centre was the smallest in the county, with the fewest visitors; with numbers continuously decreasing since 2010.

3 Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 None

4 Urgent Business

- 4.1 None

5 Local Member Issues / Member Questions

- 5.1 None Received

6. Update from Economic Development Sub Committee

- 6.1 The Committee received the update from the Executive Director Community and Environmental Services which summarized the issues and actions from the Economic Development Sub-Committee held on the 21st September 2015.

- 6.2 Mr M Wilby raised a concern around the change in membership of the Scottow Working Group but was informed that this was a matter for the Sub-Committee to decide.

- 6.3 The Committee **noted** the report.

7 Performance and Risk Monitoring report (Quarter 1)

- 7.1 The Committee received the report from the Executive Director Community and Environmental Services which reviewed quarter 1 (April to June 2015) performance and risk results for service areas that were covered by the Environment, Development and Transport (EDT) Committee.

- 7.2 The following points were raised during the discussion:-

- The reason why the 7:10 desk ratio had been removed from the performance dashboard was due to the refurbished floors at County Hall being completed and therefore the 7:10 desk ratio had been achieved.

- In regards to the figures around green waste created over the summer months, these figures would be available in the 2nd quarter.
- In response to a question about how much the predicted budget had been exceeded with regards to waste produced, the Committee were informed that the figures could be as high as £3/4m but that this was based on the 1st quarterly statement and would advise waiting for the 2nd quarter.
- Members queried the figure for reduction in CO2 emissions from street lighting in the report as it appeared to be low, particularly as part night lighting had been fully implemented. The Committee were advised that the information would be checked and a written response would be provided.

7.3 The Committee **RESOLVED** to:

- Agree the 2015/16 performance dashboard as the basis for reporting to this committee over this financial year.
- Review and comment on the performance and risk information
- Consider any areas of performance that require a more in-depth analysis.

8. Finance Monitoring

8.1 The Committee received the report from the Executive Director Community and Environmental Services which provided the Committee with information on the latest monitoring position for the relevant services from the Community and Environmental Services department, for 2015-16. It provided information on variances from the original budget (revenue and capital), emerging issues and the position on the use of reserves for those services.

8.2 In response to a query on whether any under-spend could be used for winter maintenance the Committee were informed that at this stage this was a projected underspend only and may be needed for other reasons for example addressing the potential over-spend in the waste budget.

8.3 Mr I Mackie proposed, seconded by Mr S Clancy that the EDT Committee recommend to the Policy and Resources Committee that any significant underspend from the EDT budget should be ring-fenced to be spent on future EDT projects only.

The motion **carried** with 10 votes For and 7 Against.

8.4 The Committee **noted** the forecast out-turn position for the Environment Development and Transport Committee.

9 Developing Re-imagining Norfolk.

9.1 The Committee received the report from the Executive Director Community and Environmental Services which set out details of the model of service delivery which would be required to enable the Department to operate on a budget at 75% of its addressable spend. Officers had developed a number of budget saving proposals based on this service delivery model for the Committee to consider. The proposals,

set out in Appendix 1, would deliver permanent revenue savings over the next three years. There were a total of 21 proposals with a total savings value of £22.554m. The savings proposals had been initially RAG rated by officers to provide a high level indication of the feasibility of delivering the saving.

- 9.2 The Chairman advised that comments made would be fed back to the next Policy and Resources Committee meeting on the 26th October 2015 for a decision to be taken about which proposals would be put forward for public consultation.
- 9.3 The following points were raised during the discussion:-
- In regards to the Waste Strategy proposal the members queried why the bulk of the savings were to be made in the years 2018/19. It was explained that the implementation of a new waste strategy involved changing the behaviour of the public to reduce household waste and such a strategy would take time before changes would filter through. The strategy was being put in to place now but may not result in any significant reduction for a couple of years, hence the savings from this not being available until 2018/19.
 - As the department had been asked to consider a three year budget the proposed savings varied from detailed worked-up savings proposals and some savings that would need further development work to identify exactly how they would be delivered.
 - The service re-design for the Directorate could involve significant staff reductions and would be a significant change. A consultation process with staff would need to be carried out, along with a number of other actions.
 - The proposed cuts to the economic development sector grants funding were disappointing and members felt it was important that the EDT Committee expressed their support for work done within this area. Concerns were raised that cutting costs in this area may provide a short term gain but could create issues in regards to creating revenue for the county in the future.
 - Concerns were raised regarding reduction in costs through contract renewal, which may result in a reduction in the level of service and that this should be carefully considered. Another area for further consideration across all NCC services would be investing in renewable technologies to help save costs; an example was the investment in LED for street lights the committee had previously agreed.
 - Better use of assets that Norfolk County Council already had, such as properties and land, could result in more commercially successful ventures. This had been looked into by the Strategic Review Working Group and work was being progressed in this area by the corporate property team.
- 9.4 The Chairman informed the Committee that Cllr B Watkins, Member Champion for Historic Environment had expressed his concerns regarding the proposed cuts to

the Historic Environment service and invited Mr David Gurney from the Historic Environment to speak to the Committee.

Mr Gurney informed the Committee that since 1930 the Historic Environment department had provided an identification and recording service for archaeological finds and had provided support to the coroner in dealing with inquests for treasure on this. The proposed cuts to the service would mean that these activities would cease. Overall, the proposal would reduce the number of posts in the team by 5.5, and this could lead to the funding for some other posts currently funded by externally could also cease. The reduction would mean that the identification and recording service would significantly reduce and would only deal with a small number of finds. As this was an area where Norfolk County Council had previously been at the forefront nationally, this would be a shame.

Members of the Committee noted Mr Gurney's comments and agreed it would be a shame to lose such a service but that it had to be considered within the context of the Council's overall budget needs and not in isolation.

- 9.5 The Committee queried the overall budget proposals approach; in particular whether other service departments were proposing similar levels of savings. They were advised that the Managing Director and the Section 151 Officer were happy that Norfolk County Council had produced a co-ordinated approach to the budget. The Executive Director of CES highlighted that savings required had to be robust, practical and deliverable; although technically speaking more cuts could be made within the department, he would not advise this as it would significantly impact service delivery and would not be deliverable.
- 9.6 Mr B Bremner proposed, seconded by Mrs C Walker, that the Committee invite Norfolk MP's to a meeting where they could be made fully aware of the proposed budget cuts and service changes and have the opportunity to put forward the opinions of their constituents and therefore have a better understanding of the consequences of the decisions that the County Council are having to make.

The motion was **Agreed** with 9 votes For, 6 votes Against and 2 Abstentions.

- 9.7 The Committee **did not agree** the recommendations in the report with 8 votes For and 9 Against.

The Committee **Agreed** with 9 votes For and 8 votes Against to replace the recommendations in the report with the following recommendation:

The Committee note the comments made on the proposed savings and urge the Policy and Resources Committee to lobby central government to reduce the effect of the austerity measures on the county of Norfolk.

The Chairman will raise and explain the concerns of the EDT committee at the next Policy and Resource Committee meeting due to be held on the 26th October 2015.

10 **Annual review of the Enforcement Policy**

10.1 The Committee received the report from the Executive Director Community and Environmental Services which outlined the changes in the revised CES Enforcement Policy.

10.2 The following points were raised during the discussion:-

- The policy covered all areas of enforcement for the county, the main area of enforcement activity was the Trading Standards Service, but the key areas for consideration by the EDT committee were the policies for the County Planning Authority, Lead Local Flood Authority and Highways Authority.
- There had been no fundamental changes to the policy for areas covered by the EDT committee; most of the changes were largely structural.
- Responsibility for flood management had not been devolved from the Environmental Agency to Norfolk County Council since the last review of the enforcement policy and it was highlighted by members that there was a risk of duplicated work going on which would have inherent cost and that this should be looked at.

10.3 The Committee **RESOLVED** to confirm the CES Enforcement Policy and its appendices meet the requirements of the EDT services, prior to consideration by Communities Committee (the approval body for the policy.)

11. The King's Lynn and West Norfolk Settlements Surface Water Management Plan Report

11.1 The Committee received the report from the Executive Director Community and Environmental Services which provided a summary of the process and findings of the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Settlements Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) and the follow up King's Lynn Ordinary Watercourse Study.

11.2 Mr R Bird assured the Committee members that the water concerns in this area were being dealt with very professionally by the officers involved and that the report that had been produced was a well written strategy that set an excellent example to other local authorities.

11.3 The Committee **RESOLVED** to adopt the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Settlements Surface Water Management Plan and the King's Lynn Ordinary Watercourse Study report and its findings.

12. Norfolk Minerals & Waste Development Framework - Single Issue review on Silica Sand

12.1 The Committee received the report from the Executive Director Community and Environmental Services which provided information on the proposed site and defined areas of search and contains the proposed Preferred Options Consultation document, draft Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report and draft Habitats Regulations Assessment (Task 1).

12.2 The Committee **RESOLVED** to:-

- Agree to the publication of the Preferred Options Consultation document, the draft Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report and the draft Habitats Regulations Assessment for a six week consultation period.
- Delegate to the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of EDT committee the power to make minor corrections and non-material changes that are identified prior to the issue of the consultation documents.

13. Decisions taken under delegated authority

13.1 The Committee received the report from the Executive Director Community and Environmental Services which provided an update on decisions taken under delegated powers by the Director in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman up to 5 October 2015.

13.2 The Committee **noted** the update.

14. Forward Plan

14.1 The Committee received the report from the Executive Director Community and Environmental Services which set out the Forward Plan for the Environment, Development and Transport Committee.

14.2 The Committee **noted** the report.

The meeting closed 11:21am.

Chairman



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