

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Partnerships Review Committee held on
Wednesday, 9 July 2014 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Ben Shelton – Chairman
Councillor James Hockney – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: David Bard Andrew Fraser
Jose Hales Roger Hall
Tony Orgee Aidan Van de Weyer

Councillors Kevin Cuffley, Sue Ellington, Simon Edwards, Lynda Harford, Ray Manning and Mick Martin were in attendance, by invitation.

Officers: Andrew Beyer Building Control Manager
Mike Hill Health and Environmental Services Director
Jean Hunter Chief Executive
Graham Watts Democratic Services Team Leader

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Janet Lockwood and Neil Scarr. It was noted that Councillor Aidan Van de Weyer was in attendance as a substitute for Councillor Lockwood.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 April 2014 were **AGREED** as a correct record, subject to an amendment in minute number 46 to the date of the originally scheduled next meeting of the Committee being changed to read 7 July 2014.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No questions from the public had been received.

5. SHARED SERVICES

Councillor Ray Manning, Leader of the Council, presented two reports on shared services proposals scheduled to be considered by Cabinet on 10 July 2014.

The first report sought approval of Cabinet to develop a business case for a shared Local Authority Building Control Service between Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, including the use of the South Norfolk District Council mobile working solution, and to work towards an Eastern Region Building Control partnership arrangement. A number of options for areas of further investigation in this respect were set out in the report.

Andy Beyer, Building Control Manager, was in attendance and answered questions on the proposals contained within the report, further to which the following points were noted:

- operating systems and a mobile solution had been identified, but an important stage in the process yet to be carried out would be to ensure that these worked in conjunction with the ICT platforms of respective partner authorities;
- the South Norfolk District Council mobile working solution had been demonstrated in an office environment, but officers from both Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils had not yet seen how this worked on-site. This further demonstration would be undertaken in due course;
- a mobile working solution provided a much more efficient service as it meant that officers would not need to return to the office to update the system, thereby cutting down travelling time, and could also 'police' the district and respond to issues whilst on-site;
- a shared service with Huntingdonshire District Council could be operational within twelve months;
- the options set out in the report did not commit the Council to entering into a shared service at this stage, they solely asked officers to investigate proposals further;
- South Norfolk District Council had led a Local Authority Building Control partnership operating in Norfolk since 2004 and therefore had a lot of experience in shared service provision relating to Building Control. South Cambridgeshire District Council and Huntingdonshire District Council had been very challenging as part of initial discussions and in developing the options and proposals set out in the report.

The Partnerships Review Committee **SUPPORTED** the recommendations to Cabinet, as set out in the report, regarding the options for shared services in relation to Building Control.

Councillor Manning presented the second report, which set out progress to date on shared services and proposed next steps, mainly in relation to ICT and Legal services. The report also sought approval by Cabinet to form a strategic shared services partnership within Huntingdonshire District Council, whilst continuing to work with the City Council on services where there was a business case and a shared desire to work together.

Jean Hunter, Chief Executive, answered questions on the proposals set out in the report and during discussion the following points were noted:

- any ICT shared service needed to include the County and City Councils and this would be key to any other potential shared service proposals. An ICT shared service would also bring with it quite significant savings;
- the ICT shared service was quite complex as it would depend upon when specific contracts for individual systems or pieces of software were up for renewal and at what time. It would be very expensive to end ICT contracts early, counteracting any potential savings, so a business plan or programme over a number of years would need to be developed in order to facilitate and harmonise that;
- the respective Councils used some systems that were the same and some systems that were different, which added to the complexity of the shared service proposal. Savings could still be made by entering into a shared service, however, even if each Council retained the systems they currently used. The

use of licenses for associated systems and software was also an issue, but all of this had been mapped out for the three authorities and would be considered as part of the business case process;

- a shared service for ICT would mean there being one Head of Service. Details surrounding the need for individual service teams to be physically located at the main offices of each partner authority was something that would be considered as part of the business case;
- recruitment and retention in ICT was an issue for each of the three Councils, with instances for some posts whereby authorities were competing against one another to ensure that vacancies were filled. A shared service would see the introduction of a much larger ICT team, bringing with it opportunities for areas of specialist skills, career development and progression for staff as well as offering a more effective, stronger, resilient and better equipped service;
- it was anticipated that a shared Legal service would operate similarly to that of a private legal practice when providing advice and support to major projects, such as the Northstowe development for example, to each partner authority;
- in answer to a question regarding conflicts of interest between partner authorities and the legal advice they may receive, it was noted that a Memorandum of Understanding would be drawn up as part of the establishment of any shared service arrangement which would cover these issues;
- the advantage of operating a shared Legal service would be that each partner authority would have access to a greater range of legal expertise, reducing the need to use external legal advice which in comparison was very costly.

The Partnerships Review Committee **SUPPORTED** the recommendations to Cabinet, as set out in the report, regarding the proposed next steps for shared services.

6. SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE/CAMBRIDGE CITY SINGLE SHARED WASTE SERVICE

Councillor Mick Martin, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, presented a report which provided an update on work to explore the creation of a single, shared waste service between South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council and sought support for continuing work to develop a final business case. The report was scheduled to be considered by Cabinet on 10 July 2014.

In presenting the report, Councillor Martin informed Members that the aim and vision of the proposal was to create a single waste service, wholly owned and run by the local authorities, with a single management structure and workforce located on one site using a single pool of vehicles.

Councillor Martin highlighted that the initial work undertaken suggested ongoing financial savings of around £170,000 per annum. In addition, he considered that the net cost of the service could be further reduced by:

- cross boundary optimisation of rounds. An initial study indicated a potential saving of a minimum of two rounds at a saving of £150,000 per round, however, Councillor Martin reported that further data collated by South Cambridgeshire District Council indicated that it may be possible to achieve up to three times that amount;
- improved income on trade waste activity;
- consolidation and reducing of other support costs wherever practical.

Paragraph 12 of the report set out the anticipated approach to governance. Councillor Martin made it clear that both the District Council and City Council recognised that the governance surrounding this arrangement needed to work and be transparent. This would therefore be considered as a priority before any proposals were put forward later in the year.

In answer to a question about the perceived difference in the quality of service between South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council with regard to waste and recycling, Councillor Martin emphasised how important it was to move away from comparisons such as these in order to effectively work together in partnership. Both Councils had positive attributes that they could add to a single service and the City Council's performance in relation to trade waste was put forward as an example, which significantly exceeded the District Council's trade waste rates. Similarly, the District Council's record of sickness absence was much better than the City Council's, so the partnership arrangement would bring together all of the good practice of both authorities.

During discussion a number of specific questions were put forward, particularly in relation to the summary of costs set out in paragraph 20 of the report, the trade waste operation in terms of disparity between the two authorities and the City Council's capital asset at Mill Road in Cambridge. It was noted that these issues would be covered in detail as part of the final business case, which would be submitted to Cabinet for consideration in October 2014.

The Partnerships Review Committee **SUPPORTED** the recommendations contained within the report.

7. UPDATE ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Partnerships Review Committee **NOTED** those update reports that had been received from Members appointed to represent the Council on outside bodies.

8. THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Councillor Tony Orgee, Member of the Committee but acting in his role as Chairman of the Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Board for this item, provided the Partnerships Review Committee with an overview of the respective roles of the County Council's Health Committee and the Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Board. Councillor Sue Ellington, Health and Wellbeing Champion, was also in attendance for this item.

Copies of the Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2012-17 and Cambridgeshire County Council's Annual Public Health Report were circulated at the meeting for information.

The terms of reference for the Health Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Board were included within the agenda pack for the meeting and Councillor Orgee provided an overview of the main responsibilities of each body.

It was noted that the Health Committee was established as part of the County Council's revised committee structure in May 2014 and consisted of 17 Members of the County Council, together with five non-voting co-opted District Councillors, one from each District Council in the county. There were two main roles for the Committee, as follows:

- to oversee the Director of Public Health's budget;
- scrutiny of the NHS in the area.

The Health and Wellbeing Board was established as a committee of the County Council under Section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972 and its remit was to work to promote the health and wellbeing of Cambridgeshire's communities, with its focus being to secure the best possible health outcomes for all residents. The Board was made up of representatives from a range of organisations, such as the County Council, District Councils, the Clinical Commissioning Group and the NHS Commissioning Board, as well as statutory post holders including the Director of Public Health, the County Council's Executive Director for Children, Families and Adults and the County Council's Chief Finance Officer.

Councillor Orgee referred Members to the website for the Cambridgeshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. This website provided comprehensive statistical information on all aspects of health and wellbeing in the county and included reports going back approximately eight years. The Strategic Needs Assessment was an important evidence base, used to develop key policies and strategies.

It was noted that one of the main challenges over recent years had been, and continued to be, the uncertainty of identifying who was responsible and accountable for service delivery when individuals found themselves transitioning between NHS services, such as hospital related care, and County Council services, such as social care. Councillor Orgee cited an example of where this had caused problems, but stated that there was more of an urge for services to work together, rather than simply place blame with one another.

Members were also informed of a Government initiative to encourage more care in the community as a shift away from traditional care being provided in hospitals. A Better Care Fund had been launched which consisted of £37.7 million of funding for Cambridgeshire from April 2015. This funding had been transferred from the NHS, so was not new funding, and the Health and Wellbeing Board would be looking at proposals coming forward and make decisions as to how the money should be awarded and spent on behalf of the local area.

Discussion ensued on the proposed establishment of a Cambridgeshire Partnership Executive Board or Governance Group, made up of approximately 30 different representatives, also seeking to influence how the Better Care Fund was used. Members were concerned that the membership of this proposed body did not include any elected representatives, and this was something that Councillors Ellington and Orgee intended to raise at the next meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board scheduled to be held on 10 July 2014. A similar request for elected member representation was put forward by the County Council's Adults Committee.

In closing, Councillor Orgee emphasised the point that the majority of services provided by the District Council related and impacted in some way to the health and wellbeing of people living in the area.

Mike Hill, Director of Health and Environmental Services, referred to a Portfolio Holder Task and Finish Group that had been undertaken to shape the District Council's corporate outcomes and ambitions for children, young people and families. He informed the Committee that its meeting on 21 January 2014, where youth issues and children and young people services were considered and discussed, provided important evidence that he was able to feed into this piece of work.

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Partnerships Review Committee **NOTED** that future meetings would be held as follows:

- Thursday 18 September 2014 – 6pm
- Thursday 20 November 2014 – 6pm
- Thursday 22 January 2015 – 6pm
- Thursday 19 March 2015 – 6pm

The Meeting ended at 7.55 p.m.
