

# Cabinet



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Friday, 20 March 2020

A meeting of the **Cabinet** of North Norfolk District Council will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer, NR27 9EN on **Monday, 30 March 2020 at 10.00 am.**

At the discretion of the Chairman, a short break will be taken after the meeting has been running for approximately one and a half hours

**COVID\_19** - please note in light of Government guidance, the Council has restricted public access to the Council Offices. If you wish to submit a statement or question for consideration at the Cabinet meeting please email it to [democraticservices@north-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@north-norfolk.gov.uk) 24 hours in advance of the meeting and the Chairman will read it out at the meeting.

**Emma Denny**  
**Democratic Services Manager**

**To:** Mr A Brown, Mrs S Bütikofer, Mr C Cushing, Mrs A Fitch-Tillett, Ms V Gay, Mr G Hayman, Mr R Kershaw, Mr N Lloyd, Mr J Rest and Mr E Seward

All other Members of the Council for information.

Members of the Management Team, appropriate Officers, Press and Public



**If you have any special requirements in order to attend this meeting, please let us know in advance**  
If you would like any document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact us

**Head of Paid Service:** Steve Blatch  
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## A G E N D A

### 1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

### 2. MINUTES

1 - 6

To approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 02 March 2020.

### 3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

To receive questions and statements from the public, if any.

### 4. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

To determine any other items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972

### 5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked at this stage to declare any interests that they may have in any of the following items on the agenda. The Code of Conduct for Members requires that declarations include the nature of the interest and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest

### 6. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

To receive oral questions from Members, if any

### 7. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY MATTERS

To consider any matters referred to the Cabinet by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for reconsideration by the Cabinet in accordance within the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules

### 8. BIG SOCIETY FUND - REVIEW AND REFOCUS

7 - 22

Summary:

The Big Society Fund was established in 2012. The purpose of the fund is to help build strong and vibrant communities in North Norfolk through the delivery of projects that improve social and economic wellbeing.

The annual funding for the Big Society Fund is currently £225,000, with the maximum grant award being £15,000. Decisions on grant applications are made by a politically balanced Panel who meet four times a year.

The fund has now been in operation for eight years. During that time it has awarded over 260 grants totalling

approximately £1,960,000 to 211 organisations in 94 parishes across North Norfolk. End of Grant reports from successful grant applicants plus feedback from communities, Members and individuals demonstrates the importance and value of the fund and the significant difference it has made to communities across North Norfolk.

A review of the Big Society Fund in conjunction with the funds Chair and Vice Chair identified a number of areas for improvement and refocus. The aim of the fund and the purpose for which a grant can be awarded has also been reviewed to ensure it meets both Council's priorities and community need in North Norfolk.

As a result, it is proposed that a number of changes are made to the fund. This will enable a wider range of organisations to apply to the fund for projects that will benefit their communities.

It is proposed that name of the fund will change from the Big Society Fund to the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund. Sustainable Communities are places in which people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life.

The fund will be more closely aligned to the key priorities identified in the Councils Corporate Plan specifically Climate, Coast and Environment and Quality of Life.

This report seeks approval from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 to:

- Change the name of the fund to The North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund
- Refocus the fund and give additional weighting to projects with positive environmental outcomes and those which promote the physical and mental

health and wellbeing of communities.

- Require applicants to demonstrate how their project is accessible and inclusive
- Give applications for revenue and capital funding equal priority. Revenue costs could include staff or volunteer training.
- No longer fund 100% of a project. All applications will be expected to identify a level of match funding
- Establish a simplified application process for projects requesting a grant of up to £1,000. Decisions will on these application will be made each month by the Chair and Vice Chair of the fund and reported to the next Panel. Currently all eligible applications are presented to the Panel which has authority to make grant awards up to a maximum limit of £15,000.

Options considered:

Option 1 – Not to make any changes to the Big Society Fund process or criteria. The review has identified areas where the criteria of the fund needs to change to ensure it reflect key Council priorities, is more equitable, encourages accessibility and utilises the budget more effectively. This option is not recommended

Option 2 – To accept the recommendations in the report to change the name and refocus the fund. This will encourage a wider and more diverse range of projects from communities across North Norfolk. It will align with and support the delivery of identified Council priorities in respect of Quality of Life and Climate, Coast and Environment. This option is recommended

Conclusions:

Since it was established in 2012, grants awarded by the Big Society Fund have contributed to the delivery of 260 projects that have helped improve social and economic

wellbeing and build strong and vibrant communities in North Norfolk. The renaming and refocussing of the fund will build upon this legacy and ensure that The North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund supports projects that meet key Council priorities, widens the criteria to fund a wider range of organisations and communities, and promote accessibility and the effective use of the budget.

**Recommendations:** That Cabinet resolves to accept the recommendations in the report to rename and refocus the Big Society Fund and to delegate the consequential changes to the Fund's prospectus to the Head of Economic & Community Development, in consultation with the portfolio Holder for Culture & wellbeing.

**Reasons for Recommendations:** To ensure the fund reflects Council priorities, enables more organisations and communities to apply for funding to make their communities sustainable.

To utilise the fund to build sustainable communities and demonstrate the Council's commitment to respond to the Climate Emergency it declared in 2019.

Cabinet Member(s) Cllr Virginia Gay	Ward(s) affected – all across North Norfolk
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Contact Officer, telephone number and email:  
Sonia Shuter, 01263 516173 email [sonia.shuter@north-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:sonia.shuter@north-norfolk.gov.uk)

**9. ADVICE AND INFORMATION CONTRACT**

23 - 32

**Summary:** The Council has for many years provided funding to support the provision of advice and information via the Citizens Advice Bureaux. The funding arrangement that we have in place is due to terminate and consideration needs to be given as to the best way to provide such support to residents of North Norfolk in the future. The position is summarised as follows.

- The advice and Information contract with Norfolk Citizens Advice and joint funding agreement with Norfolk County Council is due to end on 31st March 2020 and we have been asked to consider an extension to it for a further 12 months in order to bring it into line with NCC's arrangements.

- The total annual grant for the service amounts to £109,000, of which North Norfolk District Council provides £66,323 and Norfolk County Council provides £42,677 per annum.
- Any decision to provide continued grant funding (for the period 1 April 2020 – 31st March 2021) for the Advice and Information service provided by Norfolk Citizens Advice needs to be informed by an evaluation of the effectiveness of the service and in particular the way it is provided and the locations that are used in North Norfolk. Such a decision will need also to consider potential alternative means of provision both in the immediate term and in the future.

Options considered:

Option 1: To extend the current funding agreement with Norfolk County Council and to contract with Norfolk Citizens Advice for another year until 31 March 2021. The original contract which ended on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 was already extended by fifteen months, until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, at the request of Norfolk County Council. A further extension of the contract would require suspension of the Council's Standing Orders in accordance with exemption Rule 9 (f). There are elements of the existing contract that, for a variety of reasons, are not being delivered. The actual cost of delivering the service has also not been reviewed. Therefore, it is not appropriate to merely extend the contract and this option is not recommended.

Option 2: Not to award any funding towards the provision of Information and Advice services in North Norfolk. Statistical data submitted by Norfolk Citizens Advice as part of the existing contract as well as data from services such as Social Prescribing, demonstrates a need, particularly for elderly and vulnerable residents, to provide access to a range of support services, including advice and information. Whilst Norfolk County council will continue to fund

Advice and Information services, ceasing any funding by the Council for Advice and Information services would have a negative and detrimental impact on residents. This option is not recommended.

Option 3: Not to award a grant to Norfolk Citizens Advice when the current arrangements end on 31 March 2020. Whilst there is a compelling case to review and revise the grant award from the Council, the total withdrawal of funding support from the Council to Norfolk Citizens Advice would have an impact on their ability to provide appropriate Advice and Information services across North Norfolk. This option is not recommended.

Option 4: Not to extend the current contract with Norfolk Citizens Advice and joint funding agreement with Norfolk County Council until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 but instead to award a *conditional* grant, not exceeding the current level (£66,323), to Norfolk Citizens Advice towards the provision of Advice and Information services in North Norfolk, which would include variations of the service provision arrangements. This option is recommended as:

- it will provide the opportunity to review/tailor the service, taking into account the reasons why elements of the existing contract are not being delivered and their appropriateness/ efficacy;
- the combined funding from Norfolk County Council and this Council for the existing Advice and Information service in North Norfolk does not accurately reflect the cost of the service that is currently being delivered;
- Since the original contract was agreed, other services such as Social Prescribing have been established in North Norfolk, which offer advice and information as part of a wider support service.

The amount and conditions of the grant awarded to Norfolk Citizens Advice should reflect other advice and information services being delivered.

Conclusions:

In 2016, the agreement with Norfolk County Council to jointly fund and procure a three-year Advice and Information service resulted in the provision of an enhanced advice and information service across the district.

Norfolk County Council has decided to extend their contract for advice and information services for a further year until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. This will include funding towards services being delivered by Norfolk Citizens Advice across Norfolk.

There is a need to review the funding as there are services within the existing contract that are not being delivered in North Norfolk; but also others that we see as being essential to maintain. The actual cost of services being delivered compared to the allocated funding also needs to be reviewed.

Ending the joint contract with Norfolk County Council will enable the Council to award a conditional and appropriate grant to Norfolk Citizens Advice for the delivery of advice and information service in dedicated offices and agreed outreach locations for the period 1 April 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

The amount of the grant should not exceed the current allocated annual funding of £66,323.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet resolves:

- To review the advice and information service being delivered by Norfolk Citizens Advice.
- Having regard to the review, to delegate authority to the S151 Officer, in consultation with the



Portfolio Holder for Culture & Wellbeing, to award a conditional grant (of no more than the current sum of £66,323) to Norfolk Citizens Advice towards the continuation of advice and information services in North Norfolk at dedicated offices and agreed outreach locations for the period 1 April 2020 – 31st March 2021.

- Over the coming year, to review the various operational options for meeting the advice and information needs of the District in future years (after the proposed new contract period).

Reasons for Recommendations:

To enable the continuation of established advice and information services by Norfolk Citizens Advice in North Norfolk for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

To ensure the funding awarded by the Council to Norfolk Citizens Advice enables residents across North Norfolk to benefit from the provision of advice and information services in North Norfolk including at designated and outreach locations as appropriate.

To ensure that sufficient preparations are made to secure appropriate provision to meet the needs of users of the service in the future.

Cabinet Member(s) Cllr Virginia Gay	Ward(s) affected All wards in North Norfolk
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Contact Officer, telephone number and email:  
Sonia Shuter, 01263 516173 email [sonia.shuter@north-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:sonia.shuter@north-norfolk.gov.uk)

## 10. SPONSORSHIP AND ADVERTISING POLICY

33 - 44

Summary:

This report presents the Sponsorship and Advertising Policy for consideration by Cabinet and links directly with objective 2.3 of the Delivery Plan. The Delivery Plan timescales scheduled the approval of the policy for the end of April 2020. The policy will provide a framework within which officers to try and drive additional income

for the Council from sponsorship and advertising to support service delivery.

Options considered: The policy itself will provide a framework within which officers will be able to operate. The options for consideration will then be developed before being shared and discussed in more detail with Members.

Conclusions: The majority of Councils have a Sponsorship and Advertising Policy. Having an approved policy in place will provide officers a framework within which these opportunities can be explored with a view to generating additional income to support services provision and the Council's financial sustainability.

Recommendations: That Cabinet approve the Sponsorship and Advertising Policy and that a further report is produced covering the potential opportunities.

Reasons for Recommendations: To enable officers to try and drive additional income for the Council from sponsorship and advertising opportunities and to agree the policy in line with objective 2.3 of the Delivery Plan.

Cabinet Member(s) Greg Hayman	Cllr	Ward(s) affected All
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Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Duncan Ellis (Head of Finance & Assets), ext 6330, Duncan.ellis@north-norfolk.gov.uk

## 11. REVENUES AND BENEFITS IT SYSTEM PROCUREMENT

45 - 52

Summary: The existing supplier contract for the Revenues and Benefits IT system ends in October 2020. A number of options around re-procurement of the system have been explored, with a direct award under a framework being the preferred option. This balances value for money and risk. The value of the contract over 5 years exceeds delegated decision making levels.

Options considered: The following options have been considered and are dealt with in more detail in the body of the report.

1. Extending the contract with the existing supplier.
2. A full procurement for a new system.

3. Using a framework agreement to procure a new system.

Conclusions: The direct award of the contract through a framework provides the most cost effective and lowest risk option for the authority.

Recommendations: That Cabinet;

- 1) agree the procurement of the Revenues & Benefits IT system through a Direct Award via the Crown Commercial Framework (RM3871) to Civica (Open Revenues) for a contract period of 5 years from October 2020 at a total cost of £301,000 and;
- 2) makes a capital provision of £101,000 for the software licences to be financed from capital resources.

Reasons for Recommendations: A direct award balances the need to achieve value for money for the Council, with a system that is suitable for the needs of both services, with minimal risk of disruption and additional cost in implementation.

#### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW**

*(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)*

Revenues and Benefits System Specification
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Cabinet Member(s) Cllrs Sarah Butikofer/ Eric Seward	Ward(s) affected  All
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Contact Officer, telephone number and email: <a href="mailto:emma.duncan@north-norfolk.gov.uk">emma.duncan@north-norfolk.gov.uk</a> 01263 516045
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#### **12. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

To pass the following resolution:  
 “That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act.”

#### **13. PRIVATE BUSINESS**

**14. PURCHASE AND OPERATION OF CAR PARK AT NORTH WALSHAM RAILWAY STATION** 53 - 64

**Summary:** This report is an update to the previous 2018 Cabinet report which outlined an opportunity for the District Council to acquire a brand new car park within North Walsham as part of the Mulberry Grove development, off Norwich Road, adjacent to the train station and railway line.

**Options considered:** An alternative option would be for the authority not to proceed with an acquisition. However, if this option was taken, it would not give the Council the opportunity of managing an important piece of community / local transport infrastructure associated with a growing town which, at the same time, would have the potential to generate future income for the authority.

**Conclusions:** The Council is an experienced and successful operator of public car parks across North Norfolk, currently managing more than 25 coastal, resort and standard car parks across the district.

There continues to be very few opportunities that arise for the acquisition of brand new car parks within the district. The Council has the potential to expand its car parking offer within North Walsham and specifically for the increasing number of rail passengers travelling from the town through the acquisition of this car park. This investment of modest capital finances in the purchase of the facility would generate future revenue income to the authority through car parking charges that would be used to support Council services.

The remaining query should be resolved with further investigations undertaken prior to exchange and completion, which will be subject to satisfactory findings.

The Council's purchase of the car park should also be seen as an investment for the future as the town accommodates further growth and train travel increases.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet agrees:

- A. To the District Council purchasing the car park at the cost plus legal fees and associated capital costs and revenue budgets. To be funded from the Local Property Investment Fund as identified within exempt Appendix C;
- B. To purchase the car park subject to satisfactory site investigations.
- C. To review the viability of charging against our commercial and environmental objectives.
- D. Allocate funding of approximately £5,000 for a Traffic Regulation Order to protect Hornbeam Road and the adjacent strategic network from displaced parking

Reasons for Recommendations:

The potential purchase of this new car park by the Council provides the opportunity for the authority to expand its car park portfolio, provide car parking to meet the anticipated demand for increased train travel locally with the forthcoming improvements to the rail service from North Walsham and generate a future source of income for the authority.

To meet the Council's new Corporate Plan objective of Financial Sustainability and Growth, as a means by which the Council will improve income streams while providing enhanced car parking facilities for those travelling by train.

Cabinet Member(s) Councillor Greg Hayman	Ward(s) affected North Walsham
Renata Garfoot, Asset Strategy Manager Tel: 01263 516086 Email:renata.garfoot@north-norfolk.gov.uk	

## 15. PROPERTY TRANSACTION

65 - 114

Summary:

Property Transaction: Disposal of Property, North Walsham

Options considered:

A range of options have been considered and can be found in exempt Appendix A.

Conclusions:

Taking into account the options included in the options appraisal a disposal of the property represents best value and

supports the objectives of the Corporate Plan, Asset Management Plan and meets the criteria as stated in the Councils Disposal Policy.

Recommendations: It is recommended to Cabinet to agree:

- A. To dispose of the property subject to Officer advice, as provided in the exempt appendix.
- B. A budget is provided for the removal of the portakabins and associated works.
- C. An independent valuation of the site for disposal is obtained by a specialist surveyor

Reasons for Recommendations: The disposal would bring the property back into use.  
 The disposal supports key corporate priorities;  
 Boosting Business Sustainability and Growth within North Walsham and surrounding areas.  
 Financial Sustainability and Growth by providing a capital receipt that could be used for other projects the Council wishes to deliver and reduces revenue costs of holding the property.

Cabinet Member(s) Cllr Richard Kershaw Cllr Greg Hayman	Ward(s) affected North Walsham
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Renata Garfoot. Asset Strategy Manager  
 Telephone:01263 516086 Email:Renata.garfoot@north-norfolk.gov.uk

**16. PROPERTY TRANSACTION**

115 - 128

Summary: The paper considers the disposal of an asset that no longer supports the objectives of the Councils Corporate Plan or core service.

Options considered: Retain the site. This option would require the capital investment and ongoing revenue budgets.

Sell a long lease of the site.

Joint Venture.

Redevelop the site for housing. Previous planning advice, would not support proposals for a separate residential development for new dwellings.

Conclusions:

Following an unsolicited offer to acquire the site, officers obtained independent advice and considered the proposed offer alongside a range of options. Valuation advice obtained indicates that a higher capital receipt may be generated through marketing the site and in addition to this, there may be opportunities to enhance the sites value further.

It would not be recommended to accept the offer received, without having undertaken an open market disposal strategy as it does not currently represent best value for the site.

Recommendations:

It is recommended to Cabinet to make a resolution:

1. To seek pre application advice on the planning acceptability of additional plots on the site in order to maximise the value of the asset prior to disposal.
2. Disposal of the freehold of the site on the open market through the appointment of a specialist Estate Agent.
3. To dispose of the site subject to overage clauses.
4. To recommend reinvestment of the receipt in a suitable income generating asset in line with the Council's adopted Commercial Property Strategy.

Reasons for Recommendations:

The current use of the site does not currently directly support any of the key themes contained with the Corporate Plan.

Cabinet Member(s) Cllr Greg Hayman	
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Renata Garfoot. Asset Strategy Manager

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## CABINET

**Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Monday, 2 March 2020 at the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer, NR27 9EN at 10.00 am**

### Committee

#### Members Present:

Mr A Brown	Mrs S Bütikofer (Chair)
Mrs A Fitch-Tillett	Ms V Gay
Mr G Hayman	Mr R Kershaw
Mr N Lloyd	Mr E Seward

#### Members also attending:

Cllr T Adams, Cllr P Grove-Jones, Cllr J Rest, Cllr N Pearce, Cllr J Toye and Cllr E Withington

#### Officers in Attendance:

Corporate Director and Head of Paid Service (SB), Democratic Services Manager, Head of Legal & Monitoring Officer and Head of Finance and Asset Management/Section 151 Officer

#### Also in attendance:

Press and Public

## 49 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 03 February 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## 50 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

None received.

## 51 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

The Chairman informed Members that there was one item of urgent business. This would be dealt with in private session at the end of the meeting.

## 52 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

## 53 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

The Chairman reminded Members that they could ask questions during the meeting as issues arose.

## 54 OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY MATTERS

The Chairman invited the Vice-Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to speak. Cllr Adams said that the Committee had considered the Delivery Plan and

had agreed to establish Scrutiny Panels to monitor and review the Plan as it progressed.

## **55 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET WORKING PARTIES**

The Chairman invited Cllr J Toye, Chairman of the Member Development Group to introduce this item. He explained that the Group had considered the use of software for Members to manage their case work and this system seemed to be the best solution.

Cllr R Kershaw queried how secure the system was – particularly regarding the management of personal data. The Leader replied that she was familiar with the system and could confirm that it was extremely secure.

It was proposed by Cllr S Butikofer, seconded by Cllr R Kershaw and

### **RESOLVED**

To proceed with the purchase of the ecasework system for interested users.

## **56 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2019-20 PERIOD 10**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Cllr E Seward, introduced this item. He said that there were three recommendations and he asked the Head of Finance to outline those relating to the award of new contracts. The Head of Finance explained that the office cleaning contract had previously been packaged with the Kier cleansing contract. The Council was the only local authority in the region to take this approach and so the proposal was to remove it from the wider waste management contract and have it as a separate contract. Regarding the energy contract, he explained that the new supplier, Haven Power, was able to supply the Council with 94.5% green energy with REGO (Renewable Energy Guaranteed Origin) certificates. The contract would start in April 2020.

Cllr P Grove-Jones asked whether the rate of pay for the cleaning contract would be in line with minimum wage requirements. The Head of Finance confirmed that they would as this was a legal requirement. He said that he would clarify whether the living wage threshold was met.

Cllr N Lloyd, Portfolio Holder for Environment, thanked officers for their work on the new energy contract. He said that it reflected the Council's commitment to the green agenda.

It was proposed by Cllr E Seward, seconded by Cllr N Lloyd and

### **RESOLVED that**

- 1) Cabinet note the contents of the report and the current budget monitoring position
- 2) Agree the award of the new cleaning contract to Norse Group Services Ltd
- 3) Agree the award of the new energy contract

Reason for the decision:

To update Members on the current budget monitoring position for the Council.

**57 PURCHASE OF TWO PROPERTIES FOR USE AS TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION FOR HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS**

Cllr A Brown, Portfolio Holder for Housing, introduced this item. He thanked the Housing Options and Property Services teams for their work on this project. He explained that the Council had a statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation for homeless households. Currently the Council purchased much of this accommodation from the private sector at a significant cost. Purchase of properties to provide quality, flexible homes for temporary accommodation would meet the Council's statutory duty and reduce the cost impact of paying for bed and breakfast accommodation which was often of variable quality and not always suitable. The two properties for which summary offers had been accepted were in suitable locations and in good condition. One was a two bedroom bungalow in North Walsham and the other was a one bedroom house in Hempton (near Fakenham). Between them they could accommodate up to 6 people at any one time.

Cllr P Grove-Jones asked how many people were currently in need of temporary accommodation. Cllr Brown replied that there were 42 households at the present time but that it did fluctuate. The Head of Paid Service (SB) added that the nature of temporary accommodation meant that the turnover was reasonably high and they would only stay in the property whilst their needs were assessed and a suitable alternative was found.

Cllr J Rest asked whether consideration had been given to the purchase of apartments or flats as these could be more secure and more cost effective to maintain. He also asked whether furniture would be provided and who would cover the cost of any replacement. Cllr Brown replied that on this occasion a bungalow was being purchased as it provided disabled access. He confirmed that white goods would be installed in the properties. The Leader added that they would be furnished too. She said that flats would be considered in future to ensure a mix of properties. Cllr Rest said that maintenance costs were key and flats were a cheaper option. The Leader replied that it was not an opportunity to generate income but the purchase of properties could save the Council money in the long-term as it would reduce the amount spent on bed and breakfast accommodation.

Cllr J Toye sought clarification that a person could be housed in temporary accommodation for up to 6 weeks. The Housing Strategy & Delivery Manager replied that it was a period of 56 days whilst the Council assessed their needs but that it did depend on the nature of the accommodation requirements.

Cllr E Seward, Portfolio Holder for Finance, said that the two properties would cost approximately £300k. This left £300k in the allocated budget and the Council would ensure that a mix of options was explored.

It was proposed by Cllr A Brown, seconded by Cllr R Kershaw and

**RESOLVED**

That Cabinet agrees to the purchase of the identified properties (subject to an independent valuation and survey) using the budget provision.

Reason for the decision:

To provide authority for expenditure over £100,000.

## **58 SHERINGHAM ENABLING LAND**

Cllr G Hayman, Portfolio Holder for Commercialisation & Assets, introduced this item. He explained that the land referred to in the report was approximately an acre of surplus land which had been identified as being suitable for development. The sale of this would generate a capital receipt for the Council which would go towards the Sheringham leisure centre project. The site had been marketed for over two years and the Council had recently received a formal offer to acquire the freehold of the land for redevelopment. Cllr Hayman added that the leisure project had been inherited from the previous administration and there was a need to ensure that it was financed sufficiently.

Cllr E Withington, local member for Sheringham North, said that there was disappointment in the town that there would not be housing on the site. This was the preferred option. The Leader replied that all options had been considered but there was a need to act fiscally and it was felt that the recommended proposal met the criteria.

It was proposed by Cllr G Hayman, seconded by Cllr A Brown and

### **RESOLVED**

1. To approve the disposal of the site as detailed in Option 1
2. To allocate a capital budget of £100,000 for site servicing costs and in addition a contingency of 10%.

Reason for the decision:

To dispose of an asset that is surplus to requirements and funds generated are to enable the Leisure development on adjacent land.

## **59 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was proposed by Cllr V Gay, seconded by Cllr N Lloyd and

RESOLVED to pass the following resolution:

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 & 5 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act."

## **60 PRIVATE BUSINESS**

Urgent Item – Senior Leadership Restructure

The Leader referred Members to the report and accompanying appendix that had been circulated at the start of the meeting. She said that it set out the business case and provided the reasons.

It was proposed by Cllr S Butikofer, seconded by Cllr R Kershaw and

### **RESOLVED**

To approve the funding requirements outlined within the business case as set out in the exempt appendix to the report

The meeting ended at 10.41 am.

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Chairman

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## **Big Society Fund – Review and Refocus**

**Summary:**

The Big Society Fund was established in 2012. The purpose of the fund is to help build strong and vibrant communities in North Norfolk through the delivery of projects that improve social and economic wellbeing.

The annual funding for the Big Society Fund is currently £225,000, with the maximum grant award being £15,000.

Decisions on grant applications are made by a politically balanced Panel who meet four times a year.

The fund has now been in operation for eight years. During that time it has awarded over 260 grants totalling approximately £1,960,000 to 211 organisations in 94 parishes across North Norfolk. End of Grant reports from successful grant applicants plus feedback from communities, Members and individuals demonstrates the importance and value of the fund and the significant difference it has made to communities across North Norfolk.

A review of the Big Society Fund in conjunction with the funds Chair and Vice Chair identified a number of areas for improvement and refocus. The aim of the fund and the purpose for which a grant can be awarded has also been reviewed to ensure it meets both Council's priorities and community need in North Norfolk.

As a result, it is proposed that a number of changes are made to the fund. This will enable a wider range of organisations to apply to the fund for projects that will benefit their communities.

It is proposed that name of the fund will change from the Big Society Fund to the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund. Sustainable Communities are places in which people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life.

The fund will be more closely aligned to the key priorities identified in the Councils Corporate Plan specifically Climate, Coast and Environment and Quality of Life.

This report seeks approval from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 to:

- Change the name of the fund to The North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund
- Refocus the fund and give additional weighting to projects with positive environmental outcomes and those which promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of communities.
- Require applicants to demonstrate how their project is accessible and inclusive
- Give applications for revenue and capital funding equal priority. Revenue costs could include staff or volunteer training.
- No longer fund 100% of a project. All applications will be expected to identify a level of match funding
- Establish a simplified application process for projects requesting a grant of up to £1,000. Decisions will on these application will be made each month by the Chair and Vice Chair of the fund and reported to the next Panel. Currently all eligible applications are presented to the Panel which has authority to make grant awards up to a maximum limit of £15,000.

Options considered:

Option 1 – Not to make any changes to the Big Society Fund process or criteria. The review has identified areas where the criteria of the fund needs to change to ensure it reflect key Council priorities, is more equitable, encourages accessibility and utilises the budget more effectively.

This option is not recommended

Option 2 – To accept the recommendations in the report to change the name and refocus the fund. This will encourage a wider and more diverse range of projects from communities across North Norfolk. It will align with and support the delivery of identified Council priorities in respect of Quality of Life and Climate, Coast and Environment.

This option is recommended

Conclusions:

Since it was established in 2012, grants awarded by the Big Society Fund have contributed to the delivery of 260 projects that have helped improve social and economic wellbeing and build strong and vibrant communities in North Norfolk. The renaming and



refocussing of the fund will build upon this legacy and ensure that The North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund supports projects that meet key Council priorities, widens the criteria to fund a wider range of organisations and communities, and promote accessibility and the effective use of the budget.

Recommendations: That Cabinet resolves to accept the recommendations in the report to rename and refocus the Big Society Fund and to delegate the consequential changes to the Fund's prospectus to the Head of Economic & Community Development, in consultation with the portfolio Holder for Culture & wellbeing.

Reasons for Recommendations: To ensure the fund reflects Council priorities, enables more organisations and communities to apply for funding to make their communities sustainable.

To utilise the fund to build sustainable communities and demonstrate the Council's commitment to respond to the Climate Emergency it declared in 2019.

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW**

*(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)*

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Cabinet Member(s) Cllr Virginia Gay	Ward(s) affected – all across North Norfolk
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Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Sonia Shuter, 01263 516173 email <a href="mailto:sonia.shuter@north-norfolk.gov.uk">sonia.shuter@north-norfolk.gov.uk</a>
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**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Big Society Fund was established in 2012. The purpose of the fund was to help build strong and vibrant communities in North Norfolk. Grants awarded by the Big Society Fund are used to support communities to deliver new and innovative projects that improve their social and economic wellbeing and support their ongoing sustainability.
- 1.2 The Big Society Fund was originally financed from a proportion of the second homes council tax returned by Norfolk County Council. This funding has now ceased and in order to maintain the fund from this financial year the budget will come from from accrued 'community reserves'.
- 1.3 The annual funding for the Big Society Fund is currently £225,000, the maximum grant award is £15,000 and there is no requirement for match funding.

- 1.4 Eligible organisations can apply for a grant each year. Applications are determined against the Funds prospectus, which allows for a wide variety of initiatives, however the vast majority of grants are awarded for capital projects. These are predominantly used to improve community venues such as village halls and for the provision of play equipment.
- 1.5 End of Grant reports submitted from successful grant applicants plus feedback from communities, Members and individuals demonstrate the ongoing importance and value of the fund and the significant difference it continues to make across North Norfolk.
- 1.6 The Fund's prospectus has hardly changed since its inception; whilst the context within which it operates and the Council's priorities *have* changed. Recent discussions with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Big Society Fund panel identified a number of areas where it is felt the fund could better achieve the priorities of the Council and better fit the needs of local communities.. Whilst it is still recognised that the funding awarded is clearly of benefit to local communities, it was felt that it is time for a refocus by changing the prospectus and the funding guidelines. A review was thus undertaken involving the staff responsible for administering the fund and the members of the panel.

## **2. Finding of the review**

- 2.1 The review identified that:
  - 2.1.1 The current focus of the fund does not sufficiently reflect the high priority attached to the declared climate emergency and the need to protect the environment (and by direct implication communities themselves).
  - 2.1.2 Grants are predominantly awarded for capital projects such as the provision of or improvement to new and existing facilities, e.g. community buildings, sports facilities and play areas. The focus on capital projects may preclude some parishes or community organisations from applying for funding.
  - 2.1.3 The overall purpose of a project may meet the fund's eligibility criteria but often the proposed use of the grant is outside the scope of the fund, e.g. an organisation may want to provide support to people with mental health needs in North Norfolk, but applies for funding to train volunteers. The project would meet the existing criteria in relation to improving or supporting the wellbeing of communities; however, the proposed use of the grant would be outside the scope of the fund (as revenue costs for administering groups or organisations, such as staff, management, volunteer and training are not supported).
  - 2.1.4 The current application, assessment and decision process is the same for all applications, regardless of the amount of funding requested. The process can be unnecessarily onerous for organisations that require a lower level of funding.
  - 2.1.5 There is a need to secure finance to support the long term continuation of the fund. The Big Society Fund was originally financed from a proportion of the second homes Council Tax returned by Norfolk County Council.

This funding source has now ceased, and from this financial year, the finances to support the fund are being taken from accrued community reserves.

- 2.1.6 The fund aims to support projects which improve communities' social and economic wellbeing. Whilst this is still appropriate, it is considered that the fund should also align to the priorities in the recently adopted Corporate Plan, specifically Quality of Life and Climate, Coast & Environment.

### **3. Proposed changes to the fund**

- 3.1 To address the findings of the review, the following changes are recommended:

- 3.1.1 The name of the fund be changed to The North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund (NNSCF). Sustainable communities are places in which people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. It is felt that relaunching the fund as The North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund will raise its profile and focus on what the Council sees as a priority and be able to respond to the identified needs of local communities.
- 3.1.2 Full Council declared a Climate Emergency across the District in April 2019. To reflect the priorities of the Council in respect of climate change and the environment weight should be given to funding projects with positive environmental outcomes and in which applicants clearly demonstrate that they have focussed on carbon reduction, reducing the environmental impact of their project and / or conserving or enhancing the biodiversity of their local environment. Such projects could include green energy generation, community allotments, habitat creation and improvement, tree planting, energy conservation, waste reduction and more local sourcing of materials and services. Organisations will be asked to consider the environmental impact of their proposed project and the Panel will give weight to projects that enhance the sustainability of local communities or help to tackle climate change.
- 3.1.3 To reflect the priorities of the Council in respect of quality of life weighting should also be given to applications which promote, encourage or support healthy lifestyles, increase accessibility and promote the physical, mental and social wellbeing of communities.
- 3.1.4 To widen access to the Fund amongst all communities across North Norfolk, and to allow for a wider range of beneficial projects to be supported, applications for revenue funding will be given equal priority as capital projects. Revenue or project costs to establish a new project, increase the access to, location of or frequency of an existing project should also be eligible. This could include staff or volunteer training. The fund should not however support existing core revenue costs (including staff costs) and no expectation of ongoing funding .

- 3.1.5 A simplified application process should be set up for smaller revenue or capital projects below £1,000. Supported by the Health and Communities Manager, these applications will be decided monthly by the Chair and Vice Chair of the fund and reported to the next Panel.
- 3.1.6 In order to make best use of the funding available, all applications will be expected to identify a level of match funding commensurate with the type and size of the organisation and value of the project.

#### **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 The Council is proud of the significant benefit that the Big Society Fund has made to organisations, communities and residents across North Norfolk.
- 4.2 The re-naming, re-aligning and re-focussing of the fund is intended to increase the number and type of organisations and projects eligible to apply for a grant.
- 4.3 The proposed changes will encourage smaller community groups, whose contribution to their communities is equally valuable to apply for grants to help make their communities sustainable.
- 4.4 Any eligible organisation, with a project that meets the criteria of the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund should be able to apply for a grant. The prospectus should be changed to specify that additional weight will be given to applications where the proposed project demonstrates a positive impact on the Council's corporate priorities and in particular:
- the environment
  - accessibility and inclusiveness
  - The health and wellbeing of the community.
- 4.5 The additional weight given in these areas will help support the delivery of two key Council's priorities in relation to Climate, Coast and the Environment and Quality of Life. It will also raise the importance and profile of these issues within communities and help support the development of sustainable Communities in North Norfolk.
- 4.6 The changes to the fund will be implemented from 1st June 2020. The application pack and supporting documentation will be revised to reflect the changes to the fund. A press release and media campaign will be put in place to promote the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund.

#### **5. Implications and Risks**

- 5.1 The Council has identified and committed through its Corporate Plan to deliver on key priorities. There is a need to ensure that the Council directs grant funding that helps deliver on these objectives and helps meet the needs of and benefits more communities in North Norfolk.
- 5.2 For the last eight years, the Big Society Fund has been of significant benefit to communities in North Norfolk. Whilst it is important that the ethos of the Big Society Fund continues, it is now appropriate and timely to review, reflect and

realign the fund. This will ensure that it meets the Council's priorities and the needs of communities, particularly given the increasing environmental and quality of life challenges facing residents and communities.

- 5.3 There is a reputational risk in not responding to the findings of the review.

## **6. Financial Implications and Risks**

- 6.1 The Big Society Fund was originally financed from a proportion of the second homes council tax returned by Norfolk County Council. This funding has now ceased, and from this financial year, the finances to support the fund are being taken from accrued community reserves.
- 6.2 Requiring an element of match funding and offering smaller grant awards of up to £1,000 will enable funding to be used more effectively and appropriately. The Panel are continually mindful of the fact that the fund is reliant on accrued reserves when they consider applications. Reducing the grant fund or the maximum amount that can be applied for is unlikely not reduce the level of applications.
- 6.3 A range of options in relation to income and expenditure will be explored (through the budgeting process) to secure the continuation of the fund for at least the next five years.

## **7. Sustainability**

- 7.1 The whole aim of the renaming and realigning of the fund is to promote and encourage sustainability in our communities.

## **8. Equality and Diversity**

- 8.1 Realigning and refocusing the fund will increase equality in terms of the type of organisations that can apply to the fund, and the type of projects that can be funded. The North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund will particularly encourage organisations to ensure that their projects are accessible and inclusive.

## **9. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations**

- 9.1 There are not considered to be any crime and disorder considerations

## Advice and Information Contract

### Summary:

The Council has for many years provided funding to support the provision of advice and information via the Citizens Advice Bureaux. The funding arrangement that we have in place is due to terminate and consideration needs to be given as to the best way to provide such support to residents of North Norfolk in the future. The position is summarised as follows.

- The advice and Information contract with Norfolk Citizens Advice and joint funding agreement with Norfolk County Council is due to end on 31st March 2020 and we have been asked to consider an extension to it for a further 12 months in order to bring it into line with NCC's arrangements.
- The total annual grant for the service amounts to £109,000, of which North Norfolk District Council provides £66,323 and Norfolk County Council provides £42,677 per annum.
- Any decision to provide continued grant funding (for the period 1 April 2020 – 31st March 2021) for the Advice and Information service provided by Norfolk Citizens Advice needs to be informed by an evaluation of the effectiveness of the service and in particular the way it is provided and the locations that are used in North Norfolk. Such a decision will need also to consider potential alternative means of provision both in the immediate term and in the future.

### Options considered:

Option 1: To extend the current funding agreement with Norfolk County Council and to contract with Norfolk Citizens Advice for another year until 31 March 2021. The original contract which ended on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 was already extended by fifteen months, until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, at the request of Norfolk County Council. A further extension of the contract would require suspension of the Council's Standing Orders in accordance with exemption Rule 9 (f). There are elements of the existing contract that, for a variety of reasons, are not being delivered. The

actual cost of delivering the service has also not been reviewed. Therefore, it is not appropriate to merely extend the contract and this option is not recommended.

Option 2: Not to award any funding towards the provision of Information and Advice services in North Norfolk. Statistical data submitted by Norfolk Citizens Advice as part of the existing contract as well as data from services such as Social Prescribing, demonstrates a need, particularly for elderly and vulnerable residents, to provide access to a range of support services, including advice and information. Whilst Norfolk County council will continue to fund Advice and Information services, ceasing any funding by the Council for Advice and Information services would have a negative and detrimental impact on residents. This option is not recommended.

Option 3: Not to award a grant to Norfolk Citizens Advice when the current arrangements end on 31 March 2020. Whilst there is a compelling case to review and revise the grant award from the Council, the total withdrawal of funding support from the Council to Norfolk Citizens Advice would have an impact on their ability to provide appropriate Advice and Information services across North Norfolk. This option is not recommended.

Option 4: Not to extend the current contract with Norfolk Citizens Advice and joint funding agreement with Norfolk County Council until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 but instead to award a *conditional* grant, not exceeding the current level (£66,323), to Norfolk Citizens Advice towards the provision of Advice and Information services in North Norfolk, which would include variations of the service provision arrangements. This option is recommended as:

- it will provide the opportunity to review/tailor the service, taking into account the reasons why elements of the existing contract are not being delivered and their appropriateness/efficacy;
- the combined funding from Norfolk County Council and this Council for the existing Advice and Information service in North Norfolk does not accurately reflect the cost of the service that is currently being delivered;
- Since the original contract was agreed, other services such as Social Prescribing have been established in North Norfolk, which offer

advice and information as part of a wider support service. The amount and conditions of the grant awarded to Norfolk Citizens Advice should reflect other advice and information services being delivered.

Conclusions:

In 2016, the agreement with Norfolk County Council to jointly fund and procure a three-year Advice and Information service resulted in the provision of an enhanced advice and information service across the district.

Norfolk County Council has decided to extend their contract for advice and information services for a further year until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. This will include funding towards services being delivered by Norfolk Citizens Advice across Norfolk.

There is a need to review the funding as there are services within the existing contract that are not being delivered in North Norfolk; but also others that we see as being essential to maintain. The actual cost of services being delivered compared to the allocated funding also needs to be reviewed.

Ending the joint contract with Norfolk County Council will enable the Council to award a conditional and appropriate grant to Norfolk Citizens Advice for the delivery of advice and information service in dedicated offices and agreed outreach locations for the period 1 April 2020 – 31st March 2021.

The amount of the grant should not exceed the current allocated annual funding of £66,323.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet resolves:

- To review the advice and information service being delivered by Norfolk Citizens Advice.
- Having regard to the review, to delegate authority to the S151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture & Wellbeing, to award a conditional grant (of no more than the current sum of £66,323) to Norfolk Citizens Advice towards the continuation of advice and information services in North Norfolk at dedicated offices and agreed outreach locations for the period 1 April 2020 – 31st March 2021.



- Over the coming year, to review the various operational options for meeting the advice and information needs of the District in future years (after the proposed new contract period).

Reasons for Recommendations:

To enable the continuation of established advice and information services by Norfolk Citizens Advice in North Norfolk for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

To ensure the funding awarded by the Council to Norfolk Citizens Advice enables residents across North Norfolk to benefit from the provision of advice and information services in North Norfolk including at designated and outreach locations as appropriate.

To ensure that sufficient preparations are made to secure appropriate provision to meet the needs of users of the service in the future.

#### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW**

*(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)*

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Cabinet Member(s) Cllr Virginia Gay	Ward(s) affected All wards in North Norfolk
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Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Sonia Shuter, 01263 516173 email <a href="mailto:sonia.shuter@north-norfolk.gov.uk">sonia.shuter@north-norfolk.gov.uk</a>
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### **1. Background**

- 1.1** At the Cabinet meeting on 6 January 2015, Cabinet accepted the recommendation of Overview and Scrutiny to consider opportunities to work with Norfolk County Council to procure a new generic advice and information service in North Norfolk. Prior to this the Council had awarded grants to individual Citizens Advice Bureaux which delivered advice and information services in North Norfolk. Due to a number of concerns in relation to one particular service provider, and the desire to ensure consistency across the District, the Council was not willing to continue with this arrangement. As a result, Norfolk County Council and this Council agreed to enter into a three-year Partnership Agreement to jointly fund the provision of a new generic advice and information service across North Norfolk from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016 until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018. Following a procurement exercise a contract was agreed with Mid Norfolk Citizens Advice to provide the service via a consortium with Norfolk Citizens Advice.
- 1.2** Overall the Advice and Information service has worked effectively and has increased the number of physical locations in North Norfolk where advice and information could be accessed. There have been issues with the implementation of certain aspects of the contract, e.g.:

- face-to-face provision in dedicated or drop in locations in all seven main towns in North Norfolk – no service is currently provided in Wells-next-the-Sea;
- face-to-face provision in Mundesley and Melton Constable – no service is provided in these locations;
- face-to-face evening and weekend support – no service is provided;
- electronic kiosks in two identified locations in NNDC – no longer operational;
- email, web chat and skype – no web chat and skype service is provided.

**1.3** The non-compliance issues have been raised with the service provider. It was accepted that in some geographical areas there was not sufficient demand (and insufficient benefit) for an outreach service which only operated for a limited number of hours and days each month. In relation to evening and weekend support, health and safety issues and the willingness of volunteers to work unsocial hours were identified as reasons why these services were not delivered.

**1.4** Prior to the original contract expiring on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018, Norfolk County Council decided to extend its funding for the North Norfolk generic advice and information contract for a further 15 months up until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. Norfolk County Council provides funding for a range of advice and information including specialist advice services across the county. These services have different contract end dates and the County Council wanted to align all contracts to start and end at the same time.

**1.5** The Council's Standing Orders prevented the contract from being extended for a further 15 months. However, it was possible to suspend the Council's Standing Orders in accordance with exemption Rule 9 (f), in order to allow the contract to be extended and in October 2018, Cabinet agreed that the contract would be extended for a further 15 months until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. It was stated that no further extension would be sought and a new tender process would be undertaken during the 2019/20 financial year to allow a new generic advice and information service to operate with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.

## **2. Current position**

**2.1** In April 2019 Mid Norfolk Citizens Advice merged with Norfolk Citizens Advice. The Advice and Information Service in North Norfolk has therefore since then been delivered by Norfolk Citizens Advice.

**2.2** In North Norfolk, face-to-face services are currently being provided from designated offices on various days and times in Holt and North Walsham. Outreach services are provided in Fakenham, Stalham, Cromer and Sheringham (Appendix A). Advice can also be obtained via the Norfolk Citizens Advice web site, email and by phone.

**2.3** Norfolk County Council has recently advised that it has been unable to progress the procurement of a generic advice and information service and has decided to extend all its contracts for the provision of advice and information services for another year (until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021). A small increase in the funding allocated towards these services has also been agreed.

- 2.4** Whilst the benefit and value of the services provided in North Norfolk are recognised, much has changed since the contract commenced (and since it was first extended) – outlined above; it is not therefore considered appropriate to just follow suit with Norfolk County Council and merely extend the contract for another year. In addition, the historic reasons why the initial joint funding agreement was established are no longer relevant.
- 2.5** A meeting recently took place with Norfolk Citizens Advice to discuss the current service and the actual delivery cost. It was identified that the current cost of the delivery of the service in North Norfolk is significantly less than the grant awarded.
- 2.6** Norfolk County Council is aware of the end of the current joint contract arrangement. The funding of £42,677 which NCC currently allocates towards the North Norfolk joint contract, together with an agreed increase, will remain available for provision in the contract extension between NCC and Norfolk Citizens Advice for the delivery of Advice and Information in the county (as a whole). Their contract will be amended to include North Norfolk within its remit. A copy of the County contract has been requested so the type and level of Advice and Information services in North Norfolk to be provided by Norfolk Citizens Advice and funded by Norfolk County Council is clear. Once this has been received, a review undertaken of total service provision in North Norfolk completed and an assessment of need undertaken, it is suggested that the Council offer a conditional grant to Norfolk Citizens Advice for the provision of agreed and appropriate Advice and Information services in North Norfolk for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 (over and above that allowed for in the Countywide contract).

### **3. Conclusion**

- 3.1** The Council acknowledges the need for and the benefit of generic Advice and Information services. The value of the Advice and Information services provided by Norfolk Citizens Advice is recognised.
- 3.2** There is no-longer a need to have a separate joint-funding agreement with Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Citizens Advice. Norfolk County Council will continue to fund Norfolk Citizens Advice to deliver Advice and Information services in North Norfolk to a certain level. A conditional grant from This Council will, however, facilitate the continuation of services at the existing level (at least) from designated Norfolk Citizens Advice bases in North Norfolk.
- 3.3** Norfolk County Council was due to have completed its review of generic and specialist Advice and Information services by April 2020. This has not happened. Unless this Council ends its joint-contract with Norfolk Citizens Advice there is a concern that it will be asked in future to further extend a contract that does not fully meet agreed outputs, may not meet current need and where the cost of the service delivered, in relation to the grant, has not been recently reviewed.
- 3.4** Reviewing the provision of Advice and Information services will enable the Council to ensure that the needs of all its residents can be met with a particular focus on those who are vulnerable and most in need of support or who live in rural locations and may not be able to access designated or

outreach services. It will also identify duplication and gaps in service provision, enabling alternative approaches to be considered.

#### **4. Financial Implications and Risks**

- 4.1** The current contract with Norfolk Citizens Advice has an annual value of £109,000 per year of which Norfolk District Council provides £66,323 and Norfolk County Council provides £42,677 per annum. Norfolk County Council has committed to continue (at least) its proportion of this level of funding until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. North Norfolk District Council has allocated sufficient funds to support the current level of funding towards the external provision of Advice and Information services (up to a maximum of £66,323 - already accounted for in the budget). Ending the existing contract, reviewing Advice and Information services and awarding an appropriate and conditional grant will have no additional financial implications for the Council. Changing the agreement or reducing the level of funding would obviously generate a saving, which could potentially be allocated towards alternative provision of this kind of service.

#### **5. Sustainability**

- 5.1** This report covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. It does not in itself raise any issues of sustainability.

#### **6. Equality and Diversity**

- 6.1** There are no equality and diversity implications directly related with this report. Reviewing the provision of Advice and Information services will ensure that it is accessible to all residents with a particular focus on those who are most vulnerable and therefore are likely to have a greater need for these services.

#### **7. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations**

- 7.1** There are no Section 17 implications directly associated with this report.

## Appendix A

### Norfolk Citizens Advice Services in North Norfolk

#### Designated offices

##### **Holt**

Kerridge Way, NR25 6DN

Tuesday & Friday 10am-3pm Drop-in and appointments

##### **North Walsham**

St Nicholas Court, NR28 9BY

Monday – Friday 10am-3pm Drop-in and appointments

#### Outreach locations

Cromer Foodbank, Methodist Church Thursday 1.30pm-3pm

Cromer Merchants Place, Fortnightly Monday 10am-2pm

Fakenham Library, Monday & Thursday 10am-3pm

Stalham Outreach, The Baptist Church High Street Friday 1.30pm-3pm

Sheringham, YESU Fortnightly Thursday 10 – 1pm

Sheringham Foodbank, Wednesday 1.30 – 3pm

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## Advice and Information Contract

### Summary:

The Council has for many years provided funding to support the provision of advice and information via the Citizens Advice Bureaux. The funding arrangement that we have in place is due to terminate and consideration needs to be given as to the best way to provide such support to residents of North Norfolk in the future. The position is summarised as follows.

- The advice and Information contract with Norfolk Citizens Advice and joint funding agreement with Norfolk County Council is due to end on 31st March 2020 and we have been asked to consider an extension to it for a further 12 months in order to bring it into line with NCC's arrangements.
- The total annual grant for the service amounts to £109,000, of which North Norfolk District Council provides £66,323 and Norfolk County Council provides £42,677 per annum.
- Any decision to provide continued grant funding (for the period 1 April 2020 – 31st March 2021) for the Advice and Information service provided by Norfolk Citizens Advice needs to be informed by an evaluation of the effectiveness of the service and in particular the way it is provided and the locations that are used in North Norfolk. Such a decision will need also to consider potential alternative means of provision both in the immediate term and in the future.

### Options considered:

Option 1: To extend the current funding agreement with Norfolk County Council and to contract with Norfolk Citizens Advice for another year until 31 March 2021. The original contract which ended on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 was already extended by fifteen months, until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, at the request of Norfolk County Council. A further extension of the contract would require suspension of the Council's Standing Orders in accordance with exemption Rule 9 (f). There are elements of the existing contract that, for a variety of reasons, are not being delivered. The

actual cost of delivering the service has also not been reviewed. Therefore, it is not appropriate to merely extend the contract and this option is not recommended.

Option 2: Not to award any funding towards the provision of Information and Advice services in North Norfolk. Statistical data submitted by Norfolk Citizens Advice as part of the existing contract as well as data from services such as Social Prescribing, demonstrates a need, particularly for elderly and vulnerable residents, to provide access to a range of support services, including advice and information. Whilst Norfolk County council will continue to fund Advice and Information services, ceasing any funding by the Council for Advice and Information services would have a negative and detrimental impact on residents. This option is not recommended.

Option 3: Not to award a grant to Norfolk Citizens Advice when the current arrangements end on 31 March 2020. Whilst there is a compelling case to review and revise the grant award from the Council, the total withdrawal of funding support from the Council to Norfolk Citizens Advice would have an impact on their ability to provide appropriate Advice and Information services across North Norfolk. This option is not recommended.

Option 4: Not to extend the current contract with Norfolk Citizens Advice and joint funding agreement with Norfolk County Council until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 but instead to award a *conditional* grant, not exceeding the current level (£66,323), to Norfolk Citizens Advice towards the provision of Advice and Information services in North Norfolk, which would include variations of the service provision arrangements. This option is recommended as:

- it will provide the opportunity to review/tailor the service, taking into account the reasons why elements of the existing contract are not being delivered and their appropriateness/efficacy;
- the combined funding from Norfolk County Council and this Council for the existing Advice and Information service in North Norfolk does not accurately reflect the cost of the service that is currently being delivered;
- Since the original contract was agreed, other services such as Social Prescribing have been established in North Norfolk, which offer



advice and information as part of a wider support service. The amount and conditions of the grant awarded to Norfolk Citizens Advice should reflect other advice and information services being delivered.

Conclusions:

In 2016, the agreement with Norfolk County Council to jointly fund and procure a three-year Advice and Information service resulted in the provision of an enhanced advice and information service across the district.

Norfolk County Council has decided to extend their contract for advice and information services for a further year until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. This will include funding towards services being delivered by Norfolk Citizens Advice across Norfolk.

There is a need to review the funding as there are services within the existing contract that are not being delivered in North Norfolk; but also others that we see as being essential to maintain. The actual cost of services being delivered compared to the allocated funding also needs to be reviewed.

Ending the joint contract with Norfolk County Council will enable the Council to award a conditional and appropriate grant to Norfolk Citizens Advice for the delivery of advice and information service in dedicated offices and agreed outreach locations for the period 1 April 2020 – 31st March 2021.

The amount of the grant should not exceed the current allocated annual funding of £66,323.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet resolves:

- To review the advice and information service being delivered by Norfolk Citizens Advice.
- Having regard to the review, to delegate authority to the S151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture & Wellbeing, to award a conditional grant (of no more than the current sum of £66,323) to Norfolk Citizens Advice towards the continuation of advice and information services in North Norfolk at dedicated offices and agreed outreach locations for the period 1 April 2020 – 31st March 2021.

- Over the coming year, to review the various operational options for meeting the advice and information needs of the District in future years (after the proposed new contract period).

Reasons for Recommendations:

To enable the continuation of established advice and information services by Norfolk Citizens Advice in North Norfolk for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

To ensure the funding awarded by the Council to Norfolk Citizens Advice enables residents across North Norfolk to benefit from the provision of advice and information services in North Norfolk including at designated and outreach locations as appropriate.

To ensure that sufficient preparations are made to secure appropriate provision to meet the needs of users of the service in the future.

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW**

*(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)*

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Cabinet Member(s) Cllr Virginia Gay	Ward(s) affected All wards in North Norfolk
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Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Sonia Shuter, 01263 516173 email <a href="mailto:sonia.shuter@north-norfolk.gov.uk">sonia.shuter@north-norfolk.gov.uk</a>
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**1. Background**

**1.1** At the Cabinet meeting on 6 January 2015, Cabinet accepted the recommendation of Overview and Scrutiny to consider opportunities to work with Norfolk County Council to procure a new generic advice and information service in North Norfolk. Prior to this the Council had awarded grants to individual Citizens Advice Bureaux which delivered advice and information services in North Norfolk. Due to a number of concerns in relation to one particular service provider, and the desire to ensure consistency across the District, the Council was not willing to continue with this arrangement. As a result, Norfolk County Council and this Council agreed to enter into a three-year Partnership Agreement to jointly fund the provision of a new generic advice and information service across North Norfolk from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016 until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018. Following a procurement exercise a contract was agree with Mid Norfolk Citizens Advice to provide the service via a consortium with Norfolk Citizens Advice.

**1.2** Overall the Advice and Information service has worked effectively and has increased the number of physical locations in North Norfolk where advice and information could be accessed. There have been issues with the implementation of certain aspects of the contract, e.g.:

- face-to-face provision in dedicated or drop in locations in all seven main towns in North Norfolk – no service is currently provided in Wells-next-the-Sea;
- face-to-face provision in Mundesley and Melton Constable – no service is provided in these locations;
- face-to-face evening and weekend support – no service is provided;
- electronic kiosks in two identified locations in NNDC – no longer operational;
- email, web chat and skype – no web chat and skype service is provided.

**1.3** The non-compliance issues have been raised with the service provider. It was accepted that in some geographical areas there was not sufficient demand (and insufficient benefit) for an outreach service which only operated for a limited number of hours and days each month. In relation to evening and weekend support, health and safety issues and the willingness of volunteers to work unsocial hours were identified as reasons why these services were not delivered.

**1.4** Prior to the original contract expiring on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018, Norfolk County Council decided to extend its funding for the North Norfolk generic advice and information contract for a further 15 months up until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. Norfolk County Council provides funding for a range of advice and information including specialist advice services across the county. These services have different contract end dates and the County Council wanted to align all contracts to start and end at the same time.

**1.5** The Council's Standing Orders prevented the contract from being extended for a further 15 months. However, it was possible to suspend the Council's Standing Orders in accordance with exemption Rule 9 (f), in order to allow the contract to be extended and in October 2018, Cabinet agreed that the contract would be extended for a further 15 months until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. It was stated that no further extension would be sought and a new tender process would be undertaken during the 2019/20 financial year to allow a new generic advice and information service to operate with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.

## **2. Current position**

**2.1** In April 2019 Mid Norfolk Citizens Advice merged with Norfolk Citizens Advice. The Advice and Information Service in North Norfolk has therefore since then been delivered by Norfolk Citizens Advice.

**2.2** In North Norfolk, face-to-face services are currently being provided from designated offices on various days and times in Holt and North Walsham. Outreach services are provided in Fakenham, Stalham, Cromer and Sheringham (Appendix A). Advice can also be obtained via the Norfolk Citizens Advice web site, email and by phone.

**2.3** Norfolk County Council has recently advised that it has been unable to progress the procurement of a generic advice and information service and has decided to extend all its contracts for the provision of advice and information services for another year (until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021). A small increase in the funding allocated towards these services has also been agreed.

- 2.4** Whilst the benefit and value of the services provided in North Norfolk are recognised, much has changed since the contract commenced (and since it was first extended) – outlined above; it is not therefore considered appropriate to just follow suit with Norfolk County Council and merely extend the contract for another year. In addition, the historic reasons why the initial joint funding agreement was established are no longer relevant.
- 2.5** A meeting recently took place with Norfolk Citizens Advice to discuss the current service and the actual delivery cost. It was identified that the current cost of the delivery of the service in North Norfolk is significantly less than the grant awarded.
- 2.6** Norfolk County Council is aware of the end of the current joint contract arrangement. The funding of £42,677 which NCC currently allocates towards the North Norfolk joint contract, together with an agreed increase, will remain available for provision in the contract extension between NCC and Norfolk Citizens Advice for the delivery of Advice and Information in the county (as a whole). Their contract will be amended to include North Norfolk within its remit. A copy of the County contract has been requested so the type and level of Advice and Information services in North Norfolk to be provided by Norfolk Citizens Advice and funded by Norfolk County Council is clear. Once this has been received, a review undertaken of total service provision in North Norfolk completed and an assessment of need undertaken, it is suggested that the Council offer a conditional grant to Norfolk Citizens Advice for the provision of agreed and appropriate Advice and Information services in North Norfolk for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 (over and above that allowed for in the Countywide contract).

### **3. Conclusion**

- 3.1** The Council acknowledges the need for and the benefit of generic Advice and Information services. The value of the Advice and Information services provided by Norfolk Citizens Advice is recognised.
- 3.2** There is no-longer a need to have a separate joint-funding agreement with Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Citizens Advice. Norfolk County Council will continue to fund Norfolk Citizens Advice to deliver Advice and Information services in North Norfolk to a certain level. A conditional grant from This Council will, however, facilitate the continuation of services at the existing level (at least) from designated Norfolk Citizens Advice bases in North Norfolk.
- 3.3** Norfolk County Council was due to have completed its review of generic and specialist Advice and Information services by April 2020. This has not happened. Unless this Council ends its joint-contract with Norfolk Citizens Advice there is a concern that it will be asked in future to further extend a contract that does not fully meet agreed outputs, may not meet current need and where the cost of the service delivered, in relation to the grant, has not been recently reviewed.
- 3.4** Reviewing the provision of Advice and Information services will enable the Council to ensure that the needs of all its residents can be met with a particular focus on those who are vulnerable and most in need of support or who live in rural locations and may not be able to access designated or

outreach services. It will also identify duplication and gaps in service provision, enabling alternative approaches to be considered.

#### **4. Financial Implications and Risks**

- 4.1** The current contract with Norfolk Citizens Advice has an annual value of £109,000 per year of which Norfolk District Council provides £66,323 and Norfolk County Council provides £42,677 per annum. Norfolk County Council has committed to continue (at least) its proportion of this level of funding until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. North Norfolk District Council has allocated sufficient funds to support the current level of funding towards the external provision of Advice and Information services (up to a maximum of £66,323 - already accounted for in the budget). Ending the existing contract, reviewing Advice and Information services and awarding an appropriate and conditional grant will have no additional financial implications for the Council. Changing the agreement or reducing the level of funding would obviously generate a saving, which could potentially be allocated towards alternative provision of this kind of service.

#### **5. Sustainability**

- 5.1** This report covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. It does not in itself raise any issues of sustainability.

#### **6. Equality and Diversity**

- 6.1** There are no equality and diversity implications directly related with this report. Reviewing the provision of Advice and Information services will ensure that it is accessible to all residents with a particular focus on those who are most vulnerable and therefore are likely to have a greater need for these services.

#### **7. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations**

- 7.1** There are no Section 17 implications directly associated with this report.

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## Appendix A

### Norfolk Citizens Advice Services in North Norfolk

#### Designated offices

##### **Holt**

Kerridge Way, NR25 6DN

Tuesday & Friday 10am-3pm Drop-in and appointments

##### **North Walsham**

St Nicholas Court, NR28 9BY

Monday – Friday 10am-3pm Drop-in and appointments

#### Outreach locations

Cromer Foodbank, Methodist Church Thursday 1.30pm-3pm

Cromer Merchants Place, Fortnightly Monday 10am-2pm

Fakenham Library, Monday & Thursday 10am-3pm

Stalham Outreach, The Baptist Church High Street Friday 1.30pm-3pm

Sheringham, YESU Fortnightly Thursday 10 – 1pm

Sheringham Foodbank, Wednesday 1.30 – 3pm

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## SPONSORSHIP AND ADVERTISING POLICY

Summary:	This report presents the Sponsorship and Advertising Policy for consideration by Cabinet and links directly with objective 2.3 of the Delivery Plan. The Delivery Plan timescales scheduled the approval of the policy for the end of April 2020. The policy will provide a framework within which officers to try and drive additional income for the Council from sponsorship and advertising to support service delivery.
Options considered:	The policy itself will provide a framework within which officers will be able to operate. The options for consideration will then be developed before being shared and discussed in more detail with Members.
Conclusions:	The majority of Councils have a Sponsorship and Advertising Policy. Having an approved policy in place will provide officers a framework within which these opportunities can be explored with a view to generating additional income to support services provision and the Council's financial sustainability.
Recommendations:	<b>That Cabinet approve the Sponsorship and Advertising Policy and that a further report is produced covering the potential opportunities.</b>
Reasons for Recommendations:	To enable officers to try and drive additional income for the Council from sponsorship and advertising opportunities and to agree the policy in line with objective 2.3 of the Delivery Plan.

## LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

*(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)*

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Cabinet Member(s) Cllr Greg Hayman	Ward(s) affected All
Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Duncan Ellis (Head of Finance & Assets), ext 6330, Duncan.ellis@north-norfolk.gov.uk	

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The new Corporate Plan and supporting Delivery Plan have now been approved. Objective 2 under the 'Financial sustainability and growth' theme centres around 'taking, where appropriate, a more commercial approach to the delivery of discretionary services.' One of the Delivery Plan actions to help achieve this is set out under 2.3 and is to 'explore the opportunities to generate income from advertising and sponsorship.'
- 1.2. The Council does not at present have an approved policy in relation to sponsorship and advertising so the first step towards achieving this objective is to draft and agree a policy so that this income stream can start to be developed within an agreed framework.
- 1.3. The purpose of this paper is therefore to present the Sponsorship and Advertising Policy for consideration by Cabinet. The Delivery Plan timescales schedule the approval of the policy by the end of April.
- 1.4. The draft policy is attached (Appendix A) along with the project proposal document (Appendix B). This initial stage of the work and the development of the policy itself has been assessed as **small** using the current Project Management guidance and as such does not at this stage required the development of a full Project Initiation Document (PID).

## **2. Income generation**

- 2.1. The idea behind this Delivery Plan action is to generate additional income for the Council and to take a more commercial approach to this area. There are a range of different areas which could be explored, the idea being that once the policy is approved, that officers investigate opportunities and present them to Members for consideration.
- 2.2. The links below provide various examples from other authorities;
  - Buckinghamshire roundabout and traffic site sponsorship [here](#);
  - Merton - various [here](#);
  - Vale of Glamorgan – dedications and memorials [here](#);
  - Portsmouth [here](#);
  - Portsmouth filming mini-site [here](#) – NNDC could definitely replicate something like this given our recent success with various filming opportunities;
  - Rushmoor tree sponsorship [here](#).
- 2.3. The relevant internal teams will be engaged with as part of this exploration process.

## **3. Corporate Plan Objectives**

- 3.1. The development of this policy links directly to the 'Financial sustainability and growth' theme. Objective 2 relates to 'taking, where appropriate, a more commercial approach to the delivery of discretionary services.' The Delivery Plan action to achieve this as set out under 2.3 is to 'explore the opportunities to generate income from advertising and sponsorship.' Ultimately this policy will set the framework within which income from advertising and sponsorship can be delivered.

#### **4. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)**

- 4.1. As the delivery of this policy supports the 'Financial sustainability and growth' element of the Corporate Plan there is a direct link with the MTFS. The idea behind the policy framework is to generate additional income from new sponsorship and advertising activities. The target for the net additional income to be generated through this objective is £40k although at this point no additional income has been built in to the 2020/21 budget to reflect this.

#### **5. Financial and resource implications**

- 5.1. At present the resource implications are fairly minimal as the policy is drafted, it is very similar to a number of policies agreed by other Councils.
- 5.2. The real financial implication will come from the investigation and exploration of opportunities presented by the approval of the new policy rather than the policy itself.
- 5.3. The net projected income after staff/development costs is currently anticipated to be c£40k although as mentioned above this is not currently built in to next year's budget and just represents a high level forecast at this stage.

#### **6. Legal implications**

- 6.1. The draft policy will be shared with the legal team for comment, legal advice will also be taken regarding individual opportunities and the development of agreements where appropriate.

#### **7. Communications issues**

- 7.1. This policy area will ultimately rest with the Property and Estates team but will provide a framework for officers across the Council. The Communications team will play a fundamental part in helping to support and advertising/promoting these opportunities.

#### **8. Risks**

- 8.1. There are minimal risks associated with the actual development and approval of the policy itself. The risks will be assessed on a case by case basis as opportunities are assessed, the policy itself is designed to mitigate against any reputational risks by restricting the types of advertising etc available. There is a risk that without a policy and framework such as this that the Council is missing out on income generating activities.
- 8.2. The Project Plan document contains the currently identified risks.

#### **9. Next steps**

- 9.1. In terms of the investigation and development of the income streams and opportunities it is recommended that a small project team is pulled together before further discussions and consideration by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) and Members.

#### **10. Conclusions and Recommendations**

10.1. The majority of Councils have a Sponsorship and Advertising Policy. Approval of this policy will provide a framework within which officers will be able to explore new opportunities to deliver additional income from advertising and sponsorship. This area of work is also directly referenced within the new Corporate Plan (Financial Sustainability & Growth) and is included within objective 2.3 of the Delivery Plan.

10.2 It is therefore recommended that Cabinet approve the Sponsorship and Advertising Policy and that a further report is produced covering the potential opportunities.

**11. Sustainability**

11.1 The framework provided by this policy will enable officers to drive additional income to support service provision and the Council's financial sustainability.

**12. Equality and Diversity**

12.1 There are no equality and diversity implications as a result of this policy.

**13. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations**

13.1 There are no Section 17 crime and disorder implications as a result of this policy.

**APPENDIX A**  
**North Norfolk District Council**

**Sponsorship and Advertising Policy**

**1 DEFINITIONS**

- 1.1 'Sponsorship' - is a contract between parties in which one party meets all or part of the costs of the project or activity, usually in exchange for commercial benefit.
- 1.2 'Advertising' – is a contract between parties promoting a product (or service) to potential and current customers. Advertising is typically displayed on signs, brochures, websites, direct mailings or e-mail messages etc.

**2 GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

- 2.1 In entering into agreements for sponsorship or advertising, there must be transparency of process in order to protect the Council's reputation and to manage expectations.
- 2.2 The Council's constitution and policy framework, and in particular, the code of conduct for councillors and employees must be observed. Sponsorship and advertising agreements must also comply with the Council's equality and diversity policies.
- 2.3 The Council actively seeks local and national opportunities of mutual benefit and welcomes sponsorship and advertising where:
- a) the opportunity aligns with the Council's values;
  - b) it does not, and could not reasonably be perceived as, influencing the way the Council exercises a statutory function;
  - c) it does not, and could not reasonably be perceived as, attempting to influence the outcome of a decision to be made by the Council;
  - d) it does not, and could not reasonably be perceived as, influencing the Council's allocation of resources; and
  - e) it could not reasonably be perceived as being used by the sponsor to gain favourable terms.
- 2.4 Therefore the Council will not consider sponsorship or advertising which:
- a)
    - i) is against the [Advertising Standards Authority's advertising code](#);
    - ii) Does not uphold the rules laid out in the UK Code of Nonbroadcast Advertising, Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing ([CAP Code](#));
    - iii) does not follow the [Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority publicity](#)
    - iv) does not comply with the [Town Country Planning \(Control of Advertisements\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#) guidance;
  - b) creates legal or financial conflict with the interests of the Council;
  - c) has party-political associations;
  - d) conflicts with the council's branding;

### APPENDIX A

- e) involves unlawful prejudice and/or discrimination;
- f) promotes smoking;
- g) promotes irresponsible consumption of alcohol;
- h) promotes gambling or betting;
- i) involves sexual content;
- j) involves violent content; or
- k) could otherwise bring the council into disrepute or conflict with contractual obligations.

This is not an exhaustive list and any approach can be declined at the Council's sole discretion by an officer of the Council.

2.5 While it is expected that most sponsorship will be offered on the basis that it is in return for publicity or an advertising platform, the Council will of course welcome any sponsorship that is offered with no expectation of any benefit to the donor.

### 3 CO-ORDINATION AND APPROVAL PROCEDURE

3.1 Approaches to or by potential sponsors/advertisers must be coordinated through the council's Communications Team. The value of the sponsorship or advertising and the criteria for selection of a sponsor must be agreed with the Communications Team.

3.2 Depending on the value of the sponsorship or advertising, different approval and thresholds apply, as shown in the table below.

Value		Level of approval				
	Publicise	TBC	Head of Service	Strategic Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder	Cabinet
£1 - £1,000	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
£1,001 – £10,000	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
£10,001 - £50,000	Open invitation through Delta e-sourcing	Yes	Yes	Yes possible referral to Cabinet	- Yes	Possibly

**APPENDIX A**

£50,001 and above	Open invitation through Delta e- sourcing	Yes	Yes	Yes possible referral to Cabinet	-	Yes	Possibly
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- 3.3 The Council will agree with the sponsor/advertiser the nature and content of the publicity and will retain the right to approve all advertising material and to remove any material which has not received such approval.
- 3.4 Where a request for sponsorship or advertising is connected to a matter of current policy with particular sensitivity (for example, a current Council decision) the officer handling the request is required to consult the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) who may recommend a referral to Cabinet.
- 3.5 For significant sponsorship or advertising a named officer must be nominated as the sponsor/advertiser's contact.
- 3.6 All potential sponsors and advertisers must sign a declaration (as part of the financial form – see paragraph 4.2 below) to say that they are not in arrears on any payments to the Council or the subject of investigation or enforcement by the Council or any other statutory body. The Council reserves the right to refuse sponsorship if the potential sponsor does not fulfil these requirements.

**4 FINANCIAL PROCEDURE**

- 4.1 Payment terms must be agreed by the Communications Team on a case by case basis and in line with other payment policies.
- 4.2 An account (Sponsorship-Customer info request) form is available on request. The description of any agreement must be attached to this form. This must be completed and signed by both parties before any agreement starts. **TO BE DEVELOPED**
- 4.3 When the Council incurs any direct costs payment must be received in advance.

**5 TRANSPARENCY**

A list of sponsors and details of what they have sponsored will be published on the Council's website except where the donor wishes to remain anonymous (and the Council agrees to the anonymity).

**6 MARKETING AND MEDIA RELATIONS**

- 6.1 Sponsors should refer all media enquiries about sponsorship and advertising to the Council's Communications Team.
- 6.2 Any use of North Norfolk District Council's corporate branding must be approved by the Communications Team.

## APPENDIX A

### 7 DISCLAIMER

- 7.1 Acceptance of advertising or sponsorship does not imply endorsement by the Council of products and services. In order to make this clear all publications, or other media, with advertising or sponsorship should carry the following disclaimer:

'Whilst every effort has been made to ensure advertising within this publication complies with all relevant legislation, North Norfolk District Council cannot accept any liability for errors or omissions contained in any material provided by an advertiser. The Council does not accept any liability for any information or claims made by the advertisement or by the advertisers. Any inclusion of the Council's name on a publication should not be taken as an endorsement by the Council.

- 7.2 Where it is not possible to print a disclaimer, for example in the case of an advertising hoarding, the material should identify North Norfolk District Council as being the owner and that this policy is available on the council's website.

### 8. COUNCILLORS AS SPONSORS OF COUNCIL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- 8.1 There is no bar on county, district and parish councillors offering sponsorship to the Council either by sponsoring Council events or activities as individuals or through a business. However, apart from the conditions that apply to all potential sponsors, care must be taken that the sponsorship would not contravene the Councillors' Code of Conduct or the restrictions on Council publicity, particularly during the sensitive pre-election period. The advice of the Monitoring Officer will therefore be sought when a councillor puts forward a sponsorship proposal.

### 9 CONTACTS

- 9.1 Media relations and corporate identity;

**Communications Team – relevant contact details to be provided.**

- 9.2 Asset and event related opportunities;

**Estates Team – relevant contact details to be provided.**



# Project Proposal: Advertising and Sponsorship Policy (DP:FS:Obj 2.3)

<b>Department / Service (leading)</b>	Finance/Property		
<b>Head of Service</b>	Duncan Ellis		
<b>Project Manager</b>	Milo Creasey		
<b>Project Sponsor</b> (necessary for Medium / Large Projects)	Cllr Greg Hayman		
<b>Project Scope</b> <i>Summary of what the project will cover / include (and perhaps clarification of what it does not include.)</i>	<p>To develop an advertising and sponsorship policy for the Council that will generate income. Draft Policy attached for consideration and development.</p> <p>To identify advertising and sponsorship opportunities internally and externally.</p>		
<b>Objectives and Outcomes</b> <i>What corporate objectives does this project seek to deliver?</i>	<p>Delivery Plan; <b>Financial Sustainability</b></p> <p>Objective 2; Taking where appropriate a more commercial approach to the delivery of discretionary services</p> <p>2.3 Explore the opportunities to generate income from advertising and sponsorship</p>		
<b>Have you considered sustainability?</b>	YES	<b>Have you considered the equality impact?</b>	YES
<b>Financial benefits</b> <i>What financial benefits should be obtained on completion of this project?</i>	It is difficult to quantify the precise financial benefits but a reasonable estimate is £40,000(net) per annum revenue.		

<p><b>Other benefits</b> <i>What else will this project help to achieve?</i></p>	<p>The Council could partner with businesses and organisations that add to the Council's reputation. This could also be extended to align with the Council's key objectives for example;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boosting Business Growth - partnering with local businesses</li> <li>• Customer Focus – better service provision</li> <li>• Climate Coast and Environment (“green” advertisers)</li> </ul>								
<p><b>Will this project involve any other internal service?</b> <i>If Yes list them here and ensure they receive a copy of this proposal.</i></p>	<p>YES</p> <p>Communications ICT Property/Estates Finance Legal</p>								
<p><b>Will this project involve any other external body or persons?</b> <i>If Yes list them here</i></p>	<p>YES - the initial policy development work will be an internal discussion for Members/Officers but in terms of identifying, selling and marketing opportunities there will need to be external engagement.</p>								
<p><b>Cost</b> <i>How much will this project cost to complete? Give breakdown of costs as much as possible including final £.</i></p>	<p>£10k or under?</p>		<p>£10 - £50k</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>£50k - £100k</p>		<p>Over £100k</p>		
<p>Policy development - £5k Website design - £2k Identifying and delivering opportunities - £20k Marketing opportunities - £2k</p>									
<p><i>Does this include internal staff time costs or backfill?</i></p>				<p>Y</p>	<p><i>Does this include Venues, refreshments, meeting costs?</i></p>				<p>Y</p>
<p><i>Does this include costs incurred by other services?</i></p>				<p>Y</p>	<p><i>Does this include Communication and correspondence costs?</i></p>				<p>Y</p>
<p><i>Does this cost include any ICT upgrades/changes?</i></p>				<p>Y</p>	<p><i>Does this include equipment costs?</i></p>				<p>N</p>
<p><b>Resources</b> <i>What or who is essential to the success of this project?</i></p>	<p>Communications ICT Property/Estates Finance Legal</p> <p>Member engagement and buy in</p>								

<p><b>Timescales</b> When do you anticipate this project would start and finish? List any key milestones.</p>	<p>Policy Development – February to March Cabinet - April</p>																														
<p><b>Risks to service delivery</b> What are the risks to service delivery if this project does not go ahead? <b>Likelihood: Score 1 to 5</b> See Risk section <b>Impact: Score 1 to 5</b> See Risk section <b>Proximity: when may this risk occur? H = imminent, M = next few weeks/ months, L = low risk of it ever occurring</b></p>	<p>This project contributes to the Council’s Financial Sustainability theme and is identified as a specific source of future income generation by the Council. If the Council is unable to generate more income then there is a potential threat to service delivery.</p> <p>Likelihood – 2 (low 10-40%)</p> <p>Impact – 2 (marginal – loss is £5-50k)</p> <p>Proximity – M</p> <p>The risk of this project is therefore identified as low (4)</p>																														
<p><b>Individual Risks</b> What are the initial risks associated with this project? <b>Likelihood: Score 1 to 5</b> See Risk section <b>Impact: Score 1 to 5</b> See Risk section <b>Proximity: when may this risk occur? H = imminent, M = next few weeks/ months, L = low risk of it ever occurring</b></p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="509 1003 1032 1115">Risk</th> <th data-bbox="1032 1003 1201 1115">Likelihood 1 - 5</th> <th data-bbox="1201 1003 1370 1115">Impact on project 1 - 5</th> <th data-bbox="1370 1003 1503 1115">Proximity H /M /L</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="509 1115 1032 1249">Policy not being developed</td> <td data-bbox="1032 1115 1201 1249">1</td> <td data-bbox="1201 1115 1370 1249">2</td> <td data-bbox="1370 1115 1503 1249">M</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="509 1249 1032 1417">Members not wishing to adopt policy</td> <td data-bbox="1032 1249 1201 1417">2</td> <td data-bbox="1201 1249 1370 1417">2</td> <td data-bbox="1370 1249 1503 1417">M</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="509 1417 1032 1563">No or inappropriate opportunities being identified</td> <td data-bbox="1032 1417 1201 1563">2</td> <td data-bbox="1201 1417 1370 1563">3</td> <td data-bbox="1370 1417 1503 1563">M</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="509 1563 1032 1731">Failure to meet income target</td> <td data-bbox="1032 1563 1201 1731">2</td> <td data-bbox="1201 1563 1370 1731">2</td> <td data-bbox="1370 1563 1503 1731">M</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="509 1731 1032 1899"></td> <td data-bbox="1032 1731 1201 1899"></td> <td data-bbox="1201 1731 1370 1899"></td> <td data-bbox="1370 1731 1503 1899"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="509 1899 1032 2002"></td> <td data-bbox="1032 1899 1201 2002"></td> <td data-bbox="1201 1899 1370 2002"></td> <td data-bbox="1370 1899 1503 2002"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Risk	Likelihood 1 - 5	Impact on project 1 - 5	Proximity H /M /L	Policy not being developed	1	2	M	Members not wishing to adopt policy	2	2	M	No or inappropriate opportunities being identified	2	3	M	Failure to meet income target	2	2	M								
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Failure to meet income target	2	2	M																												

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## REVENUES AND BENEFITS IT SYSTEM PROCUREMENT

**Summary:** The existing supplier contract for the Revenues and Benefits IT system ends in October 2020. A number of options around re-procurement of the system have been explored, with a direct award under a framework being the preferred option. This balances value for money and risk. The value of the contract over 5 years exceeds delegated decision making levels.

**Options considered:** The following options have been considered and are dealt with in more detail in the body of the report.

1. Extending the contract with the existing supplier.
2. A full procurement for a new system.
3. Using a framework agreement to procure a new system.

**Conclusions:** The direct award of the contract through a framework provides the most cost effective and lowest risk option for the authority.

**Recommendations:** **That Cabinet;**

- 1) agree the procurement of the Revenues & Benefits IT system through a Direct Award via the Crown Commercial Framework (RM3871) to Civica (Open Revenues) for a contract period of 5 years from October 2020 at a total cost of £301,000 and;**
- 2) make a capital provision of £101,000 for the software licences to be financed from capital resources.**

**Reasons for Recommendations:** A direct award balances the need to achieve value for money for the Council, with a system that is suitable for the needs of both services, with minimal risk of disruption and additional cost in implementation.

### LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

*(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)*

Revenues and Benefits System Specification
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Cabinet Member(s) Cllrs Sarah Butikofer/Eric Seward	Ward(s) affected All
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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In June 2012, following a full OJEU procurement exercise, North Norfolk District Council (NNDC) Revenues and Benefits Services started an 8 year contract with Civica (Open Revenues) to deliver its ICT systems, having previously been in partnership with Civica (ARB). The current contract expires in October 2020 for all parts of that service.
- 1.2 The current operating model provides Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates, Housing Benefit (including overpayment recovery), and Council Tax Support, full administration, collection and reporting functionality for the caseloads.
- 1.3 The current Civica system is fit for purpose but due to the ending of the contract, an opportunity existed to review whether it still represented value for money and met the services needs in the light of the new Corporate Plan. This alignment focused on the potential to realise business efficiencies and the customer focus aims, whilst balancing any additional cost. Key outcomes were identified as improving the way in which the two services operated together including enhanced customer service delivery, improved performance, increased flexibility and speed of introducing changes, the potential for reduced running costs, and the ability to better utilise specialist technology to improve key areas of performance.
- 1.4 There was also an opportunity to undertake a fundamental review of internal processes for the two service areas, to better understand customer needs to feed into the selection of the most appropriate software systems, functionality, and modules to support this.
- 1.5 A Project Team was established to represent the key council teams involved throughout this process. The scope of the Project Team's work was looking at the selection, procurement and implementation of an appropriate system which supported the work associated with the council's Revenues and Benefits services, whilst aligning the procurement process to support the objectives of the corporate plan and to make a recommendation on an award to Cabinet.

## 2. Specification and business case

- 2.1 The Project Team identified the following outcomes as a result of procurement:

- Improved Customer Satisfaction which will be measured through appropriate mechanisms prior and post implementation of the new system
- Improved efficiency of processes to meet customer demands and to reduce demand failure so that staff can focus on value added activities and customer satisfaction
- Improved key performance measures which will be monitored prior and post implementation of the new system
- Limited downtime (3 months maximum)
- Staff confidence in the new system processes and data

2.2 A specification was subsequently drawn up to cover the following areas;

- Functionality of the existing system which the Revenues and Benefits Service does not wish to lose going forward.
- Functionality and modules which are not in use and can be removed (reducing initial contract costs as well as ongoing maintenance costs).
- Functionality and modules that have not been purchased under the existing contract but are ones which the Revenues and Benefits Services would like to procure as they offer value for money in the future delivery of the two service areas.

### **3. Discovery work and alignment with Corporate Plan**

3.1 Technology within the Council continues to develop and over the past couple of years and it has made process in delivering online services to residents of North Norfolk and providing flexible working opportunities for our staff. Our future approach will continue to build on ensuring we have the right technology which is capable of providing a flexible and efficient service, which can evolve to meet local challenges and maximise the opportunity for innovation.

2.2. The Project Team agreed, in scoping the project, that a vital part of the process was the engagement with our customers, understanding their needs and improving our processes to enable us to meet these, reducing failure demand and increasing customer satisfaction in line with the emerging Corporate Plan which aims to put the customer at the heart of everything we do.

2.5. In order to engage with customers, the Project Team chose to launch a Customer Service survey which looks at how customers were contacting the services, their reason for contact, and their preferred method of contact. The survey went live in October 2019 and runs up to the end of March 2020.

2.2 In order to ensure the council has the most appropriate ICT system to support and enable the Revenues and Benefits Services, the Project Team have undertaken a review of the market providers, the latest and future demands of the service, and areas of the service that are not meeting the organisation's needs ("the Discovery Phase").

2.3 There are three leading IT providers on the market, these being Civica, Capita (who have taken over Academy), and Northgate. All three systems are used by neighbouring authorities. Over the summer 2019, Revenues and Benefits

Services visited Norwich City Council, Anglia Revenues Partnership (Thetford), Broadland District Council, Kings Lynn Borough Council, and South Norfolk District Council.

- 2.4 Representatives from Revenues, Benefits, ICT, and Systems Administration teams attended the site visits with key areas to consider such as usability, reliability, customer accessibility and self-serve, auto processing, workflow, reporting, and specialist functionality.
- 2.5 Following consideration of the site visits it was agreed by the Project Team that Civica (Open Revenues) was the council's preferred supplier, being the system that met the Council's needs and aspirations most effectively.

#### **4. Procurement**

- 4.1 The Project Group considered a successful procurement is one which provides a system which:

- Allows the council to meet its statutory obligations
- Gives improved customer service delivery
- Meets customer expectations
- Gives value for money
- Provides a resilient service
- Integrates with other council services
- Involves minimum downtime

- 4.2 In 2012 the Council had experienced considerable difficulties in migrating systems and resulting in service delivery delays and difficulties and the need to commission an additional £200k of temporary staffing and consultancy support and learning from this officers explored a full range of procurement options to mitigate that risk;

#### **4.3 Extending the contract with the existing supplier.**

The current contract with Civica had already been extended for one year. There was the potential to extend this contract further but only if a procurement process was already in progress, otherwise the council ran the risk of challenge through not conforming to Public Contract Regulations. Consequently this was not a viable standalone option without a longer term procurement.

#### **4.4 A full OJEU procurement for a new system.**

Consideration was given to an OJEU procurement process. This could potentially have a financial benefit in terms of costs however the selection of a new supplier introduced significant risks in terms of data transfer, as had been experienced in 2012, that affected customer experience and had significantly increased costs.



The officer view was that this was outside their risk appetite on the basis of the impact on customers, the risks to reputation and the financial risk that this represented if there were other viable alternatives.

#### **4.5 Using a framework agreement to procure a new system.**

In order to mitigate risks around a re-procurement, the Council's Procurement Officer explored the possibility of awarding a further contract to the existing supplier through a framework arrangement.

Framework arrangements are OJEU compliant and have already been through a competitive process to ensure value for money.

It was confirmed that the Crown Commercial Framework (RM3871) could be used and the Council could go to a Direct Award to a preferred supplier. The length of the contract awarded would be 5 years with a 2 year extension. This is the maximum allowed under a Direct Award.

If a Direct Award was made, the council could only procure a system that is like for like compared to the existing system. Some of the functionality and modules put forward under the specification may not be available under the Direct Award and potentially may need to be purchased from the marketplace.

The Council's Procurement Officer advised that should Northgate be our preferred supplier, a Direct Award could not be made, as they are not included under the Framework.

Where a Direct Award is made there can be no negotiation to the cost of the software.

After reviewing the procurement options and the evidence gathered from the discovery Phase, the Project Team felt that a Direct Award represented a potential balance between value for money, functionality and risk.

Exploratory discussions were then held with Civica to understand potential costings. Civica quoted a basic price of Open Revenues for Revenues and Benefits of £364k (total) (plus RPI) for a 5 contract. The same functionality through the CCF achieved a total contract price of £301k.

Based upon the open market assessment, the Project Team felt that this represented good value for money for the authority and recommend a direct award.

## **5. Corporate Plan Objectives**

- 5.1** The procurement of a new Revenues and Benefits software system is a business necessity as the current contract terminates in October 2020. The Revenues and Benefits service areas must ensure they have fit for purpose ICT systems, which are aligned to the organisations and district's needs. Technology within the council continues to develop at pace and provides significant opportunities to assist the council and the community. Processes

must provide a flexible and efficient approach which can evolve to meet local needs and maximise the opportunity for innovation.

## 5.2 Financial Sustainability

The procurement of the IT system along with new functionality and modules provided scope for the two service areas to have increased financial stability by allowing an increased focus on daily workloads and realising easier transitions and processes. The need to reduce costs across the council remains a given. Finding efficiency savings is vital but we must also focus on reducing, avoiding and diverting demand.

## 5.3 Customer Focus

Procurement of the system has presented the opportunity to better understand our customers' needs so that we can then get the most appropriate software, functionality, and modules to support this aim.

Relationships with our internal and external customers will improve by embedding better communication channels and allowing enhanced accessibility to council services. Customers will be able to use mobile devices, access and update their accounts through 24/7 self-serve and automation, allowing customers the freedom to get what they want, at the moment they need it, where they need it.

Significant efforts are being made to reduce the process costs of managing customer contact in the front and back office. Services need to become automated end-to-end, with little or no additional work required, and processes need to be designed so that they are completed in a single transaction. The procurement of the system will allow the council to do this.

## 5.4 Quality of Life

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 provided for the introduction of a 'Universal Credit' which replaced a range of existing means-tested benefits and credits for people of working age. Digital access and inclusion are of fundamental importance to the successful roll-out of Universal Credit in that all applications are to be made online.

With this in mind the council has an opportunity to increase digital inclusion and adopting a digital by default approach in the Benefits service area, where such an approach could be embedded with working age groups. This will provide working age customers similarity and ease across government departments. With procurement of the system we can promote a self-sufficient service where we can engage with our customers to publicise channel shift and to encourage online usage through assisted support and training.

## 5.3 Climate, Coast and Environment

With services being moved to digital solutions, there will be environmental benefits of going paperless. Service areas will significantly reduce their paper trails which in turn will provide environment protection and will reduce the council's carbon footprint.

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 The officer recommendation is for a Direct Award as this balances the need to achieve value for money for the Council, with a system that is suitable for the needs of both services, with minimal risk of disruption and additional cost in implementation.

## **7. Implications and Risks**

### **Legal**

The Procurement Officer has confirmed the council is able to make a Direct Award to Civica under the Crown Commercial Framework Agreement.

A member of East Law was part of the Project Team.

## **8. Financial Implications and Risks**

The total cost of the new 5 year contract is just under £301k and this is broken down between the new licensing costs (£101k – one off) and the annual ongoing revenue costs of £40k (these are subject to annual inflation at RPI but total £200k excluding this).

There are two elements to the contract award for the procurement of the new system in terms of revenue and capital provision. The Council's policy is to capitalise initial licence costs which have been quoted at £101k. There is therefore a recommendation that a capital budget of £101k is made available for the software procurement.

The second element covers the ongoing annual revenue costs, as outlined above these are priced at £40k pa. The current provision within the 2020/21 budget is £56k so this represents an annual ongoing cashable saving of £16k for the same system which supports our drive for financial sustainability.

The basic price of Open Revenues for Revenues and Benefits is a total of £364k (plus RPI) for a 5 contract. However, using the software framework the Council has managed to achieve a new contract price of £301k which is £63k less than the original price.

Overall the procurement of the new system has been beneficial, by using the marketplace there is a reduced cost of £63k compared to the initial prices. We are also paying a lower cost for the system that we currently have. In addition to this there are significant savings in terms of officer time. By continuing with the current system we will not incur any conversion costs which previously cost the authority an additional £200k in back filling of posts and consultancy support.

To summarise in financial terms the original quoted price for the new 5 year contract was £364k, the Council has however managed to achieve a reduction of £63k on this price by using the framework contract via the marketplace so that potential cost increase has been avoided. We have also avoided the need to allocate £200k for consultancy costs and backfill incurred previously when moving over to a new system. In terms of the actual cash saving within the revenue budget, the new annual cost of £40k is £16k lower than the current 2020/21 budget provision.

In terms of risks, this is probably the lowest risk option as the current system effectively just continues with none of the risks associated with changing systems and testing etc that would come with changing supplier. As discussed elsewhere within the report the assessments undertaken on what else is currently available within the market have resulted in the officer recommendation to continue with the present system so officers are confident that this will be able to support ongoing improvements to customer service.

**9. Sustainability**

**Please see section on Corporate Objectives**

**10. Equality and Diversity**

**Please see section on Corporate Objectives**

**11. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations**

**None**

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