

ACTIONS ARISING FROM ORAL QUESTIONS RAISED AT FULL COUNCIL ON 18th OCTOBER 2016

AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

- a) In response to a request from Councillor A Taylor, the Chairman of the Audit and Accounts Committee agreed to provide an update regarding what actions from the Cambridge Library Enterprise Centre Review (CLEC) review were still outstanding.

Response

A response was sent on 24th November from Internal Audit reading:

Dear Cllr Taylor

Internal Audit provide regular updates on the CLEC review to the Audit and Accounts Committee and the next is due to the January 2017 meeting. Several actions from this review remain outstanding; however all except one of the outstanding actions relate to the Council's project management processes, which are being taken forward as part of the Council's Transformation Programme and Corporate Capacity Review (CCR) that is currently in progress.

The remaining action relates to an outline policy for referral to General Purposes Committee and this continues to be chased by Internal Audit.

Strategic Management Team (S MT) have agreed an extensive improvement to project management, including a review of staffing structures, methodologies and the Gateway Review Process, which will incorporate all actions currently outstanding. The first phase of the Corporate Capacity Review was completed in October 2016, and further work on the review of project management processes is now being taken forward by the newly-formed Transformation Team. Internal Audit is working with the team to ensure that the lessons learned from CLEC are reflected in the new processes. On that basis Internal Audit is content the necessary actions are being suitably prioritised.

The next report on progress will be brought to Audit & Accounts Committee in January 2017. The detail of the actions completed/outstanding as at our last report to the Committee is provided in the attached document.

Mairead Kelly
Audit & Risk Manager
LGSS Internal Audit

- b) In response to a request from Councillor Mason, Councillor Shellens agreed to provide an update regarding progress on the Council producing an Asset Register and the registration of all Council owned property and land.

Response

A response was sent on 1st November reading:

Dear Cllr Mason

You asked Cllr Shellens for an update on the Assets Register and registration of parcels of land and the following provides you a progress report. Do get back to me if you require any more information.

- Work has progressed well on the electronic asset register of the highways assets for which the Authority is responsible and it has now been completed. The Authority has a highway asset information strategy, which is designed to ensure that highways asset information is captured and, importantly, kept up to date. This strategy is fully funded.
- Officers from Highways and Finance are working to ensure that the Authority is able to provide figures for the valuation of highways assets, in accordance with the timetable for implementing the new Highways Network Assets Code of Practice for the 2016-17 accounts. There is a project plan for this work and work is progressing in accordance with the plan. The new valuation figures for the highways assets will need to be included in the Council's draft Statement of Accounts, which will be completed by 30 June 2017. Any Infrastructure assets remaining once the Highways Assets have been separately identified (such as the Guided Busway) will be reflected within the Infrastructure classification within the accounts and a new asset register will also be created for these assets. This work will be completed by January 17, as per the project plan.
- The County Council is seeking to electronically register some 6,000 parcels of land with HM Land Registry (HMLR). This is a ground breaking approach. The objective is both to get the land registered to CCC and to retain detailed, indexed title deed documents. Officers are working closely with HMLR and will be providing sample electronic documents to ensure that the new electronic registration processes are effective. The scoping of the project was initially delayed by resourcing issues at Land Registry, and subsequently by problems discovered in the sample scanned documents. In order to resolve this, the documents are to be re-scanned. It is now anticipated that the project will be completed Autumn 2018. The total area of the plots is about 1,800 Hectares.

- A full report on the valuation of highways and the registration of parcels of land will be provided to AA Committee at its meeting to be held January 2017.

ORAL QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 9.1,

- a) In response to a question from. Cearns, Councillor Count, Chairman of the General Purposes Committee, agreed to provide a written answer on the impact of the recent down time of the Council website, particularly in relation consultation deadlines and commercial transactions and the protocols in place to manage such issues.

Response

A response was provided on 4th November in the form of a Members briefing to all Councillors in response to the queries raised by Councillor Cearns reading:

MEMBERS IT BRIEFING – October 2016

17-19 September Website Issues:

Following this issue being raised at Full Council on 18 October, Members have requested an update on the website failures which occurred between 17–19 September.

Issues were first identified by our remote scanning device at 06:34 on Saturday 17 September 2016. This involved the website going down for nearly 3 minutes. The scanning process works by looking at certain site elements every minute from a number of worldwide locations and if they can't be accessed it returns a failure. It then checks again every minute until the criteria is met. The notification process works by emailing a group of users when the site goes down, and then when it is live again.

The site went down again at 08:21 on 17th September for nearly 2.5 minutes. At 08:27 the site went down again. As staff opened up the Contact Centre on Saturday morning the problem was reported to the IT help desk and the site came back up again at 09:27.

There was a similar incident at 09:49 for 45 minutes, one at 10:47 for 35 minutes, one at 11:40 for 10 minutes, one at 15:26 for 4 minutes and one at 15:42 for a minute and a half. The site went down again at 20:26 and did not come back up again that day nor the following day (which was a Sunday).

On Monday 19 September the site was working from 09:43.

On Wednesday 21 September colleagues across our IT teams met to discuss the cause and any lessons learnt. LGSS IT outlined that the problem was around one of the underlying databases, which had affected a number of other platforms which share that database. LGSS IT also identified there had been some minor issues a couple of days prior to the outage where the database had been “twitchy”.

We have identified that during this incident there had been poor communication between out of hours IT support staff, with limited visibility of outstanding incidents as shift handovers took place. We have subsequently reduced the risk of this happening again by ensuring regular notifications from the system to the out of hours IT team.

The Council is awaiting a Major Incident Report from LGSS IT to provide further detail on this incident.

27 October Website issues

The external webpage and Camweb experienced downtime for a number of hours.

The problem was caused by a routine minor patch which needed to be applied to the web servers and was scheduled to take place at 10am. The process for this is to take one server, out of the two servers, out of the pool, apply the patch and reinstate it. The process is repeated for the other server. As a consequence of this there should be no downtime.

Unfortunately when the first server was being patched the second server fell over. This resulted in a number of hours of downtime. IT will be providing a full report to explain why this has happened in due course.

Business Continuity Planning

We have now implemented a protocol whereby if the external webpage experiences downtime greater than 15 minutes or any downtime during a high volume period, such as a snow day, the Digital Strategy Manager will write to the Corporate Director outlining the cause of the downtime and the remedial action we will be taking.

Services across the Council are responsible for the business continuity planning around the functions they deliver. This covers any interruption caused by issues with location, systems or people. So for this type of outage it would be the decision of each individual service to follow up on how this impacts on their customers. In these instances services know

they need to accommodate customers, especially on this occasion where nearly all of the downtime was outside of normal working hours.

At present when a system goes down there are general communications to all staff from IT and in the case of the corporate website failing there is a communication with content authors in services who are then able to contact critical service leads. However, we have recognised that we need to do more work to ensure we have the right business continuity plans in place when incidents of this type occur. The IT client team are compiling a list of system owners across every business system within the authority; this is approximately 80% complete and we have already included all owners for services that are exposed to the public via the website. These system owners will be notified when public services have not been available for a period of over an hour.

As part of the Citizen First Digital First transformation programme, supported by GPC in July 2016, we recognised the need for reliable and usable technology so that services can concentrate on their core function. Therefore it is essential that any new system purchased has extremely high availability and this is one of the benefits that needs to be set out in any business case around any replacement or upgraded key systems, such as our website.

For Members' Awareness – Recent IT Improvements:

- We've currently rolled out 2,400 new laptops across the business, which are going out at 100-200 per week. If users haven't got one yet, they should have one by the end of December.
- Anyone getting a new laptop will automatically get Skype for Business installed. We will be monitoring its use as, through it, we aim to improve communications and reduce the need to travel, thereby saving time and travel costs.
- 24 of the 32 scheduled network site upgrades have been completed, so those people in offices around the County should be seeing faster network speeds.
- We have embarked upon our Citizen First Digital First programme, the investment in this programme was approved by GPC in July. Our first success is completely re-inventing the Blue Badge application process. Where previously it would have taken 6-12 months of protracted work with IT to re-develop a process of this kind, by adopting a different project methodology the whole process was completed in 8 weeks. More importantly these changes will significantly improve the experience for people renewing Blue Badges. We are monitoring uptake and will continue to work on improvements off the back of customer feedback.

- The IT Client Team was put in place in May to act as a point of contact between the Council and LGSS. It is working well as an IT escalation point and the team is resolving between 40 and 50 escalations from both the County Council and LGSS IT each week. All staff are encouraged to escalate to the IT Client Team if IT problems are not being progressed, after contact has been made with the IT Helpdesk.
- We've benchmarked the IT service using an independent organisation SOCITM. The results weren't outstanding, but we can now measure our improvements as we move forward. The information from this report will also inform service improvements
- All Councillors who wanted a Council laptop or tablet have received one.

Live Issues:

- Our Enterprise Vault: this is where emails are archived. Access to this is key to effective day to day working - we know it is slow retrieving older files and this is being worked on.
- Mobile phones: previously the Council had provided Windows phones with GOOD software. Windows phones are no longer supporting GOOD so we are trialling new devices as we recognise the solution chosen doesn't deliver what we need it to.

Developments in the pipeline:

- A new County Council public facing website to improve the online engagement with our citizens, due in late January 2017.
- Further work to improve our own digital processes through having better system integration to reduce the time it takes for us to carry out our work.
- Faster and more resilient storage. Users won't necessarily notice this but there is currently considerable work going on behind the scenes to make sure everything is more reliable.
- A new commissioning model for IT projects to remove the difficult/ confusing process that is currently in place.

- b) In response to a question from Councillor Manning, a written answer would be provided by Councillor Bates, the Council's representative on the City Deal Executive Board, on whether City Deal monies could be used to replace mature trees that had been felled as part of congestion improvement schemes. The Chairman of Council asked the Vice-Chairwoman to ask the Constitution and Ethics Committee to consider the rationale of questions at Council to the Council's representative on the Cambridge City Deal Executive Board.

Response

A response was sent on 26th October 2016 reading:

Dear Councillor Manning

At the Council Meeting last week you raised with me as the County Council's member on the City Deal Executive Board a statement made by the Chair of the City Deal Board Councillor Lewis Herbert that, as part of the proposals for Milton Road, mature trees will be put back or replaced in some way, if the final decision is to cut them down. You indicated that you understood that the City Deal terms are very specific about what City Deal money can and can't be spent on, especially regarding transport schemes and you asked whether the Board had received specific confirmation that City Deal money could be spent on mature trees?

As a written response to what I had already indicated at the Council Meeting when I answered yes, I can confirm that as trees and landscaping are an integral part of highway schemes, City Deal money can and will be used to replace mature trees where necessary. In terms of an exact species replacement, it would be inappropriate to guarantee anything specific at this stage, as the Local Liaison Forums and the workshops supported by external technical advice are developing plans for what is appropriate and these will be put to the Board.

I trust this answers your specific enquiry.

Sent on behalf of;

Councillor Ian Bates

Chairman

Economy & Environment P'tee

Cambridgeshire County Council

- c) In response to a question from Councillor Boden a written answer would be provided by Councillor Bates, the Chairman of the Economy and Environment Committee, regarding the timescale for the production of the Fenland Local Transport Strategy and local member involvement.

Response

A response was sent at the end of November reading:

There is no requirement for Fenland to have a Transport Strategy in place in the next 12 months. The Market Town Transport Strategies will remain until the County Council adopts a Fenland Transport Strategy.

It is proposed that officers will start developing a Transport Strategy for Fenland in Summer/Autumn 2017. We will of course involve Fenland officers and members in this process. It is likely that a member steering group will be developed to get district and county member input. There will also be a public consultation to get input from public and key stakeholders. One of the first stages of development of the Fenland Transport Strategy will setting up the arrangements for involving County and District councillors.

- d) In response to a question from Councillor Scutt, a written response would be provided by Councillor Count, the Leader of the Council, setting out the financial and resource implications of the office of directly elected Mayor as part of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough devolution deal.

Response

The details were provided in the report to the Special Council meeting held on 22nd November 2016. See the link to the agenda and agenda Item 2 'Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Devolution' as follows:

<https://cmis.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/ccclive/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/487/Committee/20/Default.aspx>

- e) In response to a question from Councillor Kavanagh, a written answer would be provided by Councillor Bates, the Chairman of the Economy and Environment Committee, on which independent schools provided a minibus service to transport their pupils from Park & Ride sites and measures to help encourage other schools to take similar action.

Response

A response was sent on 7th November reading:

A total of 13 school coaches/mini-buses use the Trumpington Park & Ride site in the morning and evening. There are an additional 5 using Madingley and Babraham sites combined. The schools and the number of vehicles to each are shown below.

Babraham: 1 x Perse Upper,
1x Brookes Cambridge School, Bury St Edmunds
 1x St.Faiths

Madingley: 1 x Kings College School
 1x Stephen Purse School

Trumpington: 2 x Perse Prep
 1x Perse Upper
 1x St.Johns College School
 1x Friends School, Saffron Walden
 1x Leys
 2x St.Marys
 1x St.Edmunds College, Ware
 2x St.Faiths
 2x Stephen Purse school

This has only been possible since the construction of 6 full size coach bays at the Trumpington site in 2013. We have reached the limit on the number of vehicles we can fit into this area and there is limited capacity at any of the other sites due to their design and footprint. Work has started on a feasibility study into a detailed costing of a proposal to increase capacity at Trumpington further. Initial estimates are that this cost will be in the region of £220k and funding opportunities, such as City Deal, will be explored once the feasibility study is complete.

I hope this is helpful but please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further information.

Ian Bates

*Chairman
Economy & Environment P'tee
Cambridgeshire County Council*

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- f) In response to a question from Councillor Bullen a written answer would be provided by Councillor Count, the Leader of the Council, confirming what information would be provided in advance of the Extraordinary Council meeting in November regarding the total costs of the Combined Authority.

Response

This was also dealt with by including the information in the Report to the extraordinary Council meeting held on 22nd November. See the response to Councillor Scutt at d) above.

- g) In response to a question from Councillor Whitehead a written answer would be provided by Councillor McGuire, Chairman of the Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee, regarding the contribution that the City Council and the parishes were making towards the cost of lighting and the difference in cost between providing reduced lighting compared to having full lighting.

Response

A response was sent on 29th November reading:

Dear Councillor Whitehead,

County Council - Tuesday 18th October 2016 - Oral Questions.
Draft Response for Question 9) Question from Councillor Joan Whitehead

Thank you for your question regarding street lighting operational times and dimming levels.
By way of background, here is a link to the report and minutes of the Committee meeting when decisions were made in relation to Streetlighting, at which there was extensive debate about the options:

Please see [here](#) for the street lighting energy savings consultation feedback report.

Please see [here](#) for the Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee meeting minutes for meeting held on the 12th January 2016.

In summary it was agreed to:

- Further dim the lights in residential areas from 40% dimming down to 60% dimming
- Switch off the street lighting in residential areas between 2-6am
- NB main traffic routes and safety zones (e.g. where there is CCTV) remain at either 60% dimming (traffic routes) or 40% dimming (areas covered by CCTV cameras) and are lit all through the night

The City Council and some Parish and Town Councils wanted to retain a higher level of lighting and were invited to supplement provision where they wished to. In the City there was a recognition of the night time economy and a preference to keep lights on all night, whilst a reduced level of dimming was also agreed for the historic city centre.

Please see below response to your specific questions:

1. Cambridge City Council contribution to lighting in Cambridge City

Cambridge City Council has paid a contribution of £43,500 to Cambridgeshire County Council for the year 2016/17, which provides funding for 5,731 street lights to be kept on between the hours of 2am and 6am, when they would otherwise be turned off, and 490 street lights being lit to a higher level than they would be otherwise (mostly in the historic core in Cambridge City centre).

Within Cambridgeshire as a whole there are also 15 Town and Parish Councils who have agreed to provide funding for 6537 street lights to be kept on between the hours of 2am and 6am, when they would otherwise be turned off, at a cost of £50,335.

2. The cost of keeping dimmed lights on between 2 – 6 am in these areas, compared to the cost of keeping lights lit at previous levels until 1am and switching off between 1-6 am.

It would cost an additional £73,000 to move from the current arrangements in Cambridge City (lights dimmed, but kept on all night) to a scenario where lights are not dimmed but instead switched off from 1am to 6am. This does not include any additional administrative costs which would be payable to the service provider Balfour Beatty to revise operational times on the central management system (CMS) which controls the operation of the street lights remotely.

It would cost an additional £346k to make this change across the rest of the county

I hope you will find the above information useful but should you require any further information or clarification please do let me know.

Regards

Mac

*Cllr Mac McGuire
Member for Norman Cross
Chairman, Highways & Community Infrastructure Committee
Cambridgeshire County Council*