



EXECUTIVE

5.30 p.m. - 6.25 p.m.

11 June 2008

Present: Councillors Morrey (Vice Chair, in the Chair), Arthur, Blakeway, Bremner, Brociek-Coulton, Sands and Waters

Also present: Councillor Ramsay and Councillor Wright (to end of item)

Apologies: Councillor Morphew (Chair)

Apologies were also received on behalf of Councillor Stephenson (Chair of Scrutiny Committee) and Councillor Watkins (Vice-Chair, Scrutiny Committee)

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 28 May 2008.

2. COMMUNAL AERIAL DIGITAL UPDATE

(Councillor Ramsay declared a personal interest during this item as he was resident of a communal block of flats affected by the proposals.)

(As several members of the public, comprising leaseholders and tenants, had attended the meeting for this item, the Chair agreed to move the item forward. Copies of statements from the Chair of the Norwich Leaseholders' Association and the Chair of the City Wide Tenants' Board were circulated to members of the Executive.)

Mrs Ronni Meadows, Leaseholder and member of the Norwich Leaseholders' Association, asked the following question:-

'My block is in a Freeview 'dead spot' . I would therefore assume Freeview will not be installed, if so, how much will I be charged for just communal satellite, and if I opt out under the 2003 Communications Act (or apply to OFCOM for a section 134) does this mean I pay nothing unless I decide to 'opt back in' at a later date?'

The Chair made the following response:-

'The issue around the legal aspects of the question are being looked into separately.

With regard to the 'technical' element of the question the contractor has advised the Council that there will be very few 'dead spots' which will be unable to receive a digital signal. Where this does occur the first option will be to locate the aerial and satellite dish in a location where a signal can be received. Where this is not possible the contractor will assess alternative options available and present a recommended option for agreement but these will be dealt with as they arise.

It is worth noting that the contract we would enter into does require the contractor to ensure a TV signal is provided to all properties that currently receive one.

Mrs Meadows' lease provides various rights and services for which there will be a service charge liability. There are no restrictions or prohibitions in the lease such as are covered by the Communications Act 2003 (choice of electronic communications services). There are restrictions on erecting aerials or apparatus without the landlord's consent as is common to all leases. There is no provision in the lease allowing "opting in" or "opting out" as suggested by Mrs Meadows'.

Mrs Meadows then asked a supplementary question concerning the Freeview blackspot and the installation of digital cable. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services invited Mrs Meadows to put the question into writing and he would ensure that she received a response.

Mrs Pauline Walton then addressed the Executive with her concerns regarding advice she had received from a provider regarding MAP3 aerials and requesting the right of tenants and leaseholders to opt out of the Council's communal aerial scheme.

The Head of Housing Management outlined the options available as set out in the report.

Councillor Ramsay said that the Scrutiny Committee had debated the issues concerning the proposals at great length but members had come to different conclusions and could therefore not make a firm recommendation. His preference had been for Option C, where the Council would meet any additional costs generated by the option of opting out of the communal aerial scheme.

Discussion ensued. Members considered that the ability to opt out of the communal aerial scheme would make it more difficult to let tenancies and would cost more to install at a later stage. The Executive was of the view that having considered the recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee and the various representations, Option A would be the most beneficial to all tenants and was consistent with the previous decision on 19 March 2008.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1) note the recommendations from Scrutiny Committee and accompanying officer comments;
- (2) approve the criteria for future individual satellite dish installation for tenants and leaseholders, as set out in this report, and the intention to ensure that this information is available in a clear and transparent manner for tenants and leaseholders;
- (3) approve the option A that opting out of the new communal aerial scheme is not available to anyone who is currently in receipt of communal aerial systems;
- (4) approve the communication process and plan.

3. THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN 2008/2009

The Chief Executive presented the report and the appended revisions following the Leader of the Council's statement to Council on 3 June 2008, which had been considered at the Scrutiny Committee on 5 June 2008.

Councillor Ramsay said that the Scrutiny Committee had discussed the details of the Draft Corporate Plan and had expressed concern that the volume of work was achievable and had been reassured from the Chief Executive that it was deliverable and that progress could be monitored.

RESOLVED to recommend the Corporate Plan to Council on 24 June 2008, for approval, subject to any editing and design changes, to be agreed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

4. REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The Policy and Improvement Consultant presented the report and together with the Chief Executive answered members' questions.

Councillor Waters said that he was confident that the Council could move forward and that the means by which the Council delivered the Corporate objectives was embedded in the Corporate Plan.

Councillor Ramsay said that the Council had embarked on a journey of improvement but cautioned about complacency.

The Chair praised the report, which was a 'snapshot in time' and acknowledged that the Council had moved on. He thanked the officers for their hard work.

RESOLVED to note the report and the proposals for implementing the recommendations.

5. END OF YEAR 2007/2008 – PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The Policy and Improvement Consultant presented the report and together with the Chief Executive answered members' questions. The Scrutiny Committee had considered the report at their meeting on 5 June 2008. The Chief Executive explained that if the arrows indicating the 'Direction of Travel' were pointing down this meant that the statistics were not moving towards the target.

Councillor Waters referred to member involvement in the re-tendering process of the City Care contract renewal and the benchmarking exercise with Steria. With regard to performance indicators he said that the balance was changing to local indicators that were important to the Council and local residents. The measure of this was how people responded to those priorities and understanding the importance of the impact of those things not prioritised, and monitoring the performance against objectives.

Discussion ensued in which Councillor Wright referred to the discussion at the Scrutiny Committee and members discussed national performance targets in the local context. Members noted that the sickness levels of staff had risen. Members also considered the Planning Improvement Programme was being taken on board. Councillor Morrey queried the accuracy of the recycling figure as the County Council's statistics for the period to the end of April had not been available in time for inclusion.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1) note the content of this report and the proposed actions contained within it;
- (2) confirm that officers undertake the actions required to tackle those areas of underperformance identified in this report;
- (3) thank the officers responsible for preparing the report.

6. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of item 7 below on the grounds contained in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

***7. SITE AT EGYPTIAN ROAD (PARAGRAPH 3)**

The Property Services Manager presented the report and answered questions.

RESOLVED to approve the sale of this site at Egyptian Road for £1m (one million pounds) subject only to the contract (details as set out in paragraph 6 of the report).

CHAIR