

**SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL AND WAVENEY DISTRICT COUNCIL
LOWESTOFT SHARED ACCOMMODATION JOINT COMMITTEE – 28/10/15**

Minutes of a Lowestoft Shared Accommodation Joint Committee meeting held on
Wednesday 28 October 2015 at 4.00 pm in the Conference Room, Riverside, Lowestoft

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Suffolk County Council Member present:

Councillors R Smith (Cabinet Member) and M Ladd

Waveney District Council Members present:

Councillors M Barnard (Cabinet Member)

Officers present:

A Charvonia (WDC Strategic Director)
D Johnson (SCC Assistant Director for Corporate Property)
P Revell (Programme Director)
N Wotton (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S Logan.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. LOWESTOFT SHARED ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME - PROGRESS AND UPDATE REPORT

The Programme Director presented an update report on the Lowestoft Shared Accommodation Programme including a summary of the background of the project, key activities and decisions made since the last meeting, key milestones, financial information and risks.

Programme Updates

Progress had been made in the following key areas:

- The formal opening ceremony took place on 3 July 2015, with the plaque being unveiled by Peter Aldous MP. The event coincided with the national Minute's Silence in respect for the victims of the Tunisia beach killings. The combined event attracted widespread coverage in the local press and television.
- The management of defects in the building had been progressing well. The main concern had been the inconsistency of the heating and cooling Actimass system, along with the building management system controls. Clarification was provided that although the target temperatures were being achieved within the building, there were some draughts and high volumes of air movement being experienced in some parts of the building. As a result, a renowned expert had been commissioned to look into the issue and remote monitoring was being undertaken in this respect. It was also reported

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that the light shades in the atrium were due to be replaced with opaque versions, in order to reduce glare.

- There had been some complaints received from neighbouring businesses regarding the on-street parking by staff, which was creating some hazardous driving conditions in the vicinity. It was noted that regular communications with staff were taking place and the Highways team had recommended that no parking zones were created. This was currently going through the necessary consultation processes and as long as no objections were received, it was anticipated that that the road markings would be installed in February 2016. Clarification was provided regarding the current charging arrangements and it was noted that Suffolk County Council staff were charged 50p to park per day. Waveney District Council staff were not currently charged a fee to park, due to staff also working at Suffolk Coastal District Council and this would be reviewed once the new offices for Suffolk Coastal were in operation. It was reported that charging for car parking at other SCC sites had proven to change staff behaviour over time, with more using greener methods of travel such as walking or using public transport. Monies raised from car parking fees were solely used to support incentives for using greener travel methods and provide the refreshments in the breakout areas and it was reported that Waveney District Council contributed equally for this service from its general fund for the Riverside building. Reassurance was provided there were separate accounts for both Waveney District and Suffolk County in respect of the Riverside Building in order to ensure that charging was equitable and transparent.
- The Riverside Building User Group was well established and staff had suggested various ideas for improvement which were being considered, such as additional blinds in certain areas, mechanised gates to the cycle store and additional external seating.
- A post occupation Well-being Survey had been undertaken by staff who had moved into Riverside. A survey had also been completed by staff prior to moving into the new building, which allowed for accurate comparisons to be made. The final report was still awaited, however initial indications showed that there had been improvements in every area. It was reported anecdotally that staff were happier and more productive, however a Councillor raised concerns that open plan working may lead to the increased spread of germs and impact on sickness levels. It was noted that staff sickness levels were closely monitored throughout the year to allow for comparisons. Further information about the survey results would be communicated to staff in due course.
- The teams from the Marina Centre has been successfully moved into their temporary accommodation in Mariners Street and St Margarets House. It was noted that Customer Service delivery was working well in St Margarets House.
- SEH French Ltd, the appointed contractors, had taken possession of the Marina Centre and the refurbishment works had commenced on Monday, 29 June 2015. The works were progressing well, although some structural issues had been discovered which had resulted in a 2 week delay and an additional cost of approximately £10,000. It was now anticipated that the Marina Centre would be re-occupied the week commencing 18 January 2016, although the final date was still to be confirmed. Reassurance was provided that the contingency funds would cover the additional works. In respect of the Housing Team who would be based at the Marina Centre, it was confirmed that there were no major concerns regarding security and there would be adequate safety provisions in place such as CCTV, panic alarms and secure escape routes which minimises the risks. Further risk assessments would be carried out once the teams have moved back in.
- The staff Transformation Champions group for the Marina Centre had been working well and supporting the project team with various activities and helping to prepare the different teams for the move into the refurbished Marina Centre.

Programme Finance

The programme budget was £13.65m – split equally between the two authorities (£6.85m each).

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The latest estimate for out-turn costs remained within the parameters of the allocated budget, having taken account of the apportionments to-date. At the time of writing the report, programme expenditure stood at £11.287million as at 12 October 2015.

Programme Risks

The Programme Risk Register was monitored by the Programme Director and reviewed at each Joint Management Group meeting. Any risks deemed as high were given special attention and appropriate actions put in place. It was reported that there were currently 17 open risks. All of the risks had mitigation strategies in place and none were categorised as 'high' or 'very high'.

RESOLVED

That the progress and update report be received.

5 EXEMPT / CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

RESOLVED

That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

6 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 JUNE 2015

RESOLVED

That the Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7 LOWESTOFT SHARED ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME – EXEMPT PROGRESS AND UPDATE REPORT

The Joint Committee considered an exempt report which provided information on the risk register for the overall programme and the latest financial summary report. A copy of the risk register was attached as Appendix A to the report, whilst the financial summary was attached as Appendix B.

There were currently 17 open risks, none of which were currently rated as high or very high. Details of the current mitigation and actions for each of the open risks were outlined within Appendix A.

Responses were given in relation to other specific issues raised by the Joint Committee.

RESOLVED

That the exempt progress and update report be received.

The meeting was concluded at 4.50 pm.

Chairman