



James Ellis
Head of Legal and Democratic
Services

MEETING : JOINT INFORMATION COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
VENUE : COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD
DATE : THURSDAY 27 OCTOBER 2022
TIME : 7.00 PM

PLEASE NOTE TIME AND VENUE

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Councillors L Haysey, A Huggins, Mrs J Lloyd, S Taylor, J Thomas and
G Williamson

CONTACT OFFICER:
Katie Mogan
katie.mogan@eastherts.gov.uk

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

1. A Member, present at a meeting of the Authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority, with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in any matter to be considered or being considered at a meeting:
 - must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
 - must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
 - must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
 - if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days;
 - must leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.
2. A DPI is an interest of a Member or their partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom they are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were civil partners) within the descriptions as defined in the Localism Act 2011.
3. The Authority may grant a Member dispensation, but only in limited circumstances, to enable him/her to participate and vote on a matter in which they have a DPI.

4. It is a criminal offence to:

- fail to disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest at a meeting if it is not on the register;
- fail to notify the Monitoring Officer, within 28 days, of a DPI that is not on the register that a Member disclosed to a meeting;
- participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which a Member has a DPI;
- knowingly or recklessly provide information that is false or misleading in notifying the Monitoring Officer of a DPI or in disclosing such interest to a meeting.

(Note: The criminal penalties available to a court are to impose a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale and disqualification from being a councillor for up to 5 years.)

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Chairman's Announcements
3. Minutes - 28 July 2022 (Pages 5 - 12)
4. Declarations of Interest
5. ICT Committee Project Update report

Report to follow.

6. Urgent business

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
JOINT INFORMATION COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON THURSDAY 28 JULY 2022,
AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillors L Haysey, A Huggins,
Mrs J Lloyd, S Taylor and J Thomas

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Richard Cassidy	- Chief Executive
Katie Mogan	- Democratic Services Manager
Tom Pike	- Strategic Director and Deputy Chief Executive
Helen Standen	- Deputy Chief Executive
Harman Sura	- Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN 2022/23

It was proposed by Councillor Haysey and seconded by Councillor Lloyd that Councillor Williamson be appointed as Chairman for 2022/23 Civic Year. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – That Councillor Williamson be elected as Chairman of the Committee for the 2022/23 Civic Year.

2 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN 2022/23

It was proposed by Councillor Thomas and seconded by Councillor Haysey that Councillor Lloyd be appointed as Vice Chairman for 2022/23 Civic Year. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – That Councillor Lloyd be elected as Vice Chairman of the Committee for the 2022/23 Civic Year.

3 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Williamson, Matt Partridge (Chief Executive – Stevenage Borough Council) and Clare Fletcher (Strategic Director – Stevenage Borough Council).

4 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Lloyd chaired the meeting in the absence of Councillor Williamson.

Members and Officers introduced themselves.

5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were declarations of interest.

6 ICT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME - PROGRESS REPORT

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager gave a presentation to the committee on the progress of the ICT Improvement Programme.

Councillor Haysey asked why there had been issues with the migration over to Microsoft 365 and if the issues had now been resolved.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said there had been a few issues with the 365 rollout including set up issues and policy issues running in the background. They had been picked up quickly and the team were receiving support from Phoenix, a Microsoft platform partner, to eliminate problems. He said that 130 people had been migrated so far and 200 issues had been logged with the IT team. The deployment of the migration had been extended to clean up the issues. The next migration groups had 50 plus staff members so needed to make sure these issues were resolved.

Councillor Thomas said she was in the pilot group so had been using 365 since Christmas. She found that meeting invites were dropping into her calendar without being approved in the inbox. She said she was having to go through her calendar on a regular basis and did not want other people to miss meetings because they haven't seen them in their diary. This had been fixed but had now reverted.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said that some fixes to issues seemed to undo work of previous fixes and confirmed that Phoenix was helping to resolve this.

Councillor Haysey asked the Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager if he felt that he had sufficient support and the right skills base within the team so that he did not need to be involved in the minor issues. She said that the remit of the group was to help him and the senior management teams to know what staffing is required.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said he was currently dealing with low level issues which was time consuming. He said the market for IT specialists was challenging and the team were struggling to fill vacant positions. The IT team have brought in Phoenix to accelerate the deployment and Microsoft want East Herts and Stevenage on its platform so they are also keen to help.

Councillor Huggins referred to the September target and asked if the issues were going to be resolved before large groups were to be migrated.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said the dates were recommendations from SOCITM and said there were now larger gaps between rollouts to make sure it had gone to plan before the next group is migrated.

Councillor Lloyd asked how difficult recruitment would be and what was the interim solution if no one suitable was found.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said that SOCTIM would support the team to find the right candidate.

The Strategic Director and Deputy Chief Executive (SBC) said that it took three rounds of recruitment before the

last partnership manager was found. SOCTIM was likely to recommend that the pay for the role similar to the Assistant Directors at Stevenage. He said that a cyber security specialist could demand a huge salary. He said it was good to have SOCTIM on board to be able to access their network of talent.

Councillor Lloyd asked if there was the budget available to recruit these specialists.

The Strategic Director and Deputy Chief Executive (SBC) said the lead role had been covered in the financial model. He said there was currently no draft operating model so it had not been worked out what the costs were and if there was a funding gap.

The Chief Executive (EHC) said it was useful to see the recommendations from the SOCTIM report to give a baseline to see where the service sits. He said that the committee had been set up to push forward the work of the review. He said that a number of key Members had not received the report and thought it would be useful to hold a briefing so all Members were on the same page and heard the same information.

Councillor Haysey agreed with the Chief Executive (EHC) and said Members needed to recognise what the report had recommended to make the service work. She asked if a Cyber Security specialist post could be shared between a number of authorities to share the cost.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said it was worth considering and the department wanted to change the remit of the Network and Security Manager to focus more on cyber security.

Action point – To look at the Cyber Security Manager role and see if there was an equivalent officer in other Herts authorities that could possibly be shared across authorities.

Councillor Lloyd asked about the password policies as she had never changed her password and would not know how to. She suggested this might be a training issue for Members.

Councillor Thomas said she became a councillor in 2000 and said she was surprised at the lack of security around passwords. She said the security of both councils data was vitally important.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said there would be training provided for Members on password security and how to change it. The password change prompt would be pushed out in stages. He said the team were running artificial intelligence software to see what password combinations were most common.

Councillor Haysey referred to the cyber security training that Members and Officers had to undertake. She said there were a few councillors that did not think they needed to do it so she gave authority to have their access cut off. She said cyber security was a real issue and referred to the incident at Gloucestershire Council and how much it cost them.

Councillor Taylor flagged up the lack of power as Leaders of the Councils to take away Members access. She said that she would appreciate some legal advice on whether they were able to do that.

Councillor Huggins said that he did not think most Members were aware of the progress of this improvement programme. He asked if Member communication could be improved to let them know how the project was progressing. He said that Members were quickly aware if there was an issue but were not aware of the positives and the progress.

Councillor Taylor asked about automatic archiving on Microsoft 365 and said it had disrupted her way of working.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said he would take the point away and investigate.

Councillor Haysey said that the Planning and Building Control team were under significant pressure and has too much work which was a national issue. She said she would be nervous about anything going wrong with their migration. She asked if the team were fully aware of the changes.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said that the team had received training sessions. He said he would not continue with the migration if he had any concerns.

Councillor Lloyd said it was good to recruit new staff but asked if there was an opportunity to upskill and develop existing staff. She asked if people were not there to apply or if the council was not paying enough.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said it was a factor of both. He said the market had opened up in

cyber security especially since Russia invaded Ukraine. He said a cyber security role in London was paying £85,000 a year.

Councillor Haysey asked about the telephone systems and historically, it was not known what licences the council had and who owned them.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager apologised for not including the telephone system in the presentation. He said the workshop design had been completed and ICT were engaging with departments to find out their requirements. He referred to the licence issue and said all contracts had been entered into a database including contract renewal dates and costings.

Councillor Taylor asked the Chief Officers to urgently look at the issues around recruitment into the team. She asked them to come back to Members via email about whether the issues were conditions of the market or a pay pressure.

7 URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm

Chairman

Date