

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
JOINT INFORMATION COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON TUESDAY 7 MARCH 2023,
AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillors L Haysey, Mrs J Lloyd, J Thomas
and G Williamson

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Richard Cassidy	- Chief Executive
Clare Fletcher	- Assistant Director of Finance
Katie Mogan	- Democratic Services Manager
Matt Partridge	- Chief Executive
Helen Standen	- Deputy Chief Executive
Harman Sura	- Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor
Henry and Councillor Huggins.

2 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councillor Williamson said this would be the last meeting held at East Herts Council before the meetings are hosted at Stevenage Borough Council for the next civic year.

3 MINUTES - 27 OCTOBER 2022

Councillor Lloyd proposed, and Councillor Thomas seconded a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 October 2022 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman. On being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 October 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5 ACTION POINTS FROM THE LAST MEETING

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager ran through the updated action points from the last meeting.

In reference to A1, the Strategic Director (SBC) said herself and the Deputy Chief Executive (EHC) had met with the ICT Management Team and took them through the report. From that meeting, 13 actions were being tracked and the team will meet monthly to discuss progress.

The Chief Executive (EHC) said this reflected a different way of working which was important with a new Assistant Director starting at the end of the month. He said that himself and the Chief Executive (SBC) gave full support to the IT team.

In reference to A3, Councillor Williamson asked if a significant proportion of the issues reported to the IT Service Desk could have been solved by users themselves if they searched the intranet/internet.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said that the migration to Microsoft 365 was a new process for all staff so the high number of issues reported was to be expected.

The Deputy Chief Executive (EHC) said that most of the IT Service Desk issues related to passwords and accounts being locked. It was hoped that users would be able to unlock their accounts themselves using multi-factor authentication in the future which would mean a reduction in calls.

In relation to A4, the Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said interviews were scheduled this week for a full time project manager for the telephony system. He said that the team now knew what was required from the system and would implement three functionalities; call back options, voicemails and time spent in queues.

Councillor Haysey said that East Herts Members would be pleased with that progress. She said that the Council had been criticised over its telephony system so would need to communicate to the public that these services were now available.

6 ICT COMMITTEE PROJECT UPDATE REPORT

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager presented the latest updates to the ICT Project.

The Chief Executive (EHC) asked if any downtime or upgrades to systems would be scheduled during the Pre-Election Period as the team would be working evenings and weekends.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said he had been working closely with the Elections team to ensure that their systems were working. He said that a change freeze would be in place so no changes or upgrades would take place in that period.

Councillor Williamson referred to the Wifi project and said that the committee were informed at their last meeting that the contract had expired. He asked if it had been extended to cover the period before the next contract starts.

The Deputy Chief Executive (EHC) said that the date on the presentation needed to be in the revised end date as the original target was March 2023.

Action: Amend the date on the Wifi project.

The Strategic Director (SBC) said there was a decision to be made on a cloud vs premise solution but finances needed to be agreed first.

Councillor Haysey asked if renting out the building would be a security problem from other companies depending on a cloud or premise solution.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said that it would be on a separate connection and not be a risk.

Councillor Williamson asked if the Council would be at risk if the contract expired in October but the timescales for the new solution was December 2023.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said that the new service provider would take on existing services and maintain what was already in place before the new solution would be in place.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager presented the position on vacancies in the team.

The Chief Executive (SBC) asked if the issue in recruitment was the availability of candidates in the market or if the roles needed to be adjusted to attract candidates.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said that there was a high demand in the sector and cyber security engineers with appropriate qualifications could be earning £75-80k in London.

The Chief Executive (SBC) asked if there was a Plan B if it proved more difficult to recruit.

The Strategic Director (SBC) said that if the market was competitive, it was worth agreeing an approach on a permanent post as it was worth bearing in mind that that interim officers can be expensive and could leave with a weeks' notice.

Councillor Haysey asked if the partnership was developing relationships with the local colleagues and university to advertise roles.

The Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager said they were looking at offering apprenticeships for existing colleagues.

The Strategic Director (SBC) said that they had been attending job fairs and offering meet the team sessions but that interacting with higher education institutions was a good idea.

The Members and Officers thanked the Interim Strategic IT and Partnerships Manager for his hard work in the role as this was his last meeting.

7 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm

Chairman

Date