

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Date: 12 October 2015

Venue: East Northamptonshire House, Cedar Drive, Thrapston

Time: 7.30pm

Present: Councillors: Richard Lewis (Chairman)
Glenvil Greenwood-Smith (Vice-Chairman)
Steven North (Leader of the Council)

Tony Boto	Helen Harrison
David Brackenbury	Andy Mercer
Wendy Brackenbury	Rupert Reichhold
Val Carter	Anna Sauntson
Roger Glithero	

182. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Glenn Harwood, Dudley Hughes and Sarah Peacock.

183. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

184. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

185. QUESTIONS UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.3

There were no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 10.3.

186. MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES

a) Personnel Sub-Committee – 21 September 2015

The minutes of the meeting of the Personnel Sub-Committee held on 21 September 2015 were received (see pages 127 to 128).

187. CUSTOMER SERVICE STRATEGY

The Interim Head of Customer and Community Services submitted a report which sought the adoption of a new Customer Service Strategy for the authority to replace the previous strategy adopted in November 2011.

It was reported that the new strategy had been developed with both the customer and the needs of the council in mind and reflected increased use of technology and different mediums to access services. The strategy was focused on getting more council services online and allow customers to access those services at their convenience, not during the council's working hours.

Members were broadly supportive of the aims and aspirations of the strategy and welcomed the direction outlined in respect of enabled customers to access services at their convenience. Some concern was expressed in respect of some demographics not being able to access services through online or digital methods, however it was confirmed that a "one size fits all" approach was not the intention, but rather to widen the routes available to customers to interact and receive services from the council.

RESOLVED:

That the Customer Service Strategy be approved.

(Reason - To enable the council to better respond to the changing needs of customers).

188. 'COLLECTIVE SWITCHING' – AFFORDABLE ENERGY SCHEME

The committee considered a report submitted by the Interim Environmental Protection Manager which sought approval for the council to participate in a 'collective switching' scheme to be offered to residents of the district.

It was reported that a switching scheme required residents to register their interest in switching to another energy provider following which an auction would take place where energy providers make a collective offer for providing energy to the interested parties en masse. In order for such a scheme to be successful, a strong communications plan and strong customer service support would be required. It was noted that the council had selected iChoosr to run the scheme in East Northamptonshire.

It was anticipated that the scheme in East Northamptonshire could be launched on 1 December 2015, with the auction held and offers made in February 2016.

Members expressed support for the council's participation in the scheme and identified that there would be many beneficiaries locally. Some concerns were highlighted that some individuals may already have better energy price deals than would be available through the scheme; however the committee was reminded that the decision to change supplier and accept a deal would be a matter for each individual customer and was not binding through participation in the scheme.

RESOLVED:

That the East Northamptonshire Council's participation in a collective switching scheme be approved

(Reason – To enable residents to get a better deal on energy).

Chairman



Personnel Sub-Committee

Minutes of a meeting held on Monday 21 September 2015 at 10.30am, East Northamptonshire House, Thrapston

Present: Councillors: Roger Glithero (Chairman)
Glenn Harwood MBE
Sarah Peacock

Officers: David Oliver Chief Executive
Katy Everitt Head of Resources and Organisational
Development
Aime Armstrong Human Resources Manager
Beverley Wilson Senior Electoral Services Officer

1.0 MINUTES

1.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Personnel Sub-Committee held on 20 July 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

2.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 Apologies for absence were received from, Councillors Wendy Brackenbury and Steven North.

3.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 No declarations of interest were made.

4.0 QUESTIONS UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 10.3

4.1 There were no questions submitted under Procedure Rule 10.3.

5.0 ELECTORAL REGISTRATION – FEES FOR CANVASSERS

5.1 The Senior Electoral Services Officer presented a report proposing the establishment of new rates of pay for canvassing activity undertaken on behalf of the Electoral Registration Officer following the transition to Individual Electoral Registration (IER).

5.2 The existing fee structure was no longer considered to be adequate for the additional responsibilities and burdens that IER would place on canvassing staff and the significant changes from the existing fee structure were the payment of £0.10 or £0.15 for an administration fee, rather than for a response for a property, and the introduction of a mileage payment, which was an important consideration for canvassers working in the rural north of the District

RESOLVED:

That the following Fees Structure for Electoral Registration for the 2015 Canvass be approved.

Activity	Proposed Fee
Attendance at briefing with Electoral Services at commencement and end of canvass	£25.00
Administration Fee (to cover preparation of visits and return of paperwork to Electoral Services)	£0.10 per form for urban round £0.15 per form for rural round
Property visit	£0.60 per property
Mileage payable from first property visited to last property (not mileage from or to home)	£0.45 per mile

(Reason: to enable the ERO to undertake his statutory responsibilities.)

Chairman