

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the **JOINT PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL** held in the Marquee Suite, Springfields Events & Conference Centre, Camelgate, Spalding, PE12 6ET, on Tuesday, 29 June 2021 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

B Alcock (Chairman)

J R Astill
J Avery
A C Beal
F Biggadike
T A Carter
A C Cronin

R A Gibson
J L King
J D McLean
A M Newton
N H Pepper
P A Redgate

J L Reynolds
G P Scalese
A C Tennant
S C Walsh

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors M D Booth, C J T H Brewis, M Hasan, G T D Rudkin, S-A Slade, D J Wilkinson and A R Woolf

In Attendance: Head of Paid Service and Strategic Advisor, Democratic Services Manager, Democratic Services Trainee

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Alcock was elected Chairman for the duration of the meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

3. A NEW LOCAL STRATEGIC ALLIANCE FOR SOUTH-EAST LINCOLNSHIRE

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Paid Service and Strategic Advisor which set out the recommendations from Stage Two of the review of the future of the Integrated Shared Management Structure and Joint Working Arrangements for South Holland District Council.

Members asked for clarity as to what would happen if either Boston Borough Council or East Lindsey District Council did not vote to pursue a business case to develop the new local strategic alliance for South East Lincolnshire.

- The Strategic Advisor clarified that if the decisions had not been agreed at either council then the recommendation

Action By

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would not be put forward to South Holland District Council members at a special meeting of the council on 1st July.

Members expressed concern over the structure of the Shared Senior Management team and how this would be shared across the 3 Councils.

- The Strategic Advisor responded as follows:
 - That the shared Senior Management structure would include Tiers 1-3 of the current SHDC Management structure, which would be the posts of Chief Executive, the Executive Directors and the Assistant Directors;
 - The Chief Executive and one Executive Director post are currently vacant;
 - The costings for this Shared management structure are split based on a population ratio of 31% SHDC, 23% BBC and 46% ELDC;
 - There would be a smaller share of a larger number of senior officers across the 3 authorities;
 - There would be a greater cost saving to SHDC across this partnership than there was across the Breckland partnership and as there would be a larger team, there would be more resilience across the Senior Management Team;
 - It had been proposed that there would be a Deputy Chief Executive in post at each of the three authorities;
 - Heads of Service would remain SHDC based.

Members asked what would happen to the current S151 Officer and Monitoring Officer at BBC/ELDC if SHDC officers were to be installed in those statutory roles across all 3 authorities.

- The Strategic Advisor responded that the current officers had been informally consulted about the proposals and were in principle happy to relinquish those statutory roles. He confirmed that those officers would still be employed within the Shared Management Structure.

Members raised concerns over whether the current staff employed in the SHDC Management structure were the best fit for the roles they were in.

- The Strategic Advisor confirmed:
 - That the starting point for the structure were no redundancies for the SHDC senior team. The

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partnership's goal was not to fundamentally restructure the management team but a bringing together of the strengths of all three existing senior teams in a new structure that would work for partnership;

- The strategic alliance has a policy of no compulsory redundancies;
- No concerns about current staff had been raised directly with the Head of Paid Service.

Members asked whether there could only be one person appointed to each statutory role across the partnership.

- The Strategic Advisor responded:
 - That it had been agreed that only 1 person would be designated in each statutory posts across the partnership to enable consistent advice and support to be provided across the three authorities.
 - The Monitoring Officer post did not require any specific qualifications whereas the S151 officer was required to be a qualified accountant and the Head of Paid Service was required to have a reasonable degree of senior experience and responsibility.

Members asked whether any resignations had occurred at any level since the announcement of the intended partnership.

- The Strategic Advisor confirmed that that was not the case.

Members were reassured to hear that a Deputy Chief Executive would be put in post and based at South Holland.

Members were concerned that not enough information had been contained in the report, that Members had not had enough engagement so far in the process and not enough scrutiny had taken place.

Members commented that East Lindsey and Boston Councils were setting up a Joint Scrutiny Panel specifically to discuss the development of the business case for the partnership. Was this something that could be set up at South Holland as well?

Members wanted to understand the level of services that East Lindsey and Boston were providing their residents with and whether they will bring value to South Holland's services.

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Members raised concerns that there were no points to be able to monitor the success of the partnership included within the report other than financial savings.

- The Strategic Advisor confirmed that the purpose of the report before members was to signal a direction of intent but give the Joint Panels the opportunity to amend or add recommendations to the report that would go to Full Council.

Members commented that no formal meeting had taken place in choosing the preferred partnership option and they felt that an executive decision on the preferred option should have been taken and scrutiny followed after that.

- The Strategic Advisor confirmed:
 - That no decision had been made so far and the decision for Full Council to make was to enter into the partnership, subject to the business case that would be put forward at the end of July being acceptable.
 - A reasonable amount of informal member engagement had already taken place prior to a preferred option being chosen and Members were aware of the reasons for the informal basis of engagement;
 - If, it was the view of Members, that the business case that was brought to Full Council is not satisfactory, the decision to form a partnership would be taken or not at that time.;

Members asked who would have input in developing the business case and what would be contained within it.

- The Strategic Advisor detailed:
 - That the business case was already being developed in anticipation of a decision being made;
 - The business case would detail the strategic and financial case for going into the partnership. It would detail how financial savings would be made and how the strategic priorities would be delivered;
 - It would detail the services that are in scope for review and the order in which these services would be reviewed;
 - The business case would also include the timeframe for the delivery of the programme and any investments that were required for that delivery;

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- That subject to the decision taken by the Full Council, the interim Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, Rob Barlow, would pull together the resources to build the business case, memorandum of agreement and the proposed structure of the partnership to be considered by the Full Council by the end of July 2021.

Members asked how the new interim Chief Executive was going to get an insight into the way that SHDC works and its needs and priorities.

- The Strategic Advisor responded that if Rob Barlow were to be appointed as Head of Paid Service and Chief Executive on an interim basis, he would engage with members immediately to ensure he was aware of the priorities of SHDC.

Members expressed concerns that the priorities of South Holland did not line up with those of East Lindsey and Boston.

Members raised the following areas as observations to be made to Full Council regarding the Panel's concerns:

- Targets needed to be set that are not purely financial;
- Reassurance needed to ensure that Senior Managers' time would not be taken up disproportionately elsewhere;
- Reinforce that officers were visible and easily accessible to members;
- A robust programme put in place to raise staff morale before and after the process;
- Ensure that the authority was able to take opportunities to work with other authorities and private enterprises outside of the partnership;
- Ensure that PSPS maintains its independence as long as it remains effective;

The Strategic Advisor reassured Members that priorities would always be determined by them. In terms of the partnership, priorities need to be looked at on an individual basis to ascertain whether they would be better done alone or in partnership.

Members asked whether specific timescales could be written into the recommendations to Council.

- The Strategic Advisor asked members for clarity what a realistic timescale would look like for them and what format

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they would like Scrutiny to take place in.

Members asked whether the other 2 authorities were member-led.

- The Strategic Advisor informed Members that work would need to be done to assure officers that the relationship with members would be the same and consistent across the partnership and that members expectations were taken into consideration.

Members questioned how the 31% time share for shared officers would work in a practical sense.

Members were disappointed that the business case had not yet been developed and presented to members as part of the report.

- The Strategic Advisor confirmed that the business case had not yet been developed as a decision was only made recently but that Members would have time to consider the business case before the Council meeting at the end of July.

The Panel agreed that more time was needed to look at the business case and member input was vital and the potential interim Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service needed to be involved in those conversations.

Key areas for discussion to include:

- New Structure
- Memorandum of Agreement – how partnership is governed
- Business Case

DECISION:

It is suggested that a further recommendation be made to the Full Council, the recommendation being:

‘That a Joint PDP/PMP Working Group be established to review the proposed report and associated documentation in advance of the business case decision for the next Council decision.

- *The associated documentation to include the Business Case, Memorandum of Agreement and proposed structure for consultation.*
- *The Working Group to include the Chairman and Vice Chairman of PDP and PMP and the remaining members to be appointed from the membership of the above Panels*

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and to reflect where possible the political balance of the Council.

- *A series of topic briefings will be prepared by officers for the Working Group's considerations.*
- *The Joint PDP/PMP Working Group to provide a report and recommendations directly back to the Council on its findings as part of the next report to the Council.*
- *The final version of the report will be for the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Working Group to agree following Member opportunity to provide feedback.'*

4. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

There were none.

(The meeting ended at Time Not Specified)

(End of minutes)

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