

Norfolk e-Champions Group
Notes of a meeting held on
Wednesday 16th July 2003 at Broadland District Council

Present:

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| Muktar Jibril | Breckland District Council |
| Matthew Cross | Broadland District Council |
| Bruce Peddie | Gt Yarmouth Borough Council |
| Jane Crowder | Gt Yarmouth Borough Council |
| Mark Barrow | Gt Yarmouth Borough Council |
| Cliff Grosvenor | Gt Yarmouth Borough Council |
| Jamie Card | King's Lynn and WN Borough Council |
| David Tate | King's Lynn and WN Borough Council (Chair) |
| Steve Holland | Norfolk County Council |
| Teresa Coldicott | Norfolk County Council |
| Tim Anderson NCC | Norfolk County Council |
| Anna Graves | Norfolk County Council |
| Tina Wegg | North Norfolk District Council |
| Nick Nicholson | Norwich City Council |
| Simon Lincoln | South Norfolk Council |

1 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from: Graham Bull, Steve Harris, Becky Hellard, Tim Mobbs, Janet Norman-Phillips, Alan Tidmarsh

2 **Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising**

The notes of the meeting held on 23 April were agreed
The notes of the meeting held on 18 June were agreed

Item 5 - Revenues Partnership - Matthew said that the Audit Commission had carried out some work 'New Skills for New Agendas' as part of the modernising local government agenda. At Broadland the project had not been defined for a variety of reasons. Matthew said that a project had now been worked-up. Rather than carrying out an inspection, the Audit Commission had agreed to facilitate some training. This would be centred around partnership working. Matthew explained that Broadland were trying to set up several sessions in September where a particular model would be utilised which dealt with barriers to partnership working. Subsequently there would be an opportunity to look at producing an action plan to enable partnerships to develop. Matthew said that there was an opportunity to set-up an additional training session for the Norfolk Connect Partnership which could include Elected Members. Matthew agreed to circulate more information if required.

ACTION

Matthew

David reminded the group that Tim had suggested someone from the Strategic Partnership Taskforce might be prepared to come along to talk to the partnership. Matthew confirmed that Tim had circulated an email regarding this. David suggested that if this dovetailed with Broadland's work this might be useful and agreed to liaise with Tim about this.

David

Matthew agreed to try to put something together outlining Broadland's proposals and David suggested that, additionally, this be flagged up at the Norfolk Chief Executive's Group.

Matthew

Colin

As a new member to the group, Mark asked whether there was a document that captured all the NCP projects to aid understanding particularly including timelines and budgets. David confirmed that the list of projects had been considered at earlier meetings and that Tim could provide details. It was agreed that Tim would be asked to produce a report detailing available budgets.

3 **Customer Service Centre (CSC)**

Anna said that Becky had requested this item for the agenda to explore interest from other authorities. Steve Holland, the County Council's Head of Trading Standards and Project Manager for the CSC Project outlined the work.

Steve explained that Norfolk County Council (NCC) were in the process of implementing a 3 year development project. By 31st March next year the aim was to be handling 250,000 requests through Customer Service Agents (CSA). Thereafter the aim was to increase this capacity and additional CSAs may need to be recruited to deal with this. Elements of NCC work that had currently been identified to be delivered by the Centre included eg Trading Standards enquiries and general enquiries.

Steve said that NCC were in the process of determining the sequence in which services would enter the Centre. An extremely experienced Customer Service Centre Manager had been appointed yesterday, to start on 13th August, and recruitment was underway for the Customer Service Agents who would all be in place ready to begin training on that date. Describing the infrastructure Steve said the centre would run with existing systems initially although the telephony had been significantly upgraded.

Steve said the centre would be based at County Hall in the re-fitted North Wing (the former Police HQ). There was enough space for a large number of CSAs with room to expand.

Steve confirmed that consideration was also being given as to how main services areas would be presented in directories. 20 telephone lines had been secured - 0844 800 8001-20. The advantage of using the 0844 code was that once one million calls were reached the service would be free. Customers would be able to ring in, have a call answered by a multi-skilled person and the Centre would aim to provide: answers to all FAQs, leaflets etc. Financial transactions would not be incorporated until year 2. Other channels were also being developed eg Face 2 Face contact through Council Information Centres, re design of the authority's web site to be re-launched soon.

Mark queried whether consideration had been given to potential links with eg Care Direct, Police and PTC eg to deal with issues like abandoned vehicles.

Colin said that the ability to handle the majority of calls at first point of contact was extremely beneficial but queried what would happen during the Centre's extended hours if related organisations were not available.

Responding to the queries, Steve said that analysis would be needed and that there was no reason why, during the scoping exercise, these issues couldn't be channelled.

Steve said that interested authorities might be able to participate at either an early or later stage and arrangements could be flexible but capacity would be the limiting

factor. Even if authorities did not wish to participate, consideration would need to be given about how cross-cutting queries would be dealt with. Steve confirmed that approaches had been received from Rob Garnett and Richard Parkham and initial discussions would be held with them. David highlighted the potential benefits if all Norfolk authorities were involved and Colin suggested that it would be prudent to talk to all authorities if only to capture information. He asked for clarification about how the County Council were proposing to handle the 15% of calls that were mis-directed. Simon highlighted the potential for a larger number of mis-directed calls once the 0844 number had been advertised. Steve agreed to ask Alan Tidmarsh to write to all Norfolk authorities about the project.

Steve
Steve

Alan

4 **SUPER 2**

Steve confirmed that SUPER was a European funded project which had resulted in a database driven website which allowed any business in Norfolk to access information about regulatory requirements in all 7 Districts and Trading Standards issues county-wide. The project was the result of a collaboration between a small number of Districts. Steve confirmed that accessing the site would provide numerous pieces of information on eg planning, environmental health, and building control issues. It was not necessary for businesses to know who the regulators were in advance because the system would automatically link the user with the regulations relevant for their business. It would also allow emails to be sent to the right person in the right area, it would then be the responsibility of the relevant back office function to handle the customer. In existence for some 10 months a significant amount of access to the site had taken place outside normal office hours. Steve said that there was now a necessity to spend money to upgrade the look and feel of the site. The Chamber of Trade had agreed to help with promotion.

SUPER 2 was based on the same principles but was designed for citizens and covered a wide range of trading practices. It would be launched in November (National Consumer Week). The service would provide easy access to information and the ability to complain on-line, and would be widely available eg in libraries and schools. Financing was again an issue and the cost had been divided between the 8 partners - many who had already contributed. Steve confirmed that the Fire service would join shortly so that all community fire information was available through the site.

Colin said that authorities had not been anticipating the bill which had been received for the project. He said that Broadland were committed to the initiative and would like to support this but that wide-ranging support was needed to make it cost effective. Commitment would be required from all to contribute to the site content. Steve said that NCC had a co-ordinating officer and contacts in each District but that there were varying degrees of support - clarity of roles and responsibilities would be needed. Information was kept up-to-date by the relevant authors, and NCC carried out the publishing. Quarterly editorial meeting were being established. Steve suggested that the best way forward might be to pay experts to carry out the work. Tim said that similar issues needed to be taken forward as part of the Phase II partnership projects. In response to a query raised by Nick, the group were unable to confirm how many authorities had a link into the SUPER site from their own web sites.

Tim

5 **Norfolk Portal**

The group received a presentation from SOPRA representative Steve Laslett, the Local Government Programme Manager and Gavin Cameron from Open Objects. Steve highlighted the work of the SOPRA Group, their international presence and work with other companies, particularly the public sector and also the work that

SOPRA were doing on IEG etc.

Gavin highlighted the work of Open Objects who he explained often worked through partners. He said that an infrastructure had been built for a number of search solutions and demonstrated the facility to search across a number of sites using examples from Warwickshire and Suffolk authorities. The follow key points were noted:

- Search engines were necessary to ensure information was readily available within a small number of hits.
- The Norfolk Portal would be invisible but would provide information displayed in the relevant authority's 'look and feel'.
- Partners could be provided with a monthly log about activity and advice could be offered about how to improve visibility.
- Spell checking and thesaurus options were available
- Content could be 'themed up'.

The group discussed the access to sites and how customers would search for the information required eg through a particular authority's site, through a search facility site like Google.

Steve confirmed that the work highlighted was part of the Portal Phase I project. Sopra would be interested in working with Norfolk to understand what was going on elsewhere. He said that LGOL National Projects were now underway and that Sopra were particularly looking at Personalised Local Service Websites. The LAWS project scope had been defined and 4 main strands existed. Norfolk authorities could consider utilising any of these. NCP Phase 2 and 3 projects were highlighted and other possibilities for Norfolk authorities were suggested. Responding to a query from David, Steve confirmed that Sopra would be keen to adopt King's Lynn and West Norfolk as a pilot web site.

Sopra were thanked for their presentation and authorities should note that copies of the presentation would be circulated.

Jackie

Colin said that, particularly due to the time constraints in spending government money, the Portal Board needed to make choices about managing areas to progress in Phase 2 and 3 but that e-Gov Champions should to make the decision what elements to pursue.

All

Responding to a query on licensing requirements, Colin said that Norfolk Chief Executives had agreed that one solution should be deployed to meet all districts' requirements.

6 **Projects update**

Tim presented the appended report and summarised the issues.

It was agreed that:

- Authorities should let Tim know if there were any changes to the identified ICT contacts in Districts who Capita would be contacting as part of the Council Information Centre (CIC) Project.
- Partnership money could be used to purchase a joint internet based monitoring system for the CICs
- Tim would circulate the Broadband Demand Study report

All

Tim

7 Phase II Partnership Projects

Tim introduced his appended report and appendices and outlined the options and recommendations.

Considering the recommendations:

The Option A project management structure was approved ie 2 Project Managers and QA officer would be required. Anna highlighted NCC's procurement through s-CAT and there was broad support for this. Simon highlighted the need to maintain leads in authorities and the commitment and implications of this. Matthew said that resource issues would need to be flagged. Colin confirmed that up to 10k was potentially available for each authority for this. Host authority for the posts was considered and Anna confirmed that this didn't need to be NCC. The group saw both the benefits of spreading the resource out amongst the partnership and co-location at County. The group were unable to respond to Teresa's query about her future role.

Alan

It was agreed that:

- particular views should be provided to Anna as soon as possible.
- David and Anna would discuss further with Alan Tidmarsh
- e-Champions should ensure their authorities were aware of the joint licensing approach

Anna
David/
Anna/Alan
All

The PID's, MOA and other material previously circulated were approved.

The project specification and approaches from Appendix One were approved in principle - David queried whether the LAWS project might be one where authorities would support one authority being selected as a pilot. Tim said that it would necessary for a discussion with the LAWS project co-ordinators to see what was involved. There were a number of projects where this was needed as shown in the project specifications. He agreed to co-ordinate a discussion with LAWS representatives.

Tim

Simon highlighted South Norfolk's concern regarding the secure email project and government gateway costs.

A number of other issues were identified in Appendix One and it was agreed that:

- Tim would redraft the Appendix and this would be circulated

Tim

A draft budget should be circulated for the projects within the next two weeks.

Tim

The technical team should draw up more detailed specifications and start discussions with potential suppliers - Responding to a query from Nick, Tim confirmed that process mapping would take place, a general discussion with SOPRA about what sort of technical options were needed. A timeline could be produced for the first piece of work and possibly the second element but the detailed process map wouldn't follow until thereafter. What information was available would be added to the project plan.

The recruitment and employment of staff was considered - a number of issues were identified. The group noted the significant commitment now required. Matthew reminded the group that the principle of the partnership was that authorities could

opt into projects as required. Greater clarity was needed about the projects each authority was interested in. David suggested that this needed to be considered again by the authority e-Champions and it was agreed that:

- a session on project manager structure and resourcing should be convened in the near future particularly to clarify how much the partnership would contribute in terms of project managers and how much individual partners would contribute. Mark highlighted the importance of articulating a change control agreement and the need to proceed with a consensus view.

Jackie

8 **Citizen authentication and registration**

David confirmed that the appended reports provided the background about King's Lynn's work with the Office of e-Envoy and that development time was provided by King's Lynn.

It was agreed that:

- Partnership monies would be made available for the DIS box.

9 **Draft Partnership Strategy**

Tim's appended document was received. The group noted that this was Norfolk County Council's strategy for their partnership work.

It was agreed that:

- a similar strategy would be adopted for the group and possibly individual councils and Tim would edit Norfolk's document to provide this.
- The strategy would subsequently be circulated

Tim

Tim

10 **Any other business**

The group noted that the next meeting would be David's last and that therefore there was a need to appoint another Chairman.

It was agreed that:

- Jackie would seek nominations

Jackie

The group noted that the September meeting would be at the Norwich Connect Project Office.

Jackie/
Nick

The next meeting with member e-Champions would be October rather than September.