

**MINUTES of the meeting of the MONITORING OF RECOMMENDATIONS TOPIC GROUP held on Thursday 21 April 2016 at 10.00 AM**

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**ATTENDANCE**

**Members Of The Topic Group**

R H Beeching (Chairman), A Joynes (substituting for L R Kercher), M B J Mills-Bishop, M A Watkin

**Officers**

Angela Bucksey- Assistant Director: Property  
 Nicola Cahill - Democratic Services Officer  
 Steve Johnson - Business Manager for Contracts and Networks  
 Jim McManus - Director of Public Health  
 Trevor Mose - Maintenance and Minor Works Manager (Schools)  
 Natalie Rotherham – Scrutiny Officer  
 Richard Stacey - Assistant Network Manager Strategy  
 Gary Vaux - Head of Unit

**Other Members in attendance**

M Cowan, T L F Douris, T W Hone, T Hutchings, P A Ruffles

**ACTION**

**1. MINUTES**

The minutes of the Monitoring of Recommendations Topic Group Meeting held on 16 February 2015 were confirmed as a correct record.

Nicola Cahill

**2. SCHOOL REPAIRS TOPIC GROUP**

2.1 Members were provided with an update report which outlined progress made against recommendations since the Topic Group had taken place in July 2015.

2.2 The Topic Group were advised as to progress against recommendation 2.1. The Topic Group had requested officers clarify how condition drives the programme priorities. The Topic Group were advised that improved guidance had been published on the school's intranet system 'The GRID' and was promoted via termly training and would be circulated to schools via the Schools News Bulletin.

Trevor Mose

2.3 Members heard that The Building Management Team (BMT) had been clear with schools in acknowledging their bid status and where unacceptable bids had been submitted contact was made to advise

them that the bid had been rejected.

- 2.4 In relation to recommendation 2.4 Members were informed that education responsibilities for Local Authorities were set to change within the context of the 2016 Education White Paper, Officers advised that it would not be prudent to establish new in-house positions in a time of uncertainty.
- 2.5 It had been recommended that the BMT keep the Resources and Performance Cabinet Panel informed regarding the programme delivering capital repairs and maintenance to Hertfordshire's school buildings. It was noted that, in the light of announcements surrounding the Education White Paper it was unlikely that the local authority repairs and maintenance programme would continue beyond 2022 when all schools will be expected to become academies.
- 2.6 Members were pleased to learn that property frameworks had been written so that other public bodies could use them should they wish to. This would include Academy schools and would enable a smooth transition of responsibilities to take place if need be.

### **Conclusions**

- 2.7 The Topic Group signed off the recommendations of the School Repairs Topic Group.

## **3. HERTFORDSHIRE WELFARE ASSISTANCE TOPIC GROUP**

- 3.1 The Topic Group were advised as to the progress made following the Hertfordshire Welfare Assistance (HWAS) Topic Group held in June 2015.
- 3.2 Members requested further information regarding the relationships between HWAS schemes and foodbanks. It was noted that Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) services were funded to provide a preventative service, the Topic Group requested further information regarding the efficacy of the relationship between foodbanks and the CAB office.
- 3.3 The Topic Group was advised that a full-time temporary adviser had been recruited in Autumn 2015 for the Money Advice Unit's Mental Health Project, in line with the recommendations, which had proven invaluable in maintaining the project and minimising waiting lists. It was noted that uncertainty remained regarding the future of the role owing to the funding arrangements ceasing in October 2016. Members were pleased to learn that alternative arrangements were being sought. Following the meeting it was confirmed that the project had a 3 year Service Level Agreement in place, which secured its future until at least 2019.

- 3.4 HWAS had established a twitter account to serve as an information tool as a response to recommendation 2.3. The Topic Group requested that the Twitter handle be circulated to Members.
  
- 3.5 The Topic Group were advised that the procurement process was in progress for the Crisis Intervention Service, it was hoped that the contract would be awarded for 3/5 years during May 2016, to commence in July 2016. Owing to the delay in the delivery of the new arrangements services continued to be delivered and funded under the pre-existing arrangements.
  
- 3.6 The extension of Universal Credit to people with health or disability problems making new claims is due at the end of 2017. It was anticipated that roll out to existing claims may not take place until 2020. The MAU was engaged with a number of partners regarding the development of regional services able to assist with budgeting, IT access and supporting rent payments. Members highlighted the importance of assisting those unable to access the internet.

**Conclusion**

- 3.7 The Topic Group signed off all recommendations as completed subject to updates being circulated outside of the meeting regarding the Twitter handle and feedback from Foodbanks and the Citizen’s Advice Bureau.

**4. PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 The Topic Group considered the update provided which detailed work undertaken since the Topic Group had taken place in November 2015.
  
- 4.2 Members learnt of the progress in relation to the development of touchdowns. Sixty touchdowns were in place and it was anticipated that an additional thirty would be ready for use by September 2016. Information regarding the development of touchdowns would be included within the quarterly performance reports considered by the Resources and Performance Cabinet Panel.
  
- 4.3 The Topic Group noted that work had been undertaken in partnership with district/borough councils and other partners to identify what land each public body owns and where a joint approach to marketing land could maximise land value. Work was underway to understand what data is held and what needs to be refreshed, following which a plan would need to be agreed to provide enhanced data in partnership with other public bodies.
  
- 4.4 The Topic Group noted that Property had looked in to providing access to courses for those considering taking on a rural estates lease. It had been proposed that Hertfordshire County Council would work with Cambridgeshire County Council on the development of

such a course. Cambridgeshire had ceased to deliver such courses, alternatives had been sought but none found. Owing to the small number of small holding leases which had come to market in the past 15 years, and in order to use resources to best effect, it was concluded that in the future viewing data would provide greater information regarding the lettings that are available and additional access to information from the Rural Team.

4.5 The Property Team were about to go out to recruit for a second time for a new Senior Estates Officer. In the previous recruitment round the department had not received applications from suitable candidates. In the absence of internal resource the County Council would continue to commission Lambert Smith Hampton.

**Angela  
Bucksey**

4.6 The Property Asset Management Topic Group had recommended that a member seminar be held to explain the different tenancy agreements typically entered into with farmers/ small holders. In discussion the Monitoring of Recommendations Topic Group advised that the recommendation could be met by circulating an information document.

**Angela  
Bucksey**

### **Conclusion**

4.4 The Topic Group signed off recommendations 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.8 and 2.9. Members requested that officers attend the November Monitoring of Recommendations meeting to present an update against recommendation 2.7 and requested that rather than a seminar officers are asked to provide a briefing note to all Members.

## **5. TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS**

5.1 In relation to recommendation 1 it was noted that procedures to include new guidelines on timescales when objection periods end had changed on 1 April 2016 had been written. The Topic Group requested details of the new guidelines be circulated.

5.2 The recommendation to contact Broxbourne Borough Council had yet to be completed. Members requested that officers contact Broxbourne by the end of May 2016 to obtain feedback on their experience on dealing with objections and proposals for TROs.

**Richard  
Stacey**

5.3 In relation to the development of a self-help pack the Members were advised that the self-help pack had been completed and would be distributed to all members by the end of May 2016. A note to all Members would also be circulated regarding the costs associated with a TRO.

**Richard  
Stacey**

5.4 The Topic Group noted that the requirement for TROs to be advertised in newspapers remained. The Executive member advised that he would continue to lobby the minister. He advised that he would write by the end of May 2016 and raise the issue at the LGA conference.

## **Conclusion**

- 5.5 The Topic Group signed off all recommendations as completed subject to the following;
- i) That recommendations 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 be actioned by the end of April 2016
  - ii) That recommendation 2.4 be actioned by the end of June 2016
  - iii) That the Executive Member to write to the minister by the end of May 2016

## **6. RINGWAY HIGHWAYS SERVICE TEAM CONTRACT**

- 6.1 In relation to recommendation 2.1 (which recommended that customers and Members should be kept informed regarding medium and low priority CAT 2 items which do not receive immediate attention) it was acknowledged that there were insufficient resources to keep customers updated on individual defects. It was noted that the department was working with Serco to develop a new acknowledgement email which would provide an indication of timescales.
- 6.2 The Executive Member advised that quarterly reporting on the cost of CAT 2 high priority jobs had not been taken forward owing to time and cost implications. In the interest of balance and delivering services within a context of best value for money, in depth reporting was not considered to be helpful. However, officers would investigate the possibility of obtaining figures from the system which might provide some useful insight for members. **Steve Johnson**
- 6.3 An information note was planned to be taken forward to the Highways Cabinet Panel in October 2016 which would set out service improvements that have been delivered by Ringway. **Steve Johnson**
- 6.4 Members were pleased to learn that a review had been undertaken of arrangements with Ringway to build in flexibility regarding repairing defects within a defined vicinity (5-10m) of a reported fault. The introduction of a triage inspection service and changes to response times to certain defects should ensure that similar defects are repaired together.

## **Conclusion**

The Topic group welcomed the update and requested that:

- i) Progress on the triage service be reported to members via the Highways Cabinet Panel
- ii) Officers to present an update on steps to increase flexibility within the Ringway contract at the Monitoring of Recommendations Topic Group in November 2016

- iii) That the outcomes of the HLB review be presented at the Monitoring of Recommendations Topic Group in November 2016.

## **7. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Topic Group agreed that the work programme of the next meeting would include Care Pathways.

## **8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

The Topic Group agreed to cancel the September 2016 meeting owing to insufficient business and agreed future dates as follows:

25 November 2016  
28 February 2017

## **9. OVERVIEW DATABASE**

### **Conclusion**

- 8.1 The overview database was noted.

## **10. PUBLIC HEALTH INTEGRATION**

- 10.1 The Monitoring of Recommendations Topic Group received report which provided an update on recommendations since the Public Health Integration Topic Group had taken place in April 2015.
- 10.2 Members welcomed the excellent progress made against each of the recommendations. In relation to recommendation 2.1 it was noted that considerable work was underway to examine the possibility of a pooled budget between Public Health, Children's Services and the two Clinical Commissioning Groups, the target date for the completion of this work was November 2016.

### **10.3 Conclusion**

The Topic Group signed off each of the recommendation with the exception of 2.1. The group requested an update be brought to the November Cabinet Panel in relation to improved joined up working.

**KATHRYN PETTITT  
CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER**