



Minutes of a meeting of the ESPO Management Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield, Leicestershire on Wednesday, 20 September 2023.

PRESENT

(in the Chair)

Lincolnshire County Council

Cllr. S. Rawlins

Peterborough City Council

Cllr A Coles

Cllr. J Allen

Leicestershire County Council

Mrs M Wright CC (Chair)

Mr. J. Poland CC

Warwickshire County Council

Cllr. P Butlin

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from

Cllr. A. Hagues (Lincolnshire County Council), Cllr. A. Jamieson (Norfolk County Council), Cllr Richard Baxter-Payne – Warwickshire County Council,

IN ATTENDANCE

Cllr. N. Shailer (Cambridgeshire County Council – Online)

Cllr. S. Ferguson (Cambridgeshire County Council - Online)

Cllr J James (Norfolk County Council – Online)

ESPO

Kristian Smith - Director

David Godsell – Assistant Director

Gary Ford – Assistant Director

Maurice Campbell – Assistant Director

Dave Goodacre – Financial Controller

Leicestershire County Council

Simone Hines– On behalf of Consortium Treasurer

Lauren Haslam – On Behalf of the Consortium Secretary

Anna Poole – Democratic Services Officer

The Chairman announced that as there were less than four member authorities present in the room, the meeting was not quorate. As members had joined online, the meeting would be held as a virtual meeting and the procedure set out in the Constitution (Standing Order 21.6) would be followed.

14. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2023 were taken as read, confirmed, and signed.

15. Urgent items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

16. Declarations of interests.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

17. Items referred by the Finance and Audit Subcommittee.

There were no items referred by the Finance and Audit Subcommittee. The issue considered by the Subcommittee is covered in minute 23 below.

18. Consortium Secretary and Consortium Treasurer.

The Management Committee considered a report of the Consortium Secretary which proposed that the role of Consortium Secretary be transferred from the Chief Executive of Leicestershire County Council to the Director of Law and Governance, Leicestershire County Council and advised of a change of person in the role of Consortium Treasurer. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda item 5', is filed with these minutes.

It was moved by Mrs Maggie Wright CC and seconded by Cllr Butlin that:

- (a) the appointment of Lauren Haslam, Leicestershire County Council's Director of Law and Governance as Consortium Secretary and to delegate the relevant functions set out in Appendix 3 of the Constitution to her, be formally confirmed;
- (b) the appointment of Declan Keegan, Leicestershire County Council's Director of Corporate Resources, as Consortium Treasurer and to delegate the relevant functions set out in Appendix 3 of the Constitution to him, be formally confirmed.

RESOLVED:

That:

- (a) the appointment of Lauren Haslam, Leicestershire County Council's Director of Law and Governance as Consortium Secretary and to delegate the relevant functions set out in Appendix 3 of the Constitution to her, be formally confirmed;
- (b) the appointment of Declan Keegan, Leicestershire County Council's Director of Corporate Resources, as Consortium Treasurer and to delegate the relevant functions set out in Appendix 3 of the Constitution to him, be formally confirmed.

19. Director's Progress update.

[Before the item was presented by the Director, the Chairman announced that the meeting was now quorate as a meeting with 4 member authorities present in the room, and added that the meeting would now return to the procedures followed for a quorate meeting.]

The Management Committee gave consideration to a report of the Director which provided an update of the actions and progress made since the previous ESPO Management Committee held on 28 June 2023. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 6, is filed with these minutes.

In presenting the report, the Director explained that the External Audit had been completed for 2022/23 and would be presented to the Finance and Audit Subcommittee as planned at its meeting in October. He added that the warehouse extension had been delayed slightly but was expected to start in mid-October. the inflationary environment had affected the project, as with all capital projects.

In response to questions, the Director explained that

- i. staff were so much more aware of the risks surrounding IT security following guidance and training. The IT team regularly sent out testing emails of a suspicious nature to staff to test their level of knowledge in this area and determine where further training was needed.
- ii. although Eduzone was performing well, it was not a business priority to increase investment in this area. However, performance would be kept under review.
- iii. underlying inflation continued, and could be disruptive for ESPO. Officers would plan beyond that for business continuity. However, a downward inflationary trend could be good for ESPO overall.

It was moved by Mrs Maggie Wright CC and seconded by Cllr Rawlins that the update provided by the Director be noted.

RESOLVED:

That the update provided by the Director be noted.

20. Date of Next Meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 15 November 2023 at 10.30am at County Hall, Glenfield.

21. Exclusion of the Press and Public.

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100 (A) (iv) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining items of business on the grounds that it will involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Act and that in all of the circumstances the public interest in maintaining the exception outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

22. Supplementary Information Informing the Progress Report of the Director's Progress Update.

The Management Committee considered an exempt report of the Director which set out further supplementary information regarding the Director's Progress Update. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda item 10', is filed with these minutes.

The exempt report was not for publication as it contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The Director responded to questions related to:

- i. The provision of LPG as an alternative fuel to gas/electricity for schools in some rural areas;
- ii. Financial risks to ESPO presented by financial issues experienced by local authorities;
- iii. The impact on business delivery due to potential difficulties of sourcing gas/electricity;
- iv. whether English language schools were a potential market for ESPO;
- v. the preference of customers for online or catalogue ordering.

It was moved by Mrs Maggie Wright CC and seconded by Cllr Coles that the update provided by the Director be noted.

RESOLVED:

That the update provided by the Director be noted.

23. Financial Year 2022/23 - Rebate Performance.

The Management Committee received an exempt presentation by the Director concerning rebate performance. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda item 11', is filed with these minutes.

The exempt presentation was not for publication as it contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The presentation included:

- Highlights
- Top 20 Framework Rebate Performance
- Framework Sector Performance
- Top 10 Customer Growth
- New Business
- Aspirations for 2023/24.

Questions from Members related to:

- How frameworks were chosen and developed
- What businesses were included in the list for Local Government/Central Government Frameworks
- The recycling and refuse marketplace

- How recycling rates could be improved and what support was in place for customers
- How rejection rates could be reduced, and the impact mitigated.

It was moved by Mrs Maggie Wright CC and seconded by Cllr Rawlins that the update provided on the Financial Year 2022/23 Rebate Performance be noted.

RESOLVED:

That the update provided on the Financial Year 2022/23 Rebate Performance be noted.

24. Competitor Report.

The Management Committee considered an exempt report of the Director which provided an update on ESPO's competitor landscape. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda item 12', is filed with these minutes.

The exempt report was not for publication as it contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information).

It was moved by Mrs Maggie Wright CC and seconded by Cllr Butlin that the update provided on ESPO's Competitor landscape be noted.

RESOLVED:

That the update provided on ESPO's Competitor landscape be noted.

10.30 am - 12.00 pm
20 September 2023

CHAIRMAN