

Minutes of a meeting of the ESPO Management Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday, 21 November 2019.

PRESENT

Cllr. S. Rawlins – Lincolnshire County Council

Cambridgeshire County Council

Cllr. M. Howell

Lincolnshire County Council

Cllr. A. Hagues

Leicestershire County Council

Dr. K. Feltham CC

Mr. R. Shepherd CC

31. Inquorate Meeting.

The Chairman advised members present that the ESPO Constitution provides that for a quorum there should be at least four Members who are entitled to attend and vote, provided that at least four of the Member Authorities are represented.

As the meeting was inquorate it would be necessary for the Consortium Secretary to write to all constituent authorities to seek their agreement to “decisions” reached. This would be in relation to the following items on the agenda:-

Item 7 – Strategic Alliance

Item 8 – Accounting for ESPO under IFRS rather than CIPFA code of practice

Item 9 – ESPO External Auditor Contract Award

32. Minutes.

The notes of the meeting held on Thursday 19 September 2019 were taken as read, confirmed and signed following a correction that the meeting took place at ESPO Grove Park.

Members noted that ESPO was treated as an admitted body of the Leicestershire Pension Fund, a report on the pensions deficit would be brought to a future meeting following the Fund’s triennial valuation that had taken place. Members noted that on an actuarial basis ESPO was 81% funded, the deficit would be repaid over 15 years.

33. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

34. 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.

35. Director's Progress Report.

The Members present considered a report of the Director which provided an update of the actions and progress made since the last ESPO Management Committee held on 19 September 2019. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 4', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from the discussion the following points were noted:-

- i) Members were pleased to note that the sickness absence rate had continued to improve, the Director assured Members that the figure was continually monitored, work would continue to improve the figure.
- ii) Officers tracked the responsiveness to call waiting times and were able to organise staffing levels accordingly to deal with known busy times to keep waiting times down.
- iii) It was important that ESPO continued to invest in high stock availability to respond to the complex needs of customers to prevent them going elsewhere.
- iv) ESPO were committed to the health of staff which was supported by access to Leicestershire County Council staff benefit's such as Wider Wallet, which provides discounted gym membership, eye tests and bike schemes among others. ESPO also took part in the Leicestershire County Council Mental Health First Aider scheme held in house flu clinics for staff.

Members present noted the contents of the report.

36. Exclusion of the Public.

It was agreed that under Section 100(A) (iv) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that it will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information during consideration of the following items of business as defined in paragraphs 3 and 10 of Schedule 12A of the Act; and, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

37. Supplementary Information Informing the Director's Progress Update.

Members present 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 6', 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).

In response to queries made, the Director responded as follows:

- i) ESPO was continuing to develop its current, and additional services, in line with the agreed business case. Where an opportunity arose for ESPO to expand its operations it would be explored and brought to the Management Committee's attention.

- ii) ESPO were aware of the pressures being brought by the Climate Emergency. Officers were looking at actions that could be taken to become more environmentally friendly while remaining aware of the demands of its customer base.
- iii) The Management Committee would continue to receive regular updates on the Website Project.

Members present asked the contents of the report be noted.

38. Strategic Alliance.

Members received a report of the Director seeking approval to undertake further work on a Strategic Alliance. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 7', 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 presented the proposed strategic alliance and potential workstreams and responded to questions raised. Members were pleased that the route proposed would respond to market pressure and the predicted future changes in the sector. Further reports would be brought to the Management Committee as needed.

Members present noted the contents of the report and the recommendations as set out in the report to take forward the proposed strategic alliance.

39. Accounting for ESPO under IFRS rather than CIPFA code of practice.

Members received a report of the Director and Consortium Treasurer outlining accounting method for ESPO under IFRS rather than the CIPFA code of practice. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

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

The Director assured Members that the changes to the accounting method would provide no material difference to the information provided to Members and constituent authorities received from ESPO. Members were pleased that the change would bring ESPO more in line with private sector competitors.

Members noted the contents of the report and endorsed the change to the accounting method.

40. ESPO External Auditor - Contract Award

Members received a report of the Director and Consortium Treasurer to approve the award for the appointment of Grant Thornton as external auditor for ESPO. A copy of the report, 'Marked Item 9', is filed with these minutes.

Members noted the contents of the report and agreed the appointment of Grant Thornton as external auditor.

41. Date of Next Meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 4th March 2020 at 10.30am via Skype.

Times Not Specified
21 November 2019

CHAIRMAN