

Agenda Item No:	<b>12</b>	
Committee:	<b>Council</b>	
Date:	<b>23 February 2017</b>	
Report Title:	<b>ARP Section 113 agreement</b>	

## Cover sheet:

### **1 Purpose / Summary**

- To agree Cabinet's recommendation that the Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) enters into a Section 113 agreement with Norwich City Council (NCC).

### **2 Key issues**

- At Council on 19 December 2013, Members endorsed the Council's approach to Service Transformation including the way forward in respect of Shared Services. This meeting approved that the Council's Revenues and Benefits service join ARP as of 1 April 2014.
- At Council on 27 February 2014, Members approved governance arrangements allowing Fenland to be part of ARP. This allowed Officers to be shared between ARP member authorities.
- The Business Case for Fenland joining ARP, as previously advised to Council at its 19 December 2013 meeting generates savings to ARP of £272,000 per full year, of which Fenland receives £136,000 per full year over five years.
- With Fenland becoming part of ARP, the partnership comprised seven authorities; namely the District Councils of Breckland, East Cambs, Fenland, Forest Heath, Suffolk Coastal and Waveney.
- In 2015 it was decided by ARP Joint Committee that ARP would be closed to any new partners.
- This remains the case; however ARP is now seeking to undertake work with NCC in partnership under Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972. This means that NCC will not be a partner as part of ARP, but will pay £80,000 to ARP to provide services to it.

### **3 Recommendations**

- That this report is noted and Council agree Cabinet's recommendation:-
  - That the Council instruct the Operational Improvement Board to negotiate and enter in to a Section 113 agreement with Norwich City Council so that officers' services can be placed at all authorities disposal (shared).
  - That approval is given for ARP to start working with Norwich City Council immediately to carry out any necessary work prior to the 1st of April 2017 that will assist with the commencement of the agreement.

<b>Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>Forward Plan Reference</b>	N/A
<b>Portfolio Holder(s)</b>	Councillor John Clark, Leader of the Council (also Chair of the ARP Joint Committee)  Councillor Chris Seaton and Councillor Will Sutton (who are substitute members of the ARP Joint Committee)
<b>Report Originator(s)</b>	Geoff Kent – Head of Customer Services
<b>Contact Officer(s)</b>	Rob Bridge - Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer Geoff Kent – Head of Customer Services Paul Corney – Head of ARP
<b>Background Paper(s)</b>	N/a

## Report:

### **1 Background / introduction**

- 1.1 On the 19th March 2015 the Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) 2015 Joint Committee decided that the (ARP) would be closed to any new full partners or members of the Joint Committee for the time being.
- 1.2 The 2015 Joint Committee has all Revenues and benefits functions delegated to it from the 7 partners and the ARP operates as a single officer core providing equal service provision for all partners across these functions.
- 1.3 The Joint Committee has subsequently agreed that, where it benefits the 7 ARP partners, the ARP will work in partnership and/or provide services to other Councils with regard to specific elements of their services but not their whole service. This will mean that the ARP can build resilience and generate efficiencies to meet the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 1.4 On the 20 September 2016 the Joint Committee agreed that, subject to formal approval from each Council, a Section 113 agreement leading to a shared management arrangement with Norwich City Council should be put into place.
- 1.5 Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables Local Authorities to enter in to an agreement as follows:

“a local authority may enter into an agreement with another local authority for the placing at the disposal of the latter for the purposes of their functions, on such terms as may be provided by the agreement, of the services of officers employed by the former, but shall not enter into any such agreement with respect to any officer without consulting him.”

### **2 Reason for opportunity**

- 2.1 Recent developments mean Norwich City Council will be taking their Revenues and Benefits service out of the current partnership arrangement with Local Government Shared Services (LGSS) with effect from 01/04/2017.
- 2.2 The service will be brought back in house which will mean that the Senior Management Team for LGSS Revenues and Benefits will no longer manage Norwich City's service after the 31/03/2017. The transfer back to Norwich will include two operational managers for Revenues and for Benefits but, no head of service function.
- 2.3 Norwich approached the ARP to discuss the potential for the ARP to provide support for the service when they bring it in house. The support would involve providing mentoring and coaching for the operational managers and to provide strategic management services for Norwich, essentially to act as the Head of Service for them.
- 2.4 The current Revenues and Benefits employees already work in Norwich and so transfer will only involve handing the Management of the service from LGSS to the ARP on the 01/04/2017. It will however be necessary to acclimatise the ARP management team to the current statistics and ways of working at Norwich so that we can be proactive in understanding any priorities for Norwich City Council Service from 01/04/2017 and so, it is recommended that approval is given for the Management team to start working with Norwich before April where necessary to effect as seamless a handover as possible.
- 2.5 Norwich are also interested in joining the Enforcement Agency at a later date (once their existing contract expires) and in looking at ARP providing other services through trading and partnership.

- 2.6 A negotiated section 113 agreement will enable partnership working without the need for Norwich to become members of the Joint Committee and in the future may lead to trading and other partnership opportunities.
- 2.7 The Operational Improvement Board has agreed steps to reinforce the existing structure to support the Strategic Managers in managing an 8th Council. This will mean that we retain the resilience that we need for the existing partners.

### **3 Next steps**

- 3.1 It can either be decided to do nothing, or take the recommendations forward.

### **4 Reasons for the recommendations**

- 4.1 A Section 113 Agreement will offer the following: -
  - Efficiencies of £80,000 per annum (shared across ARP partner authorities);
  - The potential for the provision of chargeable services later.
  - A future potential partner for the Enforcement Agency leading to additional efficiencies;
  - The continuance of robust strategic and operational management;
- 4.2 Initially Norwich would be contributing £80,000 towards the cost of the ARP resource allocated to this work.
- 4.3 Subsequently Norwich have stated that they would be interested in ARP providing/sharing other services such as:
  - Resilience services (processing, Appeals etc.)
  - Project management (larger projects)
  - Fraud and Compliance services
  - Enforcement Agency Services