

MINUTES OF THE CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Thursday 12 November 2015

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COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Price (Leader), Turner (Deputy Leader), Brown, Hollingsworth, Kennedy, Lygo, Rowley, Simm, Sinclair and Tanner.

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Craig Simmons and Councillor Jean Fooks

OFFICERS PRESENT: Caroline Green (Assistant Chief Executive), David Edwards (Executive Director City Regeneration and Housing), Tim Sadler (Executive Director Community Services), Nigel Kennedy (Head of Financial Services), Lindsay Cane (Law and Governance), Catherine Phythian (Committee Services Officer), Julia Castle (Corporate Assets), Stephen Clarke (Head of Housing and Property), Mark Jaggard (City Development), Helen Vaughan-Evans, Paul Wilding (Benefit Operations Manager) and Jane Winfield (Regeneration and Major Projects - Team Manager)

101. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the Chief Executive.

102. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

103. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions had been received.

104. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Committee & Member Services Manager submitted a report detailing recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee on the Annual Monitoring Report.

Cllr Simmons, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee presented the report and explained the reasons for the recommendation to add two new indicators to future Annual Monitoring Reports.

In response Cllr Hollingsworth, Executive Board Member for Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services said that he was happy to agree the recommendation subject to the following amendment: 1a) delete “housing” and replace with “homes”. He said that a formal written response to the recommendation would be sent to the Scrutiny Committee.

The City Executive Board resolved to state its agreement to the following recommendation from the Scrutiny Committee:

1. That the Council includes the following two new indicators when considering the effectiveness of planning policies contained within the Oxford Local Development Plan:
 - a) Number of units of affordable homes to rent built on Council owned land
 - b) The amount of land freed up for affordable housing development through change of use

Cllr Simmons asked the Board to consider whether there was merit in developing a further indicator which related housing pressures in the city to the economy and job market. The Board noted that there was an existing metric which showed the ratio of average house price to average salary within the city which could be included in future Annual Monitoring Reports.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

2. Agree to include a further indicator in future Annual Monitoring Reports which showed the ratio of average house price to average salary within the city.

105. COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES ON ANY ITEM FOR DECISION ON THE BOARD'S AGENDA

Cllr Fooks addressed the Committee with regard to:

- agenda item 10: Award of a furnished tenancy scheme
- agenda item 11: Financial Systems Retender

Her comments are included in the minute for those items.

106. COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES ON NEIGHBOURHOOD ISSUES

There were no Councillor addresses on neighbourhood issues.

107. ITEMS RAISED BY BOARD MEMBERS

No items were raised by Board Members.

108. NORTHWAY AND MARSTON FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME PROJECT

The Executive Director, Community Services submitted a report which sought project approval for the Northway and Marston Flood Alleviation Scheme.

Cllr Tanner, Executive Board Member for Climate Change and Cleaner Greener Oxford presented the report and commended the scheme to the Board as it would reduce the risk of flash flooding in Northway and Marston.

The Board expressed their appreciation to Cllr Roy Darke and the members of the Waste Water Flooding Scrutiny Panel for their commitment to investigating the problems in Northway and Marston and pursuing a solution with the relevant agencies. The Board also thanked the Northway and Marston Flood Scheme Manager for her contribution to the development of the scheme and the successful grant application.

The Executive Director, Community Services reminded the Board that the Council carried all of the risk associated with the completion of the scheme and although there was a reasonable contingency built into the budget it was a material consideration in determining whether to approve the scheme.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **grant** project approval for the scheme;
2. **note** the reduction in the need for Oxford City Council capital funding provision to deliver this project (a release of £1,268,000);
3. **grant delegated authority to** Executive Director, Community Services, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and s151 Officer, to be able to enter into any necessary funding agreements to secure the external funding for the scheme; and
4. **recommend Council to resolve to** include the additional budget of £928,000 for the Northway and Marston Flood Alleviation Scheme in the Capital Programme (£2,196,000 financed from external funding, £400,000 financed from Council capital).

109. ENHANCING PATHWAYS FOR THE LONG TERM UNEMPLOYED

The Executive Director, Organisational Development & Corporate Services submitted a report which sought approval to deliver a project supporting long term unemployed people into work.

Cllr Brown, Executive Board Member for Customer and Corporate Services presented the report and informed the Board that the outcome of stage one of the funding bid would not be known until mid-November.

The Board noted that the focus of the project was to provide support to the long-term unemployed who faced significant barriers to entry into the job market. They were pleased to note the success of the recent job fair in Blackbird Leys and supported officers plans to hold other similar events at other locations in the city.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **approve** the project outlined in the report.

110. AWARD OF THE PROVISION OF A FURNISHED TENANCY SCHEME CONTRACT

The Head of Housing and Property submitted a report which detailed proposals to award a contract to deliver the Council's Furnished Tenancy Scheme.

Cllr Rowley, Executive Board Member for Housing presented the report. The Board commended the scheme as a valuable tool to support vulnerable residents and help them avoid debt by offering the equivalent of a zero-interest loan. The Board noted that the government's proposed changes to social rent levels would not impact this scheme.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **Delegate authority to** the Executive Director Regeneration & Housing, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and s151 Officer, to award the Furnished Tenancy Scheme contract to the supplier selected following completion of the EU-compliant open tender process described in this report, for the provision of household goods and furnishings to Council tenants.

111. FINANCIAL SYSTEMS RETENDER

The Head of Business Improvement and Head of Financial Services submitted a report which sought project approval to retender for the Council's core financial systems and delegate authority to award the contract on the basis of the most economically advantageous bid.

The Board noted that this was a straightforward retendering exercise prompted by the expiry of the existing contract on 31 December 2015.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **grant project approval** for the retendering of the Council's core financial systems; and
2. **delegate authority to** the Head of Business Improvement, in consultation with the s151 Officer and Monitoring Officer to award the contract for a new Finance System on the basis of the most economically advantageous bid.

112. FLAG FLYING - ADDITION TO PROTOCOL

The Board considered a report submitted by the Head of Law and Governance which sought approval to add two occasions to the protocol for regular Flag Flying on:

- Victory in Europe Day (VE day) – 8 May
- Victory in Japan Day (VJ day) – 15 August

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **Agree** to add the regular flying of the Union Flag from the flag pole above the 1930s extension to the Town Hall on VE day, 8 May and VJ day 15 August.

113. PLANNING - ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT (AMR)

The Head of Planning and Regulatory Services submitted a report which sought approval of the Annual Monitoring Report for publication.

The Board Member for Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services presented the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2014-15 which reported on the effectiveness of planning policies contained within Oxford's Local Development Plan against a range of performance indicators. He explained whilst it was disappointing that only 17 affordable dwellings were completed in the 2014/15 monitoring year it was in part due to the phasing of the completion of residential developments. The situation would improve in future years as existing developments were completed.

In response to a suggestion from Cllr Fooks the Board agreed to arrange a meeting for members and officers to discuss further matters relating to Indicator 22: Students and Purpose Built Student Accommodation. The Board noted that this indicator only applied to the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes and agreed that consideration should be given to expanding the remit to include other educational institutions and student accommodation built and managed by third parties.

The Board agreed that there was a wider safeguarding consideration about the accommodation arrangements for students at other educational institutions, such as language schools, in the city. They felt that this was something that might possibly be addressed through the planning function.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **Approve** the Annual Monitoring Report 2014/15 for publication.
2. **Authorise** the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services to make any necessary additional minor corrections not materially affecting the document prior to publication.

114. SALE OF CITY FARM, GARSINGTON

The Head of Housing and Property submitted a report which sought approval for the sale of City Farm, Garsington which is held as a General Fund investment asset.

Cllr Turner, Executive Board Member for Finance, Asset Management and Public Health presented the report. He made the following points:

- The property was a poor investment return for the Council
- The property represented a significant financial liability to the Council with regard to property maintenance and if the Board chose not to divest the property it would be necessary to allocate funds from the capital programme
- redevelopment of the site was unlikely but the sale contract would include a long-term or permanent clawback clause to ensure the Council benefitted from any future development.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **approve** the sale of City Farm on the basis of the valuation set out in Appendix 3; and
2. **delegate authority to** the Executive Director for Regeneration and Housing, in consultation with the Executive Lead Member, the Chief Executive, the Monitoring Officer and the s151 Officer, to vary those terms on condition that the revised terms continue to represent the best consideration reasonably obtainable.

115. MINUTES

The Board resolved to APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2015 as a true and accurate record.

116. MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION

The City Executive Board resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the item in the exempt from publication part of the agenda in accordance with the provisions in Paragraph 21(1)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2000 on the grounds that their presence could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in specific paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

117. CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX: SALE OF CITY FARM, GARSINGTON

The Board received and noted the contents of the not for publication appendix to the report at agenda item 14 (minute 115).

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 5.37 pm