

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Monday 8th July 2002

PRESENT: The Chair (Councillor Hollingsworth), The Vice Chair (Councillor Baker), Councillors Susan Brown, Christian, Clarkson, Cook, Johnson, Smith and Tarver.

OFFICERS PRESENT FOR THE WHOLE OF THE MEETING: The Chief Executive (Marion Headicar), Isobel Garner, Neil Gibson and Mark Luntley (Strategic Directors), David Taylor (Head of the Modernisation Unit) and William Reed (Modernisation Unit).

OFFICERS PRESENT FOR PART OF THE MEETING: Ian Barrett (Customer Services Business Manager), Mark Bowler (Leisure and Culture Business Manager), Colin Beever (Property Investment Manager), Graham Bourton (Oxford Building Solutions Business Manager), David Hill (Strategic Policy and Research Business Manager), John Hill (Built Environment Business Manager), Graham Smith (Transport and Parking Business Manager), Bob Peedell (Transport and Parking Business Unit), Val Johnson (Neighbourhood Renewal Manager), Helen Liddar (Legal Services Business Unit), John Moyles (Financial Management Business Unit), Peter McQuitty (Corporate Strategy Business Unit), John Evans (Modernisation Unit).

94. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Price.

95. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were made of the type specified by the undermentioned Councillors in respect of the matters listed against their names:-

- (1) Councillor Susan Brown - Night Shelter - personal and prejudicial interest as a user of the Day Nursery adjacent to a proposed site for the temporary relocation of the Night Shelter.
- (2) Councillor Hollingsworth - Night Shelter - personal and prejudicial interest as a user of the Day Nursery adjacent to a proposed site for the temporary relocation of the Night Shelter.
- (3) Councillor Johnson - personal and prejudicial interest in any matters relating to Oxford United or land at Minchery Farm because he was an Oxford United Football Club season ticket holder.

- (4) Councillor Smith - personal interest - minute 105 (Garage Rents).
Councillor Smith said that she had now resigned as the Chair and as a member of the Night Shelter Management Committee and so therefore had no personal or prejudicial interest in the matter.

96. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Four persons asked questions as provided for in Executive Board Procedure Rule 2.03. The substance of the questions or the matters upon which questions were asked, and the answers given were as follows:-

- (1) Councillor Fooks - on minute 98 (Night Shelter Temporary Relocation) asked if the Board was aware that the site of the Albion Place Car Park had been earmarked for a tourist coach set down and pick up point. The forthcoming review by the County Council of its Capital Programme could provide funds for the Albion Place tourist coach project to proceed and it could be provided by early 2003. There would be a delay if the Night Shelter was temporarily relocated to Albion Place. She also observed that there were no costs in the report relating to the relocation.

Councillor Smith (Housing Portfolio Holder) replied by saying that she felt Albion Place was a serious contender as a temporary site for the Night Shelter. The Tourist coach project was unfunded at the moment and she understood that there were access problems still to be overcome. Proper costings for the relocation were needed and the length of time for which Albion Place would be used should be minimised.

- (2) Councillor Sargent - on minute 95 (Night Shelter Temporary Relocation) asked whether the Board considered that Albion Place was the best site for the Night Shelter, and whether it was the best site so far as local residents were concerned. He said he felt that Abbey Place would be a better site. He pointed out that local residents had not been consulted.

Councillor Smith (Housing Portfolio Holder) said that the temporary relocation would be into proper buildings as opposed to portacabins. Abbey Place was not suitable because of the impending Westgate development. Osney Lane in her view was not a suitable site. An advantage of Albion Place was that users would be close to the Luther Street Medical Centre which provided medical care to the Luther Street Night Shelter at present. She said the proper consultation would take place.

- (3) Mr Curran, a resident of Folly Bridge Court on minute 95 (Night Shelter Temporary Relocation) asked if the Board was aware that City centre residents viewed the use of Albion Place as a temporary relocation for the Night Shelter with anxiety. He then followed that question with associated questions which amplified the anxieties and concerns likely to be felt by local people. He asked whether a City centre location was in fact

needed. He asked that a decision on relocation be deferred for consultation which should precede the normal consultation on planning applications.

Councillor Smith (Housing Portfolio Holder) explained that the relocation would be temporary. The reason for the relocation was in order to enable a new and improved Night Shelter to be provided. Councillor Smith and other Councillors said that a decision could not be further delayed. Various sites had already been looked at. There would be an opportunity to discuss the Night Shelter proposal at the Central, South and West Area Committee. Formal consultation would take place through the planning process.

- (4) Mr Hannigan, a resident of Western Road, asked questions on minutes 95 (Night Shelter Temporary Relocation), 99 (Building Regulation Charges and Investment), 102 (Capital Programme Review), 103 (Park and Ride Tender - Latest Position), 111(2) (Park and Ride Security) and 115 (Minutes).

In reply Councillors Baker and Smith said that the hostel information that Mr Hannigan had asked for some little time ago had been supplied to Mr Curran in answer to his earlier questions and would be copied to Mr Hannigan.

The Legal Services Business Manager said that the case law Mr Hannigan had quoted did not support Mr Hannigan's assertion that Councillor Smith had a personal and prejudicial interest in the relocation of the Night Shelter.

Councillor Hollingsworth said that the subject matter of a number of Mr Hannigan's questions had already been dealt with elsewhere at great length. Outstanding objections to the Council's accounts were for the District Auditor to deal with.

Councillor Clarkson (Environment Portfolio Holder) said that she would undertake to reply to Mr Hannigan upon building regulation charges and accounts.

The Strategic Director, Finance and Corporate Services said that the first quarter financial monitoring for 2002/03 was currently being finalised and would be circulated to members shortly. Thereafter, monitoring would be on a monthly basis.

97. HOUSING STOCK CONDITION SURVEY

The Strategic Policy and Research Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) to RECOMMEND Council:-
 - (i) to agree to the allocation of £200,000 for a housing stock condition survey as referred to in the report;
 - (ii) that the cost of the survey be spread over a two-year period, funded from the Housing Revenue Account, with, in the first year, £30,000 found from existing HRA budgets and £70,000 funded from balances and, in the second year, possibly funded from resources freed up as a result of the introduction of the Supporting People initiative;
- (2) subject to the adoption of the recommendation in (1) above, to authorise the Strategic Policy and Research Business Manager to seek tenders for a stock condition survey (together with a housing needs survey (already funded) if there were financial and efficiency savings in so doing).

98. NIGHT SHELTER TEMPORARY RELOCATION

The Neighbourhood Renewal Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) that the Board's preferred option for the temporary relocation of the Night Shelter whilst a new Oxford Resettlement Project was provided at Luther Street was the Albion Place staff car park;
- (2) to ask for detailed costings to be presented to the next meeting of the Board on the preferred option;
- (3) to authorise the submission of a planning application for a temporary relocation.

99. BUILDING REGULATION CHARGES AND INVESTMENT

The Built Environment Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) to RECOMMEND Council to agree the changes to and investment proposals for the Building Control budget and service as set out in sections 3. and 4. of the report;
- (2) to note, and to draw to Council's attention, that as a result of the changes referred to in section 3. of the report (which effectively meant that the

Building Control Account would have to be ring-fenced as regards expenditure and income) there would be a budget pressure (i.e. a deficit) in the General Fund of £136,000 and that this would be addressed in budget monitoring at a later date;

- (3) to agree the scale of charges for building regulation plans and inspections as set out in Appendix A to the report.

100. SPENDING PRIORITIES AND FUNDING

The Strategic Director, Finance and Corporate Resources submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) to RECOMMEND Council:-
 - (i) that the carry forwards from general reserves of the sums and for the schemes referred to in Appendix 4 to the report be agreed subject to Strategic Directors conducting a thorough check that the amounts shown against each carry forward were needed in full to fund the carry forwards;
 - (ii) that the new administration's priorities (unnumbered table within Part 2 of the report) together with the bids agreed by the Executive Board and Council (Appendix 2) be funded in the current financial year subject to Strategic Directors conducting a thorough check that the amounts shown against each item were needed in full to fund the items, and to consider the phasing-in of the introduction of the initiatives and spending upon them;
- (2) to note the position in relation to the 2001/02 accounts;
- (3) to ask the Strategic Management Board to identify a small number of service areas to analyse as to the continued validity of the purpose for which the services were provided and whether and how the services could be provided more cheaply and/or in different ways to reduce costs, this to be considered as a priority in order to work towards a balanced budget;
- (4)
 - (i) to ask that the next meeting of the Board be provided with a comprehensive list of vacant posts (both unfilled and "frozen") (Appendix 3 to the report not being considered to show the true picture) so that the Board could consider if any of these posts might be permanently removed from the establishment;
 - (ii) that vacant posts should be notified to the Portfolio Holder, Human Resources and:-

- (a) that each vacant post should be seen as a potentially frozen post;
 - (b) to reiterate Council policy that where vacant posts occurred, Business Units should review their structure to see if there was a purpose and continued need for the work of the post-holder and whether there are other ways in which the work could be done;
- (5) that progress on devolving budgets to area committees could best be advanced once Business Unit budgets had been properly established;
- (6) that General Fund balances should not reduce below £2 million.

101. CAPITAL PROGRAMME REVIEW - 2002/03

The Strategic Director, Finance and Corporate Services submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended). He substituted the Annexes A and B printed with the report for a revised Annex A. Annex B, and all references thereto in the report were deleted.

Resolved:-

- (1) to note the current level of uncommitted capital resources immediately available for new investment and the estimate of resources expected to be available during the year, as set out in paragraph 3.1 of the report;
- (2) (i) to RECOMMEND Council to confirm its support for those items shown as funded in Appendix A to the report and that the schemes listed as unfunded be agreed for inclusion in the capital programme;
- (ii) in consequence of (i) above, not to ask for detailed progress reports on schemes as referred to in paragraph 2.4 of the report;
- (3) to ask the Strategic Director to report back to the Board in the autumn on financial resources then likely to be available for the current and next financial year;
- (4) to record that the areas of priority spend were renovating grants and areas highlighted as part of the Community Buildings Best Value Review, and to ask Business Unit Managers to bear these priorities in mind in developing business plans for 2003/04;
- (5) (i) to ask Business Managers to develop detailed project timetables that were then matched against a resources timetable in order to manage the overall capital programme more effectively;

- (ii) to agree that the capital bids process be assimilated into business planning thus moving investment decisions in line with the annual revenue budgeting cycle.

102. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - OUTTURN 2001/02, CARRY FORWARDS AND FINANCIAL PROSPECTS 2002/03

The Strategic Director, Finance and Corporate Services submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) to approve carry forwards of £270,100 as itemised in the table annexed to the report;
- (2) to note that some minor variations were likely to be contained within existing budgets (paragraph 2.1 of the report refers);
- (3) to note that some major variations could not be contained within existing budgets and would be reported upon later (paragraph 2.3 of the report refers);
- (4) to agree that the cost of the Housing Stock Condition Survey be spread over a two year period, funded from the Housing Revenue Account, with, in the first year £30,000 found from existing HRA budgets and £70,000 funded from balances and, in the second year, possibly funded from resources freed up as a result of the introduction of the Supporting People initiative, and to note that this would be the subject of a recommendation to Council;
- (5) to note that a report upon the funding of the CANACT service would be presented to a future meeting of the Board.

103. PARK AND RIDE TENDER - LATEST POSITION

The Transport and Parking Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

He said that the County Council had now confirmed that it could not accept a bid qualified in the way referred to in the report.

Resolved that an unqualified tender for the management and operation of the Thornhill and new north of Oxford Park and Ride sites be not submitted.

104. 2-36 BUTTERWORT PLACE, BLACKBIRD LEYS, 68-70 NOWELL ROAD, ROSE HILL AND 28 LAMBOURN ROAD, ROSE HILL - PROPOSED DEMOLITION

The Neighbourhood Renewal Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved that the Minor Capital Project for the demolition of 2-36 Butterworth Place, 68-70 Nowell Road and 28 Lambourn Road be approved.

105. GARAGE RENTS

The Housing Management Manager submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) that the amendment to the Garage Discount Scheme referred to in the report be agreed, backdated to 8th April 2002;
- (2) to ask the Housing Portfolio Holder to discuss with the Housing Management Manager whether any further changes to the garage rents processes should be investigated pending the setting of the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2003/04.

106. NORTHWAY SPORTS CENTRE

The Neighbourhood Renewal Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1)
 - (i) that the Northway Sports Centre be directly managed by the Neighbourhood Renewal Business Unit in the short-term;
 - (ii) to note that the £8,700 shortfall in the sum needed to enable the Unit to keep the Northway Sports Centre open for the remainder of the year was being recommended for funding to Council on 29th April 2002;
- (2) to ask the Neighbourhood Renewal Manager to continue to attempt to identify an appropriate community group to take on the management of the Centre;
- (3) that the report be referred for information to the North East Area Committee.

107. SPORTS CENTRE CAPITAL INVESTMENT

The Leisure and Culture Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) to RECOMMEND Council that the capital investment in leisure facilities detailed in figure 1 in the report and amounting to £1,579,454 spread over a period of 3 years be included in the Council's Capital Investment Programme;
- (2) to ask the Leisure and Culture Manager to report back to a meeting of the Board in September on procurement options.

108. DIDCOT ENTERPRISE CENTRE - EXTENSION OF LEASE

The Oxford Building Solutions Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved to agree to an extension by two years of the lease of a unit at the Didcot Enterprise Centre to facilitate the carrying out of the property repairs contract for the South Oxfordshire Housing Association.

109. COWLEY AND WOOD FARM - IMPROVING ACCESS TO SERVICES

The Strategic Director, Housing and Health submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) to ask for a report on the staffing and financial details of establishing a Cowley One-Stop Shop at the Oxford Citizens' Housing Association offices in Barns Road opposite Cowley Centre;
- (2) that a one day per week surgery service be provided at Wood Farm and to ask for a report back on the staffing and financial resourcing;
- (3) that the Northway service be reduced by one day per week;
- (4) to make no change to the present East Oxford, St. Aldate's or Summertown service arrangements;
- (5) to note that a report would be submitted in due course on the use of new technology to provide advice and information.

110. HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION BILL

The Head of the Modernisation Unit reported that the Green Group had asked the Executive Board to consider the following Motion:-

“The Executive supports the Home Energy Conservation Bill. We therefore call on the Government to support the Bill as it presently stands, in particular the target of a 30% improvement in home energy efficiency by 2010, and resolve to write to Oxford’s MPs, to Margaret Beckett MP and John Prescott MP asking for their support when the Home Energy and Conservation Bill resumes its Report Stage in the House of Commons on 19 July. This will be the last opportunity to enable it to become law this Session”.

Resolved:-

- (1) not to adopt the Motion because the Council’s support for the sentiments it contained had already been affirmed;
- (2) to ask the Head of the Modernisation Unit to write again to local MP’s and to Government Ministers reminding them of the Council’s support for the contents of the Bill.

111. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY - RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS

(1) Drug Related Crime - Working with Other Authorities

The Head of the Modernisation Unit submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved as follows in relation to the recommendations contained in the covering report:-

- (a) recommendation (1), action already taken in pursuance of the recommendation;
- (b) recommendation (2), action already taken in pursuance of the recommendation;
- (c) recommendation (3), action already taken in pursuance of the recommendation;
- (d) recommendation (4), action already taken in pursuance of the recommendation;
- (e) recommendation (5) action taken in pursuance of recommendation;
- (f) recommendation (6), action already taken in pursuance of the recommendation;
- (g) recommendation (7), action already taken in pursuance of the recommendation;

- (h) recommendation (8), the Strategic Director, Housing and Health to co-ordinate lobbying efforts;
- (i) recommendation (9), not adopt. The Homelessness Task Force would be considering how homeless people could enter employment;
- (j) recommendation (10), not adopt. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be advised that the issue received day to day attention;
- (k) recommendation (11), to note that a joint bid between the City, the County and the Police was ongoing. To ask that a briefing note on funding opportunities offered by the Recovered Assets Fund be prepared for the Portfolio Holders;
- (l) recommendation (12), not adopt;
- (m) recommendation (13), refer to the Drugs Action Team;
- (n) recommendation (14) agreed;
- (o) recommendation (15), agreed. Area Committees to be asked to have a standing item on their agenda for the area committee representative on the Police Consultative Group to report back;
- (p) recommendation (16) agreed;
- (q) recommendation (17), to note that this was already a requirement. To remind all Business Units Managers that any reports that had crime and community safety implications should be seen by the Portfolio Holder for Crime and Community Safety (Councillor Susan Brown) before they were finalised;
- (r) recommendation (18), to ask that cleansing staff note where needles were found but not the numbers found;
- (s) recommendation (19), ask for a report on the matter;
- (t) recommendation (20), note that work was in progress;
- (u) recommendation (21), to note that work was in progress;
- (v) recommendation (22), to note that work was in progress;
- (w) recommendation (23), decision reached by the Board on 27th May 2002 (minute 30 refers);

- (x) recommendation (24), not adopt in view of recent Government initiative;
- (y) Council recommendation (1): to support the recommendation. Remodeling of Bonn Square should take place as soon as possible after the determination of the Westgate planning application;
- (z) Council recommendation (2): noted.

(2) Park and Ride Security

The Head of the Modernisation Unit submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended) together with a minute extract (also previously circulated and now appended) of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee's meeting of 30th May 2002.

Resolved:-

- (i) not to review the present policy on the use of income from Park and Ride charges;
- (ii) that the crime statistics table (but not the other information) in the confidential appendix to the report be not regarded as confidential.

(3) Disposal of Land to Parish Councils

The Head of the Modernisation Unit submitted a minute extract (previously circulated and now appended) of the Executive Board's meeting of 26th March 2002. He said that the Finance and Performance Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered the reference and was recommending the Board to consider each request for disposal of land to a Parish Council on its merits.

Resolved that each request for disposal of land to a Parish Council be considered on its merits.

(4) Overview and Scrutiny Resourcing

The Head of the Modernisation Unit reported that at the Council meeting on 24th June 2002 Councillor Baker had undertaken to consider how to address members' concerns about resourcing the Overview and Scrutiny function. The Head of the Modernisation Unit said that the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group at its meeting on 26th June 2002 had resolved to advise the Board that scrutiny needed £35,000 carry forward and adequate staffing resources. The Group had expressed concern at the delay in recruiting an additional secondee to work on housing scrutiny issues.

Resolved:-

- (i) to note that the post of the Head of the Modernisation Unit would not be filled;
- (ii) that additional financial resources would be provided for the overview and scrutiny function and that this was being recommended to Council on 29th July 2002.

112. AREA COMMITTEES - RECOMMENDATIONS

There were no recommendations from area committees.

113. PORTFOLIO HOLDER QUESTIONS

Resolved to note a Portfolio Holder question and answer in respect of housing benefit payments.

114. DECISIONS TAKEN IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE AUTHORITY

Resolved to note that one decision, on the Public Service Agreement bid, had been taken by the Strategic Director, Housing and Health and that the details would be formally reported to the next meeting.

115. MINUTES

- (1) Resolved that the minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 27th May 2002 be confirmed as a correct record.
- (2) There were no matters raised from the meeting of the Executive Board held on 17th June 2002.

116. FUTURE BUSINESS

The Head of the Modernisation Unit submitted a note (previously circulated and now appended) of items for future Executive Board agenda.

Resolved to ask that Business Unit Managers, Strategic Directors and Portfolio Holders keep William Reed updated as to additions to and deletions from the list of future items of business.

117. DAVID TAYLOR

The Leader referred to the fact that today's Board meeting was the last that David Taylor would attend as a Council officer. The Leader expressed his

appreciation for the experience that Mr Taylor had brought to bear on the matters for which he was responsible. He particularly thanked Mr Taylor for his work which had led to the report on Minchery Farm land that the Board was to consider in confidential session. The Leader paid tribute to all the advice and assistance that Mr Taylor had offered to him and all Members of Council over the years.

Board Members applauded and associated themselves with the Leader's remarks.

118. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

Resolved that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining items on the agenda on the grounds that their presence would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in specific paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Summary of Business Transacted on Part 2 of the Agenda as required by Section 100C(2) of the Local Government Act 1972

The Board confirmed the confidential minutes of its meeting held on 27th May 2002. No matters arose from its meeting held on 17th June 2002.

The Board considered the confidential annex to the report entitled "Park and Ride Security" which it had considered on the open agenda (minute 111(2) refers). The Crime Statistics Table contained in the Annex was released from confidentiality and appears below:-

Crime Statistics (a crime is the theft of a car, damage to a car or theft from a car)

<u>Park and Ride Site</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>
Peartree	173	153	41	41	39	6
Redbridge	324	179	246	34	23	24
Seacourt	108	76	43	20	19	8
Thornhill	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	206	164

The Board considered a report on land at Minchery Farm in the ownership or control of Mr Kassam's companies. The Board decided:-

- (1) to reject an offer made by Mr Kassam;
- (2) to authorise officers to seek an expedited judgement for £494,000 for the Stadium site plus the accruing interest plus the Council's legal costs;

- (3) that the action referred to (2) above be withdrawn if at any time up to such a Court hearing payment in full as set out above was received from Mr Kassam;
- (4) that negotiations concerning the Priory Site and the Minchery track should proceed separately from and not be linked to the issue of payment for the Stadium site.

The meeting commenced at 9.00 a.m. It went into confidential session at 12.09 p.m. and closed at approximately 12.30 p.m.