

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Monday 9th September 2002

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

OFFICERS PRESENT FOR THE WHOLE OF THE MEETING: Marion Headicar (Chief Executive), Isobel Garner, Neil Gibson and Mark Luntley (Strategic Directors), Jill Bailey (Corporate Strategy Business Unit), Michael Crofton-Briggs (Planning Business Manager), David Penny (Media and Communications), Bhupinder Gill (Legal Services Business Manager), Val Johnson (Neighbourhood Renewal Business Manager), Glen Wooldridge (City Works Business Manager) and Brenda Lammin and William Reed (Modernisation Unit).

181. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Christian.

182. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

183. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Councillor Goddard asked the following questions on the Cornmarket Street environmental improvement scheme as provided for in Executive Board Procedure Rule 2.03:-

(a) Has the County Council provided the City Council with detailed costings to support the County's estimate that the difference in costs between a scheme with a granite carriageway and one with a surface dressing over asphalt is not £313,000 as estimated in November 2000, but £200,000?

(b) Will the Board make these detailed costings available to all City Councillors if they have already been provided or when they are provided by the County, and also make them publicly available?

(c) Can the Board confirm, and will it publish detailed costings in support, that the cost of the extension of the scheme to Carfax Tower is estimated by the County to be £60,000?

(d) Can the Board confirm, and publish detailed costings in support of the estimate by the County, that £140,000 of the currently estimated costs of the asphalt scheme is attributable to "inflation"?

Councillor Cook confirmed that, in response to questions (a), (b), and (c) figures had been received from Oxfordshire County Council and he was happy to make them available to City Councillors and the public. He asked the Leader to respond to question (d). Councillor Hollingsworth said that, on initial examination, the County's estimates appeared to be reasonable. He explained that the construction cost indices were higher than the RPI inflation rate. Isobel Garner agreed there was a need to demonstrate that the Cornmarket Street scheme represented value for money and that figures would be made widely available.

Resolved that the information made available in relation to Councillor Goddard's questions be sent to all members of the Council, and reproduced for the next meeting of the Executive Board.

184. GENERAL FUND AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - FIRST QUARTER MONITORING 2002/03

The Financial Management Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved to note the report including that:-

- (a) budget pressures identified by the Business Units (other than corporate pressures) were being worked on by them in order to manage their budgets;
- (b) the Executive Board of 8th July had already requested reports on the Housing Revenue Account where costs could not be contained within budgets.

185. AUDIT COMMISSION RE-INSPECTION OF PLANNING

The Planning Control and Conservation Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) to note the contents of the report, and agree that the report and any consequential recommendations made by the Board be circulated to area committees for information;
- (2) to record appreciation for the hard work of the officers in the Planning Business Unit and to congratulate them on making such excellent progress;
- (3) to ask for a progress report early in the New Year.

186. E-GOVERNMENT SPENDING PROPOSALS - MAJOR PROJECT

The Strategic Director, Physical Environment submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) to approve the scheme as a major project (Financial Procedure Rule 2.7) subject to a full report being made to the Board on the phasing of expenditure once it was known;
- (2) to note that the project was already included in the Capital Programme and that no change to the budget framework was therefore required;
- (3) to convene a special Executive Board meeting on 14th October to recommend the Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) Year 2 Statement to Council on that day.

187. SUPPORTING PEOPLE DRAFT SHADOW STRATEGY

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

Resolved:-

- (1) to RECOMMEND Council that the draft Supporting People Shadow Strategy be agreed in principle as part of the Council's Policy Framework;
- (2) to note that if there were amendments made to the draft Strategy as a result of the procedure referred to in paragraph 6.3 of the report, and otherwise, these would be brought back to the Board for recommendation to Council.

188. INSURANCE PROGRAMME

The Internal Audit Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) to approve the report as a major project (Financial Procedure Rule 2.7) subject to a full report being made to the Board on the phasing of expenditure once known;

- (2) to agree to the variation of the type, scope, and level of insurance cover as set out in the appendix to the report;
- (3) to note the possible need for a special Council at the end of September, depending upon tenders received.

189. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

(a) Oxfordshire Play Association

Resolved to note that no nominations had been received and agree that nominations be made following consultation with Party Groups.

(b) Oxfordshire Community Health Issues

Resolved to note that no nominations had been received and agree that nominations be made following consultation with Party Groups.

190. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS

The Chief Executive submitted the minutes of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 15th August 2002.

Resolved:-

- (1) to defer consideration whilst Portfolio Holder views were sought;
- (2) more generally, that the views of Portfolio Holders on Overview and Scrutiny recommendations would be submitted in writing to future Board meetings.

191. AREA COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) South East Area Committee - Garage Sites

The Chief Executive reported that the South East Area Committee at its meeting on 5th August 2002 had resolved to ask the Board to consider a report on garage sites in the City. It had reached this decision in the light of concern expressed about the parlous state of a number of such sites in Oxford.

Resolved to consider a report on garage sites and note more generally that the views of Portfolio Holders on recommendations of Area Committees would be submitted in writing to future Board meetings.

(b) North East Area Committee - Sewage Overflow

The Chief Executive reported that the North East Area Committee at its meeting on 20th August 2002 had heard residents concerns about sewage overflow in Ferry Road. A report on the matter generally was being prepared for the Board's consideration. The Environment Portfolio Holder had been asked to write to Thames Water to invite it to attend a future Board meeting to consider the problems.

Resolved to note that Councillor Clarkson (Environment Portfolio Holder) had agreed to write to Thames Water on the matter.

192. PORTFOLIO HOLDER QUESTIONS

Resolved to note Portfolio Holder questions and answers report (previously circulated and now appended) in respect of area committee spending powers.

193. DECISIONS TAKEN IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE AUTHORITY

Resolved to note:-

- (1) the contents of the decision summary to use the "spend to save" budget to progress a staff survey;
- (2) the decision of the Strategic Director for Housing, Health and Community regarding the leasing of properties for first stage homelessness requiring full payment in advance;
- (3) the decision of the Strategic Director, Physical Environment to terminate the agreement between the City and the County Councils on staffing at Thornhill Park and Ride site;
- (4) to note the decision of the Strategic Director, Physical Environment to conclude negotiations on the Section 106 agency with the County Council.

194. MINUTES

Resolved that the minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 19th August 2002 be confirmed as a correct record.

195. FUTURE BUSINESS

The Chief Executive submitted a note (previously circulated and now appended) of items for future Executive Board agenda.

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

196. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

Resolved that the minutes (previously circulated) of the confidential business transacted by the Executive Board on 19th August 2002 be confirmed in open session as a correct record.

The meeting commenced at 9.00 am and closed at 9.57 am.