

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Tuesday 30 November 2004

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillor Hollingsworth (Chair), Councillor Baker (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Armitage, Brown, Clarkson, Christian, Paskins, Simmons, Tanner and Turner.

OFFICERS PRESENT FOR THE WHOLE OF THE MEETING: Caroline J Bull (Chief Executive), Sharon Cosgrove, and Mark Luntley (Strategic Directors), Brian Johnson, Brenda Lammin and William Reed (Legal and Democratic Services Business Unit) and David Penney (Media and Communications).

OFFICERS PRESENT FOR PART OF THE MEETING: Sarah Fogden and Penny Gardner (Financial and Asset Management Business Managers), Roger Pitman (Environmental Health Business Unit), Jan Banfield, Steve Daniels and David Steel (Strategy and Review Business Unit), Chris Brook and Nicky Atkin (Business Systems Business Unit) John Hill and John Bellenger (Built Environment Business Unit), Val Johnson and Steve Kilsby (Neighbourhood Renewal Business Unit), Claire Emmett (Performance Management Team), Dennis Boobier and Graham Stratford (Housing Services Business Unit) and Paul Warters (Revenues and Benefits Business Manager), .

159. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

160. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of personal interests were made:

<u>Councillors</u>	<u>Minute No</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Simmons	163	His work involved giving advice on pollution
Tanner	173	He helped to run a housing advice service in Banbury
Hollingsworth and Turner	183	Account holders with financial institutions referred to in the report

The Strategic Director, Finance and Corporate Services, also declared an interest in that he was an account holder with financial institutions referred to in the report.

161. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no questions for which notice had been given.

162. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Interim Legal and Democratic Services Business Manager submitted minutes of Scrutiny Committees (previously circulated and now appended). The Board also considered an oral report concerning decisions of the Housing Scrutiny Committee on 22 November and the Finance Scrutiny Committee on 23 November in respect of the call-in of the Board's decisions to those Committees.

Resolved: -

- (1) further to minute 55 (8) of the Finance Scrutiny Committee to agree that local performance indicators should be identified by means of local working, for example through Area Committees;
- (2) to note the concerns set out in minute 57(4) of the Finance Scrutiny Committee that it might not be possible to achieve the target set for the collection of Council Tax;
- (3) to note minute 60(2) of the Finance Scrutiny Committee that in future years Budget consultation should be carried out with stakeholders earlier in the process, possibly in June or July;
- (4) further to minute 44(c) of the Housing Scrutiny Committee to concur that, in order to build good relationships between the Executive Board, Scrutiny Committees and the Housing Advisory Board, it was important to have a forward Plan that was as far in advance as possible;
- (5) further to minute 57(4) of the Housing Scrutiny Committee to ask the Strategic Housing Portfolio Holder (Councillor Turner) to report back to the Board on perception issues in respect of Council housing
- (6) to note that minute 48 of the Housing Scrutiny Committee would be dealt with later on the agenda (minute 167);
- (7) further to minute 46 of Environment Scrutiny Committee, to note that the draft Leisure Strategy would be submitted to that Committee before informal consultation began, and that the draft Strategy would not be submitted to the Executive Board until after completion of the informal consultation process;
- (8) to note that the call-in of the Board's decision (minute 148) on the Rose Hill Development Options Appraisal and Procurement Framework had not been supported by the Housing Scrutiny Committee and note the other comments made by that Committee on social housing and the ECO Homes "excellent" standard;

- (9) to note that the call-in of the Board's decision (minute 138) on the Oxford Plan had not been supported by the Finance Scrutiny Committee.

163. JOINT CITY COUNCIL AND COUNTY COUNCIL SCRUTINY REVIEW OF AIR POLLUTION

The Strategy and Review Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended). Councillors Fooks, Hollander and Pressell, (members of the Joint Review Group) addressed the meeting, and County Councillor David Robertson attended as an observer.

Resolved to: -

- (1) agree that the membership of the Bus Quality Partnership should be extended to all operators and to use it to set targets within two years for the minimum percentage of buses (for each operator) that conform to the highest emission standards (by being equipped with emission reduction technology (including retro-fitting of tail-pipe technology));
- (2) ask bus operators to introduce pre-ticketing, greater through-journey ticketing, and cross-operator ticketing arrangements, especially using stored-value cards;
- (3) demonstrate in 12 months time how a strengthened Freight Quality Partnership has been used to reduce the congestion being caused in the City centre from large delivery lorries, by: -
 - reducing the number and size of vehicles
 - ensuring deliveries only take place between 7 p.m. and 8 a.m.
 - encouraging increased use of transshipment to smaller vehicles at the edge of the City, and
 - increasing the proportion of delivery vehicles with reduced emission profiles;
- (4) support the use the Taxi Quality Partnership to require further emission reduction in return for granting taxis the ability to use Botley Road bus lane;
- (5) recognise that the City Council already has targets in place to get all Council vehicles to conform to the highest emission standards, and to ask the County Council to undertake to: -
 - set targets for the percentage of its vehicles to be equipped with green technology
 - set targets for the percentage of current contracts to be renewed or replaced by contracts stipulating the use of green vehicles, especially school buses

- reveal the level of improvement achieved every year through the establishment of a fleet emissions audit, as is done by the City Council;
- (6) ensure that periodic road-side emission testing is carried out, perhaps in partnership with other Councils, in order to ensure greater compliance with emission standards;
 - (7) review the quantity and location of on-street and off-street parking in the City centre, and review the enforcement of Residents Parking Zones outside the City Centre, especially where occurring on bus routes;
 - (8) agree to work more closely with cycling and pedestrian groups, and to
 - (a) ask the County Council to designate an appropriate officer to be the lead officer on pedestrian and cyclists issues
 - (b) ask City Council officers to try to respond positively to requests from cyclists and pedestrians;
 - (9) agree to run a campaign to raise awareness of air pollution issues and how the public could help and what advantages there would be for them, subject to achieving clarity concerning the approach to be taken and the desired outcomes;
 - (10) increase City centre parking charges at least in line with inflation so as to encourage increased bus usage, especially Park and Ride;
 - (11) implement a policy requiring an environmental impact assessment, that specifically includes air quality, to be done for all proposed major schemes and large developments (e.g. the Westgate and West End proposals) and to require Travel Plans for all major developments;
 - (12) ask the County Council to include statutory air quality targets in the new Local Transport Plan:
 - (13) establish a joint process to manage further development and implementation of an Air Quality Action Plan, so as to guarantee a shared corporate approach now and in the future, and to report back to both Scrutiny Committees on their specific proposals for achieving this closer working between the Councils;
 - (14) agree to strengthen the Air Quality Action Plan by including further options as listed in Appendix 5;

- (15) ensure full public consultation on the Air Quality Action Plan and to include improving air quality as a priority in both the Oxfordshire Community Partnership and the City's Local Strategic Partnership;
- (16) record concerns at the inexactitude or lack of clarity of some of the data contained in the Joint Review document;
- (17) thank all concerned for their work on the Joint Review.

164. RECOMMENDATION OF THE HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD – FORECAST 2004/05 BUDGET

The Interim Legal and Democratic Services Business Manager submitted draft minute 8 of the Housing Advisory Board and the related report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved: -

- (1) to note that the Housing Advisory Board considered the revised Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget for 2004/05 to be acceptable and should be recommended to the Council as a budget variation;
- (2) to RECOMMEND Council to vary the HRA Budget at the special meeting of Council on 16 December 2004 because submission of the recommendation to any later ordinary meeting would constitute an unacceptable delay to the detriment of the housing authority's interests;
- (3) to note that the Housing Advisory Board had some concerns about the rate of local area spend (as a result of which that element was being varied to reduce that part of the base budget).

165. RECOMMENDATION OF THE HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD – PREPARING FOR HOUSING INSPECTION

The Interim Legal and Democratic Services Business Manager submitted draft minute 14 of the Housing Advisory Board and the related report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved: -

- (1) to note that in order to implement the Improvement Plan contained in Section 2 of the report there was a need to vary the Council's budget as set out in detail in paragraph 3.2 of the report (and as contained in the revised HRA Budget for 2004/05, the subject of advice contained in minute 8 of the Housing Advisory Board) to be funded from forecast surpluses, and to RECOMMEND the special meeting of the Council on 16 December 2004 accordingly;

- (2) to note the requirement for an additional budget also to be included in the 2005/06 HRA Budget, to be funded from forecast HRA surpluses.

166. SECOND QUARTER FINANCIAL MONITORING

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

Resolved to RECOMMEND the special meeting of the Council on 16 December 2004 to: -

- (1) agree the following budget variations listed in Appendix A to the Strategic Director's report: -

Oxford Inspires	£120,500
Freedom of Information staffing costs	£16,000
Local Plan earlier completion of inspection	£95,000
Increased insurance premiums	£27,332

[NOTE – the following budget variations listed in Appendix A were NOT recommended for approval at this stage: -

<i>Senior management costs</i>	<i>£95,000</i>	<i>(awaiting capacity fund bid outcome)</i>
<i>Local cost of benefits</i>	<i>£500,000</i>	<i>(detailed report requested)</i>
<i>Blackbird Leys Community Centre rates and service charges</i>	<i>£32,700</i>	<i>(full report requested)</i>
<i>Bonn Square</i>	<i>£50,000</i>	<i>(to be dealt with via budget process)</i>
<i>Extra area revenue budgets</i>	<i>£100,000]</i>	

- (2) approve all variations to the budget that did not affect the level of balances listed in Appendix C of the Strategic Director's report;
- (3) approve the variations to the Capital budget listed in Appendix D of the Strategic Director's report;
- (4) approve the following requests for carry-forwards listed in Table 1 in the Strategic Director's report: -

Customer services - employee underspend to fund savings target in 2005/06	£25,000
---	---------

Planning – underspend on planning delivery grant due to delays in recruitment	£54,000
---	---------

Planning – underspend on contribution to West End Project due to delay	£14,000
--	---------

Transport and Parking – employee underspend to fund

Savings target in 2005/06

£30,000

167. SECOND QUARTER PERFORMANCE MONITORING

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

Resolved to: -

- (1) agree the performance indicators for reporting to Executive Board;
- (2) accept exception reporting as the approach to performance monitoring;
- (3) in respect of void properties: -
 - (a) to examine performance and processes with a view to improving turnaround times for void properties;
 - (b) to ask the Housing Advisory Board to review the balance between the degree of work carried out to bring properties up to the Decent Homes Standard and the need for a reasonably quick turnaround;
 - (c) to number of refusals received for properties in some areas;
 - (d) to ask officers to submit details of any residential property disposals agreed by the Executive Board which had not been completed;
- (4) further to minute 48 of the Housing Scrutiny Committee to agree to consult relevant Area Committees on the disposal of properties;
- (5) congratulated officers on their achievements to date.

168. INDICATIVE BUDGETS FOR 2005/06 – 2007/08

The Strategic Director, Financial and Corporate Services, submitted a report and draft consultation Budget Book for 2005/06 to 2007/08. It was noted that a revised copy of pages 7A and 7B of the draft Budget Book had been circulated to correct errors in the original copy.

Resolved to: -

- (1) approve the draft budget book (including the capital programme) for consultation;
- (2) note that: -

Background/Starting Point

- (a) the starting point was the position for the General Fund reported to Executive Board on 1st November 2004;
- (b) that total was then adjusted by the revised surpluses reported in the Budget Book reported to this Executive Board (page 7);
- (c) HOWEVER, it was important to note that several of the Business Manager proposals for balancing the budget are still being reviewed by Directors, Portfolio Holders, Scrutiny and other consultees. Some of these may well be unachievable and/or undesirable, and that will reduce the surplus currently shown in the bottom line;

Specific Saving Proposals

- (d) Professional Services Procurement - savings were to come largely from shared procurement with neighbouring authorities and other public bodies;
- (e) Customer Services Rationalisation - cost reductions arose largely from changing contact methods and the improvements in the benefits service. [NB – since there was a risk that these savings would run counter to those in the Business Manager's proposals for balancing his budget, this business unit will have only be asked to make these savings in 2005/2006: future years would be reviewed during the consultation process. This adjustment is shown at the bottom of the figures];
- (f) Car Park Charges – these would be reviewed with the aim of raising an extra £350k per annum. The money raised would be used to pay for an improvement to the Concessionary Bus Fare Scheme for pensioners (see (j) below);
- (g) Street Wardens - The budget for street wardens would allow the current scheme to continue, and for new parts of the city to be covered, such as Barton and Wood Farm. The precise details of the expanded scheme would be finalised at the end of the current consultation period;
- (h) Housing Procurement – this funding would allow for housing procurement to be given a more strategic role in the Authority, looking to build partnerships with Registered Social Landlords, builders and landowners to maximise the development of affordable housing;
- (i) Discretionary HMO Registration - this funding would allow the Council to implement its policy decision to go beyond the statutory registration scheme for HMOs set out in the new Housing Act;
- (j) Concessionary Scheme - unfortunately the budget process is overlapping with the current Scrutiny review into the costs of

expanding the concessionary fare scheme, so this figure is the best estimate currently emerging from Scrutiny. It is linked to the Saving Proposal for car park charges above, with the two amounts largely cancelling one another out. The precise detail of any improvement will come from the Scrutiny review, but it is estimated that the sum of £400k could pay for EITHER a cheaper or even free concessionary fare OR the expansion of the operating hours of the scheme to allow it to start earlier in the day (the option preferred by pensioners taking part in the consultation exercise earlier in the budget process).

- (k) Transferring cleansing costs from the HRA - this would ensure that tenants were not paying twice for grounds maintenance and litter clearance for areas of open land on housing estates;
- (l) Lead Costs - these were some of the potential lead costs for making the longer term savings;

Totals Overall

- (m) Business Unit Balancing proposals - the proposals put forward by the Business Manager for Customer Services for balancing his budget appear to overlap the more strategic savings proposals list above (see e. above). To allow the business unit a more planned adjustment to new ways of working the requirement to achieve the balancing proposals is removed for 2005/2006 only;
- (n) Balances - the current year budget was underspent by over £800k. While business managers claim that all budgets will be fully spent, experience shows that this is rarely the case. As part of the next stage of the budget review process, the budgets for 2004/2005 would be adjusted downwards to match likely levels of expenditure, which would ensure a sufficient level of balances to assign to next year's budget;
- (o) Totals – the totals for each year showed a surplus. HOWEVER it was important to note that within each year were proposals that were currently under review and may NOT be achievable or desirable. Therefore it was sensible at this stage to make an allowance for some of these proposals to be removed from the budget in its final form;
- (p) Other Issues - there was a recommendation from the Licensing Committee elsewhere on the agenda which would involve both the use of balances in 2004/05 and possibly ongoing budget increases in the Environmental Health Business Unit. These figures needed to be checked (not least the apparently new information about Public Entertainment Licence income), and then possibly incorporated into the budget at the next stage;

(See also the table in Annex 1 to the minutes.)

- (3) ask officers to review the timing of the Capital Programme;
- (4) note that apparent errors in the draft "Budget Book" would be checked and corrected as the consultation process progressed;
- (5) note that items identified as financial pressures would be closely examined to see whether they could be reduced and used to contribute to spending bids or offset proposed savings;
- (6) note that the £20,000 cultural budget for the Town Hall, which had been agreed for 3 years but only included in Year 1 of the draft Budget Book, would be added in to the final Budget presented to Council.

(NOTE: The above minute needs to be read in conjunction with minute 179 below concerning the Licensing Act 2003 – Resources Needs.)

169. DRAFT EQUALITIES POLICY

The Strategy and Review Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved to: -

- (1) approve the draft Equalities Action Plan, as appended to the report, for consultation in accordance with the Policy Framework procedure rules;
- (2) note the actions on the Equalities Action Plan and the progress made to date against them.

170. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Strategy and Review Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved to: -

- (1) agree that the Economic Development Strategy should be part of the Council's Policy Framework;
- (2) approve the draft Strategy appended to the report for consultation (subject to minor amendments suggested at the meeting) in accordance with the Policy Framework procedure rules;
- (3) agree that the Vision set out in the Strategy be incorporated in the Oxford Plan, and asked the Strategy and Review Business Manager, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to consider whether there was a need to recommend amendments to the wording of the section of the Council's Vision on creating prosperity and sustaining full employment to

achieve consistency;

- (4) pay tribute to the work carried out by Steve Daniels, Economic Development Manager, in preparing the draft Strategy.

171. CONSULTATION STRATEGY – RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

The Strategy and Review Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended). The Board was advised that the Finance Scrutiny Committee had suggested some minor amendments to the draft Consultation Strategy and that the Consultation Officer had agreed to incorporate those changes in the version submitted to the Council for adoption.

Resolved to: -

- (1) RECOMMEND Council to adopt the Consultation Strategy, as amended by the Finance Scrutiny Committee and to incorporate the comments made at the meeting;
- (2) pay tribute to the work of Claire Tyrell Williams during her time as the Council's Consultation Officer.

172. HIGH HEDGES COMPLAINTS

The Planning Services Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended). The Board was advised that the Finance Scrutiny Committee had suggested some minor amendments to the

Resolved to: -

- (1) RECOMMEND Council to: -
 - (a) agree that the Planning Services Business Manger should handle the new responsibility for high hedges complaints;
 - (b) amend the Constitution to give the Planning Services Business Manager full delegated powers to handle high hedges complaints. However, if a complaint related to hedges or shrubs on the Council's own land or that of a council Member or employee, then the complaint would be notified to the Monitoring Officer and put before the relevant Area Committee for determination;
- (2) Ask the Planning Services Business Manager to prepare and circulate guidance to all Councillors on the scope of the Council's responsibilities in order to assist them in dealing with queries from local people.

173. HOUSING ADVICE SERVICE CONTRACT AWARD

The Acting Housing Services Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended). The Board also considered an oral report of the recommendations of the Housing Scrutiny Committee meeting on 22 November.

Resolved to: -

- (1) welcome the report as a good step forward;
- (2) agree that there would be an interim provision of a housing advice service from January 2005 until the full service was available in April 2005;
- (3) agree that accessibility and the service name should be considered further to include possible City-centre drop in sessions and outreach workers;
- (4) note that it was important that performance monitoring was undertaken with the Housing Scrutiny Committee;
- (5) support further discussions taking place with the other District Councils on how they proposed to provide housing advice;
- (6) thank Dennis Boobier for his work.

174. HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY – PROGRESS REPORT

The Acting Housing Services Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved to: -

- (1) note the report;
- (2) thank Dennis Boobier and his team for their excellent work on this service, and note the impact that increased efficiency in this area had made on the Council's finances.

175. REPLACEMENT OF APPLICATION SERVERS – MINOR PROJECT APPROVAL

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

Resolved to: -

- (1) grant Minor Project Approval for the replacement throughout the Council of computer application servers running core systems over the next 3 years;

- (2) note that although the costs of the above were approved as a Revenue bid of £35,000 for 3 years commencing in 2004/05, the expenditure met the definition of Capital spend;
- (3) approve the virement of £35,000 from the Revenue to Capital budget in each of the next 3 years;
- (4) approve the expenditure as set out above.

176. IMPLEMENTING ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT STATEMENT 4 (IEG4)

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

Resolved to: -

- (1) note the good progress that the Council had made this year towards the December 2005 deadline;
- (2) agree the content of Oxford City Council's fourth Implementing Electronic Government submission, as appended to the report;
- (3) congratulate the Business Systems Business Manager and his team for achieving in nine months what was normally achieved over a four year period in many authorities.

177. REMOTE AND MOBILE WORKING INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT – SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

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

Resolved to agree that the allocated funds, as shown in the appendix to the report, may be used for the purpose of the Major Project Approval granted by the Board on 6 August 2004 (minute 69).

178. BUILT ENVIRONMENT BUSINESS UNIT - CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE

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

Resolved to note the report.

179. LICENSING ACT 2003 – RESOURCES NEEDS

The Strategic Management Board submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved to: -

- (1) approve a project in the estimated sum of £244,818 (allowing rollover from 2004/05 to 2005/06) to enable the Council to undertake its statutory obligations under the Licensing Act 2003, and RECOMMEND Council to agree the budget variation for 2004/05 and to commit the base budget for 2004/05 –2005/06 in respect of the project;
- (2) note the predicted income of £192,000 from licensing fees (spread over part of 2004/05 and all of 2005/06) and that the figures could be subject to adjustment in the light of the Fee Regulations;
- (3) RECOMMEND Council that: -
 - (a) the one-off predicted shortfall of £52,818 between income and project costs be met from balances;
 - (b) the additional payments to members of the Licensing Committee during the start-up period, as recommended by the Members' Allowances Panel and totalling an estimated £24,270, be transferred from balances to the Members' Allowances Budget;
 - (c) as part of the 2005/06 Budget £115,000 is taken from General Fund balances and put into a contingency to meet the potential cost of licensing appeals;
- (4) note that the Licensing Committee had agreed that inspection and enforcement against conditions would be carried out at a level broadly comparable to that carried out under the present Public Entertainment Licensing (PEL) regime;
- (5) agree that on account of the reduction in licence fee income from PEL licences, the licence fee income was unlikely to equal the PEL income, and because there would be significantly more licensed premises to which inspection and enforcement would need to apply, £74,030 be included in the Council's Budget for 2006/07 onwards to cover inspection and enforcement, and drew attention to the impact this would have on the consultation Budget agreed earlier in the meeting;
- (6) note that the Licensing Committee had expressed some concern at the low level of the legal resources bid (0.5 FTE) and wished to review the legal provision in 12 months' time;
- (7) note that the Licensing Committee had noted that: -
 - (a) further reports would be presented, if required, during 2005/06 concerning any further temporary budget needs arising from

variances during transitional work;

- (b) a report would be presented during 2005/06 concerning the base line resources needed for future years;
- (c) quarterly reports would be submitted to the Committee on the operation of the licensing regime and expenditure and income thereon.

180. POLICY TO BE ADOPTED ON THE PROVISION OF GUARANTEES BY THE COUNCIL

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

Resolved to: -

- (1) adopt Guarantee Policy 2, as set out in paragraph 6 of the report, but note that the ability to act as guarantor would depend on the amount of the guarantee and the resources available;
- (2) agree that providing such a guarantee would be likely to achieve the improvement of the social, economic and environmental well-being of the residents of Oxford who might benefit from the scheme.

181. GUARANTEES FOR ST MARGARET'S INSTITUTE LEASE REPAYMENTS

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

Resolved: -

- (1) to support the provision of a guarantee, as set out in the report, in relation to the St Margaret's Institute, and agree that providing such a guarantee was likely to achieve the improvement of the social, economic and environmental well-being of the residents of Oxford;
- (2) to RECOMMEND Council to vary the Budget Framework to set up a provision in the accounts for the amount of the guarantee;
- (3) subject to the decision of the Council, to instruct the Strategic Director, Finance and Corporate Services, to inspect the relevant documents (business plan, agreements with St. John's College, etc.) to evaluate the risk to the City Council and, if satisfied, enter into the necessary agreement with St. Margaret's Institute in line with the principles set out in the report.

182. WRITE-OFF OF UNCOLLECTABLE DEBTS

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

Resolved to agree to: -

- (1) write off the debts listed in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) write off the debts in Appendix 2 to the report if recovery action was not successful within nine months.

183. TREASURY MANAGEMENT 2004/05

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

Resolved to RECOMMEND Council to: -

- (1) note the report and in particular the breach of limits referred to in paragraph 2;
- (2) approve the revised lending list at Appendix A to the report.

184. ESTATE SHOPS

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

Resolved to advise the Housing Advisory Board that the Executive Board supports the following recommendations: -

- (1) to approve the actions already taken to: -
 - (a) pursue a more systematic and rigorous rent arrears policy;
 - (b) initiate an initial "level rent" policy to bring all units on a parade to one standard rent level;
- (2) let any vacant shops on the open market;
- (3) use the rent levels obtained to set the benchmark for rent reviews and lease renewals for other units in the parade, and increase grant allocations for community uses accordingly;
- (4) commission a "Stock Condition Survey" to quantify the cost of the outstanding repairs, noting that this project would not require project approval as it was below the Minor Project Approval threshold;

- (5) commission a shopping needs survey and seek approval for any rationalisation or change of units for specific units/parades, noting that it was anticipated that this survey would not exceed the Minor Project Approval threshold, and that a further report would be submitted if estimates showed that this would not be the case;
- (6) consider rationalising management control of all aspects of the budget into one business unit, to be determined on the completion of the review of Housing Revenue Account “non-dwelling” assets.

185. AREA COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Interim Legal and Democratic Services Business Manager submitted recommendations (previously circulated and now appended) from Area Committees.

Resolved to: -

- (1) note the South East Area committee’s concern at the lack of progress with the bid to Sport England for funding for alterations to the Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre;
- (2) note the South East Area Committee’s support for Police Community Support Officers;
- (3) note the North Area Committee’s request that the Leisure and Parks Business Manager submit a report to the Board on works /improvements to Wolvercote Cemetery and other City Cemeteries.

186. PORTFOLIO HOLDER QUESTIONS

There were no Portfolio Holder questions and responses for the Board to consider.

187. DECISIONS TAKEN IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE COUNCIL

The Interim Legal and Democratic Services Business Manger submitted a pro-forma (previously circulated and now appended) concerning a decision taken by the Chief Executive, in respect of entering into an agreement for offering the Home Computers Initiative to Council employees.

Resolved to note the decision taken by the Chief Executive.

188. FUTURE BUSINESS

The Interim Legal and Democratic Services Business Manager submitted a list

(previously circulated and now appended) of future agenda items.

Resolved to note the list of future agenda items, and the need for items to be entered on the Forward Plan as far in advance as possible.

189. MINUTES

Resolved that the minutes (previously circulated) of the Board dated 1 November 2004 be agreed as a correct record subject to the addition of personal interests declared by Councillors Armitage and Paskins in respect of minute 152 because they were Council appointed members of the Ferry Centre Management Board.

The meeting began at 2.00 pm and finished at 6.00 pm.

No.	Title	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	Lead in Costs
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
	Base budget surplus for year (as reported to Executive Board 1/11/2004)	8	3	3	
	Further savings identified to 30/11/2004	136	429	434	
1.1	Alternative procurement (professional services)	0	100	200	(50)
2.1	Customer Services Reduce Scope	35	70	70	0
2.3	Push maximum contact onto web	25	25	25	0
2.4	Manage telephones by remote external provider	0	50	50	0
2.5	Reduction in C/S management overhead	0	40	40	0
2.6	Council wide rationalisation of peripheral service point	0	50	100	0
3	Alter charges for off-road inner city car parks	350	350	350	0
4	Review of section 42 functions	100	340	340	(20)
5	Investigate alternative ways of administering car parks	0	220	220	(50)
6.	Review delivery of museum service	80	120	120	(20)
8.1	Street wardens: Sustain existing service	0	(250)	(250)	0
9	Expand Housing procurement function at a strategic level	(100)	(100)	(100)	0
10	Discretionary HMO registration	(150)	(150)	(150)	0
13.1	Concessionary Bus Fare Scheme – increase budget to allow for EITHER a lower or free fare OR earlier operating hours for the scheme at current rates	(400)	(400)	(400)	0
14	Closing the gap – policy development work on social inclusion and community cohesion	(100)	(100)	(100)	0
15	Implementing the corporate improvement plan and managing performance management team	(170)	(290)	0	0
16	Transfer of cleansing and ground maintenance costs from HRA to General Fund	(75)	(75)	(75)	0
	Total Lead in Costs from Savings	(140)			
	Business Unit balancing proposals not taken (in part or in full) – Customer Services	(100)	0	0	
	Total From Balances	750	250	0	
	Total	74	432	447	