

# EXECUTIVE BOARD

Monday 19 June 2006

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillors Goddard (Chair), Rundle (Vice-Chair), Armitage, Bance, Fooks, Murray, Paskins Tall, Sellwood and van Zyl.

**OFFICERS PRESENT FOR THE WHOLE OF THE MEETING:** Caroline J Bull (Chief Executive), Sharon Cosgrove and Michael Lawrence (Strategic Directors), Penny Gardner (Financial and Asset Management Business Manager), Jeremy Thomas and Brenda Lammin (Legal and Democratic Services Business Unit) and Louisa Dean (Media and Communications).

**OFFICERS PRESENT FOR PART OF THE MEETING:** Michael Crofton-Briggs, (Planning Services Business Manager), Janet Banfield and Helen Rowlands (Strategy and Review Business Unit), Phil Dunsdon and Peter Dobson (City Works Business Unit), Margaret Mernagh, Jacqueline Hunt and Claire Newport (Leisure and Cultural Services Business Unit), Val Johnson, Nicola Harrison and Oliver de Soissons (Neighbourhood Renewal Business Unit), Graham Stratford, Fiona Brown, Dave Scholes and Martyn Mumford (Housing Services Business Unit), John Kulasek (Financial and Asset Management Business Unit) and Chris Pyle (Oxford Building Solutions Business Unit).

## 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no questions in accordance with Procedure Rule 13(iii).

## 4. SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS

The Board considered a reference from the Housing Scrutiny Committee and an associated report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved that the concerns of Housing Scrutiny Committee regarding the increase in numbers of rough sleepers and the need for a "Wet House Garden" facility be noted.

## **5. DISPOSAL OF 2 PROPERTIES – CALL-IN**

The Board considered (a) a recommendation of the Housing Scrutiny Committee in response to the call-in of the decision contained in Executive Board minute 299 2005/06, and (b) the report (previously circulated and now appended) of the Housing Services and Oxford Building Solutions Business Managers considered by the Board on 3 April 2006.

Resolved: -

- (1) to proceed with the sale of 225 London Road due to the high costs of repair works required to bring it up to Decent Homes standards;
- (2) that, in future, repair reports should be available to councillors (but not included in reports submitted to Committee);
- (3) that the distinction between Executive Board and Housing Advisory Board responsibilities on housing issues be clarified;
- (4) that it be noted that the call-in had not been to question the policy of disposal and that any further disposals should continue to be considered on a case by case basis.

## **6. COMMUNITY AND CORE COUNCIL EVENTS – CALL-IN**

The Board considered (a) a recommendation of the Environment Scrutiny Committee in response to the call-in of the decision contained in Executive Board minute 284 2005/06, and (b) the report (previously circulated and now appended) of the Leisure and Cultural Services Business Manager considered by the Board on 3 April 2006.

Resolved that: -

- (1) it be noted that consultation was a statutory requirement for larger licensed events;
- (2) recognising that there were not sufficient resources that to carry out consultations in all cases, advance notice be given to local residents as far as practicable in respect of smaller unlicensed events, not only through the area committees, but also by reaching local residents' associations and similar groups (via the area co-ordinators).

## **7. APPROVAL OF THE MUSEUM OF OXFORD BUSINESS PLAN FOR THE MUSEUM ACCREDITATION SCHEME**

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

Resolved that the Museum of Oxford Business Plan 2006-2009, as set out in the appendix to the report, be approved for the Museum Accreditation Scheme.

## **8. CAR FREE DEVELOPMENTS – COUNCIL MOTION**

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

Resolved that: -

- (1) letters be written to all estate agents and letting agencies in the City from time to time asking them to remind tenants and purchasers at the appropriate time that they live in car-free developments;
- (2) it be noted that the issues raised in respect of car-free and low car parking developments would be taken into account during preparation of the forthcoming Parking Supplementary Planning Document;
- (3) some simple mechanism be found to celebrate and advertise the car free status of any development, for example through a plaque or sign tastefully designed and obviously placed on the building.

## **9. PLANNING DELIVERY GRANT**

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

Resolved that: -

- (1) Council be RECOMMENDED that the Planning Development Grant (£402,000) for 2006/07 be accepted as a change to the budget framework and approval be given for it to be spent wholly by the Planning Service, and broadly as set out in the appendix to the report, subject to noting that the description of item 7 in the annex to the report would be changed to reflect the fact that the funding was for the payment of professional fees and subscriptions for planning officers;
- (2) officers be congratulated on the continued improvement in planning performance;
- (3) it be noted that there were concerns regarding uncertainties regarding future “top-up” funding for planning services and that discussions would take place between the Planning Services Manager and the Portfolio Holder at the appropriate time to ensure that priority items were included in base budgets.

## **10. OXFORD WEST END DESIGN PANEL**

The Planning Services Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended). The Board also considered representations from Councillor Sargent (ward councillor) regarding the proposed membership of the Design Panel and the importance of ensuring there was input on sustainability issues and crime prevention measures.

Resolved that an Oxford West End Design Panel be established, as set out in the appendix to the report.

## **11. THE SOUTH EAST PLAN**

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

Councillor Bance, seconded by Councillor Paskins, moved an amendment to the recommendations set out in the report to “add under recommendation (i) and renumber accordingly, that the most sustainable way of meeting residual housing need in the Central Oxfordshire sub-region would be one or more urban extensions to Oxford”, but this was not carried.

Councillor Paskins, seconded by Councillor Bance, moved an amendment to the recommendations set out in the report to “delete recommendation (i) and replace it with 1. to advise the panel that the view of full Council is that there is a desire for managed growth to take advantage of the unique opportunities for sustainable economic growth in the central Oxfordshire sub-region 2. There is a belief that an urban extension to Oxford is the most sustainable location for new housing in central Oxfordshire”, but this was not carried.

Councillor Sellwood moved that the recommendations in the report be accepted with the addition of an additional recommendation “(viii) The City Council considers that local government should once again be allowed to build council housing, and that a ‘fourth option’ of direct investment into existing council housing should be provided by central government.

The amendment was accepted by the Leader with the agreement of the Executive Board.

The Board voted on the substantive motion, and this was carried.

Councillors Bance and Paskins asked for the votes to be recorded in the minutes. Councillors Goddard, Rundle, Armitage, Fooks, Murray, Tall, Sellwood and van Zyl voted for the motion and Councillors Bance and Paskins voted against it.

Resolved that the Examination in Public Panel be advised that the City Council’s response to the draft South East Plan was as follows: -

- (i) *Green Belt. (Policy CC10a)* - there is a case for a strategic review of

Green Belts within the region;

- (ii) *Overall Housing numbers (Policy H1)* - the South East Plan should make provision for 36,000 dwellings per annum, as indicated from the demographic and economic forecasts prepared by SEERA;
- (iii) *Central Oxfordshire (Policy CO2)* -the Plan should make provision for 2,000 per annum (40,000 in total) to meet the demographic and economic forecasts prepared by SEERA;
- (iv) *Sustainable Development* - the Plan is commended for its policies on sustainable development (Policy CC1), climate change (Policy CC2) and sustainable construction (Policy CC4) as these complement those of the City Council;
- (v) *Economy (Policy CC8b)* - the priority given to regional hubs is supported
- (vi) *Town Centres (Policies TC1 and 2)* - support is given to the recognition of Oxford as a Primary Regional Centre;
- (vii) *Central Oxfordshire Policy CO5* - support is given for the recognition given to the Castle development, West Gate redevelopment and the wider West End rejuvenation;
- (viii) the City Council considers that local government should once again be allowed to build council housing, and that a 'fourth option' of direct investment into existing council housing should be provided by central government.

## **12. SMALL AND CONTINGENCY GRANTS**

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

Resolved that: -

- (1) the small grants and contingency fund criteria for 2006/07 be approved, as set out in appendix 1 to the report;
- (2) that a grant of £1,00 be made to the Perm Association, noting that the Board was satisfied that such a grant would promote the social, economic or environmental well-being of Oxford.

## **13. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN - UPDATE**

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

Councillor Paskins, seconded by Councillor Bance, moved an amendment to the recommendations set out in the report to delete recommendation 2 and replace it with “to note the Council’s concerns that the need to prioritise affordable and accessible services in the more deprived areas had not been reflected in the Plan’s priorities be noted; to note that the resources which have been allocated to implement the proposals in the Plan are woefully inadequate to meet the needs of young people in Oxford”.

This was not carried because of concerns at the possible effects of not working in partnership with other local councils if the Plan was not endorsed. Councillor Rundle moved that the concerns expressed in the above motion be noted and that the Plan be endorsed, notwithstanding those concerns.

The amendment was accepted by Councillor van Zyl, with the agreement of the Executive Board.

Resolved that: -

- (1) the feedback from the consultation on the Oxfordshire Children and Young People’s Plan be noted;
- (2) it be noted that concerns that the need to prioritise affordable and accessible services in the more deprived areas had not been reflected in the Plan’s priorities;
- (3) it be noted that the resources allocated to implement the proposals on the Plan were woefully inadequate to meet the needs of young people in Oxford;
- (4) notwithstanding the above concerns, the Oxfordshire Children and Young People’s Plan be endorsed.

#### **14. REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR**

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

Councillor Paskins, seconded by Councillor Bance, moved that the allocation of the grants budget set out in paragraph 15 be consulted upon and a further report be submitted to the next meeting of the Executive Board, but this was not carried.

Resolved that: -

- (1) the broad allocation of the revenue grants budget for 2007/08 be agreed, as set out in paragraph 15 of the report, noting that these percentages were based on patterns spanning several years;
- (2) a further report be submitted to the Board in August 2006 seeking

approval of the prospectus.

## **15. NEW RECYCLING SCHEME FOR OXFORD**

The Interim City Works Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Councillor Paskins, seconded by Councillor Bance, moved that the implementation of plastic recycling, and wheelie bins for those who want them be brought forward to October 2006, but this was not carried.

Resolved that: -

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) it be noted that a further report would be submitted to the July meeting of the Board for a final decision on details of the new scheme and the implementation programme;
- (3) to note that Major Project Approval was not required at this stage and this aspect of the scheme would be dealt with in the report to the July meeting.

## **16. TRADE WASTE SERVICES – REVIEW OF CHARGES**

The Interim City Works Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved that an increase of 10% in waste management charges for the collection of Trade Waste, with effect from 1 July 2006.

## **17. CREATION OF A SINGLE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT SERVICE**

The Strategic Director, Housing, Health and Community, submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended). The Board noted that the Housing Scrutiny Committee had considered the report and supported the proposals.

Resolved that Council be RECOMMENDED that: -

- (1) the Oxford Building Solutions (OBS) Business Unit should no longer exist and that the name of the new HRA Business Unit be Oxford City Homes;
- (2) the Housing Services Business Unit be renamed the Community Housing Business Unit;
- (3) the current delegated powers for the OBS and Housing Services Business Managers shown in the constitution be deleted and replaced with the list

of responsibilities and delegated powers for the Business Manager of Oxford City Homes and the Business Manager of Community Housing as set out in appendix 1 to the report;

- (4) the virement of budgets from the current Housing Services Business Unit to Oxford City Homes Business Unit be agreed, as detailed in appendix 2c and summarised in paragraph 14 of the report, noting that this included the transfer of posts from the HRA to the General Fund (GF) resulting in an additional cost to the GF of £107,000 and a saving to the HRA of £107,000 in 2006/07.

## **18. HOUSING ALLOCATION SCHEME – PROPOSED CHANGES TO HELP PREVENT HOMELESSNESS**

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

Resolved that Council be RECOMMENDED to approve the changes to the Housing Allocation Scheme, as detailed in the report.

## **19. OLDER PEOPLE’S HOUSING STRATEGY**

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

Resolved that the draft Older People’s Housing Strategy be approved for consultation, as specified in the report.

## **20. CHOICE BASED LETTINGS – PROPOSED SCHEME**

The Housing Services Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended). The Board noted that the Housing Scrutiny Committee had considered the report and supported the proposals.

Resolved that: -

- (1) officers continue to work on the Choice Based Lettings (CBL) project in accordance with the project plan, as summarised in paragraph 58 of the report;
- (2) a new Allocations Scheme be drafted and that the priority system within it should use a banding approach (similar to that illustrated in Appendix 3 to the report), and that the scheme be drafted to ensure it is compatible with the proposed key features of the Choice Based Lettings Scheme, as outlined in the report, and the additional factors identified in paragraph 54 of the report;



- (3) officers consult with stakeholders on the redrafted Allocation Scheme, as required by statute, prior to recommending it to Executive Board and Council at the end of 2006;
- (4) the Choice Based Lettings scheme should continue to be developed, incorporating the main features proposed in this report, (paragraphs 18 to 48) and in particular that: -
  - (a) properties be advertised on the website (with additional terminals provided to assist access at customer service points), and through a paper newssheet, and that a limited number of newssheets be mailed to persons not otherwise able to access this information;
  - (b) the option of providing a CBL 'property shop' alongside other service provision be explored, and that public receptions and local service shops be fully utilised to advertise properties and assist with customer queries;
  - (c) CBL 'bids' can be undertaken through a variety of options, with automated phone lines and an SMS-text message facility being developed, in addition to the web, that the internet method also be accessible to staff who may be asked to facilitate a bid for a customer (whether in person or by phone), and that a paper 'coupon' method of bidding should also be available, on request;
  - (d) a two week bid cycle be progressed, but that the feasibility of a one week cycle also be explored further so it could be introduced later if found to offer significantly more advantages;
  - (e) applicants be limited in the number of bids they can make per bid-cycle; help and assistance be pro-actively offered to applicants in high housing need, that are not bidding; officers and partner agencies may assist with bidding, when required, but that bidding 'by proxy' will be available in exceptional circumstances only; and that 'automated bidding' be explored further;
  - (f) advert labelling be limited, but that it be used, when necessary, in order to ensure lettings targets are met, and to assist with the development of sustainable communities (as referred to in paragraphs 43 and 44 of the report);
  - (g) provision be made for Direct Offers to be made on an exceptional basis, and that alternative penalties for the refusal of an offer of suitable accommodations be explored further;
- (5) that officers should ensure that and ICT equipment procured is capable of meeting the above requirements.

## **21. LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN FOR EAGLE WHARF DEVELOPMENT**

The Housing Services Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended). The Board noted that the Housing Scrutiny Committee had considered the report and did not support the proposals.

Resolved not to make a recommendation to Council on the proposals but to ask Council to consider the proposals at its meeting in July with an open mind, and that a revised report be submitted to that Council meeting, taking into account the points raised during the Board's discussion.

## **22. OPTIONS FOR 2 HRA PROPERTIES – 1 VACANT SHOP AND 1 TENANTED HOUSE**

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

Resolved that the properties referred to in the report be sold on the open market (subject to a further report in accordance with paragraph 9.05 of the Contract Procedure Rules) and the proceeds be allocated towards meeting the Decent Homes Target.

## **23. SALE OF 68 CHARLES STREET**

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

Resolved that the best offer currently available for 68 Charles Street be accepted (as detailed in the confidential appendix to the report) and in the event that the proposed purchase does not proceed at that level the Financial and Asset Management Business Manager be authorized to proceed with a sale to an alternative party at a best price at or above open market value.

## **24. YEAR END 2005/06 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Chief Executive submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended). The Board was advised of the recommendations of the Finance Scrutiny Committee, which had considered the report on 15 June 2006.

Resolved that: -

- (1) key performance indicators for 2006/07 should include Revenues and Benefits key performance indicators;

- (2) the target for sickness absence should remain at 10.59 days rather than being rounded up to 10.6 days, in order to be consistent with the requirements for the Best Value Performance Plan;
- (3) sickness absence statistics should be split between short and long term absences.

## **25. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN**

The Chief Executive submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended). The Board was advised of the recommendations of the Finance Scrutiny Committee, which had considered the report on 15 June 2006.

Resolved that: -

- (1) the relevant portfolio holder (Councillor Tall) be authorized to approve an edited performance summary text from the end of year monitoring report for inclusion in the Best Value Performance Plan;
- (2) the updates to the Oxford Plan referred to in paragraph 6 of the report be endorsed so that it may form the Council's Best Value Performance Plan, and Council be RECOMMENDED to approve the Best Value Performance Plan, incorporating the three-year targets for BVPIs and the above updates to the Oxford Plan;
- (3) it be noted that Portfolio Holders and Officers would be looking into revised targets for recycling, the reasons for under-representation of ethnic minorities in the Council's workforce, and checking the reliability of data on removal of offensive graffiti.

## **26. AREA COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services submitted recommendations made by the Central South and West Area Committee.

Resolved that: -

- (1) further to a recommendation of the Central, South and West Area Committee concerning accommodation at Hinksey Park it was noted that Councillor Tall had offered to meet with officers, ward councillors and the British Sub-Aqua Club to try to resolve the impasse over rights of accommodation at Hinksey Park;
- (2) further to a recommendation of the Central, South and West Area Committee concerning streetscene issues in the vicinity of Friars Entry to note actions taken in respect of deep cleaning in Friars Entry and that the review of the Public Realm Strategy would proceed once a project manager had been appointed.

## **27. PORTFOLIO HOLDER QUESTIONS**

There were no such questions for the Board to consider.

## **28. DECISIONS TAKEN IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE COUNCIL**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services submitted proformas in respect of (a) a decision of the Housing Services Business Manager on a 12 month extension to current Supporting People contracts, and (b) a decision of the Neighbourhood Renewal Business Manager on rephrasing of payments under the Lord Mayor's Deposit Scheme.

Resolved to note the decisions taken.

## **29. MINUTES**

Resolved that the minutes (previously circulated) of the Board dated 3 April 2006 be agreed as a correct record.

## **30. MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION**

Resolved that in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 21(1)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 the press and public on be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that their presence could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in specific paragraphs of Schedule I2A of the Local Government Act 1972.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason for exemption</u>	<u>Minute No</u>
C1	information relating to the business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	31
C2	information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings	32
C3	information relating to the business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	33
C4	information relating to the business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)	34

### **31. DISPOSAL OF TWO PROPERTIES – CALL-IN**

The Housing Services and Oxford Building Solutions Business Managers submitted an exempt from publication appendix (previously circulated and now appended) to the joint report referred to in minute 5.

Resolved that the information be noted.

### **32. CHOICE BASED LETTINGS - PROPOSED SCHEME**

The Housing Services Business Manager submitted an exempt from publication appendix (previously circulated and now appended) to the joint report referred to in minute 20.

Resolved that the information be noted.

### **33. OPTIONS FOR 2 HRA PROPERTIES – 1 VACANT SHOP AND 1 TENANTED HOUSE**

The Housing Services Business Manager submitted an exempt from publication appendix (previously circulated and now appended) to the joint report referred to in minute 22.

Resolved that the information be noted.

### **34. SALE OF 68 CHARLES STREET**

The Housing Services Business Manager submitted an exempt from publication appendix (previously circulated and now appended) to the joint report referred to in minute 23.

Resolved that the information be noted.

The meeting began at 9.15 am and ended at 1.05 pm.