

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Monday 16 April 2007

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Goddard (Chair), Rundle (Vice-Chair), Armitage, Malik, Sellwood, Tall and van Zyl.

OFFICERS PRESENT FOR THE WHOLE OF THE MEETING: Brian Dinsdale (Interim Chief Executive), Sharon Cosgrove, Mark Luntley and Michael Lawrence (Strategic Directors), Sue Shutter (Human Resources Business Manager), Jeremy Thomas and Brenda Lammin (Legal and Democratic Services Business Unit).

OFFICERS PRESENT FOR PART OF THE MEETING: Pat Jones, Andrew Davies and Alan Brown (Strategy and Review Business Unit), Lyn Lawrence, Matthew Bates and Mark Jaggard (Planning Services Business Unit), John Hill (Built Environment Business Manager), Paul Einon (City Works Business Unit), Graham Stratford and Dave Scholes (Community Housing Business Unit), Paul Warters and Paul Wilding (Revenues and Benefits Business Unit), Rob Sproule (Business Systems Business Manager), Sarah Fogden and John Kulasek (Financial and Asset Management Business Unit) and Louisa Dean (Media and Communications).

304. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bance and Fooks.

305. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

306. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Jack Richens, Chair of the Oxford Wheels Project (OWP) asked the following question in accordance with Procedure Rule 13(iii): -

The OWP's research into skateboarding trends and potential sites in Oxford has spanned over a decade and we have concluded that there is a need for adequate wheeled sports provision that is not being met.

Would the Executive Board agree that meeting this would benefit the mental, physical health and well-being of many residents from all over the city, particularly the 'hard to reach' age groups who need somewhere safe to ride their boards and bikes?

Response from Councillor Armitage (Healthier Environment Portfolio Holder)

I acknowledge the need for the provision of such facilities in Oxford and personally regret the decision taken by the Cowley Area Committee to not allow it on the Cowley Marsh site. I can confirm that the provision of a wheels park is included in the Council's Leisure Strategy. Also I would like to thank Jack Richens and others from the OWP for working with the Council to try and identify a suitable site.

307. ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION – TOWPATH CONDITIONS

The Board considered a recommendation of the Environment Scrutiny Committee (previously circulated and now appended) relating to a report of the Strategic Director, Physical Environment (also appended) together with comments from officers and the Cleaner City Portfolio Folder. The Board also considered the comments of Councillor Phelps (Chair of the Environment Scrutiny Committee).

Resolved to note that: -

- (1) Oxford City Council was seeking to work closely with the County Council and others on improved co-ordination and planning of the repair, maintenance and management of the towpath;
- (2) the Portfolio Holder had agreed to ask for a risk assessment to be done;
- (3) the Strategic Director, Physical Environment, acknowledged that although the risk of danger was relatively small the consequences of those dangers were potentially calamitous and the risks were taken extremely seriously;
- (4) Oxford City Council did all that was possible to seek proper funding from the County Council for work carried out on the Thames Towpath under s42 of the Highways Act, but the reality was that the funding provided by the County Council often fell short of the levels that would allow the City Council to undertake full a full maintenance and restoration programme;
- (5) s42 works had not been suspended to allow urgent works funded by the County Council to be carried out on the towpath.

308. FINANCE SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION – JOB EVALUATION AND SINGLE STATUS

The Finance Scrutiny Committee submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved that the recommendations of the Finance Scrutiny be accepted in full.

309. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS (SPD) ON PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

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

Resolved that Council be RECOMMENDED to: -

- (1) adopt the Supplementary Planning Documents on Planning Obligations;
- (2) authorise the Planning Policy Manager to make any necessary editorial corrections.

310. DRAFT TELECOMMUNICATIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

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

Resolved that: -

- (1) the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Telecommunications be approved for formal public consultation;
- (2) the Planning Policy Manager be authorised to alter the text of the draft SPD before publication for consultation and to make any necessary editorial corrections.

311. LEISURE BEST VALUE REVIEW

This item was withdrawn.

312. BUILDING REGULATION CHARGES

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

Resolved that the revised charges, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved with effect from 1 May 2007.

313. PURCHASE OF CITY WORKS VEHICLES – MAJOR PROJECT APPROVAL

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

Resolved that Major Project Approval be given for the purchase of replacement vehicles in 2007/08, as set out in the report, noting that Council had agreed a

capital budget of £2,877,700 for this purpose on 12 February 2007.

314. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE ALLOCATIONS SCHEME INCLUDING THE INTRODUCTION OF CHOICE BASED LETTINGS

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

Resolved that:

- (1) Council be RECOMMENDED to : -
 - (a) approve the adoption of the new Allocation Scheme (Appendix 1 to the report) to introduce banding as the method of determining priority;
 - (b) authorise the Community Housing Business Manager to set the effective date for the Allocation Scheme at Appendix 1 on 1 July 2007 or within a period of one month of that date;
 - (c) approve the adoption of the new Allocation Scheme (Appendix 2 to the report) to introduce Choice Based Lettings;
 - (d) authorise the Community Housing Business Manager to set the effective date for the Allocation Scheme at Appendix 2 on 1 December 2007 or within a period of one month of that date;
- (3) the Community Housing Business Manager be authorised to make minor editorial changes to either scheme prior to Council agreeing them;
- (4) all political parties be encouraged to take part in round table discussions to clarify some of the points raised in the report and agree a common view on the proposals prior to the full Council meeting on 30 April 2007;
- (5) following adoption of the new allocations scheme by Council, officers be requested to prepare a summary briefing paper for all members on the changes, and organise a member briefing seminar prior to the implementation of the Choice Based Lettings scheme.

315. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2007-2010: POWER TO INCUR EXPENDITURE

The Head of Oxford City Homes submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved that: -

- (1) approval be given to the housing capital repairs programme, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;

- (2) Major Project Approval be given for the works contained in the report to bring the Council's housing stock up to Decent Homes standard;
- (3) approval be given to the capital spend on the works outlined in the report of up to: -

£ 9,900,000 for 2007/08;
£11,163,000 for 2008/09;
£11,340,000 for 2009/2010.

316. OPTIONS FOR HRA PREMISES IN IFFLEY ROAD

The Financial and Asset Management Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended). The Board also considered the recommendations of the Strategic Director, Housing, Health and Community, following consideration of the report by the Housing Advisory Board.

Resolved that: -

- (1) the property be sold on the open market as soon as full vacant possession has been achieved and the proceeds be allocated towards meeting the Decent Homes target;
- (2) a further report be submitted to the Board prior to disposal, in accordance with Contract Regulation 9.05.

(Councillor Sellwood asked for his vote against the above resolution to be recorded in the minutes.)

317. REVIEW OF CAPITA DEBT COLLECTION CONTRACT

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

Councillor Sellwood moved and Councillor Goddard seconded that the money allocated for extending the debt collection contract be used instead to employ 1.5 f.t.e. employees in house. The resolution was put to the vote but was not carried.

Resolved that: -

- (1) the debt collection contract be extended for a temporary period of up to 3 months whilst further quotes for a full 12 month contract are sought;
- (2) the Revenues and Benefits Business Manager and Strategic Director, Finance and corporate Services, be authorised to agree the future 12 month contract.

318. AUDIT COMMISSION ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER

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

Resolved that: -

- (1) the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter and the comments of the Audit and Governance Committee be noted;
- (2) the progress on the action plan in response to last year's Annual Audit and Inspection Letter be noted;
- (3) the action plan to address the key issues in this year's Annual Audit and Inspection Letter be adopted;
- (4) all staff be thanked for their hard work , which had made the improvements possible.

319. TARGET SETTING FOR 2007/08

The Interim Chief Executive submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved that the performance targets for 2007/08, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be agreed subject to:

- (1) amendment of the first line of the comments on BV084a (kilograms of household waste collected per head) to "Improve despite regional and national trends";
- (2) noting that further adjustments could be made to targets once the year end figures for 2006/07 were known, prior to publication in the Council's Best Value Performance Plan for 2007/08.

320. BIG OXFORD COMPUTING COMPANY LTD. CONTRACT

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

Resolved that: -

- (1) Major Project Approval be granted for the implementation and maintenance of the Council's external web site facility;
- (2) authorisation be given for the Council to enter into an appropriate agreement with the Big Oxford Computer Company Ltd to ensure ongoing maintenance of the web site facility.

321. HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY FRAMEWORK

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

Resolved that: -

- (1) the policies under review be noted and the policy framework, as set out in the Appendix to the report, be endorsed;
- (2) it be noted that the Human Resources Business Manager would provide the Leader with further information on policies that had been approved by the Board, clarifying whether or not they had in fact been implemented.

322. BUDGET SAVINGS 2007/08

The Financial and Asset Management Business Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended). The Board also considered the comments of the Finance Scrutiny Committee on the report.

Resolved that the report, and the comments of the Finance Scrutiny Committee, be noted.

323. UPDATE ON USING SYSTEMS THINKING TO IMPROVE OUR SERVICES

The Interim Chief Executive submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Resolved to note: -

- (1) the result of the restricted tender process and the decision made under delegated powers by the Chief Executive to appoint Vanguard Consulting as the Council's Systems Thinking partner;
- (2) the approach developed by the Strategic Management Board for the first Systems Thinking intervention;
- (3) the supporting activities to begin embedding the Systems Thinking approach and link this to the Chief Executive's action plan for the 2008/09 budget.

324. AREA COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services submitted recommendations from Area Committees.

Resolved that: -

- (1) further to a recommendation of the South East Area Committee on environmental enforcement it was agreed that enforcement action would be taken as a final resort whenever that was appropriate, but that other measures such as education and advice should and would be used first;
- (2) further to a recommendation from the Cowley Area Committee and comments from the East Area Parliament on proposals for a skate park at the Cowley Marsh Recreation Ground it was agreed to note that: -
 - it was part of the Council's Leisure Strategy to provide wheeled sports facilities in Oxford;
 - a great deal of work had been undertaken to identify possible sites across the city and the conclusion was that Cowley Marsh was the best option
 - a planning application was going to be submitted for a skate park facility at Cowley Marsh;
 - the application would be clear on the size and location of the facility;
 - following discussion between Environmental Health officers and independent consultants the proposals had been slightly amended to address concerns regarding noise and the planning application would set out an agreed view on noise issues;
 - there would be further public consultation as part of the planning application process.

325. PORTFOLIO HOLDER QUESTIONS

There were no such questions for the Board to consider.

326. DECISIONS TAKEN IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE COUNCIL

There were no such decisions for the Board to consider.

327. FUTURE ITEMS

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a list (previously circulated and now appended) of future agenda items.

Resolved that, although the item would remain on future agendas, the most recent forward plan would no longer be included because it was sent to all

members anyway and it was available to view at the Council offices and on the Council's web site.

328. MINUTES

Resolved that: -

- (1) the minutes (previously circulated) of meetings of the Board held on 19 March 2007, as amended, be approved as a correct record;
- (2) further to minute 275 on Grants to Voluntary and Community Organisations, the Neighbourhood Renewal Business Manager be asked to circulate the terms agreed with the Oxfordshire Chinese Community and Advice Centre in respect of their lease/grant to all Board members for information.

329. 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 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)	330

330. OPTIONS FOR HRA PREMISES IN IFFLEY ROAD

The Financial and Asset Management Business Manager submitted an exempt from publication appendix (previously circulated and now appended) to the report referred to in minute 316.

Resolved that the information contained in the exempt from publication appendix be noted.

The meeting began at 9.00 am, the resolution to exclude press and public was taken at 11.09 am, and the meeting ended at 11.10 am.