

CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Wednesday 9 February 2011

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Price (Chair), Turner (Vice-Chair), Cook, Lygo, Malik, McManners, Smith, Tanner and Timbs.

130. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Bance.

131. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None made.

132. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

(1) Question by Nigel Gibson

- At the last CEB, it was resolved to ask the Head of Finance to provide Members with a briefing paper on VAT chargeable services. At the Cowley Area meeting on 2nd February, Councillor Timbs said that an explanation would be provided to demonstrate how the 0.2% increase in costs to Fusion caused by the VAT increase translated into a 2% increase in admission charge, 10 times higher than the actual cost incurred. Is this explanation going to be included in the briefing paper requested by CEB, and if so when will this be available to members of the public?
- Answer – The Leader – in relation to the briefing paper requested at the last City Executive Board meeting, this would be available in the public domain in the course of the next 24 hours.

(2) Question by Jane Alexander

- In the answer to question 5 in Public Questions at the last CEB in January, the first sentence of which states, “Nothing has changed since the previous reports to the CEB regarding the provision of swimming pools to the south of the City” there have been significant changes since the previous reports to CEB, including the independent assessment of the carbon footprint of the Council’s leisure centres. Temple Cowley Pools now has the lowest carbon footprint of any of the combined wet and dry leisure centres. Previous reports to CEB focused on how expensive a refurbishment of TCP would be principally because of the work done to reduce the carbon emissions. Since this argument is now demonstrably untrue simply through operational improvements by Fusion, will CEB:-

- (a) Acknowledge that there have been changes since previous reports, and
- (b) Reconsider keeping TCP and Blackbird Leys swimming pools open for less than £3m?

- Answer – Board Member, Leisure Partnerships – there had been a mistake in the independent assessment of carbon footprints. The assessment for Temple Cowley Pools and other leisure centres would be re-checked that week. In fact, Temple Cowley Pools had one of the largest carbon footprints.

(3) Question by Nigel Gibson

- Given the information available to the Save Temple Cowley Pools Action Group, the answer to question 6 in Public Questions at the last CEB in January is highly misleading. Can you provide detail concerning the ‘door knocking’ exercise to which you refer in providing ‘extensive’ support for a new pool? Specifically, who (and in what combinations if they were in groups) actually knocked on the doors of how many properties in which area, what questions were asked and what information was provided?
- Answer - Board Member, Leisure Partnerships – both he and the Board Member, Customer Services had door knocked in Pegasus Road. Some 30 properties had successfully been contacted. Most people had said they were happy with the proposals for a new swimming pool (having been shown an artist’s drawing in the Leys News). Concerns had been around loss of views, loss of trees and the impact of car parking. The Board Member, Customer Services said that on her regular canvassing at Blackbird Leys she had received generally positive feedback on the new pool proposal.

(4) Question by Nigel Gibson

- Given the information available to the Save Temple Cowley Pools Action Group, the answer to question 6 in Public Questions at the last CEB in January is highly misleading. You state that representative focus groups ran between May and November, implying a series of meetings. Can you please say exactly how many focus group meetings were held during that period?
- Answer - Board Member, Leisure Partnerships – four focus groups had been held, on 18 May, 10 June and 24 and 26 November. The feedback had been positive. Three open meetings, on 8 and 10 June and on 17 August had been held. There had also been meetings with Sport England and with the local amateur swimming association.

(5) Question by Estelle Packwood

- In calculating the unit cost of our clients, we wonder why no consideration has been given to:-

- (a) The translation and interpretation costs;

(b) The inefficient and old fashioned heating system of our old building;

(c) The high rent of our centre as compared with other advice centres, and

(d) The community element of our work as agreed when considering our tenancy agreement, as we do not have any grant for community work,

and in consultation with the Chinese community why such a tiny sample is being selected?

- Answer – The Leader – The position had been discussed with the Board Member, Regeneration and Community Development. Information and concerns had been passed to the Council's Grants Officer.

133. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORTS

(1) Budget 2011/12

The Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee's Budget Review Group submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) in response to the Budget for 2011/12.

Councillor Coulter spoke to the report.

Resolved:-

- (1) To approve Scrutiny recommendations 1 – 4 and 6 – 11 as qualified by the comments of the Corporate Director, Finance and Efficiency incorporated into the report;
- (2) Not to approve recommendation 5;
- (3) That comprehensive analysis and impact of the Budget as eventually approved by full Council would be carried out in September / October and, depending upon the outcome, decisions would be taken on the future shape of the Budget.

(2) Treasury Management Strategy 2011/12

The Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee's Budget Review Group submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) in response to the Treasury Management Strategy for 2011/12.

Councillor Coulter spoke to the report.

Resolved:-

- (1) To approve Scrutiny recommendations 1 – 7 as qualified by the comments of the Corporate Director, Finance and Efficiency incorporated into the report;

- (2) To thank Pat Jones (Principal Scrutiny Officer) and Anna Winship (Financial Accounting Manager) for their work in preparing the Strategy and facilitating the scrutiny of it.

134. BUDGET FOR 2011/12

The Head of Finance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended). Also circulated and now appended was a paper on amended fees and charges for local land charges searches to replace pages 5.43 and 5.44 in Appendix 5 to the Budget report.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Approve the amendments to the consultation budget as set out in Tables 3 (General Fund), 5 (Housing Revenue Account) and 6 (Capital Programme) in the main report;
- (2) RECOMMEND Council to approve:-
 - (a) The General Fund budget requirement of £25.778 million as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report and in so doing to agree a Council Tax freeze for 2011/12, thereby resulting in an average Band D Council Tax of £262.96;
 - (b) The Housing Revenue Account budget for 2011/12 as set out in Appendix 3 to the report and an average dwelling rent increase of 7.64% and an average garage rent increase of 2.6%;
 - (c) The Capital Programme for 2011/12 -2014-15 as set out in Appendix 4 to the report;
 - (d) The fees and charges schedule as set out in Appendix 5 to the report.

135. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Head of Finance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended). Also circulated and now appended was an amended table to paragraph 94 of the Treasury Management report.

Resolved:-

- (1) To RECOMMEND Council to:-
 - (a) Adopt and approve the Prudential Indicators and limits for 2011/12 to 2014/15 as set out in sections 71 – 96 of the report;

- (b) Approve the Minimum Revenue Provision statement (which sets out the Council's policy on repayment of debt) at paragraphs 13 - 16 of the report;
 - (c) Approve the Treasury Management Strategy for 2011/12, and the Treasury Prudential Indicators at paragraphs 18 – 46 of the report;
 - (d) Approve the Investment Strategy for 2011/12 contained in the Treasury Management Strategy, and the detailed investment criteria as set out in paragraphs 47 – 67 of, and appendices 2 and 3 to the report;
- (2) To ask the Head of Finance to prepare and circulate to all members a paper on the Public Sector Deposit Fund.

136. ROSE HILL REDEVELOPMENT SCHEME – AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNIT NUMBERS

The Head of Community Housing and Community Development submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved to:-

- (1) Agree to increase the scope of the original Rose Hill development project to include five additional affordable housing units;
- (2) Delegate to the Head of Corporate Assets the authority to negotiate the terms of, and to enter into, a Supplemental Agreement to the original Development Agreement with Oxford Citizens' Housing Association and Taylor Wimpey to deal with these additional units;
- (3) Agree to the issue of a Voluntary Transparency Notice under EU Procurement Regulations in regard to the additional housing;
- (4) Approve grant funding from the Council of a sum up to £100,000 to supplement funding from the Homes and Communities Agency and to delegate to the Head of Community Housing and Community Development the authority to enter in to an appropriate funding agreement on these terms with Oxford Citizens' Housing Association.

137. CORPORATE PLAN AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS 2011/12

The Head of Policy, Culture and Communications submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) To agree for the purposes of consultation the draft copy and targets for those sections of the Corporate Plan 2011-2015 that required extensive updating;

(2) at this stage to ask that the following parts of the draft copy be better emphasised:-

- (a) The Council's commitment to reducing the City's carbon footprint and , in particular, the work of Low Carbon Oxford;
- (b) Public Realm activities and working with others.

138. 83 – 97 ASHURST WAY – DISPOSAL

The Head of Corporate Assets submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved:-

- (1) To approve the freehold disposal of 83-97 Ashurst Way at a consideration as detailed in the confidential appendix attached to the report;
- (2) That in the event that the purchase did not proceed at the level detailed in the confidential appendix, to authorise the Head of Corporate Assets to proceed with a sale to an alternative bidder at or above the estimated open market value.

139. DEMOCRATIC CHANGES – PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) proposing changes to the democratic arrangements of the authority.

Councillor Armitage made proposals for comprehensive consultation upon the proposed changes. The Chief Executive referred in particular to the working up of the area forum proposals.

Resolved to agree the proposed changes to democratic arrangements as described in this report for the purpose of consultation.

140. FUTURE ITEMS

Nothing was raised under this item.

141. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

142. MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION

Resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the items in the exempt from publication part of the agenda in accordance with the provisions in Paragraph 21 (1)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2000 on the grounds that their presence could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in specific paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

Summary of business transacted by the Board after passing the resolution contained in minute 142

The Board received and noted the contents of a not for publication annex to the report at minute 138 (83 – 97 Ashurst Way – Disposal).

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 6.00 pm.

