

CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Wednesday 9 March 2011

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

144. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Smith.

145. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Tanner declared a personal interest in item 152 as he or close family members had associations with a number of the charities that were in receipt of Council grant funding.

Councillor Bance declared a personal interest in item 154 as she had recently accepted an appointment with one of the contractors detailed in the report.

Councillor Price declared a prejudicial interest in Item 160 as a Trustee of the Lake Street Playgroup.

146. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

1) Questions from Jane Alexander and Nigel Gibson

- (a) Over the course of several CEB meetings, the Save Temple Cowley Pools Campaign has repeatedly pointed out that circumstances have changed and asked that CEB revisits its rationale for a new 25m non-Olympic swimming pool in Blackbird Leys and the associated closure of the most energy-efficient wet/dry leisure centre in the city that is Temple Cowley Pools and Fitness Centre. Given that the costs of the proposed new pool are now over £9m, and that the Council's own finance department has supported a figure of £3m that will not only refurbish but also improve both Temple Cowley Leisure Centre and the existing Blackbird Leys Swimming Pool, how can the CEB sustain its view that the proposed new pool provides the best value for money for the city?
- (b) The council has not made its case to the public for closing Temple Cowley Leisure Centre, consistently choosing to ignore all the evidence provided by the Save Temple Cowley Pools Campaign. All the public meetings concerning this issue have overwhelmingly stated that taxpayers want Temple Cowley Pools to remain open. The Council has quoted knocking on 30 doors in Blackbird Leys as strong evidence that a new swimming pool is wanted there. Why is that considered as evidence but the petition to keep existing facilities been dismissed as irrelevant?

- (c) Has the Council knocked on 30 doors in Temple Cowley and asked if the residents support closing the existing leisure centre? If not, why not?
- (d) At CEB on 1st September 2010, it was resolved “that work is continued to ensure Temple Cowley residents retain good access to leisure facilities”. Can you please explain what work has been continued, and what will be done in future? Can you also please explain what work CEB is doing to ensure residents from other areas that regularly use Temple Cowley Leisure Centre, such as Headington, Rose Hill, Littlemore, Abingdon Road and Wood Farm also retain good access?
- (e) What work has been carried out to analyse the forecast usage at the proposed new swimming pool in Blackbird Leys to demonstrate which parts of Oxford the users will come from?
- (f) Council officers have stated unequivocally that the proposed new 25m non-Olympic swimming pool in Blackbird Leys will not suffer an increased number of weekend closures compared to those currently at Temple Cowley due to the elite Swimming Club holding galas. The Swimming Club has stated clearly that the proposed new pool will enable them to hold more galas more frequently. Who is correct, and why?
- (g) On the council’s website there is a page headed “Consultation on Leisure Facilities”. The information on there is misleading and biased, and does not provide members of the public with a balanced view of the issue. For example, stating that Temple Cowley Pools and Blackbird Leys Swimming Pool are “near the end of their operational lives” is simply incorrect, as both the Mace Study last year and the previous Condition Survey stated that Temple Cowley Leisure Centre is in “fair” condition and “midlife”. Will the CEB please ensure that this and all other misleading or incomplete information on this page and other related pages is corrected as soon as possible?

Composite Answer form Councillor Price

- All the relevant Executive Board reports can be obtained from the Council’s website. The figure of £8.5 million for the construction of the proposed new facility remains correct. The £3m sum quoted as the repair cost for the current pool building in Cowley would only meet the requirements of the maintenance backlog and would not produce an improved facility. This option was not adopted as it did not provide long term value for money. The proposed new pool facility would be constructed to contemporary standards and deliver very substantial running cost savings year on year.
- Consultation with the public has been extensive; there have a number of public meetings and mail outs to individual households, as well as discussions with particular stakeholder and other interest groups. The petition referred to had been discussed at a meeting of Council.

- The proposed location of the new facility adjacent to the Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre was selected as the preferred option because it is served by good quality bus and cycle routes and is easily accessible by car. It is also within easy walking distance of a very large local population in Blackbird Leys itself, Littlemore, and Cowley.
- It is too early to know which swimming galas may be held at the proposed new facility.

2) Question from Louise Webberley

You have a sub title in the report entitled Policy framework.

You refer to one of the six priorities as set out by the Oxford City Council performance framework for 2008-2011 which is to "improve the local environment, economy and quality of life". Whether you achieve this objective for residents in the Blackbird Leys area is highly questionable, given there is already an existing swimming pool in the area which could be refurbished at a significantly reduced cost to building a new one. With this in mind, can I ask how in the likely event that the Temple Cowley pool will be closed to fund the building of the new Blackbird Leys pool, how you intend to "improve the local environment, economy and quality of life" for a mother like myself on a low income with no transport? How will I be able to afford to maintain swimming sessions for my child, which I consider an important life skill? In addition, how will council maintain priority one of their performance framework to have "stronger and more inclusive communities" when you are proposing to take away a facility in Temple Cowley that serves to bring the community of Cowley together and is well used by families in a densely populated area?

Answer from Councillor Price

The proposed new facility in Blackbird Leys will be accessible by bus, cycle, on foot and by car. Clearly, it will be more or less accessible than the current pool for every individual across the City, depending on their place of residence and choice of transport.

3) Question from Barbara Gatehouse on behalf of the Oxfordshire Chinese Community and Advice Centre

If the City Council can identify some funding now or later in the year, is it possible to give OCCAC more funding?

So far the grant allocated to OCCAC from the County Council and the Vale of White Horse District Council is just sufficient to provide bilingual advice service for 1 day only, including outreach visitation to different parts of the County.

OCCAC is applying to the Oxfordshire County Council Big Society Fund, as suggested by Councillor Bance and the officers. It seems that the nearest category we can apply for funding is related to "Day Opportunities for Older People", and does not directly relate to bilingual advice service.

OCCAC has to make a decision in the next few weeks regarding redundancies and also has to inform the non-English speaking Chinese through our quarterly newsletters regarding the Advice Centre's opening hours.

Is it possible to let us know what assistance the City Council or officers can give us?

Are there any staff who can speak Mandarin, Cantonese and Hakka at the other advice centres?

Can the building which OCCAC uses be treated as a community centre, so that OCCAC can enjoy the same benefit with regard to rent as other community centres, and also the neighbouring organisations on the same site?

Answer from Councillor Bance

The Council does not foresee any additional money being made available in the next financial year. Councillors will be given a budget to spend in their wards. Organisations would be encouraged to apply for some of this funding once it becomes available.

The Citizens Advice Bureau has an arrangement with Oxford Brookes University to provide language and translation services which would be available to all in the City.

There would be a meeting between representatives of the centre and Council Officers to discuss what future assistance could be offered to the advice centre.

147. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORTS

(a) Financial Reporting Quarter 3

The Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee's Finance and Performance Panel submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) in response to the financial report for the third quarter.

Councillor Coulter spoke to the report.

Resolved to approve the recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel;

(b) Performance Reporting Quarter 3

The Value and Performance Scrutiny Committee's Finance and performance Panel submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) in response to the third quarter performance information.

Councillor Coulter spoke to the report.

Resolved:-

- (1) To approve the recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel
- (2) To note the response of the Board Member (appended to these minutes)

148. VISIT OXFORDSHIRE DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

The Head of City Development submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning the next steps required in order to confirm the relationship between Oxford City Council and Visit Oxfordshire.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Enter into a co-operation agreement for 12 years with the new not for profit company formed to promote tourism and cultural business across Oxfordshire;
- (2) Lease Council premises at 15 – 16 Broad Street to the new company for 10 years;
- (3) Retain the current staff as City Council employees but second them to the new company for 2 years;
- (4) Provide a grant to the new company in 2011/12 at a level that retains the City Council's net budget commitment at £160,000, reducing by 10% in subsequent years; and
- (5) Grant delegated authority to the Executive Director, City Regeneration after consultation with the Corporate Director, Finance and Efficiency to complete negotiations and to enter into an appropriate agreement with the new company.

149. SECURITY DOORS AND CONTROLLED ENTRY – TENDER APPROVALS

The Head of Corporate Assets submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) advising the Board of tenders received for the Installation of Controlled Entry Systems and Security Doors.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Accept the tender submitted by East Midlands Service Limited for Security Doors and Controlled Entry Installations; and
- (2) Accept the tender submitted by Baydale Control Systems Limited for the Controlled Entry Service contract

150. APPROVAL OF SUB-CONTRACTORS FOR HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUILDING WORKS

The Head of Direct Services submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) advising the Board of the tenders received for sub-contract building works.

Resolved to authorise the sub-contractors listed in the report (with the exception of scaffolding which would be re-tendered) to be engaged as necessary by Direct Services as necessary to undertake specialist and other works as the demand dictates, for a period of three years.

151. NORTHWAY AND COWLEY – SITES DISPOSAL

The Head of Corporate Assets submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) advising the Board of steps need for the development of sites at Dora Carr Close and Westlands Drive, Northway and Barns Road, Cowley and future provision of community facilities at these locations.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Approve the appointment of Greensquare Group as the Council's development partner; and
- (2) Enter into a Development Agreement and dispose of the freehold interest in the three sites at Dora Carr Close, Westlands Drive, Northway and Barns Road on the headline terms outlined in Appendix three to the report, and otherwise on detailed terms to be approved by the Head of Corporate Assets.

152. ANNUAL GRANTS REPORT

The Head of Housing and Communities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) proposing grant allocations for community and voluntary Groups for the coming financial year

Resolved to:-

- (1) Approve the recommendations for commissioning in 2011/2012, as set out in Appendix one to the report.
- (2) Approve the recommendations for 2011/2012 open bidding grant applications, as set out in Appendix two to the report.

153. OLD FIRE STATION DEVELOPMENT – UPDATE

The Head of Housing and Communities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) updating the Board on progress to date with the Old Fire Station development.

Resolved to note:-

- (1) The appointment of Kingerlee as the new contractor for the Old Fire Station refurbishment project;

- (2) The measures taken, in terms of communications with PWC, the administrators of ROK, and with the loss adjustor appointed by the bondsman, to seek to best protect the Council's interests; and
- (3) The updated programme plan and changes to key milestones in terms of both the capital and revenue programmes.

154. ROUGH SLEEPING GRANT ALLOCATION AND GRANTS ALLOCATION FOR HOMELESSNESS SERVICES

The Head of Housing and Communities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) proposing the allocation of the homelessness prevention grant and Oxford City grant for homelessness services.

Resolved:-

- (1) To RECOMMEND Council agree the allocation of the homelessness prevention grant for 2011 – 2012 as follows:-
 - a) Street Services and Reconnection Team (Crime Reduction Initiatives) - £238,218
 - b) Reconnection and Referral Co-ordinator (Under 25s) (Crime Reduction Initiatives) - £37,245
 - c) Reconnection Rent (O'Hanlon House) - £520
 - d) Severe Weather Beds - £10,000
 - e) 6 Subsidised Beds for Under 25s (Simon House) - £4,165
 - f) 6 Subsidised Beds for Under 25s (Lucy Faithful House) - £4,179
 - g) Mental Health Practitioner at Luther Street – £25,000
 - h) 2 Education, Training and Employment Workers (Aspire) - £60,519
 - i) 1 Specialist Alcohol Worker (O'Hanlon House) - £34,223
 - j) 1 Multiple Needs Hostel worker (Elmore Community Services) - £40,757
 - k) Service Broker – Big Issue - £18,750
 - l) Unallocated £568,424
- (2) To agree the allocation of Oxford City Council's homelessness grant budget for 2011-2011 as follows:-
 - a) O'Hanlon House Day Centre – homeless hostel for 25+, jointly commissioned with Supporting People - £133,432
 - b) One Foot Forward – homeless hostel for 16-25 year olds, jointly commissioned with Supporting People - £42,992
 - c) Elmore Community Services – Complex Needs Floating Support Service for clients in Oxford City Council temporary and permanent stock - £40,757
 - d) Elmore Community Services, Anti Social Behaviour Service – £20,000
 - e) The Gatehouse – café for the homeless - £9,502
 - f) Steppin' Stone – day centre providing emergency provision and meaningful activity - £55,000
 - g) Simon House Hostel – provision of respite beds at an abstinence based hostel - £11,596
 - h) Emmaus Oxford Furniture Store – recycling store attached to the Emmaus Community £25,000

i) Aspire Oxfordshire – social enterprise providing work opportunities for homeless and ex-homeless people - £104,000 (to be confirmed)

k) Unallocated – nil

- (3) To RECOMMEND Council to approve delegated authority to the Head of Service of Community Housing and Community Development to allocate the balance of the Homelessness Prevention Grant (£568,424) and any amendments to the homelessness grants budget

155. ANNUAL LETTINGS PLAN – ALLOCATION PERCENTAGES 2011/12

The Head of Housing and Communities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) proposing the allocation of social housing for the next financial year.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Note the performance against the Lettings Plan in Appendix 1 for 2010/11 (April – December); and
- (2) RECOMMEND to Council the proposed Annual Lettings Plan in Appendix 2 to the report for 2011/12

156. RISK MANAGEMENT – QUARTER 3

The Head of Finance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) summarising the changes to Corporate and Service risk registers.

Resolved to note that Risk registers were being regularly monitored, and actions to reduce risk were taking place.

157. FINANCIAL REPORTING – QUARTER 3

The Head of Finance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) setting out the forecast outturn position of Council budgets for the third quarter.

Resolved to note the report.

158. PERFORMANCE REPORTING – QUARTER 3

The Head of Business improvement submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) highlighting the Quarter 3 performance for 2010/11 in the areas of specific interest for the Board.

Resolved to note the Quarter 3 performance information and the actions being taken to address the measures that are currently off target.

159. OXFORD REGENERATION FRAMEWORK – ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Head of Policy, Culture and Communications submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) updating the Board with progress made on the Oxford City Regeneration Framework.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Note progress made on delivering against the Regeneration Framework Action Plan;
- (2) Approve the revised Action Plan for 2011-12;
- (3) Receive a further report in March 2012 on the 3 year review and refresh of the Regeneration Framework.

160. COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER OF PROPERTY – AT HINKSEY PARK TO LAKE STREET PLAYGROUP

Councillor Turner took the Chair as Councillor Price left the meeting for the following item because he had a prejudicial interest as a Trustee of the Lake Street Playgroup.

The Head of Corporate Assets submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) detailing a proposal to transfer an asset from Oxford City Council to the Trustees of Lake Street Playgroup.

Resolved to note the contents of the report and agree to the principle of a community asset transfer “pilot” to the Trustees of Lake Street Playgroup, and that the form of transfer be executed by way of a new lease at a nominal rent to the Trustees (final Terms and conditions to be agreed by the Head of Corporate Assets).

161. PROCUREMENT OF CONTRACTOR FOR NEW COMPETITION STANDARD SWIMMING POOL – BLACKBIRD LEYS

The Head of Business Improvement submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) detailing a report into the next steps towards procuring a contractor for the construction of the proposed new pool in Blackbird Leys.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Grant delegated authority to the Executive Director, City Services to select an appropriate lead contractor from the Improvement and Efficiency for the South East Framework to obtain detailed tender pricing for the construction of the competition standard pool; and
- (2) Approve expenditure of up to £15k for pre-contract work with the selected contractor to support the value engineering stage of the pool design and obtain final pricing for each element of the pool construction prior to the

final report to the City Executive Board advising of the full construction costs.

162. FUTURE ITEMS

Nothing was raised under this item.

163. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

164. 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 164

The Board received and noted the contents of not for publication appendices to the reports at items 5, 7, 8 and 10.

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 7.00 pm.

Third Quarter Performance Report – Recommendations from Value and Performance Committee

Responses to Recommendations

Recommendation 1

It is minuted at a previous Scrutiny Panel that we would go for EFLG accreditation in September 2011, moving it from March 2011. VAP Scrutiny were happy with that (and I think actually suggested it would be good idea to do so). We are on track to achieve September, currently completing a dry run assessment against the standard. The focus over the coming months will be measuring core service provision across equalities strands and focusing on some key improvements

Recommendation 2

We are currently producing our annual workforce equalities monitoring report (as required by the new Equalities Act) for publication in April. As part of this report we will pick up the new budget implications across the workforce. As you are aware we've been doing some good work on workforce equalities recently, including:

- Oxford Careers fest presence
- Job shop community coaching
- Mentoring OCVV students
- Caching in interview / confidence building on individual basis
- Mock interview day with Oxon MIND
- Work with Ranstatd re Access to Work support for disabled applicants / future employees

Recommendation 3

Performance in respect of NI 181 (Benefit Right Time Indicator), suffered at the start of the year due to a large backlog of work. In the summer of 2010 an Improvement Plan was put in place to first stabilise performance of Benefits Processing, and to embed resilience into the Service, to prevent the build up of any backlogs in the future.

This has seen monthly performance improve significantly since September 2010. New Claims were processed in 13.3 days in January, and Changes in Circumstances in 8.1 days, giving a figure of 8.8 days for NI 181 in that month. However due to the poor performance at the start of the year, the year to date (YTD) position has only improved incrementally each month. At the end of January the YTD figure for NI 181 was 15.4 days. This will continue to fall as weekly processing times are now in single figures for both New Claims and Changes in Circumstances. We are projecting that we will exceed the target of 14 days for the year.

The Service has improved by putting a lot of focus on Performance Management. All staff now have regular 121's where there is a significant focus on their performance. Team leaders also meet regular with the Benefits Manager and Head of Service, to discuss how they are keeping performance on track and what action might be needed to support staff who are not meeting their targets. A resilience contract is also in place to use a third party to help with processing in times of peak workload. This was put into effect in January to deal with the small backlog that occurred following the closure for Christmas. This contract will be maintained for the duration of the Fundamental Service Review, so that current performance levels will be maintained.

Recommendation 4

The VFM indicator was based on a non defined saving for BPI at the start of the year. The saving is being recorded as not achieved via the financial monitoring reports, however the saving will be delivered via the internal programme board benefits being monitored via the 2012 Board. Many of the savings start to come to fruition in 2011/12.

N1 179- This indicator is no longer reported to central government and the calculations that had to be done to provide a result (which could take up to a day a month) are not being done any longer. From 2011/12 we have two new Corporate Plan targets which will provide a VFM result

Cost of Council services per resident

Achievement of savings targets and delivering within budget.

Recommendation 5

In quarter 3, we experienced approximately 100% increase in calls in October at OCH due to the Blue Bin scheme being introduced, with nearly 4000 calls extra being answered with the same number of resources. So far in the last quarter, we have had a further increase in calls due to weather related incidents in January, and in February we have seen a reduction in call volume and an associated increase in the number of calls answered first time, resulting in an abandonment rate for February of 11.68% for both contact centres.

Recommendation 6

The procurement team has achieved the savings target however, some of the savings delivered sit in other service areas, hence the budget monitoring report shows as a different figure.

Recommendation 7

The number of online transactions being measured for this target is only a part of all of the online transactions that can be tracked within our current internet database. There are a larger number of online transactions taking place in relation to invoicing and payments not recorded in this total. The methodology for calculating the target is being reviewed and compared with how other authorities calculate it. We will be able to report back to the Scrutiny panel within the next 4 weeks.

Recommendation 8

The service is currently undergoing a complete restructure, which will result in a change of focus, moving from a performance reporting framework to supporting the delivery of performance improvement. The team is still in the process of being recruited to and the new Performance Improvement Officer commences with the Council on 21st March 2011. The Performance Improvement Manager's post is currently being advertised. The priority for the team is to first bring together the Council's four performance management databases into a single database, CorVu and set this up in time for April. This will enable the Council to have more accessible, user friendly and integrated reports available online. The system will also include risk management and hopefully finance information to facilitate dashboard reporting.

Once this is completed the team will be developing the wider performance improvement framework which will include the Council's approach to benchmarking, external challenge, fundamental service reviews etc and a rationale for developing and managing this approach to ensure that we can demonstrate ongoing continuous improvement and VFM.