

# MINUTES OF THE CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Thursday 24 March 2016

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**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillors Price (Leader), Turner (Deputy Leader), Kennedy, Lygo, Rowley, Sinclair and Tanner.

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cllr Jean Fooks

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Peter Sloman (Chief Executive), Tim Sadler (Executive Director Community Services), Nigel Kennedy (Head of Financial Services), Lindsay Cane (Legal Services Manager), Shaun Hatton (Highways and Engineering Manager) and Catherine Phythian (Committee Services Officer)

## **204. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Brown, Cllr Hollingsworth and Cllr Simm.

## **205. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **206. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

No public questions were received.

## **207. COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES ON ANY ITEM FOR DECISION ON THE BOARD'S AGENDA**

Councillor Fooks addressed the Board on agenda item 9. Her comments are included in the minutes for those items (212).

## **208. COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES ON NEIGHBOURHOOD ISSUES**

There were no councillor addresses on neighbourhood issues.

## **209. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORTS**

No scrutiny committee reports were submitted to the meeting.

## **210. OXFORD AND ABINGDON FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME**

The Executive Director Community Services submitted a report which sought authority to enter into an agreement with the Environment Agency in regard to funding the Oxford and Abingdon Flood Alleviation Scheme, and to seek project approval for the scheme.

The Executive Board Member, Corporate Strategy and Economic Development presented the report. He confirmed that there was already budget provision; that the scheme was due to start in 2018, subject to further evaluation by the Treasury and DEFRA; and that it was hoped that the preferred route would be identified by June 2016 and that this would then be subject to public consultation.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **Authorise** the Council's entry into the proposed agreement with the Environment Agency, as described in this report, under which the Council would play an active role in the establishment of the business case of the Oxford and Abingdon flood alleviation scheme, and provide funding to a capped sum.
2. **Grant project approval** for the Council's involvement in the Oxford and Abingdon flood alleviation scheme, as described in this report.

## **211. BID FOR REFURBISHMENT AND EXTENSION OF CAR PARK FOR A PUBLIC SECTOR BODY**

The Executive Director Community Services submitted a report which sought approval to enter into a contract for civil engineering works associated with the refurbishment and extension of a car park in Oxford for a public sector body.

The Executive Board Member, Finance, Corporate Asset Management and Public Health presented the report. The Board noted that this was a low risk project which drew on the Council's skills and resources and that there was a market opportunity for the Council to continue to develop its service offering in this area.

The Board congratulated the Highways and Engineering Manager and his team on their success in winning bids and delivering external work to a high standard.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **Authorise** the entering into a contract for civil engineering work referred to in this report.

2. **Note** that the contract will make a satisfactory contribution towards local overheads, as identified in the Not for Publication appendix.

## 212. DEVOLUTION UPDATE

The Assistant Chief Executive submitted a report which updated the Board on the proposals for devolution and sought authorisation for further joint working in support of those proposals.

The Executive Board Member, Corporate Strategy and Economic Development and the Chief Executive presented the report. The Board acknowledged that the overall objective of devolution was to stimulate the economy, deliver improved services and make savings for the benefit of the residents of Oxfordshire.

The Board noted that:

- there were sufficient resources to meet the additional call on budget
- that the details of the consultation process would be developed as part of the study by the external consultants, and that it would look at best practice models from other local authorities such as Dorset County Council
- that initial feedback from Government indicated that the City and District Council proposals for devolution needed to be more ambitious and innovative in terms of governance (e.g. possible alternatives developed by other local authorities included an elected mayor and/or fewer tiers)
- that the terms of reference for the study by the external consultants included the requirement to look at a range of alternative models and options, including cross-boundary arrangements
- that the proposals would be evaluated on the following criteria:
  - improved and sustainable strong leadership
  - value for money
  - improved service delivery
  - transition costs
  - savings

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **Agree** to work with the other District Councils and partners to further develop the initial unitary devolution proposals.
2. **Agree** that independent consultants should be jointly appointed by the Districts to undertake detailed work and a contribution of up to £50k be made to facilitate those studies.
3. **Recommend Council** to allocate the budget of £50k to support the initial study on viability and sustainability and governance; specialist work on collaboration around Children and Adult services; public consultation and involvement; and preparation of a revised Devolution Deal. This will be funded from reserves and balances.

## **213. ITEMS RAISED BY BOARD MEMBERS**

No items were raised by Board Members.

### **Matters Exempt from Publication**

The City Executive Board resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the item 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.

## **214. CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX: BID FOR REFURBISHMENT AND EXTENSION OF CAR PARK FOR A PUBLIC SECTOR BODY**

The Board received and **noted** the contents of the not for publication appendix to the report on the bid for refurbishment and extension of a car park for a public sector body (agenda item 8; minute 211).

**The meeting started at 4.00 pm and ended at 4.40 pm**