

# Minutes of a meeting of the CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD on Tuesday 13 February 2018

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## Committee members:

Councillor Brown (Chair)

Councillor Price

Councillor Hollingsworth

Councillor Sinclair

Councillor Tanner

Councillor Turner (Deputy Leader)

Councillor Smith (Deputy Leader)

Councillor Rowley

Councillor Hayes

Councillor Tidball

## Officers:

Gordon Mitchell, Chief Executive

Tim Sadler, Executive Director Sustainable City

Jackie Yates, Executive Director Organisational Development and Corporate Services

Anita Bradley, Monitoring Officer

Nigel Kennedy, Head of Financial Services

Andrew Brown, Committee and Member Services Manager

Richard Adams, Community Safety Service Manager

Tanya Bandekar, Service Manager Revenue & Benefits

Ian Brooke, Head of Community Services

Julia Tomkins, Grants & External Funding Officer

John Mitchell, Committee and Member Services Officer

## Also present:

Cllr Altaf-Khan

Cllr Fry

## Apologies:

Councillor Gant sent apologies in respect of item 7 on the agenda.

## 145. Declarations of Interest

None.

## 146. Addresses and Questions by Members of the Public

Two questions had been asked in advance by members of the public, responses to which are given as an attachment to these minutes.

## **147. Councillor Addresses on any item for decision on the Board's agenda**

Cllr Altaf-Khan addressed the Board in relation to the matter of proposed changes to the Headington car park charges (reference Item 8 on the Agenda: Budget 2018/19). He was concerned at the scale of the proposed increases. He said this concern was widely shared by members of the community and some Members. He understood that the decision about the charges had been informed, principally, by data derived from the City's car park in Summertown. He said that the proposals should be reconsidered, based on data from Headington car park and that there should be a further period of public consultation.

Cllr Hollingsworth, Board Member for Planning and Regulatory Services, explained that the proposals in relation to Headington were based, also, on physical observations of parking practice there which revealed sufficiently close parallels with the practice at Summertown to justify the proposed charges.

## **148. Councillor Addresses on Neighbourhood Issues**

None.

## **149. Items raised by Board Members**

None

## **150. Scrutiny Committee Reports**

The Committee and Member Services Manager spoke briefly to the following reports before the Board:

### Air Quality Annual Report

He said the Scrutiny Committee was grateful to the Board Member and officers for their contribution to the report and for the CEB response, via the Board Member, to its recommendations. He noted that this would, in future, be an annual report.

### Update of the Corporate Plan (item 13 of the agenda)

There was nothing to add to the report and the CEB's response before the Board

### Review of Community Protection Notices (item 16 of the agenda)

There was nothing to add to the report and the CEB's response before the Board

Cllr Fry, as Chair of the Scrutiny Finance Panel, spoke to the report before the Board. He was grateful to Board Members for having agreed to most of the Panel's recommendations. He was however disappointed that the Board Member had not felt able to agree that the allocation of additional resource for City Centre management was a priority. He was also disappointed that the opportunity would not be taken to move the price of garden waste collection immediately to its target price of £52 for 2018/19.

Cllr Turner, Board Member for Finance and Asset Management, said he was grateful to the Panel for its contribution to the budget process and for being able to submit its recommendations in time to be taken into account against a very tight timescale. In relation to City Centre management, there were other challenges that vied for attention but he recognised that it was a matter that might need to be returned to.

## **151. Budget 2018/2019**

The Head of Financial Services had submitted a report which presented the outcome of the budget consultation and seeks agreement of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2019-20 to 2021-22 and 2018-19 Budget for recommendation to Council.

Cllr Turner, Board Member for Finance and Asset Management, recorded his thanks to the Head of Financial Services and colleagues for their work in preparing this report. While there were, evidently, still some financial challenges, the City's overall financial position was enviable compared with many other authorities. There were many judgements and competing priorities to be balanced in coming to a view about where fees and charges should be increased and such decisions were never taken lightly. He went on to note some of the key features of the financial proposals. He drew particular attention to the Council's work in addressing the needs of those who are homeless or rough sleepers. Progress in relation to this was not just a function of the significant financial resource directed towards it but also of the Council having acted as a lead agency, pulling together other partners and providers to address the issue.

The Head of Financial Services reaffirmed the Board Member's positive reflection of the overall financial position but noted that a careful eye was being kept on potential future risks and challenges such as anticipated changes to the Business Rate Retention arrangements (100 – 75%) and the much delayed Fair Funding Review.

Cllr Turner noted that since the report had been written it had become apparent that the amount of Housing Benefit Administration Grant for 2018/19 was greater than anticipated to the tune of £193k. He therefore proposed an additional recommendation to the Board, that it should recommend to Council that the additional award of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction Scheme Administration Grant of £193k for 2018/19 is allocated as follows :

- i. Additional one off resources on the Housing Benefit Service - £100k
- ii. Homelessness reserve - £93 k

### **The City Executive Board resolved to:**

- 1) **Approve** the 2018-19 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account budgets and the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Financial Plan as set out in Appendices 1-10, noting:

- a) the Council's General Fund Budget Requirement of £23.369 million for 2018/19 and an increase in the Band D Council Tax of 2.99% or £8.67 per annum representing a Band D Council Tax of £298.86 per annum
  - b) the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2018/19 of £43.241 million and a reduction of 1% (£0.85/wk) in social dwelling rents from April 2018 giving a revised weekly average social rent of £104.58 as set out in Appendix 4
  - c) the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme as shown in Appendix 6
- 2) **Agree** the fees and charges shown in Appendix 7
- 3) **Delegate authority to** the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Board Member for Finance and Assets the decision to determine whether it is financially advantageous for the Council to enter into a Business Rates Distribution Agreement as referred to in paragraphs 12-14 below.
- 4) **Agree** to increase the long term empty property premium from 50% to 100% at the earliest opportunity so as to encourage long term empty properties back into use.
- 5) **Recommend** to Council that the additional award of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction Scheme Administration Grant of £193k for 2018/19 is allocated as follows :
- i. Additional one off resources on the Housing Benefit Service - £100k
  - ii. Homelessness reserve - £93 k
- 6) **Recommend** Council to accept the budget for 2018-19

## **152. Capital Strategy 2018/19**

The Head of Financial Services had submitted a report which presented the Capital Strategy 2018/19 – 2021/22 for approval.

Cllr Turner, Board Member for Finance and Asset Management, spoke briefly to the report. The updated Strategy included a small number of changes as referred to in the covering report.

The Chair was pleased to note the reference to major capital work investment in the Covered Market.

### **The City Executive Board resolved to:**

1. **Approve** the Capital Strategy attached at Appendix A to the report.

### **153. Treasury Management Strategy 2018/19**

The Head of Financial Services had submitted a report which presented the Treasury Management Strategy 2018/19 together with the Prudential Indicators for 2018/19 to 2021/22 for referral to Council.

Cllr Turner, Board Member for Finance and Asset Management, spoke briefly to the annual report noting that its contents and format were to a large extent driven by CIPFA requirements which did not always result in an elegant read. He drew attention to the few proposed changes, some of which were due to changes in CIPFA's Treasury Management Code of Practice. He noted that, where possible, investments were sought which would be beneficial to the City in their own right and not just financially.

**The City Executive Board resolved to recommend that Council approves:**

1. The Treasury Management Strategy 2018/19 as set out in paragraphs 7 to 43 and the Prudential Indicators for 2018/19 – 2021/22 as set out in Appendix 2;
2. The Borrowing Strategy at paragraphs 12 to 22;
3. The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement at paragraphs 23 to 24 which sets out the Council's policy on charging borrowing to the revenue account; and
4. The Investment Strategy for 2018/19 and investment criteria as set out in paragraphs 25 to 39 and Appendix 1.

### **154. National Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Relief Policy 2018-2022**

The Head of Financial Services had submitted a report seeking agreement to an updated National Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Relief Policy for 2018-2022.

The Service Manager for Revenue & Benefits, introduced the report which reflected a number of changes to the rate reliefs which the Council had implemented since 2015. These changes included removing Retail Relief, Long Term Empty Property Relief, New Build Empty Properties and Flooding Relief (all of which had been time limited). It was anticipated that 100% relief for public toilets will be able to be granted in the near future this is dependent on change to primary legislation. (It was confirmed after the meeting that the total rates payable in 2017/18 for the City's 12 public toilets, of which 9 are owned by the Council, is a little under £14k).

**The City Executive Board resolved to:**

1. **Approve** the updated National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) Discretionary Rate Relief policy as attached at Appendix 1 and;
2. **Agree** to grant 100% discretionary relief for Public toilets from 1/4/18 if the bar is lifted on giving rate relief to local authorities by then.

## **155. Grant Allocations to Community and Voluntary Organisations 2018/19**

The Head of Community Services had submitted a report proposing the allocation of grants to community and voluntary organisations through the Community Grants Programme.

Cllr Sinclair, Board Member for Culture and Communities, introduced the report which sought, among other things, to provide consistency and stability to the beneficiaries of grants through the move to three rather than annual allocations.

The Grant and External Funding Officer said that the annual open bidding process was in its final phase. The deadline for submission of bids had passed and those submitted would be reviewed the following week.

The Chair noted that Scrutiny Committee had welcomed the response to its recommendations about grant allocations.

Cllr Smith, Board Member for Leisure, Parks and Sport, noted the importance of robust monitoring given the move to three year allocations. The Grant and External Funding Officer confirmed that such monitoring would be in place.

### **The City Executive Board resolved to:**

1. **Approve** the recommendations for the commissioning programme as set out in Appendices 1 and 2;
2. **Delegate authority to** the Head of Community Services, in consultation with the Executive Members for Customer and Corporate Services and Culture and Communities, to approve the recommendations for applications received to the grants open bidding programme for the period of 2018-21 and allocate funding to art and culture organisations that apply for funding through this theme from April 2019; and
3. **Delegate authority to** the Executive Director for Organisational Development and Corporate Services in consultation with the Executive Members for Customer and Corporate Services and Culture and Communities to allocate the development fund in the Advice and Money Management commissioning theme for the period of 2018-21.

## **156. Update of the Corporate Plan 2018**

The Assistant Chief Executive had submitted a report seeking approval of the annual update of the Corporate Plan 2016-20.

Cllr Price Board Member for Corporate Strategy and Economic Development, introduced the report which provided a broad framework for the Council's activities and had provided an opportunity to 'tidy up' the Council's priorities.

### **The City Executive Board resolved to:**

1. **Approve** the Annual Update report on the Corporate Plan 2016-20, as set out in Annex 1;
2. **Delegate authority to** the Assistant Chief Executive to make minor textual/formatting changes to the Annual Update Report in advance of formal publication; and
3. **Delegate authority for** the Assistant Chief Executive to add new success measures to the Annual Update Report (point 13) once agreed with Service Heads and the Chief Executive.

### **157.Children & Young People's Strategy 2018-2023**

The Head of Community Services had submitted a report seeking agreement to the commencement of the consultation process for the draft Children & Young People's Strategy 2018-2023.

Cllr Tidball, Board Member for Young People, Schools and Public Health, introduced the report. The Strategy would be underpinned by three principles:

1. Preventative led provision;
2. Equality, inclusion and engagement of young people; and
3. Facilitating effective partnership working

The Strategy sought to focus on three key outcomes for Children and Young People (CYP), that they should be healthy and safe; connected; and productive.

She noted that whereas the County Council's role in relation to CYP was now effectively limited to its statutory obligations, the City provided open access opportunities.

Central to the Strategy was the introduction of a 'zoning' methodology which focuses on partners working together on shared outcomes across a locality area. This aspect of the Strategy offered some opportunities for co-operation with the County Council and it was proposed to work with the County to set up a pilot impact zone in the City to focus on improving the outcomes for CYP in that locality.

In discussion there was acknowledgement of the need to take account of those CYP who may cross the City boundary for one reason or another. In relation to this point, Cllr Sinclair, Board Member for Culture and Communities, noted that many CYP and volunteers who engage with City activities come from outside the City. The critical importance to the Strategy of partnership with others was noted as was the regret at the County's significant diminution of non-statutory support for CYP in the City such as the loss of Children's Centres and Youth Clubs.

There was widespread acknowledgment of the importance of the health element of the partnership and the particularly acute pressures faced by the CAMHS service. This

concern was raised by Cllr Tidball at every opportunity at both the Children's Trust and Health & Wellbeing Board.

Members commended the Strategy as an excellent piece of work.

**The City Executive Board resolved to:**

1. **Agree** the pre consultation version of the Children & Young People's Strategy; and
2. **Agree** to commence the consultation process on the draft Children & Young People's Strategy.

**158. Use of Receipts from the Sale of 156 Walton Street (HRA assets)**

The Head of Housing Services had submitted a report seeking approval for the receipt from the disposal of a HRA property to be used for the purpose of purchasing larger properties to address overcrowding issues.

Cllr Rowley, Board Member for Housing, introduced the report. He was pleased to report that a bid of over £1m had been accepted for the property. This receipt could now be reinvested, via the HRA, to purchase one or two properties for larger households for which there was a great need.

**The City Executive Board resolved to:**

1. **Recommend** that full Council include an additional budget in the HRA capital programme of £1,035,000 for the acquisition of social housing properties from the open market, funded by the receipt from the sale of 156 Walton Street; and
2. **Grant delegated authority** to the Head of Housing Services to negotiate and agree such transactions, including any works required to any acquisitions, to maximise the benefit of the receipt.

**159. Review of use of Community Protection Notices**

The Executive Director Sustainable City had submitted a report which detailed the findings of the review into the application of antisocial behaviour enforcement, with particular reference to people thought to be rough sleeping, and to review the Council's underpinning enforcement policies.

Cllr Hayes, Board Member for Community Safety reminded the Board that the report resulted from a Council motion in October 2017 requesting the CEB to review the process of issuing Community Protection Notices. A senior officer review of the 5 cases in 2016 and 2017 against rough sleepers found that in all cases the Council's policies in respect of these matters had been followed appropriately. The report before the Board had been preceded by cross-party talks. He was pleased that Scrutiny Committee had accepted the report and had been pleased to respond positively to its two recommendations. He went on to reaffirm the Council's absolute commitment, as a caring and compassionate authority, never to act in a punitive way against people by simple virtue of the fact of their being either homeless or rough sleepers.

Cllr Rowley, Board Member for Housing, echoed the comments of Cllr Hayes and drew attention to the fact that the Council's approach required officers to take the lowest form of intervention possible when dealing with such cases.

Cllr Price, Board Member for Corporate Strategy and Economic Development, thought this was a good and thorough report but it would be helpful to see greater clarity about when the recommendations would be taken forward and completed and that Members should have the opportunity to engage with the subsequent proposals. Cllr Hayes confirmed that there would be such opportunities and the Executive Director for the Sustainable City confirmed that the necessary work was already well underway.

**The City Executive Board resolved to:**

1. **Endorse** the report, including the findings of the Community Protection Notice Review and Cross-Party Panel; and
2. **Authorise** the Head of Community Services, in consultation with the Board Member for Community Safety, to update the Antisocial Behaviour Policy and Antisocial Behaviour Procedures in line with the recommendations made.

## **160. Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme**

The Executive Director, Sustainable City had submitted a report which presented for approval the proposed land disposals and discounts in relation to the Council's commitment of up to £1,000,000 in-kind contributions from land disposal and compensation foregone to facilitate the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme.

Cllr Price, Cllr Price, Board Member for Corporate Strategy and Economic Development, introduced the report noting that it was the 'last bit of the jigsaw' to facilitate the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme.

It was noted that the funding gap recorded in the report had now been met.

Cllr Hollingsworth noted the desirability of ensuring that when land was disposed of for the scheme, every effort should be made to secure access for cyclists. It was recognised that while this could be easily achieved in relation to land owned by the Council it could not necessarily be achieved in relation to land in private ownership. It was agreed that this aspiration should be embedded in the scheme as it proceeds.

Cllr Tanner asked for thanks to be recorded for the work of Cllr Price and officers in bringing the project to this important stage.

**The City Executive Board resolved to:**

1. **Approve** the disposal of land (as identified in Appendix 1) to the Environment Agency for the purposes of the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme. Such disposal to be below market value but subject to receipt of appropriate consents and the inclusion of appropriate restrictive covenants; with the Council also foregoing any land

compensation in relation to the severance to the retained land. The values of the land identified in Appendix 1 being set out in Appendix 2;

2. **Approve** the total net in-kind contribution to be made by the Council to the Environment Agency of £450,500;
3. **Approve** the use of the Council's powers under the Local Government Act 1972 and General Disposal Consent 2003 to dispose of the land identified in Appendix 1 below market value; and
4. **Grant delegated authority** to the Executive Director - Sustainable City, in consultation with the Heads of Finance and Law and Governance, to enter into appropriate legal agreements with Environment Agency to give effect to the above matters.

## **161. Minutes**

The Board resolved to APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 23 January as a true and accurate record subject to the correction of a typographical error.

## **162. Dates of Future Meetings**

The next meetings are scheduled for :

- 20 March
- 17 April

All meetings start at 5pm

## **163. Matters Exempt from Publication**

If the Board wishes to exclude the press and the public from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the exempt from publication part of the agenda, it will be necessary for the Board to pass a resolution in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 21(1)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 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.

The Board may maintain the exemption if and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**164. Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme - confidential appendices**

These papers were not discussed at the meeting.

**The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 6.40 pm**

**Chair .....**

**Date: Tuesday 20 March 2018**

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**Oxford City Executive Board  
13 February 2018**

**Questions from members of the public**

1. Re proposed Headington Car Park Charges:

Question from Mrs Stefanie Garden:

*“Over 500 people objected to the original proposals - why hasn't there been further public consultation now that you are planning to change the number of tariff bands as well as the charges?”*

Response from Cllr Alex Hollingsworth, Board Member for Planning and Regulatory Services:

*Local Authorities are able to alter parking charges in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, which allows the change of tariffs without formal consultation. However, it is important to the City Council that we do consult on proposed changes, and to adjust the proposals in the light of comments received, which is what we have done in this case.*

2. Re proposed Headington Car Park Charges:

Question from Mr Guy Garden:

*What impact assessment has been made on the vitality of small businesses in Headington - won't these parking increases meet with resistance from the public who may choose to shop or do business elsewhere resulting in business closure with a loss of rates?*

Response from Cllr Alex Hollingsworth, Board Member for Planning and Regulatory Services:

*The City Council has operated off-street car parks for many years and during this time has gained valuable experience in setting tariffs to balance different objectives; careful and detailed analysis of proposed tariff structures is undertaken by the parking service with support from finance colleagues.*

*In respect of the Headington tariff structure, analysis shows that during the last three years usage at this site was broadly in line with Summertown car park, which has had separate bands for 0-1 hours and 1-2 hours. This was not unexpected considering the demographics of both locations are similar and the retail offering is comparable. Officers therefore concluded that if a similar tariff structure was introduced at Headington car park, usage would remain broadly similar.*

*With regard to your specific concern regarding the parking charges and displacement to other locations, our experience does not suggest that this would be a significant factor. Data shows that the majority of usage is condensed within the first few tariff bands. However, we acknowledge that each car park is used for different purposes and are aware that the proposal may encourage some customers to utilise public transport. Therefore some resistance was factored into the financial assessment.*

*Therefore while the City Council accepts that any increase may meet some initial resistance, the proposed tariff structure for Headington will be identical to that at Summertown and at Union Street, and therefore it is not envisaged there will be displacement to these sites as opposed to Headington.*

*Parking tariffs are set at a level that manages the available capacity, achieves regular a turnover of vehicles to ensure that customers for local businesses have some to park, and which assists in recovering costs associated with providing these facilities. If the level of parking exceeds supply it is usually because we have not priced it effectively. If parking charges are too low our experience is that that parking spaces are occupied by employees which prevents customers from making full use of the car park.*

*Headington, like other district centres, is well served by public transport options, and is in easy walking and cycling distance for many potential customers. Car parking provides an important option for some customers, but it is not the only option, and should be seen in the context of a achieving a balance between different modes of transport. The City Council's assessment is, therefore, that the proposed changes to parking tariffs in Headington will not have a negative impact on businesses.*

13 February 2018