

CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Wednesday 12 June 2013

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Price (Leader), Brown, Turner (Deputy Leader), Clack, Kennedy, Lygo, Rowley and Seamons.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Peter Sloman (Chief Executive), Helen Bishop (Head of Customer Services), Lindsay Cane (Law and Governance), Michael Crofton-Briggs (Head of City Development), Richard Hawkes (Corporate Asset Manager), Nigel Kennedy (Head of Finance), Jane Lubbock (Head of Business Improvement and Technology), Lois Stock (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer) and Jackie Yates (Executive Director Organisational Development and Corporate Services)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Cook and Tanner.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

4. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Scrutiny Committee submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning Discretionary Housing Payments. Councillor Mark Mills, Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, presented the report to the Board and provided some background to it.

Resolved that this would be discussed under the relevant agenda item (minute 10 refers)

5. COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES ON ANY ITEM FOR DECISION ON THE BOARD'S AGENDA

There were no Councillor Addresses

6. END OF YEAR INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE REPORT 2012 - 2013

The Head of Finance and the Head of Business Improvement and Technology submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) that updated the Board on matters of finance, risk and performance as at 31st March 2013.

Councillor Ed Turner (Board Member for Finance and Efficiency) presented the report and provided some background and context.

He gave further details of the temporary car parking arrangements at Westgate. This was a key scheme for the City, and, should it not proceed, there would be a financial liability for the Council. Therefore, it was wise to set aside funds to cover this. The Council would revisit the Medium Term Financial Strategy later in the summer. It was expecting a 12.5% cut in the revenue support grant; which would clearly hit finance hard. Councillor Turner acknowledged that there were some performance challenges, not least that the City had not qualified for "Bellwin" funding following flooding; however steps were being taken to address these. He commended the report to the Board.

Councillor Bob Price (Leader) noted the improvements in the budget and performance monitoring processes, and thanked officers for all their hard work to achieve this.

Councillor Jean Fooks (Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group) attended the meeting and addressed the Board on this subject.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Note the financial outturn and performance of the Council for the year 2012/13 and also the risks outstanding at 31st March 2013;
- (2) Agree the transfer to earmarked reserves of unspent budgets detailed in paragraph 7 of the report to be used in 2013/14 and beyond;
- (3) Agree the transfer to earmarked reserves from the HRA as detailed in paragraph 10 of the report, and recommend to Council the approval of appropriate budgets in 2013/14 and beyond for these items.

7. CORPORATE DEBT MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Head of Finance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) seeking the approval and formal adoption of the Oxford City Council Corporate Debt Management Policy.

Councillor Ed Turner presented the report to the Board. He commended officers for their hard work on investigating how the Council can better manage its debts. Greater use of direct debit is being encouraged, as this saves the Council money and helps prevent debts from mounting out of control.

The Board noted that commercial tenants were not obliged to use direct debits, but, when leases are up for renewal, they are strongly encouraged to do so.

Resolved to approve the Corporate Management Policy and associated Action Plan, as set out in Appendices A and B of the report.

8. DATA PROTECTION POLICY REFRESH

The Head of Business Improvement and Technology submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) seeking the approval of the Board for a new Data Protection Policy to reflect the Data Protection Act amendments in 2008. Jane Lubbock presented the report to the Board and explained the purpose of the proposed policy.

Councillor Price observed that Councillors needed clear instructions about the data that they held, and how it should be treated. The Board would welcome the appropriate registration of all Members as soon as possible, and the Head of Law and Governance was urged to arrange this.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Approve the Data Protection;
- (2) Note the new Data Protection guidance framework.

9. OXPENS DRAFT MASTERPLAN - PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Head of City Development submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) seeking approval for public consultation the draft Oxpens Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Michael Crofton Briggs introduced the report and provided the background to it.

The Board noted that this document would go out for public consultation, and would return to CEB (and ultimately Council) towards the end of the year.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Approve the Draft Oxpens Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document for public consultation;
- (2) Approve the Draft Oxpens Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document as a material consideration in determining planning applications;
- (3) Endorse the accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Combined Screening and Scoping Report-Appendix 1a of the report;
- (4) Authorise the Head of City Development to make any necessary editorial corrections to the document prior to publication, in consultation with the Board Member.

10. DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS POLICY

The Head of Customer Services submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) seeking approval for the request for additional Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) funding, and approval for the new Discretionary Housing Payments Policy.

Councillor Susan Brown and Helen Bishop presented the report to the Board and provided further background to it. It was important to be aware that the DHP fund of £525,000 was a relatively small amount and that the aim was to help people move towards a more sustainable solution for their financial issues. DHP was intended as a temporary measure. The Council had to administer what was a national policy at a local level. It was not inappropriate to ask people to take some steps to reduce their reliance on DHP, and such steps would of necessity be tailored towards individual circumstances.

Councillors Sam Hollick and Van Coulter attended the meeting, and addressed the Board on this matter.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Approve the revised Discretionary Housing Payment policy laid out in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (2) Delegate authority to the Head of Customer Services to vary the amount and duration of Discretionary Housing Payment awards in line with changing demand;
- (3) Agree the following recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee:-
 - (a) To organise a general campaign of clear advice through as many agencies, partnerships and offices as possible, making clear the temporary nature of DHP, and the requirements to engage in more sustainable solutions;
 - (b) To keep the DHP Policy under review and in particular to revisit it once regulations on further Welfare Reform are clear;
 - (c) For the Scrutiny Committee to be included in the monitoring arrangements for this policy in both financial and outcome terms. To see this at the September Scrutiny Committee;
- (4) Amend (in italics below) and agree the following recommendation from the Scrutiny Committee;
 - (d) To extend the current outreach work to include benefit take-up to maximise benefits to current and potential claimants *once the changes to the welfare system are fully known*

11. OUTSIDE BODIES - APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES 2013/14

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning the Council's appointments to outside and other bodies for 2013/14.

Councillor Jean Fooks attended the meeting and addressed the Board on this subject.

Resolved to:-

(1) Retain Council representatives on:-

- Alice Smith Trust and Sarah Nowell Educational Trust
- Oxfordshire Ethnic Minorities Enterprise Unit (OEMEU)
- Florence Park Community Association.
- Oxford Asian Cultural Association (*with reduced membership to 2 representatives*).

(2) Reduce Council representation to one representative on the following bodies:-

- Headington Parish Charity
- Katherine Rawson Trust
- Parochial Charities of St Clements
- South Oxford Adventure Playground

(3) Delete the following appointment because the group is inactive:-

- Oxford City Local Area Police Board

(4) Delete members' involvement from the following bodies, because the Council's interests are not served:-

- National Association of British Market Authorities
- Environmental Protection UK
- Tourism South East
- The Pathways Project.

(5) Make appointments to outside bodies as shown in Appendix 3 of the report, and appoint Councillor Kennedy to the Police and Crime Panel.

12. AFFORDABLE HOMES PROGRAMME - AWARD OF MAIN CONTRACT

The Regeneration and Major Projects Manager submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) concerning the appointment of the main contractor for the Affordable Homes Programme 2015.

Councillor Scott Seamons presented the report to the Board. He urged the Board to consider bringing forward more sites, and going beyond Environmental Code 4 for the sites, as the budget allowed.

Richard Hawkes (Corporate Asset Manager) informed the Board that 10 planning applications would shortly be submitted and that it was expected that these would be considered by the relevant Committees in August/September.

Michael Crofton Briggs (Head of City Development) indicated that he would be happy to provide an informative briefing to members of the Planning Committee/s before the applications were considered.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Authorise the Executive Director for Regeneration and Housing to select the final sites for the 112-114 new homes to be built on (in consultation with the Portfolio Holder);
- (2) Agree the Cost Plan in Exempt Information Annex 3 of the report;
- (3) Authorise the Executive Director for Regeneration and Housing to let the main build contract and any subsequent "call off" contracts where total build costs (including contingencies) are equal to the Cost Plan; and
- (4) Authorise the Executive Director for Regeneration and Housing to agree any cost overruns that can be contained within the overall budget envelope of the Affordable Homes Programme to be certified as such by the Project Manager

13. MINUTES

Resolved to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 10th and 22nd April and 7th May 2013.

14. FUTURE ITEMS

Nothing was raised under this item.

15. 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.

Paragraph 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

16. AFFORDABLE HOMES PROGRAMME - AWARD OF MAIN CONTRACT

The Regeneration and Major Projects Manager submitted confidential appendices containing not for publication information on certain financial aspects of the Affordable Homes Programme (minute 12 refers)

Summary of business transacted by the Board after passing the resolution contained in minute 12

The Board received and noted the contents of the not for publication appendices to the reports at agenda item 12 (minute 12 refers).

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 6.20 pm

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