

# Agenda Item 16

## CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Wednesday 12 February 2014

**COUNCILLORS PRESENT:** Councillors Price (Leader), Turner (Deputy Leader), Brown, Cook, Curran, Kennedy, Lygo, Rowley, Seamons and Tanner.

### 128. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

### 129. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received

### 130. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions were submitted.

### 131. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORTS

The following reports from Scrutiny were submitted and are appended to the relevant minutes.

- Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014/15 to 2017/18 and 2014/15 Budget
- Treasury Management Strategy 2014/15
- Covered Market Strategy
- Educational Attainment Programme – Progress

The reports were taken with this minute but for completeness are attached and referred to under the related minutes 133, 135, 137 and 142.

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

With the agreement of the Chair, Councillors Campbell, Fooks, Hollick and Simmons addressed the Board on the subject of minute 133 (Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014/15 to 2017/18 and 2014/15 Budget), minute 135 (Treasury Management Strategy), minute 137(Covered Market Strategy), minute 138 (Town Hall Strategy) and minute 142 (Educational Attainment Programme – Progress). A summary of the addresses is contained in the relevant minutes.

### **133. BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2014/15 TO 2017/18 AND 2014/15 BUDGET**

The Head of Finance submitted a report (the main report) (previously circulated, now appended) and a supplementary report (also previously circulated, now appended). The Board also had before it a Scrutiny report (previously circulated, now appended). With the agreement of the Chair, Councillor Simmons addressed the meeting and spoke to the Scrutiny report and generally.

Resolved:-

(1) To RECOMMEND Council to approve:-

- (a) The Council's General Fund Budget Requirement of £24.080 million for 2014/15 and an increase in the Band D Council Tax of 1.99% or £5.34 per annum as set out in Table 1 of the supplementary report of the Head of Finance, representing a Band D Council Tax of £273.53 per annum;
- (b) The continuance of the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme (formerly Council Tax Benefit) as referred to in paragraph 44 of the main report of the Head of Finance;
- (c) The Housing Revenue Account budget for 2014/15 as set out in Appendix 4 to the main report and an increase in average dwelling rent of 5.42% representing £5.25 per week and taking the annual average rent to £102.08 as set out in Appendix 5 to the main report;
- (d) The Capital Programme for 2014/15 -2017-18 as set out in Appendix 6 to the main report;
- (e) The Fees and Charges Schedule that forms Appendix 7 to the main report;
- (f) The changes to the level of exemptions and discounts on empty homes and unoccupied properties as outlined in paragraph 44 of the main report;

(2) To adopt a retail relief scheme for business rates on the terms set out in paragraph 19 of the main report and to delegate the authority to administer the Retail Relief Scheme to the Head of Customer Services in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer;

(3) On the recommendations from Scrutiny:-

- a) To agree recommendation 1, 3, 4, 6, 11 and 13;
- b) Not to agree recommendations 5, 7, 9 (noting that the supplementary report of the Head of Finance dealt with the Government's announcement on 'excessive council tax' levels and the setting of the Council Tax), 10 and 12, all for the reasons set out in the Board Member's response as contained in the Scrutiny report;

- c) On the five parts of recommendation 2, to agree parts 2, 4 and 5; on part 3 to note that an additional £25,000 for the low carbon Oxford budget line was proposed to be added and that no further budget provision was felt to be necessary; and on part 1, not to agree for the reasons given in the response to the recommendations as contained in the Scrutiny report;
- d) On recommendation 8, to record that officers would be seeking to develop good quality outcome monitoring for 2014/15 from the Council's involvement in youth activities.

#### **134. CORPORATE PLAN 2014-18 - OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION - PLAN ADOPTION**

The Head of Policy, Culture and Communications submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended). The Board also had before it a Scrutiny report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved to:-

- (1) Agree, in the light of consultation amended copy and targets for the Corporate Plan 2014-2018;
- (2) RECOMMEND Council to agrees the Corporate Plan 2014-2018;
- (3) Delegate authority to the Head of Policy, Culture and Communications to make minor textual amendments where necessary, in preparation for formal publication of the Corporate Plan 2014-2018.

#### **135. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2014/15**

The Head of Finance submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended). With the agreement of the Chair, Councillor Simmons addressed the meeting and spoke to the Scrutiny report and generally.

Resolved to RECOMMEND Council to:-

- (1) Adopt the Treasury Management Strategy 2014/15, and to approve the treasury prudential indicators at paragraphs 13 – 28 of the report;
- (2) Approve the Investment Strategy for 2014/15 and the detailed investment criteria as set out in paragraphs 29 – 48 of and Appendix 1 to the report, including the changes highlighted in paragraph 9 of the report;
- (3) Approve the Prudential Indicators and limits for 2014/15 to 2017/18 as set out in paragraphs 50-51 of and Appendix 2 to the report;
- (4) Approve the Minimum Revenue Provision statement (which sets out the Council's policy on repayment of debt) at paragraphs 18 – 28 of the report;

- (5) On the recommendations from Scrutiny, to respond to them in the terms set out in paragraphs 7-10 of the Scrutiny report.

## **136. COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS - GRANT ALLOCATIONS 2014/15**

The Head of Customer Services and the Head of Leisure, Parks and Community Services submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved, subject to Council agreeing the grants budget on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2014, to approve:-

- (1) The recommendations for the commissioning programme as listed in Appendix 1 to the report, noting that at the Board's meeting on 9th October 2013 it had agreed that 2014/15 would be a one year funding programme with a three year commissioning cycle from April 2015 (minute 80 refers);
- (2) The recommendations as amended and listed in Appendix 2 to the report for the Arts and Culture commissioning theme;
- (3) The recommendations for the applications received to the grants 2014/15 open bidding programme as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

## **137. COVERED MARKET STRATEGY**

The Regeneration and Major Projects Team Manager submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended). The Board also had before it a Scrutiny report (previously circulated, now appended). Councillor Campbell and Fooks addressed the meeting. In summary they referred to the need for a clear positioning of the Council in respect of its responsibility for the Covered Market and that this should be made clear in the Asset Management Strategy; that a market manager should be appointed as soon as possible and work should then commence as a priority with the traders to develop the Covered Market for the future and to improve trust between the traders and the Council; and that the physical development of the Covered Market on the Market Street frontage was important.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Note the consultants' recommendations and the responses to the public consultation on the consultants' report;
- (2) Instruct the officers to prepare a detailed, costed action plan and programme, that plan to consider, among other things, the content of Scrutiny recommendations 5-8 and to emphasise the importance of a market committee to facilitate this, among other purposes;
- (3) Subject to funds being available in the Council's Budget, to be agreed by Council on 19<sup>th</sup> February, to endorse the appointment of an interim market manager;

- (4) On Scrutiny recommendations 1, 3 and 4, generally to endorse them; and on recommendation 2, that a market manager would be appointed subject to funds being available in the Council's Budget (resolution (3) above refers).

## **138. TOWN HALL STRATEGY**

The Head of Human Resources and Facilities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended). With the agreement of the Chair, Councillor Hollick as member for the Ward in which The Town Hall was located addressed the meeting. Councillor Fooks also addressed the meeting with the Chair's agreement.

In summary, Councillor Hollick referred to the unavailability of the Town Hall toilets when the Town Hall was closed on a Sunday because no events were taking place; that there needed to be transparency in terms of community interest group status (paragraph 5.8 of the report refers); that the average annual percentage increase figures in Appendix 1 to the report were, in his view, understated; and that the Town Hall staff restructure, as he saw it, had caused stress and anxiety to the staff involved. Councillor Fooks referred to the viability of the Town Hall café and also to the Town Hall staff restructure.

In response the Leader said that the Town Hall could not be open simply to keep the toilet facility available when otherwise there were no activities in the Town Hall; that in terms of fees and charges increases, the Council's proposed charges compared favourably with competitors as set out in paragraph 5.4; and that there would be member oversight of the use of Town Hall accommodation by community interest group. As to the Town Hall staff restructure, this was a separate issue. It had been carried out under the Council's change management policy agreed by Council (in other words Council had agreed a policy within which restructures were carried out by officers).

Resolved to:-

- (1) Note progress on the operational plan and the commissioning of an options appraisal for future utilisation of the Town Hall;
- (2) Agree the proposed opening times at set out in Section 4 of the report;
- (3) Agree the charging arrangements set out in Section 5 of the report and that those charges be incorporated into Appendix 7 of the main Budget report considered at minute 133;
- (4) Agree the changes to the budgeted income as set out in the table in Section 6 of the report.

## **139. LEISURE FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT CONTROL - REVIEW**

The Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended). The Board also had regard to a not for publication

annex to the report that contained a consultants' report on a review of the delivery of leisure services for the Council.

Resolved to:-

- (1) Agree that the contract for the development, management and operation of the City's leisure centres with Fusion Lifestyle be extended for a five year period to April 2024;
- (2) Delegate authority to the Director of Community Services to conclude negotiations and complete the necessary contract arrangements;
- (3) To thank Lucy Cherry (Leisure, Parks and Communities) for her work in managing the Fusion contract.

#### **140. ROSE HILL COMMUNITY CENTRE DEVELOPMENT - NEXT STEPS**

The Head of Leisure, Parks and Communities and the Regeneration and Major Projects Team Manager submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended).

Resolved to:-

- (1) Approve the project to progress the construction of a new community hub in Rose Hill;
- (2) Grant authority to the Executive Director, Community Services to approve the award of the construction contract for the building of the Rose Hill Community Centre, subject to tenders being within budget.

#### **141. RED BRIDGE WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE**

The Regeneration and Major Projects Manager submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended). The Board also had before it a not for publication appendix relating to costings.

Resolved that the Council enter into an agreement with Oxfordshire County Council whereby a rent of £20,000 per annum is agreed in respect of the review due on December 2011, and that the earlier outstanding reviews are not pursued by the City Council on the basis that the County Council for its part will not activate the annual rolling break, and will be committed to operating the waste recycling centre for a period of five years from the date of the agreement, unless an alternative site approved by the City Council is located and made operational.

#### **142. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT PROGRAMME - PROGRESS**

The Head of Policy, Culture and Communications submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended). The Board also had before it a Scrutiny report (previously circulated, now appended). With the agreement of the Chair, Councillor Campbell addressed the meeting. In summary he expressed concern at the large turnover of staff at schools participating in the programme; that

comparison with schools in other local authority areas was important; and he commented on the KRM and 'digitally excluded' programmes.

In response on staff turnover, the Leader said that this was not untypical of schools.

Resolved to note the progress outlined in the report.

#### **143. FUTURE ITEMS**

Nothing was raised under this item.

#### **144. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 6.37 pm**

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