

CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Wednesday 19 November 2014

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

OTHER COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Fooks and Hayes, (Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Committee).

OFFICERS PRESENT: Peter Sloman (Chief Executive), David Edwards (Executive Director City Regeneration and Housing), Jackie Yates (Executive Director Organisational Development and Corporate Services), Nigel Kennedy (Head of Finance), Lindsay Cane (Law and Governance), Michael Crofton-Briggs (Head of City Development) and Sarah Claridge (Committee Services Officer)

76. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Simm.
Apologies for lateness were given by Councillor Brown.

77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

78. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions were received.

79. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Board noted the Scrutiny Committee's report on Westgate Community Infrastructure Levy (minute 81).

The Scrutiny Committee's recommendation and comments on the Statement of Community Involvement 2014 Review (minute 82) were considered during the Board's discussion of the item.

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

Councillor Fooks addressed the Board on Westgate Community Infrastructure Levy (minute 81) during the discussion of the item.

81. WESTGATE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

Councillor Brown arrived at the meeting.

The Head of City Development has submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which considered a proposed financial contribution to the Westgate Alliance towards the public realm works associated with the Westgate development.

Cllr Price, Board member for Corporate Strategy, Economic Development and Planning presented the report.

The Executive Director of City Regeneration explained that there was a draft Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) list attached to the report. The work at Westgate does not compromise consideration of the wider CIL programme.

Councillor Tanner asked whether the work proposed to Pennyfarthing Place by St Ebbes Church could be extended to include Pembroke Street and can it be added to the list of work or are there reasons for it being excluded?

The Head of City Development said it has been excluded from this contribution because the developer would not be undertaking work in the wider vicinity. However, he reported he has been speaking with the County Council about wider schemes in the area.

Councillor Fooks asked how the figures were reached. The Head of City Development explained that they are the estimated sums for the work.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. Recommend to Council to apply Community Infrastructure Levy receipts to the value of £1,134,000 in two phases of £567,000 each (50% in Q1 2016/17 and 50% in Q1 2017/18) in order to fund public realm works that fall outside the site covered by the planning application for the Westgate redevelopment scheme .

2. Delegate to the Executive Director of Regeneration and Housing responsibility to complete an appropriate legal agreement in conjunction with the Council's Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer.

82. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT 2014 REVIEW

The Head of City Development submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which detailed the draft updated Statement of Community Involvement to publish for public consultation.

The Head of City Development presented the report. He explained that although it was no longer a legal requirement it was still useful to do. Consultation will run through December- January 2015.

Cllr Price asked that a Members' consultation session be run at the end of January to review the public submissions.

Cllr Hayes, Vice Chair of the Scrutiny Committee presented the Scrutiny Committee's report. Cllr Price accepted the Scrutiny recommendation to include in the statement of community involvement how the public can access paper versions of planning documents.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. Agree to publish the draft Statement of Community Involvement for public consultation.
2. Authorise the Head of City Development, in consultation with the Executive Board Member, to make any necessary editorial corrections to the document and to agree the designed version before publication for consultation.

83. TREASURY MANAGEMENT FIRST HALF YEAR REPORT 2014/15

The Head of Finance has submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended) which detailed the performance of the treasury management function for the six months to 30th September 2014.

Cllr Turner, Board member for Finance, Asset Management and Public Health presented the report. He explained that

- Invested money with commercial property funds was getting a 6% return.
- The amount of money in Iceland banks was dwindling.
- We were now following Council's ethical investment statement.
- Most debt was related to the HRA and the purchase of the Council's housing stock from the government.

Cllr Tanner noted that all the maturity dates were short term. He asked whether the Council had any longer term deposits. The Head of Finance explained that interest rates are currently forecast to increase in the second quarter of 2015 and it made sense to invest short term to guard against the risk of being caught by interest rate rises. The Council does have £10 million in long term indirect property funds although the interest rates are significantly higher than traditional investments.

Cllr Price noted that the Low Carbon Hub investment proposal had offered quite a high interest rate. He asked whether the Council had looked into any other forms of energy schemes. The Head of Finance explained that these form of investments are classified as 'non-specified investments' as the organisations being invested with have no official credit rating and as such they tend to be more risky but offered a higher return. Under the Council's current Treasury Strategy such investments are limited to 25% of the total portfolio and the Council already held £10 million in indirect property fund non-specified investments.

The Head of Finance explained that these forms of investment fall into a non-specified investment category and these tend to be more risky but offered a higher return. The Chief Executive stated that investing in bonds was a growing area for local authorities. Green energy investments provided a modest rate of return with risks spread over a number of smaller schemes. Possibly the Council should consider using treasury management funds to support some of the strategic objectives, for example to encourage people to purchase property in Oxford. The Executive Director of Organisational Development and Corporate Services explained that there were set limits on different types of investment so that the Council always has the cash flow to deal with its daily business. While it is possible to look at alternatives the Council needed to be mindful not to put too much into risky investments

Consideration of investing in other vehicles such as Green energy bonds would be considered when the Treasury Management Strategy was reviewed in a few months time.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

- Note the performance of the treasury management function for 2014/15.
- Thank officers for the work done

84. MINUTES

The Board resolved to APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2014 as a true and accurate record.

Councillor Brown asked if there was an update on the development at Frideswide Square. The Head of City Development will update the members outside the meeting.

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 5.25 pm