

MINUTES OF THE CITY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Thursday 19 May 2016

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COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillors Price (Leader), Brown, Hollingsworth, Kennedy, Rowley, Simm, Sinclair and Smith.

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Gant and Cllr Tidball

OFFICERS PRESENT: Peter Sloman (Chief Executive), Tim Sadler (Executive Director Community Services), Caroline Green (Assistant Chief Executive), Nigel Kennedy (Head of Financial Services), Lindsay Cane (Legal Services Manager), Patsy Dell (Head of Planning & Regulatory Services), Lorraine Freeman (Development Funding Officer), Mark Jaggard (Spatial & Economic Development Manager), Ian Marshall (Team Leader Design, Heritage and Specialist Services), Paul Wilding (Programme Manager Revenue & Benefits) and Catherine Phythian (Committee Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Turner and Tanner.

Cllr Brown arrived during Minute 7.

The Leader welcomed Cllr Smith, Board Member for Leisure, Parks and Sport to the City Executive Board.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

4. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORTS

No scrutiny committee reports were submitted to the meeting.

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

There were no Councillor addresses.

6. COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES ON NEIGHBOURHOOD ISSUES

Cllr Tidball addressed the Board on Grandpont Children's Centre and the proposal for it to be funded as part of a Hub and Spoke Model.

A copy of her address is attached to these minutes.

On behalf of the Board, the Leader thanked Cllr Tidball for her comments and observed that this was a serious issue with significant implications for families in Oxford. The Board commended the proposed financial model and considered that this was an opportunity for resources to be used to best effect and that it could be replicated for other childrens centres in the city. They expressed concern about the lack of clarity over the County Council's plans for the childrens centres.

The Board requested the Director of Community Services to raise this proposal as a matter of priority in his on-going discussions with the County Council regarding the future of children's centres and other related service cuts.

7. EVALUATION OF OXFORD CITY COUNCIL'S WELFARE REFORM TEAM EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND PROJECT

The Executive Director Organisational Development & Corporate Services submitted a report detailing the outcomes and learning achieved from the Welfare Reform Team's European Social Fund project.

The Revenues & Benefits Programme Manager presented the report and highlighted the following key points:

- A researcher from the Social Policy Unit at Oxford University carried out analysis of the data collected during the project. Her most statistically significant findings were that people who had been out of work for 6 to 12 months were more likely to enter work than any other cohort, and that the more income a person lost from changes to their benefit, the less likely they were to move into work. This last finding contradicts existing government thinking in relation to reductions in benefit payments.
- The project highlighted that lack of available childcare is the main barrier to work for customers. As a consequence the OCC Welfare Reform Team have formed stronger relationships with local children's centres as they are likely to engage with people who will be affected by the lower Benefit Cap.
- Partnership work was one of the most successful elements of the project, and has had the most significant legacy.
- The project evaluation had been distributed locally to all partners and interested parties, and also to the Universal Credit Programme at DWP, the Local Government Association, and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

- Since the project ended the Council has led two partnership bids with 20 third sector partners for funding from the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

In discussion the Board commented on the value of the academic appraisal of the project; the importance of the provision of affordable “after school” childcare by the County Council; the benefits of early intervention and expenditure in reducing longer term costs; and the implications for mental health support services.

In conclusion the Board noted that the groups most impacted by the welfare cuts needed support from a wide range of resources and that the loss of some of those key service components locally combined with the national changes to the benefit system presented a very serious problem.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **Note** the outcomes and learning detailed in this report;
2. **Refer** the project findings and the Board’s conclusions to the County Council and local Health Authority;
3. **Share** the project findings with Government and the Shadow front bench.

8. OLD MARSTON CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

The Head of Planning & Regulatory Service submitted a report presenting the conservation area appraisal for Old Marston for approval.

The Board Member, Planning and Regulatory Services introduced the report. He said that the appraisal process had been lengthy and had included extensive consultation with stakeholders. He was pleased to say that the appraisal had met with an enthusiastic response from the Parish Council and local community.

The Board queried the status of the appraisal document in terms of planning policy and determining planning applications. The planning officers explained that the appraisal would be part of a broader range of design and style guidance such as the Design SPD and the updated Local Plan which would include a city wide design policy.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. **Approve** the Old Marston Conservation Area appraisal and endorse it for use in informing development management decisions; and
2. **Endorse** the conservation principles it promotes and its key conclusions.

9. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (NEIGHBOURHOOD PORTION) – AGREEING THE PROCESS FOR CONSULTING AND SPENDING

The Head of Planning and Regulatory Services submitted a report detailing proposals for the process for consulting and spending the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - (Neighbourhood Portion).

The Board Member, Planning and Regulatory Services introduced the report. He outlined the proposed arrangements for spending the neighbourhood portion of the CIL and explained the rationale for the proposals. He said the £2500 allocation was in addition to the existing ward member budget. A further allocation would be made in the next Council year.

The Board requested that officers provide Ward Members with further clarification and guidance on the types of projects and work that they could fund.

The Board noted that this element of the CIL had been allocated on an equitable basis across all wards but that other elements of CIL were reserved for the areas in which the development took place.

The City Executive Board resolved to:

1. Note the requirements for expending the neighbourhood portion of CIL in parished areas
2. Approve the process for spending the Neighbourhood Portion of CIL in the non parished part of the City.

10. ITEMS RAISED BY BOARD MEMBERS

No items were raised by Board Members.

11. MINUTES

The Board resolved to **approve** the minutes of the meeting held on 14 April 2016 as a true and accurate record.

The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 6.00 pm