

## **Cherwell District Council**

### **Budget Planning Committee**

Minutes of a meeting of the Budget Planning Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 6 April 2017 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Douglas Webb (Vice-Chairman, in the Chair)

Councillor David Anderson  
Councillor Ken Atack  
Councillor Ian Corkin  
Councillor Carmen Griffiths  
Councillor Alan MacKenzie-Wintle  
Councillor Andrew McHugh  
Councillor Barry Richards  
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Also Present: Linda Wilson, Head of Corporate Services, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, for item 6  
Samantha Gilbert, Assistant Director of Finance, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, for item 6

Apologies for absence: Councillor Nicholas Mawer  
Councillor Hugo Brown  
Councillor Tom Wallis

Officers: Karen Curtin, Commercial Director  
Paul Sutton, Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer  
Louisa Butters, Property and Facilities Manager  
Sanjay Sharma, Interim Head of Finance / Deputy Section 151 Officer  
Lesley Farrell, Democratic and Elections Officer  
Joel Bliss, Assistant Democratic and Elections Officer

#### **82 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **83 Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

#### **84 Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

85 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

**Resolved**

“That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the ground that, if the public and press were present, it would be likely that exempt information falling under the provisions of Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraph 3 would be disclosed to them, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.”

86 **Solihull Partnership Presentation**

The Head of Corporate Property Services and the Assistant Director of Finance, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, gave a verbal update on the Solihull Partnership.

The Commercial Director for Cherwell District Council (CDC) and the Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) Head of Corporate Property Services acknowledged that errors had been made at both SMBC and CDC but the project was now running smoothly due to recent effort from both SMBC and CDC. The early stages of the project had been hindered by high staff turnover in key positions and a lack of clarity over roles and responsibilities.

The Commercial Director clarified that the roles and responsibilities of both CDC and SMBC had been defined, that the contract was now in place and that permanent staff had filled the key positions that had previously been vacant or only filled on a temporary basis.

**Resolved**

(1) That the verbal update be noted.

(The Head of Corporate Property Services and the Assistant Director of Finance, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, left the meeting at the conclusion of this item).

87 **Solihull Partnership**

The Commercial Director gave a verbal update on the Solihull Partnership.

In response to Members' questions, the Commercial Director informed the Committee that more resources had been put into the project. It was acknowledged that the scope of the initial project had been too ambitious and was now more realistic.

The Committee was advised that the Properties and Facilities Manager and her team were now all in post and would provide the continuity that had been

lacking in personnel between Cherwell District Council and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.

Members requested that they continue to receive regular updates on the progress of capital projects held by the Solihull Partnership.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the verbal update be noted.

88 **Re-admittance of Press and Public**

**Resolved**

That the press and public be readmitted.

89 **Quarter 3 2016-17 - Update to Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report which provided an update on queries raised by Members regarding overspend within Regeneration and Housing and slippage in capital projects at their 28 February meeting when the Committee had considered a report on the Council's Revenue and Capital position for the first nine months of the financial year 2016-17 and projections for the full year.

In response to Members' questions, the Chief Finance Officer explained that the unanticipated closure of British Home Stores at Castle Quay and the costly nature of agency staffing had been responsible for some of the slippages.

Members were assured that the number of agency staff was reducing as the Property and Investment Services Team was now fully established with permanent staff members.

The Committee was advised that town centre initiatives were being discussed and it was believed that Castle Quay phase II would improve the town centre's prospects.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the additional information to the projected revenue and capital position at the end of December 2016 relating to significant revenue variances and slippages against the capital programme on the projected revenue and capital position be noted and no comments be referred to Executive.

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The meeting ended at 20:00

Chairman:

Date: