

Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held in at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 12 January 2009 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman)

Councillor G A Reynolds
Councillor Norman Bolster
Councillor Michael Gibbard
Councillor James Macnamara
Councillor Kieron Mallon
Councillor Nigel Morris
Councillor D M Pickford
Councillor Nicholas Turner

Also present: Councillor George Parish
Councillor Leslie F Sibley

Officers: Mary Harpley, Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service
Ian Davies, Strategic Director - Environment and Community
Julie Evans, Strategic Director - Customer Service & Resources
John Hoad, Strategic Director - Planning, Housing and Economy
Mike Carroll, Head of Improvement
Liz Howlett, Head of Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Phil O'Dell, Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer
Jo Smith, Communications Manager
Karen Curtin, Chief Accountant
Gillian Greaves, Head of Housing Services
David Marriott, Head of Economic Developments & Estates
Catherine Phythian, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer
Ed Potter, Head of Environmental Services

Resolutions

145 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

146 Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

The Chairman reported that he had received two requests to address the meeting:

Councillor Parish for agenda item 7, GP Led Health Centre in Banbury. The Leader indicated that he would also allow Councillor Parish to ask questions on this item.

Councillor Sibley for agenda item 8, Sustainable Communities Act 2007.

147 Urgent Business

There was none.

148 **Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting were not available for signature.

149 **Forward Plan**

The Chief Executive submitted the Leader's Forward Plan of key Executive decisions to be taken over the next four months. The Executive noted that there were a number of errors, duplications and some omissions in the document. The Chief Executive explained that this was due to the migration of data to the committee management system and assured the Executive that before the Forward Plan was re-issued these problems would be corrected. The Leader of the Council requested that the Chief Executive bring forward a report on the re-organisation of the Council at an appropriate date.

Resolved, that the Forward Plan for the next four months be noted and that the items detailed above be added to the Forward Plan.

Reasons – to create a Forward Plan for the Council as required by the Local Government Act 2000.

150 **GP Led Health Centre in Banbury**

The Strategic Director Environment and Community submitted a report which set out the Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust's (PCT) proposals for a new GP led health centre in Banbury. The Executive also received a presentation from representatives of the Oxfordshire PCT and in response to questioning the following points were made:

The proposal related only to GP led primary care services and as such would not impact on diagnostic and other services provided by the Horton Hospital. Where possible the PCT would seek to integrate this proposal with the recommendations of the Independent Reconfiguration Panel but ultimately they were two independent work streams.

The PCT would let the contract for five years and it would be subject to regular monitoring with regard to value-for-money, patient satisfaction and statistical analysis of service delivery and patient numbers. It was recognised that the recruitment and supply of medical staff would be a challenge to those tendering for the contract but the presence of a GP for 12 hours per day, 365 days per year was a key requirement of the contract.

The contract would contain a "nil detriment" clause to ensure that the GP led health centre would not have a minimal impact on other GP practices in Banbury but that the ultimate measure of this will be the public's satisfaction with the overall health services they receive.

The catchment area for registered patients would be a five mile radius from Banbury Cross. It was recognised that a proportion of "walk-in" patients were likely to be commuters from outside the district but this was an accepted part of the national model. The point was also made that Cherwell residents would be able to "walk-in" to clinics elsewhere in the country.

The core range of services that would be available to "walk-in" patients would be tightly regulated and subject to strict protocols on prescriptions.

Resolved

- (1) That the Oxfordshire PCT's proposals for the new GP led health centre in Banbury be noted and the PCT be thanked for their presentation;
- (2) That the Council welcomes the Oxfordshire PCT's reassurance that the new GP led health centre in Banbury will not impact on the services at the Horton Hospital and the limited impact on the existing GP surgeries in Banbury will be minimised.

Reasons – further investment in the healthcare services in Banbury is welcomed as this extends patient choice and access to primary healthcare services.

151 **Sustainable Communities Act 2007**

The Chief Executive submitted a report to provide the Executive with information on this Act and the timetable for the submission of first round proposals.

Resolved

- (1) That the purpose of the Sustainable Communities Act and the timetable associated with the first bidding round be noted.
- (2) That officers be requested to continue to work on this issue and to come back with firm proposals.

Reasons – the first proposal round is open and the deadline for submission is 31 July 2009. There is still uncertainty about some of the definitions and practical details of the Act and more detailed guidance on the proposal process is awaited. It is timely to commission early work from officers to identify potential fruitful areas, either independently or in collaboration with others, and with the focus on the “economic well-being” element.

152 **Bicester Town Centre Redevelopment**

The Head of Economic Development and Estates submitted a report to update the Executive on progress made on the Bicester Town Centre Redevelopment scheme, and to consider the request that the Developer be granted a further Exclusivity Agreement. The Executive noted that the work would start in 2009 and end in 2011 and would provide a net increase of 760 jobs.

Resolved

- (1) That the changes being made to the ownership of Town Centre Retail (Bicester) Ltd, the Council's development partner be noted.
- (2) That the grant of an Exclusivity Agreement to Town Centre Retail (Bicester) Ltd, for a period expiring on 31 December 2009 be approved.

Reasons – Town Centre Retail has already invested substantial sums in professional fees and in acquiring properties affected by the scheme, but currently no formal development agreement exists. As further expenditure is required to take these proposals forward, it is appropriate to grant the developer a further period of Exclusivity. The alternative would be to delay progress until a formal Development Agreement has been completed, and this is likely to take some months.

Affordable Housing Issues Paper

The Head of Housing Services submitted a report to provide the Executive with information on the delivery of affordable housing within the context of a recession, and propose a way forward that maximises opportunities for increasing the number and range of affordable housing units available for our community. The Executive noted that the Council was still on track to meet its affordable housing targets for 2008/09.

Resolved

- (1) That the current position on affordable housing policy, Corporate Plan targets and delivery be noted;
- (2) That, in the context of the 2009/10 budget process, options for extending local initiatives to maintain affordable housing delivery be noted.

Reasons - there is a clear commitment by the Council to deliver affordable housing in the District. Any significant increase in local homelessness will result in considerable financial consequences for the Council. Recession seriously threatens the methods of providing new affordable housing (planning system related) used over recent years. This is beginning to impact on Cherwell in the planning and delivery of affordable housing. To mitigate against this position and risk, requires flexibility to research and test new ways of working.

Service Plans and Budget

The Strategic Director for Customer Service and Resources and the Chief Accountant submitted a joint report setting out a second analysis of the Council's draft 2009/2010 Revenue and Capital Budget and presenting two items from the work of scrutiny in relation to fees and charges and concessionary fares.

Resolved

- (1) That the draft revenue budget 2 in the context of the Council's service objectives and strategic priorities be noted;
- (2) That the approach to the overall capital programme and 09/10 expenditure profile (as set out in Annex 1 to the minutes, as set out in the minute book) be agreed;
- (3) That the draft MTFS position be noted;
- (4) That Officers be requested to review the current Treasury Management Strategy in light of the current economic climate and present their recommendations at the 2 February Executive;
- (5) That the recommendations of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board from their meeting of 9 December 2008 (as set out below) be noted:

To note the workshop conclusions from the meeting on 9 December 2009 and to consider them as part of their final discussions on the draft budget; and

To note the request that officers ensure that in 2009 the process for scrutiny of the budgets involves members at an earlier stage and provides additional detail.

- (6) That the recommendations of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board in relation to concessionary fares (as set out below) be agreed:

Not to change the current arrangements for the Concessionary Fares Travel Scheme at the present time but that the situation should be reviewed again in six months

Reasons – the budget forms the financial expression of the Council's service delivery plans for 2009/10, and the allocation of resources against agreed service priorities is necessary in order to achieve its strategic priorities. There is also a statutory requirement that the Council sets a balanced budget by 11 March 2009, and the draft budget is part of that process.

155 **Council Tax Base for 2009/2010**

The Head of Exchequer submitted a report which referred to the statutory requirement to determine the Council Tax Base for 2009/2010, and which set out in detail the calculation as to how this should be achieved.

Resolved

- (1) That the report of the Head of Exchequer, made pursuant to the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended, and the calculations referred to therein for the purposes of the Regulations be approved;
- (2) That, in accordance with the Regulations, as amended, the amount calculated by the Cherwell District Council as its council tax base for the year 2009/2010 shall be 49,923; and
- (3) That the tax base for parts of the area be in accordance with the figures (shown in column 13 of Annex 2 to the minutes, as set out in the minute book)

Reasons – in accordance with statutory requirements. Failure to set a council tax base for 2009/2010 would result in the Council being unable to set its council tax for 2009/2010.

156 **Meeting Dates 2009/10**

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report requesting the Executive to consider a draft calendar of meetings for 2009/2010, and to recommend the Council accordingly.

Recommended, that, subject to the inclusion of the issues as set out below, the Council approve the draft calendar of meetings for 2009/2010 as now submitted;

- a) Executive: confirm all meeting dates and remove "reserve" designation.
- b) Planning Committee: delete 12 March 2010; insert 11 March 2010.
- c) Personnel & General Committee: delete 11 March 2010; insert 10 March 2010.
- d) Overview & Scrutiny Committee: delete 5 October 2010.

- e) Accounts, Audit & Risk: confirm meetings on 20 January and 14 April 2010. Insert additional meeting on 26 October 2009. Note need for Annual Governance panel meetings in April/May 2010.

Reasons – in order to transact business efficiently the Council needs to agree a calendar of meetings.

157

Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved, that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, on the grounds that they could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

EXEMPT

158 **Town Centre Offices**

The Head of Economic Development and Estates submitted an exempt report that set out the progress being made towards the disposal of the Council's Banbury Town Centre offices at 58 Bridge Street, Banbury.

Resolved, in principle to proceed with the letting of 58 Bridge St, Banbury , on the terms to be approved by the Economic Development and Estates Portfolio Holder, and to amend the proposed refurbishment scheme to incorporate the specific fitting out requirements requested.

Reasons - the opportunity to secure a letting of the property removes the risk of the building remaining vacant for a significant period, at substantial cost to the Council.

159 **Dry Recycling - Gate Fees**

The Head of Environmental Services submitted a report inviting the Executive to approve a change in gate fee and the increased cost in the processing of co-mingled dry recyclables following the severe reduction in values of recycled materials.

Resolved

- (1) That the contents of this report be noted;
- (2) That the revised gate fee be approved;
- (3) That officers continue to explore future recycling outlet opportunities and joint solutions with other waste collection authorities ahead of making any longer term procurement decisions.

Reasons - There is a need to ensure that the Council can continue to dispose of collected recycled material appropriately.

The meeting ended at 9.07 pm

Chairman:

Date: