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Cherwell District Council

Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board

Minutes of a meeting of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 16 October 2012 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Nicholas Mawer (Chairman)
Councillor Douglas Webb (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Maurice Billington
Councillor Margaret Cullip
Councillor Jon O'Neill
Councillor Nigel Randall
Councillor Lawrie Stratford
Councillor Douglas Williamson
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Substitute Members: Councillor Andrew Beere (In place of Councillor Patrick Cartledge)

Apologies for absence: Councillor Alyas Ahmed
Councillor Patrick Cartledge
Councillor Neil Prestidge

Officers: Martin Henry, Director of Resources / Section 151 Officer
Ian Davies, Director of Community and Environment
Joanne Kaye, Service Accountant - Community & Environment Directorate
Natasha Clark, Team Leader, Democratic and Elections

32 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

33 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

34 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2012 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

35 **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

Resolved

That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the 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 paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of that Act.

36 **Capital Budget 2013-14 to 2016-17**

The Board considered a report of the Director of Resources which sought agreement on recommendations to the Executive for the Capital Programme for 2013-14 to 2016-17.

The Chairman opened the discussion with a brief resume of the work that the Board had undertaken to review the capital bids for 2013-14. The bids received were reviewed at an informal budget scrutiny meeting on 24 September 2012 and had been scored using a standard score card taking into account:

- Drivers (compulsory/legal; highly recommended; or desirable)
- Strategic Objectives (direct and significant to a strategic objective; indirect; or, not applicable)
- Consultation Priority
- Impact on performance or service deliver
- Organisation risk
- Efficiency (positive revenue with figures provided)

Executive Lead Members and Heads of Service had attended the second informal budget scrutiny meeting on 2 October 2012 to provide the Board with additional information on a number of bids and respond to any queries raised by Board members.

In considering the bids the Board agreed that it was important to take account of the score including the reason for the proposed capital expenditure, how the money was allocated by quarter and any requirements in future years.

The Board agreed that the following bids which all had with a score of 24 or more should be recommended to the Executive for inclusion in the capital programme 2013/14: Bid 7 Cherwell Community Centre – Roof Covering Replacement; Bid 17 Units 6 & 7 Thorpe Way – Replacement Roof Covering; Bid 19 D & PS Access Audit 2012; Bid 23 Bicester Sports Village Phase 2; Bid 26 Stratfield Brake Repair Works; Bid 36 Vehicle Replacement 2013/14; Bid 30 Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants; Bid 34 Recycling Bank Replacement 2013/14; Bid 38 Vehicle lifting equipment; Bid 40 Microsoft Licensing; Bid 41 Desktop PC Replacement; Bid 44 Visualfiles Upgrade; Bid 43 Server Replacement Package; Bid 2 23 & 24 Thorpe Place – Replacement Roof Lights; Bid 45 Financial System Upgrade;

Members were satisfied with the information and justification for each of these bids however it was noted that there were a number of bids relating to the replacement of items which would have a limited life span and therefore

require repair or replacing again as well as . Members commented that due to the limits on the capital pot consideration should be given to services building up funds to cover future replacements and ongoing costs.

Members also agreed that Bid 37 – Wheeled bin replacement scheme; Bid 8 – Works in Connection with Condition Survey; Bid 24 Kidlington and Gosford Leisure Centre Astro Turf Replacement; Bid 25 North Oxfordshire Academy Track Refurbishment; and, Bid 29 Discretionary Housing Grants should be recommended for inclusion in the Capital Programme 2013/14.

The Board agreed that two bids should be recommended for inclusion in the 2013/14 Capital Programme subject to conditions: Bid 32 - Kidlington Pedestrian Scheme – Phase 2, subject to negotiation and agreement being reached with Kidlington Parish Council for the ongoing maintenance of the bollard; and, Bid 21 - Community Facilities Grant Scheme, subject to an appropriate policy for the scheme being established, a requirement that any bids over £2000 must have, as a minimum, matched funding and that the Lead Member approve grants.

Members agreed to defer consideration of the following bids: Bid 3 - Replacement Air Conditioning Plant to Main Chamber, Bodicote House; Bid 10 - Highfield Depot – Proposed Redevelopment of Office and Welfare Facilities; 1 - Planning and Building Control replacement of ICLIPSE (Northgate); Bid - 35 - Thorpe Lane Hard Standing Depot; Bid - 39 - Corporate – Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS); and, Bid 42 - Joint Intranet (CDC and SNC) to allow for further information to be presented to the Board in due course.

It was agreed that the following bids should not be recommended for inclusion in the Capital Programme 2013/14: Bid 33 - Bartec expansion; Bid 5 - Replacement CCTV and Intruder Systems District Wide; Bid 22 - CDC and SNC Customer Services Desktop as a Service (DaaS); Bid 27 - Town Centre Visitor Information; and, Bid 6 - Lighting to Main Chamber, Bodicote

The Board agreed that the following bids did not meet the capital requirements and should therefore not be included in the 2013/14 Capital Programme: Bid 4 - Bradley Arcade – Promenade Deck Repairs to Shops; Bid 9 - Stable Restaurant Alterations; Bid 11 - Repairs to Lighting Protection at Bodicote House and Banbury Bus Station; Bid 12 - External / Internal Painting; Bid 13 - Retained Land Backlog Maintenance; Bid 14 - Street Furniture; Bid 16 - Unit 18 Thorpe Way - clearance of unit; Bid 18 - Unit 6 & 20 Thorpe Place – Improvements; Bid 28 - CDC Community Development Strategy; Bid 28 - Cherwell Allocations Review and Implementation; and, Bid 31 - Work-in-default.

Resolved

- (1) That the recommendations, conclusions and comments relating to the Capital Budget be submitted to the Executive for consideration as part of draft 1 of the 2012/13 budget.

Environmental Services and Homelessness Budgets

The Chairman reminded Members that at the Board meeting of 4 September 2012 Members had received an extensive briefing from the Head of Environmental Services during which Members were advised that Environmental Services delivered many of the front line services of the Council, including Waste Collection, Street Cleansing, Public Conveniences and Landscape Management. These services were the services that the Council was most well known for amongst residents and accounted for a significant percentage of overall Council expenditure. The overall revenue budget for Environmental Services was £5.86 million.

In considering the Environmental Services budget, Members noted that waste collection from residents in the district was the primary function of the waste service but considered that the collection of commercial waste could generate an income for the Council. It was acknowledged that the cost of such a service could outweigh any benefits and agreed that giving consideration to the feasibility of offering such a service through a cost/benefit analysis would be the most appropriate course of action in the first instance.

The Board had undertaken a detailed review of the Council's partnership with the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership (OWP) in 2010/11 and retained the item on their work programme to monitor in light of uncertainty about the financial arrangements.

The Director of Community and Environment advised the Board that there was still considerable uncertainty about the financial arrangements and, in particular, the payments to collection authorities from the county council. The issue was under discussion by Leaders and Chief Executives across the county and would also be considered by the OWP at their next meeting.

Members agreed that this should remain on their work programme and requested that the Head of Environmental Services provide updates to the Board as appropriate.

In terms of the homelessness budget, at their September meeting the Board had been advised that the Council's homelessness budget had remained relatively stable for the previous two years and the Government had confirmed that the Council's homelessness grant would remain the same for the next two years, but this was not ring fenced. Members had considered that as a consequence of the Government's Local Government Resources Review and Welfare Reforms, the Board agreed that they should retain a watching brief through the Finance Scrutiny Working Group.

Resolved

- (1) That the recommendations, conclusions and comments relating to the Environmental Services and Homelessness budgets as set out at appendix 1 to these minutes be submitted to the Executive for consideration as part of draft 1 of the 2012/13 budget.

38 **Readmittance of the Public and Press**

Resolved

That the press and public be readmitted to the meeting.

39 **Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board Work Programme 2012/13**

The Board considered a report of the Head of Law and Governance which presented the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board work programme 2012/13 for consideration.

Resolved

- (1) That the Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board work programme 2012/13 be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm

Chairman:

Date:

2013/14 Budget Scrutiny Outstanding Actions, Recommendations and Conclusions

Capital Bids 2013/14

The budget scrutiny process for 2013/14 has involved a review of the capital bids received as part of the 2013/14 process. The bids received were reviewed at an informal budget scrutiny meeting (24 September 2012) and scored using a standard score card taking into account:

- Drivers (compulsory/legal; highly recommended; or desirable)
- Strategic Objectives (direct and significant to a strategic objective; indirect; or, not applicable)
- Consultation Priority
- Impact on performance or service deliver
- Organisation risk
- Efficiency (positive revenue with figures provided)

At the second informal budget scrutiny meeting (2 October 2012) Lead Members and Heads of Service were present to provide scrutiny members with additional information on a number of bids.

At the 16 October 2012 meeting of the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board, Members reviewed the information from the informal meetings and agreed to submit the following recommendations for consideration by the Executive:

| Recommendations | Reasons and Comments |
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| Capital Programme 2012/13 | |
| <p>1. That the following capital bids be included in the capital programme 2013/14:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. D & PS Access Audit 2012 ii. Vehicle Replacement 2013/14 | <p>Bids i – xv: The Board was satisfied with the information and justification for each of these bids. All of these bids received a score of 24 or greater during the review process and the Board determined that all bids with a score greater than 24 should be recommended for inclusion in the capital programme 2013/14.</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iii. Cherwell Community Centre – Roof Covering Replacement iv. Microsoft Licensing v. Recycling Bank Replacement 2013/14 vi. Units 6 & 7 Thorpe Way – Replacement Roof Covering vii. Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants viii. Vehicle lifting equipment ix. Desktop PC Replacement x. Visualfiles Upgrade xi. Server Replacement Package xii. 23 & 24 Thorpe Place – Replacement Roof Lights xiii. Financial System Upgrade xiv. Bicester Sports Village Phase 2 xv. Stratfield Brake Repair Works xvi. Wheeled Bin Replacement Scheme xvii. Works in Connection with Condition Survey xviii. Kidlington and Gosford Leisure Centre Astro Turn Replacement xix. North Oxfordshire Academy Track Refurbishment xx. Discretionary Housing Grants | <p>Members noted however that there were a number of bids that related to the replacement of items which would have a limited life span and therefore require repair or replacing again as well as . Members commented that the capital pot is limited and would require building up again, therefore the Board suggested that consideration should be given to services building up funds to cover future replacements and ongoing costs.</p> <p>Bid xvi (Wheeled Bin Replacement Scheme): The Board commented that it was important for the Executive to be mindful of future wheeled bin replacement schemes and that the Executive be requested to build up funds from revenue accounts for future replacement schemes. Members noted that not all bins would require replacing at the same time and therefore bin replacement should be undertaken as a rolling scheme.</p> <p>Bid xvii (Works in Connection with Condition Survey): The Board agreed that this project be recommended for inclusion in the capital programme 2013/14 as the survey would review assets and identify areas requiring replacement to inform a rolling repair and maintenance programme.</p> <p>Bid xviii (Kidlington and Gosford Leisure Centre Astro Turf Replacement) and bid xix (North Oxfordshire Academy Track Refurbishment):The Board recommended that these bids be included in the capital programme 2013/14 as recreation was one of the council’s key services and third party funding could only be sought if CDC committed funds. Members requested that officers giver consideration with partners to general maintenance and future replacement.</p> <p>Bid xx (Discretionary Housing Grants): Members noted that the level of demand for these grants varied and agreed that the grants should be retained, in particular, in light of the welfare reforms.</p> |
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| <p>2. That the following capital bid be included in the capital programme 2013/14, subject to negotiation and agreement being reached with Kidlington Parish Council for the ongoing maintenance of the bollard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Kidlington Pedestrian Scheme – Phase 2 | <p>The Board recognised that this bid was the next phase of the Kidlington pedestrianisation scheme and would help enforce the new pedestrianised area in the centre of Kidlington. The Board agreed that this bid should be recommended for inclusion in the 2013/14 capital programme subject to subject to negotiation and agreement being reached with Kidlington Parish Council for the ongoing maintenance of the bollard.</p> |
| <p>3. That the following capital bid be included in the capital programme 2013/14, subject to an appropriate policy for the scheme being established, a requirement that any bids over £2000 must have, as a minimum, matched funding and that the Lead Member approve grants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Community Facilities Grant Scheme | <p>The Board noted that the Community Facilities Grant Scheme would support community groups and parishes and there were no projects earmarked for funding. The Board stressed the need for a process for the allocation of grants that would consider each application on its merits and that each grant be approved by the Lead Member. To Board also recommended a cap of £2000 per bid and that any bids over £2000 must have, as a minimum, matched funding.</p> |
| <p>4. That the following capital bids not be included in the capital programme 2013/14:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Bartec expansion ii. Replacement CCTV and Intruder Systems District Wide iii. CDC and SNC Customer Services Desktop as a Service (DaaS) iv. Town Centre Visitor Information v. Lighting to Main Chamber, Bodicote | <p>Bid i (Bartec Expansion): The Board recommended that this bid not be included in the capital programme 2013/14 as, whilst the benefits of the system were understood, Members felt that it was not a priority at the current time, additionally, the payback was longer that the asset life.</p> <p>Bid ii (Replacement CCTV and Intruder Systems District Wide): There was no insurance requirement to replace the system which was adequate.</p> <p>Bid iii (CDC and SNC Customer Services Desktop as a Service (DaaS)): The Board felt the time and resource efficiencies of the system presented in the bid did not warrant the capital expenditure, particular as there were no direct financial efficiencies.</p> <p>Bid iv (Town Centre Visitor Information) and Bid v (Lighting to Main Chamber, Bodicote): These were the two lowest scoring bids and Members agreed that they did not justify best use of the council's resources.</p> |
| <p>5. That the following capital bids not be included in the capital programme 2012/13:</p> | <p>The Board agreed that these bids did not met the capital requirements and requested that officers investigate other sources of funding,</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Bradley Arcade – Promenade Deck Repairs to Shops ii. Stable Restaurant Alterations iii. Repairs to Lighting Protection at Bodicote House and Banbury Bus Station iv. External / Internal Painting v. Retained Land Backlog Maintenance vi. Street Furniture vii. Unit 18 Thorpe Way - clearance of unit viii. Unit 6 & 20 Thorpe Place – Improvements ix. CDC Community Development Strategy x. Cherwell Allocations Review and Implementation xi. Work-in-default | |
| <p>6. That recommendations on the following capital bids be deferred:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Replacement Air Conditioning Plant to Main Chamber, Bodicote House ii. Highfield Depot – Proposed Redevelopment of Office and Welfare Facilities iii. Planning and Building Control replacement of ICLIPSE (Northgate) | <p>Bid i (Replacement Air Conditioning Plan to Main Chamber, Bodicote House): The Board queried if this would fall under the Condition Survey that they had recommended for inclusion in the Capital Programme 2013/14. If it were not, the Board queried if it should be included. Members agreed that a decision on this bid be deferred to allow for further information to be presented to Members in due course.</p> <p>Bid ii (Highfield Depot – Proposed Redevelopment of Office and welfare Facilities): The Board agreed to defer consideration of this item and requested that a business case be developed as part of the proposal which would include detail on the immediate works required and a long term objective for the site. Members stressed that the working conditions and health and safety of the staff working on the site was a priority and the business case would ensure that their</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Corporate – Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) v. Joint Intranet (CDC and SNC) vi. Thorpe Lane Hard Standing Depot | <p>needs were addressed in an appropriate manner.</p> <p>Bids iii – v. The Board had received supplementary information on bid iv at their second informal meeting from the Lead Member for Performance and Customers, the Head of Transformation and the ICT Services Manager. The Board agreed that bids iii and v should be incorporated into the business case for EDRMS</p> <p>Bid vi (Thorpe Lane Hard Standing Depot): The Board requested that further information be provided to the Board in due course detailing the work that needed to be undertaken and the implications if it were not undertaken.</p> |
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Environmental Services Budget

The budget scrutiny process for 2013/14 has involved a review of the council's environmental services budget. The Board received an extensive briefing from the Head of Environmental Services during which Members were advised that Environmental Services delivered many of the front line services of the Council, including Waste Collection, Street Cleansing, Public Conveniences and Landscape Management. These services were the services that the Council was most well known for amongst residents and accounted for a significant percentage of overall Council expenditure. The overall revenue budget for Environmental Services was £5.86 million.

The Board agreed to submit the following recommendations for consideration by the Executive:

| Recommendations | Reasons and Comments |
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| <p>1. That consideration be given to requesting officers to develop a business case for commercial waste collection.</p> | <p>The Board noted that waste collection from residents in the district was the primary function of the waste service but considered that the collection of commercial waste could generate an income for the Council. It was acknowledged that the cost of such a service could outweigh any benefits and agreed that giving consideration to the feasibility of offering such a service through a cost/benefit analysis would be the most appropriate course of action in the first instance.</p> |
| <p>2. That the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board maintain a watching brief on the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership (OWP)</p> | <p>The Board had undertaken a detailed review of the Council's partnership with OWP in 2010/11 and retained the item on their work programme to monitor in light of uncertainty about the financial arrangements.</p> <p>The Board had noted that there was still considerable uncertainty about the financial arrangements and, in particular, the payments to collection authorities from the county council.</p> |

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| | <p>The issue was under discussion by Leaders and Chief Executives across the county and would also be considered by the OWP at their next meeting.</p> <p>Members agreed that this should remain on their work programme and requested that the Head of Environmental Services provide updates to the Board as appropriate.</p> |
| <p>Homelessness Budget</p> <p>The budget scrutiny process for 2013/14 has involved a review of the council's homelessness budget. The Head of Finance and Procurement advised the Board that the Council's homelessness budget had remained relatively stable for the previous two years and the Government had confirmed that the Council's homelessness grant would remain the same for the next two years, but this was not ring fenced.</p> <p>It was anticipated that the need for homelessness support would increase as a result of the Government's Local Government Resources Review and Welfare Reforms Resources Review and Welfare Reforms which could cause budget pressures for the Council. As a consequence, the Board agreed that they should retain a watching brief through the Finance Scrutiny Working Group.</p> | |