

Cherwell District Council

Budget Planning Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Budget Planning Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 24 June 2014 at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor Nicholas Mawer (Chairman)

Councillor Ken Atack
Councillor Timothy Hallchurch MBE
Councillor Mike Kerford-Byrnes
Councillor Melanie Magee
Councillor Alastair Milne Home
Councillor Nigel Randall
Councillor Barry Richards

Apologies for absence: Councillor Douglas Webb
Councillor Carmen Griffiths
Councillor Barry Wood
Councillor Sean Woodcock

Officers: Tim Madden, Interim Head of Finance and Procurement
Nicola Jackson, Corporate Finance Manager
Dave Parry, Democratic and Elections Officer

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Urgent Business

The Chairman reported that he had agreed to accept one item of urgent business in respect of the Annual Report of the Committee, as a decision was required by the Committee before their next meeting on a matter that had arisen since publication of the agenda. The item would be taken after agenda item 8.

5 Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 11 March and 16 June, 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman had no announcements.

7 **Capital Programme Monitoring**

The Committee considered a report of Interim Head of Finance and Procurement providing additional information following the capital programme monitoring report considered by the Committee at its last meeting, and particular comments were raised as follows:

Energy Efficiency Projects – Noting the reference to the use of LED lighting, the Committee enquired whether Zeta Specialist Lighting Ltd., based in Bicester, had been contacted in this respect.

Recycling Bins – The Committee queried the age of the green bins stated in the report, and also requested further information on the reasoning for replacing the current 240 litre capacity bins with bins of only 180 litre capacity.

Highfield Depot – Redevelop Office and Welfare Facilities – Noting the information in the report, it was recalled that the original bid had been approved on the basis that some of the monies were to be used to ascertain whether a relocation was feasible. It was agreed that the appropriate Head of Service be asked to brief the Chairman of the Committee, who would then take a view on whether the matter should be given further consideration by the Committee.

Land at Claypits Lane, Bicester – The Committee expressed concern that the monies originally allocated to this scheme appeared to have been reallocated without the matter being reviewed. It was therefore agreed that the 2014/15 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring – Quarter 1 report to the July meeting of the Committee include a new capital bid in respect of the funding originally allocated to the site 'Land at Claypits Lane, Bicester'

Resolved

- (1) That the 2014/15 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring – Quarter 1 report to the July meeting of the Budget Planning Committee include a new capital bid in respect of the funding originally allocated to the site 'Land at Claypits Lane, Bicester'.
- (2) That, subject to (1) above, the report be noted.

8 **Provisional 2013-14 Revenue and Capital Outturn Report**

The Committee considered a report of the Interim Head of Finance and Procurement summarising the Council's provisional Revenue and Capital performance for the financial year 2013-2014 and reporting on performance against the procurement action plan. The figures were still subject to further validation work to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and proper accounting practices.

The Committee noted that the report had been presented to Executive on the 23 June and its recommendations approved.

Noting that some of the directorate budget underspends came from salary savings resulting from vacant posts, the Committee queried whether mechanisms were in place to ensure residual staffing resources were not being over-stretched. In response, the Interim Head of Finance and Procurement advised that various measures were taken to ensure workloads were not excessive, and the Chairman observed that the situation was monitored by the Personnel Committee and the Council and Employee Joint Committee.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted.

9 **Work Programme 2014-15**

The Committee reviewed the Work Programme 2014/15. Following agreement that an update item be added regarding the introduction of a policy in respect of concessions, concern was expressed that additional meetings might be required in order to give capital bids proper consideration later in the year. It was suggested that a training event for Committee members would be useful, and support the bid consideration process. The Chairman undertook to discuss the matter with officers.

Resolved

- (1) That the work programme be noted.

10 **Urgent Business - Annual Report**

The Committee considered a report which presented the draft Annual Report for the Budget Planning Committee (annex to the minutes as set out in the Minute Book). It was agreed that members of the Committee be asked to submit any suggestions for amendments prior to the report being finalised for submission to Council in July.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to the inclusion of any further comments from members of the Committee, the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee, be granted delegated authority to finalise the Annual Report of the Committee prior to submission to July Council.

11 **Exclusion of the 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.

12

Medium Term Revenue Plan Update

The Committee considered an exempt report of the Interim Head of Finance and Procurement detailing the latest position for the 2015-16 budget and beyond. It was noted that, for future meetings, a spread sheet would be available into which alternative options could be input to produce different outputs for consideration.

The Chairman suggested that, at a future meeting, the Committee could give detailed consideration to a specific service budget and, in this respect, he asked members to let him have their suggestions.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm

Chairman:

Date: