

The Executive – 11 September 2013

Minutes of the meeting of **The Executive** held on **11 September 2013** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr T G Cutmore
Vice Chairman: Cllr K H Hudson

Cllr Mrs G A Lucas-Gill
Cllr Mrs J E McPherson
Cllr M Maddocks

Cllr S P Smith
Cllr M J Steptoe

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllr K J Gordon.

VISITING

Cllr C J Lumley

OFFICERS PRESENT

P Warren	–	Chief Executive
A Dave	–	Chief Executive (Designate)
A Bugeja	–	Head of Legal, Estates and Member Services
Y Woodward	–	Head of Finance
S Fowler	–	Head of Information and Customer Services
J Bourne	–	Head of Community Services
R Evans	–	Head of Environmental Services
B Saunders	–	Street Scene Manager
J Bostock	–	Member Services Manager

The Chairman and Members extended a welcome to Mr Amar Dave to this, his first meeting of the Executive. Mr Dave would be officially taking up his post on 14 October 2013 and welcomed the opportunity to attend in advance of taking up his appointment.

172 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

Resolved

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the next item of business on the grounds that exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

173 WASTE MANAGEMENT AND STREET CLEANSING CONTRACTS

The Chairman of the Review Committee, Cllr C J Lumley, presented the Review Committee's exempt report on proposed options for change and financial savings that could be negotiated with the street cleansing and waste management contractor. Each proposal was dealt with in turn.

During discussion it was noted that:-

- Responsibility for vehicle maintenance would continue to rest with the contractor. Bin provision would in future be funded through the capital programme.
- In terms of recycling incentive schemes and gauging participation, radio frequency chips can be utilised to record that a particular recycling bin has been emptied.
- A new clause in relation to the sharing of efficiency savings could be introduced by mutual agreement with the contractor. New clauses can be introduced as long as they do not represent fundamental change to the original contract.
- Early completion of an extended contract would favour the authority in terms of the saving of grant aid monies.
- It was not anticipated that there would be any changes in fuel costs as the Basildon Anaerobic Centre comes on-stream. There should be some improvements to recycling rates.

It was agreed that it would be appropriate to review whether to introduce a rewards scheme to encourage an increase in dry recycling in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for the Environment, Leisure, Arts and Culture.

On a motion, moved by Cllr K H Hudson and seconded by Cllr Mrs J E McPherson, it was:-

Resolved

- (1) That the option to extend the Waste Management and Street Cleansing contracts is taken up with SITA UK Ltd on the terms detailed in paragraphs 4.1 and 5.1 of the exempt report.
- (2) That the renewal of the contracts be agreed as soon as possible to maximise possible savings.
- (3) That Rochford District Council purchase the vehicle fleet by way of borrowing.
- (4) That responsibility for bin replacements be transferred from SITA UK Ltd to the Council.

- (5) That whether to introduce a rewards scheme to encourage an increase in dry recycling, based upon the Bracknell Forest Council model, be reviewed in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for the Environment, Leisure, Arts and Culture.
- (6) That the revised Rectification and Default Procedure, as set out in the exempt report, be adopted.
- (7) That a new clause be added to the contract to ensure that future efficiency savings are shared. (HES)

The meeting returned to public session.

174 PERFORMANCE REPORT ON KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR THE PERIOD APRIL TO JUNE 2013

The Executive reviewed the Performance Report on Key Performance Indicators for the period April to June 2013.

It was noted that:-

- The new indicator LP1766 (value of business rates collected) had been introduced to ensure that anticipated income would be sufficient. Business rates were dealt with on a cash flow basis.
- Clements Hall Sport Centre visitor levels appeared quite varied in graphical form due to the large size of the centre. Virgin Active was not unduly worried about quarter one attendance figures.
- Some recent IT associated issues would have had an impact on the indicator for the payment of invoices (BV008a). Urgent payments only had been made for a number of days. It was anticipated that payments would be back on target over the next two week period.

Members concurred with the observation of the Chairman that it would be appropriate to request Rochford Housing Association to provide a timeline on the introduction of the additional units for affordable housing currently in development.

Resolved

That the progress against key performance indicators for the first quarter of 2013/14, as set out in the report, be received, subject to Rochford Housing Association being requested to provide a timeline regarding the introduction of the additional units of affordable housing currently in development. (HCS)

175 PERFORMANCE REPORT ON KEY PROJECTS FOR THE PERIOD APRIL TO JUNE 2013

The Executive reviewed the Performance Report on Key Projects for the period April to June 2013.

Particular note was made of the current status of the Joint Area Action Plan for Southend Airport and environs which remained on target albeit that some delays were associated with its progress through Southend-on-Sea Borough Council.

Resolved

That the progress against key projects for the first quarter of 2013/14, as set out in the report, be received. (HF)

176 PROGRESS ON DECISIONS MADE BY FULL COUNCIL/THE EXECUTIVE

The Executive reviewed the progress on decisions schedule.

Resolved

That the progress on decisions made by Full Council/The Executive, as set out in the schedule, be received.

177 DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS

The Executive considered the report of the Head of Community Services on Disabled Facilities Grants.

The Portfolio Holder for Council Tax Collection, Benefits and Strategic Housing Functions advised that he was to ascertain from the County Council whether there are cases requiring Occupational Therapist assessment relating to the Rochford District that should be progressed. It was agreed that it would be of value for the Portfolio Holder to also ascertain the extent of any broader pan Essex delays.

The circumstances surrounding a recent case pointed to the value of a review of the conditions provided to contractors appointed to install equipment to ensure such conditions are clear where a contractor is expected to acquire equipment in advance of their own remuneration.

Resolved

That the content of the report providing a further update on the Council's performance in relation to the processing of Disabled Facility Grant applications and associated works be received subject to:-

- Noting that the Portfolio Holder for Council Tax Collection, Benefits and Strategic Housing Functions is to ascertain from Essex County Council whether there are cases requiring occupational therapist assessment relating to the Rochford District that should be progressed and the extent of any broader pan Essex delays in cases. The Portfolio Holder to report back to the Executive on this subject, including the possibility of the District Council engaging an occupational therapist to address case backlogs should this be appropriate.

- A review of the conditions provided to contractors appointed to install equipment to ensure such conditions are clear where a contractor is expected to acquire equipment in advance of their own remuneration. (HCS)

178 VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS 2014/15

Members considered the report of the Chief Executive on allocating the Voluntary Sector Grants Fund for the 2014/15 financial year.

Resolved

- (1) That the procedure set out in the report for allocating the 2014/15 Voluntary Sector Grants Fund be put in place on the basis that is fair, transparent and compliant with Best Value Statutory Guidance.
- (2) That applications be open to all voluntary groups operating in the District except for the Rochford and Rayleigh Citizens Advice Bureau and the Rayleigh, Rochford and District Association for Voluntary Service who will receive top-sliced funding from the same pot based on the previous year's performance in relation to their Service Level Agreement.
- (3) That the specified timeline outlined in the report, which is in line with Best Value Guidance, be followed. (CE)

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

Resolved

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the remaining business on the grounds that exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

179 RAYLEIGH SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB

Members agreed that it would be appropriate to defer consideration of the exempt report in relation to the Rayleigh Sports and Social Club to enable consultation with appropriate Portfolio Holders on the detail.

Resolved

That consideration of this item be deferred to enable consultation with the Leader, the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transport and Heritage, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources and the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Leisure, Arts and Culture on the detail. (HLEMS/HPT)

180 NEW TELEPHONY SYSTEM

The Executive considered the exempt report of the Head of Information and Customer Services on the purchase of a phone system.

Members concurred with the observation of the Chairman that it was good that some annual maintenance savings could be associated with the proposed system.

It was confirmed that system training for telephonists and other staff had been factored into the proposals. It was also confirmed that the inclusion of reference to Rochford District Council in telephonist responses to callers would be re-affirmed.

Resolved

That a Mitel 3300 phone system be purchased from Daisy Communications via the Daisy Udata Communications Contract tendered by Essex County Council. (HICS)

181 LAND ADJACENT TO HOCKLEY WOODS

The Executive considered the exempt report of the Head of Environmental Services on the purchase of land adjacent to Hockley Woods.

Members concurred with the observation of the Chairman that it was good to see this item coming forward. It was noted that any possibility of obtaining the land via an arrangement other than price would be included in further reporting on this subject. It was recognised that land values could vary substantially depending on classification.

Resolved

- (1) That an agent be appointed to approach the current owner to ascertain whether they are prepared to sell the area of land adjacent to Hockley Woods identified in the exempt report.
- (2) That a further report be submitted setting out the agent's conclusions on the best terms available to purchase the area of land.
- (3) That agent fees of up to £5,000 be funded on the basis set out in paragraph 8.3 of the exempt report. (HES)

182 POLICY FOR CAR ALLOWANCES

Note: The officers present declared an interest in this item.

Members considered the exempt report of the Chief Executive on changes to the Car Allowance Policy. The nature of the returns associated with the staff and union consultation exercise was noted. There would be a further ninety

day consultation process with staff before the changes could be introduced from 1 January 2014.

Resolved

- (1) That to promote the green travel agenda the following changes to the Council's Car Mileage Scheme be introduced:-
 - Change the essential user lump sum payments to reflect CO₂ bandings rather than engine size, with a higher sum paid for cars with a lower emission rating;
 - Pay mileage rates for both essential and casual users at one single rate rather than different amounts, again based on CO₂ bandings rather than the engine size of the vehicle;
 - Introduce a 1500 mileage threshold for authorised business journeys, with car users above this threshold to be designated essential users;
 - Those that are currently designated as essential users regardless of actual annual mileage to retain this designation until such time that they leave the Council or change roles.
- (2) That the new scheme be implemented with effect from 1 January 2014.
(CE)

183 MATTER ARISING – ACACIA HOUSE, ROCHFORD

With regard to the disposal of Acacia House identified in the progress on decisions schedule, there was some discussion on the merits of proceeding through either a sealed bid or an auction process. It was felt that, from the perspective of maximising both transparency and potential interested audience, the auction route would be preferable.

Resolved

That Acacia House, Rochford be disposed of via auction. (HLEMS)

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm.

Chairman

Date

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