

## **The Executive – 9 January 2013**

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Minutes of the meeting of **The Executive** held on **9 January 2013** when there were present:-

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

Cllr K J Gordon	Cllr M Maddocks
Cllr Mrs G A Lucas-Gill	Cllr C G Seagers
Cllr Mrs J E McPherson	Cllr M J Steptoe

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

P Warren	- Chief Executive
A Bugeja	- Head of Legal, Estates and Member Services
J Bourne	- Head of Community Services
R Evans	- Head of Environmental Services
Y Woodward	- Head of Finance
S Worthington	- Committee Administrator

### **6 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2012 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **7 CITY DEAL INITIATIVE – EXPRESSION OF INTEREST BY SOUTHEND BOROUGH COUNCIL**

The Executive considered the report of the Chief Executive asking Members to support the expression of interest under the City Deal initiative to Government to be submitted by Southend Borough Council.

It was noted that the Southend Cabinet had agreed at a meeting yesterday to submit an Expression of Interest to Government on 15 January. Members concurred that this initiative should be supported, and would need to be closely monitored.

#### **Resolved**

That the Expression of Interest to Government, to be submitted by Southend Borough Council, be supported. (CE)

### **8 REVENUES AND BENEFITS CAPITA TELEPHONE CALLS CONTRACT**

The Executive considered the report of the Head of Community Services on the contract for dealing with the Council's Revenues and Benefits telephone calls.

In response to a Member concern relating to some of the performance results associated with this contract, officers advised that the service level agreement

specified that 85% of all calls received should resolve callers' queries at the first point of contact. Responding to a supplementary concern raised about the length of time taken to answer telephone calls, officers stressed that the cost of the contract would have been considerably higher if a time limit for answering calls had been included in the service level agreement. It was further emphasised that any instances of residents having to hold the line for a long time before being put through should be reported to the Council so that any complaints can be properly investigated and resolved.

One Member observed that there would be merit in including performance results relating to this contract in the quarterly performance reports.

During debate around whether it might be feasible to bring this service back in-house it was noted that this option would have to be looked at carefully, in the context of available staffing and resources. Particular reference was made of the possibility of exploring this option within the context of the new telephony contract that was currently being examined. Members concurred that the service would need to be reviewed at an early stage, ie, autumn 2013, so that decisions could be taken in time for 2014/2015.

### **Resolved**

That Capita LGS be awarded a further 12-month contract from 1 April 2013 for taking the Council's Revenues and Benefits telephone calls. (HCS)

### **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

#### **Resolved**

That the press and public 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.

## **9 PROGRESS ON THE NEW GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

**(Note:** Cllr T G Cutmore declared a non pecuniary interest in this item by virtue of chairing the Groundwork Trust, South Essex.)

The Executive considered the exempt report of the Head of Environmental Services on the progress of the new grounds maintenance contract. The Executive's discussion of this matter is set out in the exempt appendix to these Minutes.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the grounds maintenance contract shall be let on a lowest price basis.

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- (2) That a separate report be brought to the Executive outlining whether there is a business case for bringing the cemeteries service in-house at the termination of the existing contract.
- (3) That further interim arrangements be put in place for the remaining grounds maintenance services until autumn/winter 2013.
- (4) That the grounds maintenance contractor shall provide a performance bond.
- (5) That a separate report be brought to the Executive on future provision for football pitches and pavilions. (HES)

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

Chairman .....

Date .....

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