

The Executive – 10 December 2008

Minutes of the meeting of **The Executive** held on **10 December 2008** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr T G Cutmore
Vice-Chairman: Cllr Mrs M J Webster

Cllr Mrs L A Butcher
Cllr K J Gordon
Cllr K H Hudson

Cllr M G B Starke
Cllr P F A Webster

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Mrs T J Capon.

OFFICERS PRESENT

P Warren - Chief Executive
R J Honey - Corporate Director (Internal Services)
G Woolhouse - Corporate Director (External Services)
R Evans - Head of Environmental Services
S Fowler - Head of Information & Customer Services
S Scutton - Head of Planning & Transportation
Y Woodward - Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management
J Bostock - Committee Services Manager

352 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2008 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the final line of the resolution under minute 341 reading 'Any future approaches on matters that may be twinning related to be considered on their merits and referred to the Twinning Association.'

353 MID-YEAR REPORT ON KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR THE PERIOD APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2008

The Executive considered the report of the Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management on progress against performance indicators for the period April to September 2008. It was noted that the low volume of abandoned vehicles meant that only one or two would make a significant difference to the percentage reported.

Resolved

That the progress against performance indicators for the period April to September 2008 be noted. (HFAPM)

354 CAPITAL STRATEGY 2009/10

The Executive considered the report of the Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management on the Capital Strategy 2009/10.

A couple of amendments were agreed and it was:-

Resolved

That the Capital Strategy, as appended to the report, be approved subject to:-

- Removal of the word 'and' from the second bullet point under paragraph 4.6.
- Adjustment to paragraph 4.8 to read 'The Council may consider the purchase of land whilst prices are low, to facilitate housing and town centre development. This could be funded through prudential borrowing.' (HFAPM)

355 INTERIM AMENDMENTS TO THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2008/09

The Executive received a report from the Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management on interim amendments to the Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy 2008/9.

The Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management confirmed that the Council had no debt.

Resolved

That the interim amendments made by the Head of Finance, Audit & Performance Management to the Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy 2008/09 be noted. (HFAPM)

356 PROPOSED LOCAL HIGHWAYS PANEL

The Executive considered the report of the Head of Planning & Transportation seeking views on County Council proposals for the creation of a Local Highways Panel.

Members concurred with the observation of the Portfolio Holder for Planning & Transportation, Councillor K H Hudson, that consultation with the County Council should be on the basis that the proposed local highways panel be integrated into existing District Council Area Committee arrangements.

Particular reference was made to how County proposals meant that final decisions about priorities would still be taken by the County Council Cabinet Member for Highways & Transportation (there being no real delegation of decision making). If Area Committees were not utilised, the District Council

would need to identify additional resources without any increase in the sum of money available from the County.

It was recognised that the Portfolio Holder for Planning & Transportation could be involved in considering the initial disaggregation of the annual budget to Area Committees in consultation with the Area Committee Chairmen. The Area Committees would be able to consider which projects they would like to proceed with.

Resolved

That consultation with the County Council be on the basis that the proposed Local Highways Panel be integrated into existing District Council Area Committee arrangements. (HPT)

357 ACCESS TO SERVICES STRATEGY – UPDATE

The Executive considered the report of the Head of Information & Customer Services providing an update on the Access to Services Strategy.

It was noted that:-

- The Rochford reception/switchboard receives approximately 2,000 personal visits and 8,000 phone calls per month. There are 191 direct lines into the organisation. Consistency of response was an important consideration.
- The projects outlined in the report could be contained within existing budgets.
- The proposed trial for extension of switchboard and reception hours of operation could be for a three month period. Reception staff are already able to deal with some calls without the need for further referral and consideration would be given to the development of this skill for the purpose of the trial. The trial would be given appropriate publicity, including a feature in the Council's newspaper, Rochford District Matters.

Resolved

- (1) That, subject to the trial relating to the extension of switchboard and reception hours being for a period of three months, the proposed projects outlined in paragraph 3.7 of the report be agreed in principle, the detail to be taken forward in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.
- (2) That a further report be submitted to the Executive once the detailed access to services business case has been assessed by officers.
- (3) That the complaints statistics for April to September 2008 be noted. (HICS)

358 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL REPORT

The Executive considered the report of the Head of Information & Customer Services from the Independent Remuneration Panel on Members' allowances for 2009/10.

Recommended to Council

That the Remuneration Scheme for 2009/10 proposed by the Independent Remuneration Panel be adopted. (HICS)

359 LOCAL AUTHORITY BUSINESS GRANT INCENTIVE ALLOCATION

The Executive considered the report of the Chief Executive on the Local Authority Business Grant Incentive Allocation.

Resolved

That the Local Authority Business Grant Incentive Award for 2008 be allocated as follows:-

- £84,000 to fund a full time Business Support Officer post for a period of 3 years, which also includes the cost of all relevant equipment needed including telephone, computer etc.
- £15,000 (£5,000 per year) for expenditure by the Chambers and local businesses on small scale initiatives, to replace the £5,000 per annum budget currently in the Council's Revenue budget.
- £50,000 to undertake a master planning exercise for Rayleigh Town Centre and a further £30,000 to enable the Council to progress this to an Area Action Plan if deemed worthwhile.
- £50,000 to fund the completion of the work around the Joint Area Action Plan covering London Southend Airport and its environs.
- £25,000 to commission a feasibility study/business case around the establishment of an Eco Enterprise Centre within Rochford District. (CE)

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 paragraphs 1 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be disclosed.

360 ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIVISION – INTERNAL RESTRUCTURING

The Executive considered the exempt report of the Head of Environmental Services containing proposed internal restructuring arrangements for the Environmental Services Division.

Resolved

That the proposed internal restructuring of the Environmental Services Division, as set out in the exempt report, be agreed. (HES)

The meeting closed at 8.56 pm.

Chairman

Date

If you would like these minutes in large print, braille or another language please contact 01702 546366.