



### EXECUTIVE

5.30 p.m. – 7. 00 p.m.

16 December 2009

Present: Councillors Morphew (Chair), Morrey (Vice-Chair), Arthur, Blakeway, Bremner, Brociek-Coulton, Sands and Waters

Also Present: Councillors Jeraj, Stephenson and Wright

#### 1. HEReward COOKE

The Chair referred to the recent sudden death of Hereward Cooke and paid tribute to his contribution to the City as a Councillor, Clergy and Chaplin.

Councillor Wright also paid tribute to his contribution to the City as an environmental champion and said he would be greatly missed.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Blakeway declared a personal interest in item \*5 Annex C to item below as she was employed by the project funded by LEGI.

#### 3. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL POSITION STATEMENT, CAPITAL FUNDING POSITION STATEMENT AND REVISED CITY COUNCIL AIMS AND PRIORITIES

The Director of Transformation introduced the report and referred the need to identify major General Fund revenue savings and cost reductions to reflect the current financial climate. Although there was some good news there were still some serious risks with approximately £8.4 million pounds savings required over the next three years and approximately £6.3 million pounds over the next financial year. The Deputy Chief Executive said the capital funding remained very tight and although the arrangement with the Homes and Communities Agency had provided capital funding further funding would be needed over the next few years.

The Director of Transformation commented on the need to review the Council's priorities in light of the financial position. These would be debated at full council on 26 January 2010 and as part of the budget debate in February. Councillor Waters, Executive Member for Corporate Resources and Governance welcomed the decision to discuss the corporate policy.

**RESOLVED, to –**

- (1) note the updated General Fund revenue budget position statement (Annex A to the report);
- (2) note the updated capital funding position statement (Annex B to the report);
- (3) agree to retain the existing 5 strategic aims for the City Council, and
- (4) agree the revised priorities for the 2010-2012 period (Annex D to the report) and agree that these should be debated at full Council in January 2010 prior to incorporation into a revised Corporate Plan 2010-2012, for publication in March 2010.

**4. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of Item 5 below on the grounds contained in paragraph 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

**\*5. IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME – PROPOSED SAVINGS FOR 2010/11 (PARAGRAPH 4)**

(Copies of the feedback from the Joint Venture Partnership property staff consultation, response to issues raised by Scrutiny and Unison's comments were circulated at the meeting.).

The Director of Transformation presented the report and referred to the work done to develop efficiency and cost reduction proposals to close the budget gap.

The Unison Branch Secretary said the union was opposed to any job cuts and remained concerned but appreciated the consultation. The union still had concerns around the joint venture but had taken a pragmatic line to look at this though it had an in principle opposition to shared services.

Councillor Stephenson asked if the Executive had received any documents relating to the staff consultation feedback and if staff were in a position to make suggestions to the proposals as they had not had an overview of the whole picture. The Deputy Chief Executive said there had been a thorough programmed consultation with staff and all comments had been discussed with Unison. The Chair said he would not expect staff comments to be circulated to members.

The Deputy Chief Executive explained the reason for the proposal to remove the cashiers function and answered a number of questions about how these savings would be achieved. If approved she said that people would still be able to pay by cash at post offices and pay points at various locations as well as paying with cheques and debit cards at City Hall. Support would be put in place to help those who needed it. Assurances were given that an implementation plan would be developed.

The Head of Communications and Cultural Services answered questions relating to promoting sports facilities and sponsorship for the Lord Mayors celebrations.

The Director of Regeneration and Development referred to the issues raised by the Scrutiny Committee. The Chair said the way forward for provision of the economic development function would be to have a contingency fund which could be used for responding to any unexpected events.

The Director of Regeneration and Development commented on the concerns about the proposal to withdraw the pest control service. Although the Council had a statutory duty to keep the city free of rats and mice, the public health issues could be addressed by continuing to provide a subsidised service through a nominated service provider. This approach was already adopted by a number of other Councils. The Head of Legal, Regulatory and Democratic services said the statutory duty for rats and mice would be fulfilled by officers assessing potential problems and then signposting to a provider in the private sector as appropriate. The Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods said the Council would deal with rats and mice on council land and would also pick up any problems on private land where the owner of that land could not be identified. The Chair said officers would do more work and bring back to Executive an implementation plan.

The Director of Regeneration and Development explained the reasons behind the Asset Management review. The major outcome for the management of assets was to ensure that the service was fit for purpose and the Council was a long way from achieving this aim. Councillor Waters, Executive Member for Corporate Resources and Governance, said he was reluctant to see staff transferred to a joint venture partnership, but was reassured by the staff's positive attitude following their visit to the proposed organisation.

The Deputy Chief Executive explained the voluntary staff changes and said the list was much smaller than had been anticipated. The Chief Executive said although a small number of posts had been identified for redundancy there may be others following the consultation.

**RESOLVED** to –

- (1) note the responses to the internal and external consultation processes (Annexes A and B);
- (2) agree to implement a programme of savings which have no staffing implications (see Annex C);
- (3) agree to implement a programme of revised savings proposals with staffing impacts (see Annex D);
- (4) agree to a range of voluntary staff changes subject to an implementation programme for the cashiers (see Annex E);
- (5) subject to approval by the Executive during the early part of 2010 agree 'in principle' to proceed with the joint venture partnership with Norfolk Property Services (see Annex F);
- (6) note that service planning for the 2010-2012 period will commence in February 2010.

CHAIR