



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

5.30 p.m. - 7.30 p.m.

21 January 2009

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

Also Present: Councillors Gledhill, Little (A), Lubbock, Ramsey, Stephenson and Watkins

Apologies:

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Blakeway declared an interest in the item on Greyhound Opening/Goldsmith Street as a member of the Panel that would be hearing the associated Personnel Appeal.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 7 January 2009.

3. GREYHOUND OPENING/GOLDSMITH STREET – UPDATE

(Councillor Blakeway, having previously declared an interest in this item, left the room while it was under consideration)

(Mr Phil Watson, CBE, attended the meeting for this item)

The Chief Executive Officer introduced the report and Mr Watson presented the findings from his independent review of the Council's investigations into the Greyhound Opening/Goldsmith Street sheltered housing decommissioning and explained the reasons for his further recommendations.

The Monitoring Officer referred to the discussion at the Scrutiny Committee earlier in the afternoon and read out the recommendations from that meeting.

Councillor Watkins commented on the outstanding issues still to be reviewed. He said that, depending on the scope of any review undertaken by the Audit Commission, a full independent inquiry might still be required. Councillor Ramsey referred to discussion on this issue at the Scrutiny Committee. It had generally been agreed that it would be premature to make a decision on whether further

investigations were required until the associated investigations including the possible Audit Commission review had been completed.

The Chair said that it will be helpful if an action plan for progressing those issues which could be progressed at this stage was prepared in time for the next meeting.

Councillor Arthur expressed her appreciation of the work being done by housing staff who were continuing to deliver quality services in difficult circumstances.

RESOLVED to –

- (1) note the comments of the Scrutiny Committee;
- (2) adopt the recommendations set out in the independent report by Mr Phil Watson, CBE;
- (3) refer the monitoring officer's recommendations to the Audit Committee; and
- (4) ask that an action plan for progressing those issues which can be progressed at the present time is submitted to the next meeting.

4. INDEPENDENT COMMISSION FOR OLDER PEOPLE

(David Fullman, Felicity Hartley, Irene Oliver and Chris Southgate of the Older Persons Commission attended the meeting for this item)

Councillor Arthur referred to the background to the establishment of the Older Persons Commission and outlined the recommendations contained in their report on the needs of older people living in and around Norwich. She hoped that a further report containing proposals for introducing the recommendations on a phased basis taking account of the resources available could be considered at a future meeting. She would like to see priority given to the establishment of a single 'Older Person's Forum' for the City. She also commented on the need to identify a named officer to be responsible for coordinating this work.

The Chief Executive Officer suggested that the report should also be referred to the Local Strategic Partnership to ensure that its findings and recommendations were formally drawn to the attention of all the Council's partners.

Members expressed their appreciation of the work done by members of the Older Persons Commission in producing the report.

RESOLVED to –

- (1) endorse the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Commission;
- (2) support the circulation of the report to inform the services providers of the needs and feelings of older people living in and around Norwich;
- (3) ask that the findings, conclusions and recommendations be taken into account when developing all service areas;

- (4) note that there is no City Council budget provision for implementation of the Commission's recommendations and agree to consider this as part of the budget preparation for 2009/10;
- (5) ask for a progress report and action plan to be submitted to the Executive within the next two months;
- (6) ask that an article on the report is included in a future edition of the Citizen; and
- (7) refer the report to the Local Strategic Partnership.

5. CORPORATE PROPERTY ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2008

The Head of Asset and City Management presented the report and, together with Councillor Waters, highlighted the key issues identified in the plan.

RESOLVED to –

- (1) note the progress made following the last plan including property performance relating to capital sales, income gross, risk and compliance;
- (2) note that the Asset Management Group is now working to include housing assets and a housing property asset management plan is being presented separately; and
- (3) note that the Asset Management Group will focus on the following key areas in 2009/10:-
 - (a) A comprehensive review of all Council assets to identify those that perform well for the Council assessed against their function, add long term value and are appropriately provided. From this conclusions will be drawn leading to a strategy recommendation for the existing portfolio.
 - (b) The development of a range of options to address maintenance issues of existing properties.
 - (c) Review of the role of partnerships such as HEART in the delivery of services relating to Council assets.

6. HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2008

The Head of Housing Property Services presented the report and explained that the main focus of the housing asset management plan was on service delivery rather than income and investment. He referred to the need to develop a communication plan for consultation with tenant groups. The Chief Executive Officer referred to a suggestion that this should be done through a Joint Panel with the Citywide Board.

RESOLVED to –

- (1) note the content of the Housing Asset Management Strategy;
- (2) note that the Asset Management Group is now working to include housing assets and a corporate asset management plan is being presented separately;
- (3) endorse proposals for the establishment of a Joint Panel comprising representatives of the Citywide Board and the Executive to monitor the rollout of the Asset Management Plan and the arrangements for detailed consultation with tenants as the plan evolves.

7. JOINT CORE STRATEGY

The Planning Policy and Project Manager presented his report and referred to the comments made by the Local Development Framework Working Party on 12 January 2009. He also referred to representations received beyond the end of the last consultation period including 65 objections from residents of the Mangreen area.

He said that the GNPD would be meeting again on 19 February to consider the Planning Inspectorate's recommendations.

RESOLVED to endorse the favoured option of the Greater Norwich Development Partnership for the Joint Core Strategy for full public consultation subject to a review of the evidence and soundness by the Planning Inspectorate and subject to noting the concerns raised by the Local Development Framework Working Party.

8. REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY REVIEW

The Head of Planning presented his report and outlined the proposed response to the East of England Regional Assembly as part of the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy up to 2031.

RESOLVED to endorse the advice from Norfolk County Council, as the Section 4(4) for authority, to the East of England Regional Assembly as part of the review of the Regional Spatial Strategy to 2031 subject to concerns about the unfortunate timing of the East of England Plan review and the alarming content of the recent Regional Scale Settlement Report.

9. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of item 11 below on the grounds contained in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(a) of the Local Government Act 1972.

11* CITYCARE SERVICES RE-PROVISIONING STRATEGY (Paragraph 3)

The Deputy Chief Executive Officer presented the report and, together with Councillor Waters answered questions about the proposed strategy for the re-provisioning of the CityCare services.

Discussion took place on the three contracts proposed for early re-lets and the need to involve sheltered housing tenants in the re-letting of the contract for laundry equipment maintenance.

RESOLVED to –

- (1) agree the proposed strategy;
- (2) note that the scope of services discussed at the Contracts Working Party on 9 January 2009 is work in progress that is moving the re-provisioning of services in the right direction but will be further refined and returned to the Executive for approval;
- (3) agree that the in-sourcing of services is discounted but reserved as an option if the market does not provide the required level of services at an affordable price; and
- (4) agree that the next generation of contract renewals provides the opportunity for exploring the in-sourcing of services in more detail.

CHAIR

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