



MINUTES

EXECUTIVE

5.30 p.m. – 7. 45 p.m.

8 April 2009

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

Apologies: Councillors Bremner and Sands

Also Present: Councillors Lubbock, Jeraj, Ramsay and Wright

1. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Financial Support for a Car Club in Norwich

Councillor Lubbock asked the following question:-

‘At the Executive meeting on 4 March a report was considered by the Executive on the need to financially support a car club in Norwich in order that it survive. The report suggested spending £31,000 to sustain a car club in Norwich.

At the meeting I supported the report and at the same time asked that money from section 106 agreements be spent on supporting a cycle hire scheme for Norwich. I linked the 2 together saying that IF public money was to be spent on a car hire scheme then so too should money be spent on a cycle hire scheme - both encourage sustainable transport but cycle hire was undoubtedly more sustainable than car hire.

The Executive took the decision to ask the officers to bring back to the next executive meeting a business plan for the car hire scheme and to report on the suggestion of supporting a cycle hire scheme. Please could you say what has happened to that report and decision?’

Councillor Morrey, Executive Member for Sustainable City Development’s reply:-

‘I note your support for a cycle hire scheme and this could certainly be looked at as part of a future S106 allocation but would require further work in relation to its feasibility which would take into account potential benefits and likely costs. This work had been done in relation to the car club, the infrastructure was in place and initial feasibility has been tested. It is for this reason that this item has been put forward for potential future S 106 funding. In an ideal world we would like to support both car

clubs and cycling initiatives but with very limited resources we would have to take a view on the best way forward in relation to the car club in May and continue to look at how we could promote cycling the latter informed by the work of the cycling task and finish scrutiny group.

The original report had been taken forward as an urgent item due to the financial position of the car club. However with the County Council's support this urgency had gone away and it was felt that a more measured approach would be worthwhile. The timetable for the report was therefore now for it to go to the 13 May Executive.

I note your support for a cycle hire scheme and this was something that could be considered for future S106 funding support. Naturally the Executive would need to consider the benefits, costs and business case for a cycle hire scheme before making any decision. This would require a separate report to be prepared by officers for the Executive to consider in due course.'

2. MINUTES

The Executive considered the minutes of their last meeting. The Head of Procurement and Service Improvement referred to minute 6 on the and Publication of OJEU Notice for the Public Facing Contracts Currently Provided by CityCare and explained that the lengths stated in the table in section 2 of the main report, should have contained a further column stating the extension options for those contracts. The Executive had approved "that the contracts were broken down in to the lots as described below" i.e. in the table which would have contracts that last for 3, 5 and 7 years without the option for them to continue after this time. The intention was to issue an OJEU notice that allowed for an initial contract period as stated in the table but with extension options allowing for a contract period of up to 10 years, with the exception of the Refuse, Recycling and Waste where the total contract period would be up to 14 years (i.e. an initial period of 7 years followed by an option to extend for a further 7 years).

RESOLVED, to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2009, subject to the amendment minuted above.

3. ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER 2007/08

The Chief Executive presented the report. She informed members that the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter provided a mixed picture with the Council having made good progress in some areas, notably the financial management, but needed to work harder in others. The economic downturn had had a dramatic effect on the Council's budget, along with the concessionary bus fares scheme and there were some challenging times ahead.

RESOLVED, to –

- (1) note the contents of the Annual Audit Letter 2007/08;
- (2) refer to the report on the "Corporate Improvement and Efficiency Board" on the agenda for proposed actions to achieve necessary improvements.

4. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY FRAMEWORK 2009-2011

The Chief Executive introduced the report and referred to the actions already taken and planned for the future to address the issues raised by the Audit Commission. She updated members on the current position of the reserves of over £10m through prudent planning and with over £2m efficiency savings identified. However, with the economic downturn which had had an impact on the income levels, the Council needed to find savings of £7m in the next financial year.

The Head of Finance presented the Medium Term Financial Strategy and explained that the financial situation was constantly changing. To ensure the Council was ready to respond to the economic downturn it was proposed to establish a 'Corporate Improvement and Efficiency Board' to drive the transformation agenda forward.

The Chief Executive said that the 'Aiming for Excellence' programme needed to be refreshed and focus around improving efficiency savings. The Audit Commission had recently made an inspection of the Housing Landlord Services, and the Housing Improvement Board including internal and external experts to advise on how to improve services and how to involve tenants in driving improvements had been set up to address their findings. In reply to a question she said the Board were purely an advisable body with no executive authority and members were not requesting financial payment for time or travel.

The Executive Member for Housing and Adult Services said this was a very impressive board, and together with landlord services staff and the City Wide Board would all pull together to improve services in this area.

RESOLVED, to –

- (1) approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy which sets out the financial context for the transformation programme (Annex A);
- (2) refresh the Aiming for Excellence programme to take full account of the emerging financial climate, and the need to prepare for potential unitary status (Annex B);
- (3) establish a Corporate Improvement and Efficiency Board (CIEB) to oversee and drive the corporate transformation programme;
- (4) agree proposals for a Housing Improvement Board to oversee and drive specific improvements in the housing service (Annex C).

5. DRAFT FINANCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY

The National Management Trainee presented the report and referred to the action plan for providing effective services and support to Norwich residents and with a list of lobbying issues that would support the financial inclusion agenda.

The Executive Member for Corporate Resources and Governance said it was important to work in partnership with key stakeholders including private and voluntary organisations who played an important role in reducing financial inclusion. This Strategy amongst other initiatives, would help support people through and beyond the recession.

The Head of Community Services said that there was work needed to capture all services available and to make sure they go to those who need them in the community.

During discussion it was suggested that the post bank motion be considered when compiling the list for lobbying.

RESOLVED to –

- (1) endorse the draft strategy and action plan;
- (2) ask Scrutiny Committee to consider the medium term objectives and activities that the Council and partners put in place beyond March 2010 to achieve the objectives set out in the strategy;
- (3) lobby for change on certain issues which would contribute to greater financial inclusion.

6. GREATER NORWICH DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP ECONOMIC STRATEGY

The Head of Economic Development presented the report. She referred to the extensive public consultation which had taken place before the draft strategy went through a final external consultation. There had also been an extensive consultation at officer and member level. The strategy had been ratified by the Greater Norwich Development Partnership Policy Group. A more detailed action plan would be developed which outlined actions for the four authorities.

RESOLVED to approve the Greater Norwich Development Partnership Economic Strategy.

7. NORWICH CITY COUNCIL CARBON MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Environmental Strategy Manager presented the report and explained that the Carbon Management Plan (CMP) would be used to seek match funding from SALIX. This would provide funding of £400,000 which would be managed by the Local Authority Carbon Management Board.

In reply to a question, the Environmental Strategy Manager said that the 'Invest to Save' funding would be used to match fund projects that would payback within two years. The CMP would be used to focus on the Council's in house activities and once our own house was in order it would be able to focus externally.

RESOLVED, to approve the Carbon Management Plan, for submission to the Carbon Reduction Trust, and as the basis for an application for SALIX match funding for a range of environmental initiatives to reduce our carbon footprint and reduce energy costs.

8. ANNUAL PARTNERSHIP REVIEW

The Partnership Manager introduced the report and the National Management Trainee explained the progress made in relation to the review and development of the Council's involvement in partnerships.

The Executive Member for Corporate Resources and Governance said this was a very important document for members. He also referred to the role for Scrutiny and full council in looking at the partnerships the Council had and at what was relevant.

RESOLVED to –

- (1) endorse the partnerships register as a composite list of current partnerships (appendix 1);
- (2) note the elected member representation on all partnerships and the officer representation on significant partnerships (appendix 2);
- (3) endorse the partnership risk register and action plan (appendix 3);
- (4) agree the actions arising from evaluations and continued involvement in the partnerships (appendix 4);
- (5) agree the future programme of work required to further develop and embed the process and outcomes, in order to impact upon future inspections.

9. CNC BUILDING CONTROL JOINT COMMITTEE

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services presented the report.

RESOLVED, that Norwich City Council continue to be a partner in the CNC Building Control Consultancy (Joint Committee)

10. TENDER EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR THE BUILDING CLEANING CONTRACT

The Head of Procurement and Service Improvement presented the report and said that this had been endorsed by the Contract Working Party at their meeting on 27 March 2009.

The Executive Member for Sustainable City Development said he was satisfied with the tendering process which would look to receive a good price, based around equality, diversity and environmental considerations to obtain a good balance.

RESOLVED to –

- (1) use the tender evaluation criteria as set out in the report;
- (2) approve the weightings as described in the report.

11. PRE-QUALIFICATION CRITERIA FOR THE CITY CARE SERVICE RE-PROVISIONING

The Head of Procurement and Service Improvement presented the report and referred to the recommendations made by the Contracts Working Party.

In response to a question, the Head of Procurement and Service Improvement said that the applicant would need to be able to demonstrate a good financial standing and that they were able to deliver the service.

RESOLVED to –

- (1) use the Office for Government Commence Pre-Qualification Questionnaire Version 0.1 as at Appendix 1 of the report;
- (2) approve the weightings as described in the report and as detailed in the office for Government Commence Pre-Qualification Questionnaire : Evaluation Methodology Version 0.1 as at Appendix 2 except for voluntary disqualification items discretion is used as detailed in the report (Part G of the evaluation criteria).

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of Items 13 - 15 below on the grounds contained in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

***13. LAND ASSEMBLY (PARAGRAPH 3)**

RESOLVED, having considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Development, to approve the purchase of Alderman Clarke House from Norfolk County Council before proceeding to sell all the land at the Greyhound Opening site for the provision of 102 affordable housing units.

***14. NORWICH CITY COUNCIL GARAGE REVIEW (PARAGRAPH 3)**

The Senior Development Officer (Enabling) presented the report and answered members' questions.

RESOLVED to -

- (1) note the main conclusions of the Garage Review as set out in paragraphs 1-13 of the report
- (2) agree the following principles:
 - (a) approximately two thirds of the total garage stock remain for continued use by the local community but that ways of using them to increase revenue are explored.
 - (b) approximately a quarter of the total garage stock be considered for development of new affordable housing.
 - (c) approximately a tenth of the total garage stock be considered for demolition and conversion to rentable car-parking spaces subject to funding in the HRA capital plan.

- (d) a very small amount of garages be considered for sale individually to achieve a capital receipt for the council.

(3) subject to above principles agree:

- (i) the process for the decommissioning and disposal of garage sites follows the same approach as that to be adopted for the redevelopment of council housing. (See appendix 1 for process flowchart.)
- (ii) parking was an important issue and the Council would ensure that garages which were well used, cost effective to maintain and which were in high demand were kept for local people to use. Where garages were not well used but there was a demand for parking, the council would consider replacing garages with parking spaces to help meet the local need. No site would be demolished for parking without a full consultation with garage tenants, local residents and ward councillors.
- (iii) the running of council garages should be cost effective. This would mean that the council would look at different ideas such as considering an increase in the rent charged, selling a small number of sites and demolishing sites which were expensive to repair and maintain. However no site would be sold or demolished without a full consultation with garage tenants, local residents and ward councillors.
- (iv) there was a great demand for new affordable housing in Norwich, so we will consider developing a number of sites for new affordable housing. This would only take place on a limited number of sites which were suitable for redevelopment and where the garages were not well used, were in a poor condition and where the local parking situation would not be made worse. A full public consultation with garage tenants, local residents and ward councillors would take place for any site considered for development.
- (v) action would be taken to make changes to sites where crime and anti social behaviour was a problem. This was likely to be achieved through either cost effective security improvements to sites or through the demolition of sites. Sites may be demolished to be replaced with parking, new affordable housing or by other community uses which were needed in the area and which may be identified through consultation events.
- (vi) a review of pricing arrangements for non council tenants would be undertaken and a differential charging structure considered.

RESOLVED, having considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive to approve the payment relating to the redundancy of the post holder as detailed in the report.

CHAIR