



POLICY, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

PARKSIDE, STATION APPROACH, BURTON STREET, MELTON MOWBRAY

17 APRIL 2012

PRESENT:-

Councillors J.B.Rhodes (Chairman),
S.Dungworth, M.C.R. Graham MBE, G.Bush, M.W.Barnes,
J.T.Orson, E.Hutchison, P.M.Posnett, D.R.Wright, J.Wyatt

As Observer - Councillor Holmes

Chief Executive, Strategic Director (CM), Strategic Director (KA),
Head of Central Services, Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods,
Head of Communications, Environmental Protection & Safety Manager,
Committee Support Officer (JR).

P81. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barnes and Holmes who both joined the meeting at a later time.

P82. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2012 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chairman.

P83. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Orson, Posnett and Rhodes declared personal and non-prejudicial interests in any matters relating to Leicestershire County Council due to their role as County Councillors.

P84. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

Rural, Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee: 7 March 2012
Revenue Budget Monitoring April to December 2011 – General Fund
RESOLVED that utilisation of the Local Development Framework (LDF) Reserve in the sum of £130k be allowed to fund Local Plans expenditure.

P85. UPDATE ON DECISIONS

The Chief Executive submitted an update on decisions from previous meetings of the Committee.

RESOLVED that the Update on Decisions document be updated to reflect progress and work completed.

P86. HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

The Head of Regulatory Services submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which sought approval for the Health & Safety Policy. The Environmental Protection & Safety Manager updated members on the policy and responded to enquiries regarding protecting against Legionnaires Disease.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the policy be approved;
- (2) the Head of Regulatory Services be granted delegated authority to amend the policies in line with the Health & Safety legislation and best practice guidance.

P87. CORPORATE ISSUES

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which updated members on a variety of corporate issues at a local and county wide level. It was advised that the County Council have established a system of management contacts for all District Councils within the county framework. The Relationship Managers have been established for a trial period of 3 months with consideration to be given to formal implementation after this time. The role should ensure a smooth flow of information, improved lines of communication, and the development of understanding.

The “Achieving Standard” in the Equalities Framework for Local Government has been granted to Melton Borough Council which is a significant outcome. A formal report will be received from the Peer Reviewers in due time.

The renewal of the “Investors in People” accreditation inspection will take place early May. Some Officers have been invited to meet with the Assessor. The emphasis is on human resources, relationships with trade unions and staff, and the development opportunities for staff through training.

The Service Standards outcomes are part of the review by the Performance Management Task Group. Unfortunately the last scheduled meeting did not take place so a more detailed report on learning from the standards will be included at the next meeting. The Environmental Protection & Safety Manager did explain that Environmental Health inspections of food handling premises were taking place earlier than the 4 week period before and after the due anniversary inspection date. This Standard has now reverted to being reported annually rather than monthly.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the report be noted;

- (2) the Council is to receive the views of the Melton Community Partnership on the Commissioning Plan for the Locality at its next meeting on April 19th 2012;
- (3) the Committee is to receive a report from the Performance Management Task Group at either its June or September meeting dependent upon the views of the Task Group upon its readiness to report back on the pilot Performance Management Systems.

(The Environmental Protection & Safety Manager here left the meeting)

P88. BUDGET IMPLICATIONS OF CAPITAL RECEIPT

The Head of Central Services submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which outlined the remaining financial implications/impact on the revenue budget of the large capital receipt and service issues arising. Under delegated authority a portion of the capital receipt has been used to repay general fund debt and fund existing capital projects in place of borrowing. This results in an unused balance of £6.8m which is available for investment until it is utilised. The possibility of capitalising any revenue costs to offset against this receipt will be undertaken as part of the year end closedown. The outcome will form part of the year end report which will be presented to this committee.

By repaying debt the revenue budget benefits from savings in external interest and principal debt repayments and also the benefit received from investment of the balance. This results in a surplus of £408k on the General Fund revenue budget and £5k on Special Expenses MM. Changes in local government finance are to be implemented in 2013 relating to the retention of business rates and localisation of council tax benefit. Both of these measures could impact significantly on resources received as well as the volatility of funding in the future. The Head of Central Services advised that a prudent approach should be taken with regard to any ongoing commitments relating to revenue resources.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the actions taken under delegated authority in utilising part of the receipt for repaying general fund debt and funding capital expenditure be noted;
- (2) the latest position in regard to the capitalisation of revenue costs for offset against the capital receipt be noted;
- (3) the amended revenue budget estimates in respect of the general fund be noted

P89. NEW HOMES BONUS PROTOCOL

The Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which sought approval for the New Homes Bonus Protocol which would guide decisions on the use of New Homes Funding. The New Homes scheme at Old Dalby was reported to be highly successful and a good example to other villages of what can be achieved.

The Leader advised that he would write to all local Parishes and encourage them to participate in the New Homes process and maximise the opportunities within the Protocol.

RESOLVED that

(1) the New Homes Bonus Protocol for publication and use in investment, financial planning and budgeting processes be approved.

(Councillor Holmes entered the meeting during consideration of the previous item)

P90. **OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY AND OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY DRESS REHEARSAL EVENT**

The Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which updated Members on the detailed plans of the Olympic Torch visiting the Borough of Melton for the national dress rehearsal event on 20th April 2012 and the actual Olympic Torch Relay event on Tuesday 3rd July 2012. Discussion took place regarding the £30,000 supplementary estimate, from the working balance, required to cover the costs incurred due to hosting the Olympic Torch Relay on both of these dates. The majority of the expenditure relates to the safety and security of the event whilst it travels through the Melton Borough. MBC are paying to host these events and all security and public safety items e.g. high visual jackets, radios and barriers. There are strict guidelines on the use of official Olympic merchandise and promotions. Primary school children will be invited into the main town park for supervised activities on July 3rd 2012. The Melton Photography Club is sponsoring a photographic competition. Members of the public will be invited to contribute their photographs of this memorable, historic event to the competition. Publicity on July 3rd 2012 will not only be nationwide but worldwide also as live events are to be broadcast via the internet by the BBC.

RESOLVED that

(1) plans and the request for a supplementary estimate of £30,000 to budget for the Olympic Torch Relay Event from the working balance be approved.

(Councillor Barnes entered the meeting during consideration of the previous item))

(The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods here left the meeting)

P91. **CORPORATE COMPLAINTS POLICY**

The Head of Communications submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which sought approval for the revised and updated Corporate Complaints Policy. The policy is more streamlined and aims to ensure all complaints are dealt with proactively, efficiently and in a timely manner. No feedback has been received to date but the consultation period remains open for any comments received.

RESOLVED that

- (1) that the Corporate Complaints Policy be approved;
- (2) further consultation on this policy on the web site be undertaken;

- (3) the Head of Communications be granted delegated authority to amend the policy in light of further consultation comments, from feedback, where appropriate.

P92. SCALE OF FEES AND EXPENSES PAYABLE TO RETURNING OFFICER FOR BOROUGH/PARISH/COUNTY/ AND MAYORAL REFERENDUMS

The Head of Communications submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which sought approval of the scale of fees and expenses payable to the Returning Officer for Borough/Parish/County and Mayoral Referendums.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the scale of fees as proposed by the Leicestershire Elections Administration Group for Borough/Parish/County and Mayoral referendums be approved.
(2) there be no increase in fees for 2012/13

P93. AWARD OF MERIT TASK GROUP - UPDATE

Award recipients have been invited to the Full Council meeting to be held 18th April 2012. Their awards will be formally presented by the Mayor. Those to be presented are:

For the Award of Merit:

- Malcolm Britton
- Lt Mark Whitehead
- Chris McCluskey
- Di Featherstone

For the Young Citizen Award:

- Chris Knott

Malcolm Britton will receive the 'Robert Hyslop Most Outstanding Service to the Community Award' for many years of working voluntarily in the Frisby/Brooksby community in a range of activities.

Lt Mark Whitehead will receive the 'Derek Sanders Cup' for his contribution to the Melton Army Cadet Force which, under his leadership as Detachment Commander, has become one of the top detachments in the County.

Chris McCluskey is a gardening co-ordinator who works tirelessly in the community to improve the appearance and physical environment of some of the more deprived areas of Melton Mowbray.

Di Featherstone is a Connexions Personal Advisor who has an amazing rapport with young people and contributes extraordinary support to them in her role at Connexions. Many young people have had their prospects changed and lives improved due to her determination.

Chris Knott will receive the Young Citizen Award for his activities at the Hub. He is now delivering services of the Hub's Country Park Café especially on the catering side and assists in producing healthy fresh food and menus.

P94. PROVISIONAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME YEAR END POSITION 2011-12

The Head of Central Services submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which provided information on the provisional Capital programme year end position for 2011-12, including a range of performance measures and to give consideration for requests for carrying forward unspent budgets in 2011-12 to 2012-13 in respect of specific schemes. The Burton Street lighting scheme was highlighted as being carried forward due to some complaints regarding the lighting. This sum could then be utilised for any interim work, if necessary, as part of the overall plan. The Strategic Director advised that a full report on the Burton Street Plans will be presented, by the Corporate Property Officer, to this committee in July 2012.

RESOLVED that

- (1) those schemes in the 2011-12 Capital programme totalling £1,248,000 be carried forward and included in the Capital programme as funded schemes;
- (2) delegated authority be granted to the Head of Central Services to vary the amount of the agreed carry forward on any scheme subject to the spending on any scheme not exceeding the total approved amount.

P95. CARRY FORWARD OF REVENUE BUDGETS

The Head of Central Services submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which sought approval for requests from Budget Holders to carry forward under spent budgets from 2011/12 to 2012/13. These total £153,400 although the amount will be refined under delegated authority when the actual position is known later on in the closedown process. The requests have been previously scrutinised by Management Team. A balance has been struck between allowing flexibility and not allowing budgets to be built up above a level that can be resourced by considering the carried forward amounts last year and the year end position, last year, for these services.

IT projects are on schedule but the high costs of £39k (Remote backup solution at the Cove) and £38,400 (Socitm Consultant Fees for ongoing IT review) were noted by Members. The Chief Executive advised that investment in IT has to be made as it is so important to our organisation and crucial in making MBC a progressive working Council.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the requests set out in Appendix A for budgets to be carried forward from 2011/12 to 2012/13 be approved;
- (2) when the final year end position is known the actual under spend is compared to the amount requested and the Head of Central Services be given delegated authority to amend the actual amount carried forward.

P96. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL UNDER FINANCIAL PROCEDURE RULES

The Head of Central Services submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which sought approval for requests under the financial procedure rules and to provide information on amounts approved under delegated powers. An explanation of the Customer Service staffing levels was given by the Head of Communications. All new recruited Customer Service staff will have permanent contracts with a six month probation period. The Call Centre performance has improved in April with Senior Officers assisting on a rota basis. The Council website is to be upgraded which will allow for more online transactions thus decreasing the number of calls direct to the Council. A request was made that the establishment figures should be strongly monitored. A motion was raised to keep the limit for virements, approved under delegated authority, and reported to the Policy, Finance and Administration Committee at £5K. Members voted against this motion.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the virements approved under delegated powers be noted;
- (2) the limit for virements approved under delegated authority and reported to this committee be increased to £10k;
- (3) the budget reductions approved under delegated powers be noted;
- (4) the supplementary estimates approved under delegated powers be noted;
- (5) the use of the working balance to fund 4 additional FTE Customer Services Advisors and 1 FTE additional CRM Development Officer and a permanent increase to the establishment be approved.
- (6) Recommendation 2.1(f) be deleted due to it being covered by Agenda Item 4.

P97. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which proposed a full complement of Terms of Reference for a new Governance Committee and Ethical Governance Panel. After consideration of the Terms of Reference an amendment is to be made to the Governance Committee terms at E. Mayoralty No.17.

RESOLVED unanimously that

- (1) the Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix 1 and 2 to this report are to go onward for submission to Full Council for inclusion within the Constitution subject to the following:

Amendment be made to the Terms of Reference at E.Mayoralty.No.17 which should read:

“To deal with all matters relating to the Mayoralty, Civic Ceremonial matters and Mayoral allowances and expenses (except adopting an Allowances Scheme – Full Council)”.

P98. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that the Public be excluded during the consideration of the following item of business in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (Access to Information: Exempt Information) under Paragraph 3.

P99. MAJOR PROJECTS UPDATE

The Strategic Director submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which updated Members on the major asset related projects for the Council.

Special thanks were given by the Committee to the Strategic Director (CM) for her work in respect of the New Build Project.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the progress update on Parkside and further potential partners be noted;
- (2) the completion on 26th January 2012 of the Nottingham Road disposal be noted;
- (3) the update on Phoenix House be noted;
- (4) the update on the Cattle Market be noted;
- (5) the update on the Abattoir Lease be noted;
- (6) the update on the Waterfield Leisure Pools Project be noted.

The meeting which commenced at 6.00 p.m., closed at 7.50 p.m.

Chairman