



SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
POLICY, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE
BOARDROOM, PHOENIX HOUSE, MELTON MOWBRAY

3 AUGUST 2011

PRESENT:-

Councillors M.C.R. Graham (Chairman)
N. Angrave, G. Bush, S. Dungworth,
E. Holmes, J.T. Orson, P.M. Posnett,
D.R. Wright

As Observer
Councillor J. Wyatt

Strategic Director (CAM); Strategic Director (KA)
Head of Communications, HR& Communications Manager
Administrative Assistant

P17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barnes and Rhodes.

P18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Orson and Posnett declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in any matters relating to the Leicestershire County Council due to their roles as County Councillors.

Minute P23 – Nottingham Road Disposal: Update

Councillor Posnett declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item by virtue of her being a County Councillor and that authority her specific responsibilities in that role. Councillor Posnett left the meeting before the matter was considered.

P19. HR POLICIES – CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

On behalf of the Head of Communications, the HR & Communications Manager submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) to advise on the work of the Pera Foundation and to request agreement to the next

steps for implementing a commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility through volunteering and local opportunities. She explained that staff were currently permitted to request time off with pay to volunteer for the Right to Read Scheme and mentoring and enterprise days run by the Leicestershire Education Business Company. However, few requests had been made and approved by the Management Team. The objectives and aims of the Pera Foundation and its links with other projects tied in well with the Council's corporate objectives. The Pera Foundation represented good development opportunities for staff in terms of team building and leadership skills.

A Member asked if there would be a maximum number of staff permitted paid time off for this purpose. The HR & Communications Manager explained that it would be on an as and when basis so would vary in terms of numbers and time commitment. It was pointed out that requests were subject to management approval and would be monitored to ensure there was no detrimental impact on service delivery.

RESOLVED that

- (1) staff are allowed time off with pay, in line with the leave policy to support projects facilitated by the Pera Foundation;
- (2) relevant community based projects benefitting from volunteer support are put forward to the Pera Foundation for consideration;
- (3) staff use volunteering for projects meeting the authorities Corporate Social Responsibility as opportunities for development of skills and experience.

P20. INTERNAL PARKING POLICY

On behalf of the Head of Communications, the HR & Communications Manager submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which presented the Internal Parking Policy for staff, partners and visitors to MBC offices due to come into force following the occupation of Parkside. Members were asked to approve the policy and give authority to the Head of Communications to revise the policy following monitoring of car park usage and recommendations by the Green Travel Team in consultation with the Management team and the recognised trade unions.

A report from the Melton Borough Branch of Unison was circulated at the meeting. It asked Members to consider 3 options to permit all Council employees some relief from paying the car parking charges for the first year of implementation for access to Parkside. The charge would be broadly based on the public weekly parking ticket in town centre long stay car parks.

The Chairman agreed a five minute recess in order for Members to read the contents of the additional Unison paper that was tabled.

The Chairman stated that the report had been discussed at great length at the meeting of the Joint Staff Working Group which had taken place earlier that afternoon. No firm conclusion had been reached but there was agreement to assisting staff in some way.

A question was raised on the cost of implementing proposed Option 2 for a sliding scale of charges. The Head of Communications stated that this would be more resource intensive to operate. The HR & Communications Manager confirmed that the income raised from the parking charge would be used to incentivise green travel, for example, to purchase pool cycles. A Member agreed with the comments made by the Head of Communications that Option 2 was administratively cumbersome. As an alternative, he proposed that a stepped charge be introduced as follows:

- Salary Band 1 to 4 : 25% of the agreed cost;
- Salary Band 5 to 8 : 50% of the agreed cost
- Salary Band 9 and above : 100% of agreed cost

The Head of Communications stated that as this was a variation to the options put forward by Unison, she would wish to refer this to the union representatives who were in attendance at the meeting for comment. The Chairman permitted one of the representatives to respond who confirmed that the union would be open to any assistance for its members. In response to a question, the HR & Communications Manager advised on the salaries for the bands at the top of the proposed grades and how many staff that would involve.

The motion was seconded on the basis that it was in keeping with the Council's ethos of proportionality.

RESOLVED To

(1) to approve the following scale of car parking charges for those staff requiring access to Parkside:

- Salary Band 1 to 4 : 25% of the agreed cost;
- Salary Band 5 to 8 : 50% of the agreed cost
- Salary Band 9 and above : 100% of agreed cost

(2) the Head of Communications be authorised to finalise the Internal Parking Policy in consultation with the recognised unions and the Chairman.

P21. PARKSIDE: INFORMATION SHARING

The Strategic Director (KA) submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated) which asked Members to consider the information sharing arrangements needed to support the move into Parkside. The report explained that one of the key aspects of the vision for Parkside was the ability for the partners occupying the building to be able to work more effectively together, particularly through the appropriate sharing of information in order to deliver better outcomes for people and communities.

The Strategic Director advised that a number of key practitioner workshops had been held during which a number of barriers to information sharing had been identified. He stressed the importance of keeping the focus on addressing these issues and capitalising on the momentum gained to date as the information sharing protocols currently in place across the county were not working as effectively as

they should do for those staff in the front line. The work done to date would help to drive cultural change across the organisation. The Strategic Director responded to a number of questions on the appended documents during which it was suggested that in the Information Incident Handling leaflet there should be some guidance for staff on a self reporting procedure when it was known that an error had been made.

The Strategic Director was congratulated on putting this important work together. The Member added that the protocol would only be as good as the checks and balances that were put in place to ensure the support for customers was followed through to the end. The recommendations were so moved and seconded.

RESOLVED

- (1) to note the progress being made to develop a suitable framework for information sharing is noted, in particular the development of guidance for staff;
- (2) that the Chief Executive is authorised to sign the existing Information Sharing Protocol for Leicestershire as an interim measure, subject to being satisfied that appropriate systems and processes are in place to effectively manage the requirement of the Protocol following the move into Parkside;
- (3) that information sharing will continue to be a high priority for the Council beyond the move into Parkside to ensure that staff adhere to information sharing guidance, remain aware of their responsibilities and are able to realise the opportunities that present themselves within the new building to improve outcomes;
- (4) that the Council will continue to work pro-actively with partners to develop a longer term replacement for the existing Information Sharing Protocol and to ensure that the Council builds on the momentum already generated; and
- (5) that the Council will work with the co-location partners to develop a joint equalities impact assessment specifically around information sharing.

P22. **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business in open session.

[The Head of Communications and the HR & Communications Manager here left the meeting.]

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.

The Chairman, in exercising his statutory powers, agreed that the following item be considered as a matter of urgency due to the issue being raised

following the despatch of the agenda.

Councillor Posnett declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item by virtue of her being a County Councillor and her specific responsibility in that role. Councillor Posnett left the meeting before the matter was considered.

P23. NOTTINGHAM ROAD DISPOSAL:UPDATE

The Strategic Director (CAM) submitted a report which advised Members on the change of approach relating to the Nottingham Road site.

RESOLVED to agree the recommendations in the report and authorise the Strategic Director (CAM) in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council to implement it as set out in the report.

The meeting which commenced at 6.30 p.m., closed at 7.05 p.m.

Chairman