

POLICY, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

PHOENIX HOUSE, MELTON MOWBRAY

8 DECEMBER 2010

PRESENT :-

Councillors M.C.R. Graham MBE (Chairman)
A. Jackson, R. Marks, M. O'Callaghan
J.B. Rhodes, D.R. Wright

Strategic Director (CM)
Head of Central Services, Head of Regulatory Services
Senior Democracy Officer

P46. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Angrave, J.T. Orson and Posnett.

P47. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2010 were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chairman.

P48. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Minute P60 : Council Offices and Other Major Projects : Update On Progress
Councillor Rhodes declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in this item due to his role as a County Councillor.

Councillor Graham declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in this item due to using the same firm of accountants as those used for the external advice on the Cattle Market licence arrangements.

P49. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations from other Committees.

P50. 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.

P51. REVIEW OF CHARGES FOR WATERFIELD LEISURE POOLS

The Head of Central Services submitted a report on behalf of the Head of Communities (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which

- (a) provided information on the various fees and charges that is made with respect to Waterfield Leisure Pools;
- (b) recommended changes to these charges to operate from 4 January 2011 until 31 March 2012. This took into account the change in VAT from January 2011;

It was requested that a notice be placed on the doors at the Waterfield Leisure Pools to explain the reason for the increase to the public.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the charges in respect of the Waterfield Leisure Pool be increased as shown in Appendix A to cover an inflationary increase in addition to the VAT increase in line with the Council's charging policy;
- (2) a notice be placed on the doors at the Waterfield Leisure Pools to explain the reason for the increase.

P52. REVIEW OF LAND CHARGES

The Head of Regulatory Services submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which will be used to set Land Charges fees for 2011/12.

It was noted that the Freedom of Information legislation was not easy to keep up with in respect of land charges.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the Land Charges Fees be maintained at the current levels as follows : -
 - Commercial searches to: £135
 - Residential searches to: £100
- (2) the setting of charges for individual enquiries for each of the specific questions on the LLC1 form be delegated to the Head of Regulatory

Services in consultation with the Head of Central Services at the end of the financial year;

- (3) it be noted that legislative requirements relating to this area of work are fluid and may affect fee levels, and the Committee will receive a further report if necessary.

P53. CORPORATE ISSUES

The Strategic Director (CM) circulated a report on behalf of the Chief Executive (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which updated Members on various Corporate issues which had been developing since the General Election.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the Improvement Plan be monitored by Officers, with exception reporting to relevant Policy Committees, as required until the completion of the work of the Performance Management Task Group;
- (2) the Values set out in the report be adopted;
- (3) the report of the Extraordinary Efficiency Task Group be noted.

P54. LATEST POSITION – REVENUE BUDGET 2010/11 AND 2011/12

The Head of Central Services submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which

- (a) reported on the activity of the Budget and Strategic Planning Working Group with regard to the scrutiny of the 2010/11 estimated year end position and the 2011/12 estimates;
- (b) advised on the latest position on the current year's revenue budget (2010/11) and the current position with regard to 2011/12;
- (c) set out some of the issues still to be resolved regarding 2011/12.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the estimated year end position for 2010/11 be noted;
- (2) the position with regard to the 2011/12 estimates at this stage in the process and the issues yet to be resolved as set out in the report be noted;
- (3) the Council continue with the ill health early retirement insurance on an ongoing basis.

P55. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING TO 31 OCTOBER 2010

The Head of Central Services

- (a) submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which updated the Committee on the progress of schemes within the Capital Programme to 31 October 2010;
- (b) advised that due to the deferral of this Committee meeting from 2 December 2010 it had been necessary to go ahead with the procurement of the virtual servers in order to meet deadlines set out in the new build programme. Group leaders had been consulted and agreed unanimously with this going ahead in advance of approval by this Committee.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the progress made on each capital scheme be noted;
- (2) the change to the phasing of the Cattle Market Phase 1 project as detailed in the report be approved;
- (3) the transfer of the remaining budget and funding for the Strategic IT Framework to 2011/12 to increase the project sum allowed for the Business Intelligence System as detailed in the report be approved;
- (4) it be noted that due to the postponement of the 2 December 2010 meeting, with regard to the Virtual Servers project, the associated business case and a supplementary estimate of up to £20k from prudential borrowing had previously been approved by the Group Leaders.

P56. 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 submitted requests for approval of this Committee under Financial Procedure Rules and to provide information on amounts approved under delegated powers and to report the impact of these on the Council's reserves and balances.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the virements approved under delegated powers be noted;
- (2) the budget reductions approved under delegated powers be noted;
- (3) the business cases be approved;
- (4) the budget and proposed funding for the lighting improvements scheme at the Burton Street Car Park be moved from 2010/11 to 2011/12;
- (5) the revised Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme be approved.

P57. AWARD OF MERIT TASK GROUP – MELTON BOROUGH AWARD

The Award of Merit Task Group met on 24 November 2010 and requested that the Committee reconsider the introduction and terms of reference of the Melton Borough Award. The current terms of reference were noted as being as follows :-

- A new award be introduced for those who contribute to the life of the Borough and are in paid employment and who do not meet the criteria of the existing Award of Merit Scheme
- To consider nominations and select up to 3 persons to receive a Melton Borough Award

The Committee's reconsideration was requested due to there being several similar local awards which seemed to have created a lack of interest in this award despite wide advertisement for nominations

Councillor Marks spoke on behalf of the Task Group and stated that last year there were 3 nominations for this award and this year there was 1. It appeared that the award had not created the impact expected at its introduction almost 2 years ago. Therefore he suggested that the award be discontinued at this time of year and greater emphasis be put on the Mayor's Awards of Merit in the Spring and the terms of reference for these awards be increased from 5 successful awardees to 10.

It was noted that the existence of other community awards organised locally had possibly created the lack of interest in this award.

Councillor O'Callaghan considered that the Melton Borough Award was of great value. He explained that there were people who gave sterling service to the Borough due to their job and who went beyond their job role who should be recognised for their outstanding service – similar to the honours awards. He suggested that the Award of Merit and Melton Borough Award be merged into one and the awards be given more prestige by having names in a book of all recipients. He also stated that the issue of Councillors not being able to make nominations was not conducive to the process and therefore suggested that this requirement be removed to enable Councillors to put forward candidates but be restricted as to nominating other Councillors for at least 2 years after being in office.

Councillor Rhodes agreed with idea to merge the awards to be called the Mayor's Award and there be 2 categories. He considered that only Councillors should nominate as they had good knowledge of worthy potential recipients in their wards and that there be only 2 awards in each category and this would make the award more prestigious.

Councillor Marks considered that due to awards being given to groups and individuals, there should be 2 awards for each category ie. 2 for voluntary individuals, 2 for voluntary groups and 2 for paid individuals and 2 for paid groups.

Councillor Jackson stated that he agreed with some of the prior debate but considered that to have a lot of award categories devalued the scheme. He

stated that that there should not be a category of paid and unpaid service – there should be one award.

There was a discussion regarding the additional awards in the names of Robert Hyslop and Derek Sanders and the criteria for these awards. It was noted that the 'Robert Hyslop Most Outstanding Service to the Community' Award was for the individual or organisation, out of the nominations received, who was considered to have given the most outstanding service.

The Chairman summarised the Committee's views as follows :-

- Combine the Melton Borough Award and Mayor's Award of Merit into one award called the 'Mayor's Award' and equal consideration be given to paid/unpaid service to the Borough
- There be a citation for each awardee and this be entered into a book created for the purpose of recording awardees
- Nominations for awards be made via a Borough Councillor
- Councillors may not be nominated until 2 years has passed since they ceased to be Councillor and the reason for nomination be not related to their Council work
- Nominations must relate to service in the Borough and there be no requirement for nominees to live in the Borough
- There be up to 4 awards in total ie. 2 for individuals and 2 for groups
- The 4 awards above be in addition to any other existing awards such as the Robert Hyslop Most Outstanding Service to the Borough and the Derek Sanders Cup
- Councillors on the Award of Merit Task Group may not support a candidate they have nominated
- A nominee cannot receive more than 1 award

Mrs. Hyslop be contacted with regard to amending the terms of reference of the Robert Hyslop award to be a 'Citizen of the Year' award.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the Melton Borough Award be merged with the Mayor's Award of Merit and the terms of reference for the Awards Scheme be as follows :-
 - Combine the Melton Borough Award and Mayor's Award of Merit into one award called the 'Mayor's Award' and equal consideration be given to paid/unpaid service to the Borough
 - There be a citation for each awardee and this be entered into a book created for the purpose of recording awardees
 - Nominations for awards be made via a Borough Councillor
 - Councillors may not be nominated until 2 years has passed since they ceased to be Councillor and the reason for nomination be not related to their Council work
 - Nominations must relate to service in the Borough and there be no requirement for nominees to live in the Borough
 - There be up to 4 awards in total ie. 2 for individuals and 2 for groups
 - The 4 awards above be in addition to any other existing awards such as the Robert Hyslop Most Outstanding Service to the Borough and the Derek Sanders Cup

- Councillors on the Award of Merit Task Group may not support a candidate they have nominated
- A nominee cannot receive more than 1 award

(2) Mrs. Hyslop be contacted regarding the terms of reference for the 'Robert Hyslop Most Outstanding Service to Community' award as to whether these could be amended slightly to be a 'Citizen of the Year' Award.

P58. URGENT BUSINESS : OPEN SESSION

There was no urgent business in the open session.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that the Public be excluded during the consideration of the following items 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 despatch of the agenda.

P59. URGENT BUSINESS :
POLICY, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION SUB-COMMITTEE - TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Strategic Director (CM) reported on behalf of the Chief Executive that the current Terms of Reference of the Policy, Finance and Administration Sub-Committee required reconsideration by the Committee.

RESOLVED that 2 recommendations, as circulated, be approved.

(Councillor Rhodes declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in the following item due to his role as a County Councillor.)

(Councillor Graham declared a personal and non-prejudicial interest in the following item due to using the same firm of accountants as those used for the external advice on the Cattle Market licence arrangements.)

P60. COUNCIL OFFICES AND OTHER MAJOR PROJECTS : UPDATE ON PROGRESS

The Strategic Director (CM)

(a) submitted a report (copies of which had previously been circulated to Members) which updated Members on the progress with the exempt matters relating to the New Council Offices and other major projects.

Recent developments since the last meeting on 29 September 2010 were covered in the body of the report;

- (b) updated the Committee on various matters since the last Council Business Development Sub-Committee held on 29 November 2010 and in particular the finalisation of the generator back-up solution and the furniture procurement arrangements.

It was noted that Leicestershire County Council intended to offer a painting and some other artwork for the new Council Offices building and this generosity was much appreciated.

Members were requested to make a brick colour choice for the outdoor paving at the new Council Offices, select the outdoor glazing solution as well as give their preference as to the acoustic shape choice in the main reception area taking account of costs.

It was noted that IPTV had been removed from the scheme in order to provide resources for other areas of cost.

It was also noted that in some areas where high specification electrical equipment was desired, the wiring would be installed and the equipment purchased when possible.

With regard to the street naming, this was still to be confirmed with Building Control.

Members were advised that a decision was awaited as to the position on whether the new building would be used as a court venue.

RESOLVED that

- (1) Members noted that the programme was 3 weeks and 2 days behind the contract date of 16 May 2011, with practical completion now set at 10 June 2010 and the conclusions reached from our consultants on the delay notice were as set out in the report. The contractors and project managers were working with us to minimise any impact of this revised date;
- (2) Members noted that detailed monthly reports had been prepared by EC Harris and reported to the Council Business Development Sub-Committee and were available for Members' inspection;
- (3) Members noted a wayleave agreement had been completed for an alternative cable route down a new access route to replace the Mucky Lane route. The dates for works had been agreed and an easement would be in place prior to the cable being installed;
- (4) Members noted the Section 278 Highways agreement has been completed and also note the matters raised regarding the diversion of Station Approach described in the report;
- (5) Members approved the allocation of the budget as set out in the report;

- (6) Members noted the positive progress that had been made with ICT matters for the New Build and approve the exemption from procurement regulations for Local Area Network items for the new offices as explained and detailed in the report;
- (7) Members noted that some cultural and operational matters had been raised by staff and partners and these issues would need to be recognised and addressed over time by allocating appropriate resources to this aspect of the project by all partners;
- (8) Members approved the serving of the minimum of three months advanced notice on the Council's external landlords to enable its planned exit strategy as described in the report;
- (9) Members noted the positive meetings held with another prospective partner had continued and the Council would be providing rent and service charge estimates for them to occupy the ground floor of the new offices for front of house services as set out in the report;
- (10) Members noted the progress update on other major projects in the report;
- (11) Members confirmed the external glazing solution, selected the brick colour for the outdoor paving and the rectangular acoustic panel option for the reception area at the new Council Offices.

The meeting which commenced at 6 p.m., closed at 7.35 p.m.

Chairman