

CABINET CAPITAL ASSETS COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a MEETING held in COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES,
BRADLEY ROAD, TROWBRIDGE, BA14 0RD on Wednesday, 18 January 2012.

Cllr Jane Scott OBE	Leader of the Council
Cllr John Noeken	Cabinet Member for Resources
Cllr Fleur de Rhe-Philipe	Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Strategic Planning
Cllr Toby Sturgis	Cabinet Member for Waste, Property Environment and Development Control Services
Cllr John Thomson	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Communities and Housing

Also in Attendance:	Cllr John Brady
	Cllr Lionel Grundy OBE
	Cllr Jeff Osborn
	Cllr Dick Tonge
	Cllr Stuart Wheeler

1. Apologies

None.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

Resolved:

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2011.

3. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman noted that she had agreed to accept an item of Urgent Late Business (Schools Funding Settlement 2012/13 – Capital Allocations). This was due to the recent provision of information from the Department for Education, and the need to brief Members prior to the capital budget being finalised. The item would be taken under Urgent Business (item 8).

4. **Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

5. **Oil to Biomass Boiler Conversion Programme**

Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cabinet member for Waste, Property, Environment and Development Control Services, presented a report which set out proposals for investing in a programme of biomass boiler installations in the schools estate.

Officers highlighted a risk in relation to schools which transferred to academy status in the future. The costings had been calculated on the basis of Council paying for the boiler installation and fuel, and charging the schools for the supply of the heat. However, if a school were to transfer to academy status in the future, then there was no guarantee that the Academy would wish to continue to purchase heat from the Council. Although the boiler would remain in the Council's ownership, the Academy would be a new legal entity and could not be bound to agreements made by the predecessor maintained school. The associated risks and actions taken to mitigate these were set out at paragraphs 30-32.

Resolved:

- a. **To agree a commitment to allocate capital funding for the programme of works as outlined in paragraph 12 (up to £2.73 million on funding to deliver a £3.3 million negative Net Present Value to the authority over the life of the scheme).**
- b. **To delegate to the Service Director for Economy and Enterprise to implement the programme, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Waste, Property, Environment and Development Control Services, the Service Director for Finance and the Service Director for Business Services.**

Reason for Decision

The project would deliver a £3.3 million negative Net Present Value to the authority over the list of the scheme, paying back more than the investment over 20 years, including the inflation effect on money and generating an overall surplus due to the Governments Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI).

In addition, the project would reduce the Council's carbon footprint by 14% of the corporate carbon emissions reduction target. Other benefits included a projected £1 million saving from reduced carbon trading costs, and employment generation and improvement in woodland management by stimulating a demand for biomass fuels.

6. **Capital Allocation and Monitoring**

The Director of Finance introduced the report, which set out the position of the 2011/12 Capital Programme as at 30 November 2011. The report also detailed changes to the budget such as reprogramming of schemes.

Officers were asked to clarify the figures on page 45 which showed an overspend on Highways, Winter Fleet and Street Cleaning Vehicles, with an actual spend of £0.676 million, against a budget of £0.277 million.

Resolved

- a. To note the current position of the Capital Programme 2011/12 at Period 8 as set out in Appendix A.**
- b. To note the total budget increases of £0.528 million and the £0.620 million reprogramming of spend between 2011/12 and 2012/13.**
- c. To recommend to Council, via Cabinet, the approval of £0.085 million of additional budget for E-recruitment Software to be funded from general capital receipts.**

Reasons for Decision

To inform the Cabinet (Capital Assets) Committee of the current position of the 2011/12 Capital Programme and to highlight changes in the Capital Programme.

7. **Warminster Depot**

The Cabinet member for Waste, Property, Environment and Development Control Services introduced the report which invited the Committee to consider an opportunity to negotiate to acquire properties adjacent to a council-owned piece of land at Warminster Highways Depot, with a view to improving future prospects for redevelopment of the highways depot function on its existing site.

Resolved:

That Cabinet (Capital Assets) Committee authorises the appropriate Corporate Director to approve the acquisition of properties at 32 and 34 Bath Road, Warminster, with reference to the Cabinet Member for Waste, Property Environment and Development Control Services, and following satisfactory negotiations with the property owners.

Reasons for Decision

To facilitate potential future development of the Council's existing depot site at Furnax Lane, Warminster, without the constraints currently imposed by the two subject properties.

8. **Urgent items**

The Cabinet member for Children's Services introduced the report, which informed the Committee of a drop in the Schools Funding Settlement 2012/13 and set out the impact on Wiltshire's School Capital Programme.

It was noted that the national budget had not changed, but that funding prioritisation had changed to focus on a shortage of space in schools, such as in West London, rather than the condition or age of existing buildings.

Councillors expressed disappointment at the news, particularly as Wiltshire had not benefitted from the Building Schools for the Future programme.

It was requested that a further report be prepared for the next Cabinet Liaison meeting, setting out costs and a detailed breakdown of the changes to the Schools Capital Programme.

Resolved:

- a. **To note the Capital Allocation for 2012/13 for Education projects, the impact on the capital programme and the actions being taken.**
- b. **To request that officers draft a letter to the Department for Education, setting out the Council's disappointment at this decision and showing the impact on Wiltshire. This letter will be copied to local MPs and the Prime Minister's office.**

Reasons for Decision

To inform the Committee of the announcement made by the Secretary of State in December 2011, and the levels of capital grant to be received for Education programmes in 2012/13.

9. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, to exclude the public from the meeting for the business specified in minute 85 below as it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in

withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

10. **Warminster Depot**

The Committee noted the confidential financial information relating to the proposal at minute 82 above.

(Duration of meeting: 2.30 - 3.10 pm)

These decisions were published on 20 January 2012 and will come into force on 30 January 2012

The Officer who has produced these minutes is James Hazlewood, of Democratic Services, direct line 01722 434250 or e-mail james.hazlewood@wiltshire.gov.uk
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