



IMPLEMENTATION EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2008

In Attendance

Wiltshire County Council (WCC)

Mrs Jane Scott – Leader – in the Chair
Mr John Thomson – Deputy Leader
Miss Fleur de Rhé Philipe
Mrs Mary Douglas
Mrs NS Bryant
Mrs Bridget Wayman
Mr Toby Sturgis
Mr Mark Baker
Mr John Noeken

Kennet District Council (KDC)

Mr Lionel Grundy – Leader
Mr Philip Brown – Deputy Leader

West Wiltshire District Council (WWDC)

Mr Tony Phillips – Deputy Leader
Mr Rod Eaton

North Wiltshire District Council (NWDC)

Mr Dick Tonge – Leader
Mrs Allison Bucknell – Deputy Leader

Also in attendance: Mr M Hewitt, Mr J Johnson, Mr A Molland, Mr J Osborn, Mr A Roberts

151. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr P Sample and Mr S Fear.

152. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2008 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

153. Chairman's Announcements

a) What We Will Be Like Document

The Leader reported that feedback from senior managers and members had been collated into the One Council One Culture – What We Will Be Like document which had been circulated at the meeting. The publication focused on the vision, goals and values for Wiltshire Council. The document would now be cascaded to all staff working with the Service Director, Human Resources & Organisational Development and work would also be undertaken to cascade the document to members.

The Leader also pointed out that the Audit Commission requested a copy of the document and highlighted it as best practice.

b) Communication – 100 Day Campaign

The Leader reported that on 22 December a new communications campaign would be launched to mark the 100 days countdown to 1 April. A daily countdown to the new Council would be activated and each day would be captured as a photograph marking the number of that day and members of the public, staff and elected members would be invited to submit their pictures.

A new series of road shows would start in mid January visiting all community areas as the 100 days would be a critical period to convey timely and focused messages and information across Wiltshire.

c) Visit by John Healey, Local Government Minister

The Leader reported that John Healey visited Chippenham on 9 December. The Leader of the IE and the Leader of NWDC took the opportunity to talk to the Minister and raise critical issues with him. The Minister was happy with the progress towards one Council to date.

154. Members' Interests

No interests were declared.

155. Public Participation

a) None.

b) Salisbury District Council Sunday Car Parking Charges

The Leader invited Mr Roberts, portfolio holder for Finance at Salisbury District Council, to introduce a report on Sunday Car Parking Charges in Salisbury. He stressed that SDC Cabinet proposed to re-align charging systems for car parking in order to have a consistent system in place. He emphasized that there was some public pressure for this change and that SDC were of the view that this would lead to more income rather than less.

The Leader suggested that the item should be formally considered at the next IE meeting on 13 January to allow members enough time to consider the report.

156. Council Tax Policy Harmonisation – National Non-Domestic Rate Discretionary Rate Relief

The Implementation Executive considered the report of the Chief Financial Officer which set out proposals for granting discretionary rate relief to certain sporting, philanthropic or rural businesses who pay national non-domestic rates (NNDR), and which summarised the work already carried out in harmonising the current policies which existed across the district councils.

The Leader highlighted that the figure contained in recommendation b) should be £350,000.

The Chief Financial Officer introduced the report and highlighted that current policies across the districts would continue to exist in 2009-10. In response to a member's comment, the CFO also confirmed that a further report would be brought back to the IE if there were any implications for the budget.

Members noted that work would be undertaken to communicate this positive message to all involved stakeholders.

Resolved:

a) To approve that the level of NNDR relief currently granted to recipients for 2008-09 be continued for 2009-10.

b) To continue in 2009-10 to grant applications for relief of up to £350,000 in total for the year; relief being limited to rural post offices and shops, small sports clubs and those organisations which provide services that unite their communities.

c) To refer to members for decision any award increasing net costs by more than £35,000 (10%).

d) To develop an overall policy recognising the priorities of Wiltshire Council of the Revenue and Benefits team, for consideration and approval by members and implementation by April 2010.

(NB. Mr Baker was not present for minute no.154 and declared a personal interest in this agenda item as he was a recipient of NNDR relief.)

Reason for Proposal:

To demonstrate continued support for Wiltshire business communities and provide time to harmonise a comprehensive policy for Wiltshire Council.

157. Council Tax Base for Wiltshire Council 2009-10

The Implementation Executive considered the report of the Chief Financial Officer which set out the method of calculating the council tax base for 2009-10. The Council

is required to approve its council tax base annually and the IE has the power to set the tax base for Wiltshire Council.

The Leader tabled an amendment to the recommendations and explained that this would give delegated power to the Chief Financial Officer to re-align the policy on council tax charges for empty homes in Salisbury to be consistent with discounts on the council tax for empty houses in the rest of the County (recommendation a).

In response to members' comments, the Leader requested that further work should be undertaken on exemption arrangements, such as appeals and arrangements for military based outside the County, and be reported to members. The Leader also suggested that changes in the future division boundaries would need to be reflected in the delegation to the CFO.

Resolved:

a) To agree the calculation of the council tax base for the year 2009-10, to approve the council tax base as 177,085.7 for 2009-10, and to give the Chief Financial Officer delegated authority to amend the Council Tax base calculation in respect of any late adjustments over empty property discounts.

b) To give the Chief Financial Officer delegated authority to determine on 15 January 2009 the Council's estimated Collection Fund balance as at 31 March 2009, in conjunction with the respective Districts' Chief Financial Officers.

c) To delegate authority to the CFO to reflect the changes in the future division boundaries resulting from the Boundary Review in the council tax base calculation.

Reason for Proposal:

To meet statutory requirements.

158. Implementation of Corporate Branding

The Implementation Executive considered the report of the Service Director, Policy, Research & Communications which presented options and priorities for implementing the corporate branding in the lead up to the launch of the new Council on 1 April 2009, including the new corporate branding Style Guide.

The Leader emphasised the importance of having a framework for communications and branding in place in order to ensure a consistent approach across the County and visibility for the new Council. To achieve this, re-branding of the County Council would commence in January and in March in the districts.

Mr Eaton stressed that the district councils would remain a legal entity until 31 March and would not want to lose their identity beforehand. He therefore suggested that the matter required further consultation with the district councils. Mr Roberts responded on behalf of his authority which supported the proposals.

The Leader emphasised the importance of more consultation with members and officers within the district councils.

Resolved:

- a) To agree the branding priorities as set out in the Implementation Plan in Appendix A to the report.**
- b) To use local suppliers within the county, where possible, subject to meeting the appropriate procurement protocols.**
- c) To commence implementation of the branding in January 2009 in order to ensure timely procurement on all county-owned buildings and vehicles.**
- d) To ask district councils to agree to the implementation of branding on district council owned vehicles and buildings from March 2009, but that further consultation be undertaken with members and senior officers in the district councils prior to the implementation of this.**
- e) To adopt the corporate branding Style Guide as set out in Appendix B to the report as policy for the new council across all service areas to ensure the corporate brand is applied consistently.**
- f) To delegate authority to the Service Director, Policy, Research & Communication in consultation with the Leader of the Implementation Executive to implement the corporate branding as set out in Appendix A to the report and resolve any additional branding implementation issues.**
- g) To agree that in respect of uniforms:**
 - i. to introduce uniforms for front of house services for 1 April 2009 for those staff who currently were required to wear uniforms within their contracts.**
 - ii. to give staff within the County and Districts who were currently not required to wear uniforms the option to do so from 1 April 2009.**
 - iii. to start formal consultation and negotiations with the trade unions for staff in the County Council and District Councils who were not currently required to wear uniforms and who did not opt to do so, to enable the introduction of uniforms at an appropriate time in the future.**
 - iv. to report on the preferred style of uniform to the IE before a decision is made.**
- h) To introduce, where possible and to reduce wastage, the new branding for any new regulatory uniforms from January onwards ready for 1 April, including District Council uniforms where agreement can be reached within services.**
- i) To endorse the approach on existing branding and all authorities continue to adopt a pragmatic approach between now and 1 April.**

j) To standardise all printed stationery for generic use across the new council to ensure consistency and ensure that plain English is adopted to improve customer information and reduce technical language and jargon wherever possible.

k) To agree that in respect of publications and leaflets:

- i. to continue to use all existing factual publications and leaflets, where information is still correct, after 1 April until a reprint is required, at this point, all reprints will be branded in line with the Style Guide.**
- ii. to brand all new publications produced on behalf of the new council with the new council name from January 2009.**

l) To agree that in respect of staff name badges:

- i. to request HR to issue all staff name badges and “authority to enter” ID cards (excluding schools) for the new Council to ensure that all staff feel part of the new organisation and improve security for our staff and customers from Day One.**
- ii. to issue those staff who have a requirement for a formal “authority to enter” ID Card additional cards and to produce these with the appropriate regulations quoted, containing the full name of the member of staff, contact number and signed by an appropriate officer to strengthen security to the public who may want to confirm the identity of officers visiting their homes or premises.**

m) To agree that in respect of signage:

- i. to adopt the protocol for dealing with signage as set out in the Style Guide and to standardise corporate signage across all customer facing buildings.**
- ii. to replace internal signage to locate departments as office accommodation moves are completed.**

n) To adopt the proposed naming conventions for customer access buildings as set out in the Style Guide and not to use North, South, East and West conventions to promote buildings externally.

o) To ask district councils to consider not applying existing branding to any new or replacement vehicles and to request that, where practical, County Council vehicles be rebranded with the new Council name and style from January onwards.

p) To review existing websites following 1 April to establish if they are still required and should be incorporated into the new Council’s website, and to request a report on the website for Wiltshire Council to a future meeting of the IE.

q) To continue to use the existing Wiltshire County Council Crest for civic events only.

r) To request all contractors, when commissioned by the new council to provide services on its behalf, to brand the service appropriately, based on the level of investment by the new council. This should form part of our standard procurement practice in future and branding must form point of contract negotiations.

Reasons for Proposal:

It is vital that when the new council launches on 1 April 2009 it is visible and clearly promoted to local residents and stakeholders. To avoid customer confusion the new council needs to be clearly branded on its most prominent front facing customer points, communications and services.

159. Business Continuity Management (BCM) Arrangements for Wiltshire Council

The Implementation Executive considered the report by the Corporate Director, Transport, Environment & Leisure which set out the Council's responsibilities for emergency planning and business continuity management and highlighted the requirement for adequate Business Continuity Management (BCM) Plans.

In response to members' comments, it was suggested that governance arrangements for emergency planning would be reviewed under the new Council, and in particular whether there should be regular specific reports on emergency planning.

Resolved

a) To note the Business Continuity Management programme and to endorse the action being taken by officers to implement the BCM process for the new authority.

b) To request the new Council to review the governance arrangements for emergency planning.

Reason for Proposal

To draw the BCM programme to the IE's attention and to invite the Executive to endorse the actions being taken by the Emergency Planning Unit to implement the BCM programme.

160. Local Development Scheme and Government Arrangements for Spatial Planning

The Implementation Executive considered the report of the Service Director, Economy & Enterprise which set out options on how the Spatial Planning Service would continue to function in the light of the Transitional Regulations which came into force on 28 November 2008, including identifying immediate priorities and work that needs to be progressed prior to June 2009.

The Service Director, Economy & Enterprise proposed that a rolling reserve of up to £500k for unexpected or high resource demands should be maintained by the new authority to allow for peak years in expenditure in light of statutory procedures, e.g. public consultations, examination costs, and to meet changing demands of central Government. He also stressed that his service areas had met the 1C4W commitments within the cash freeze budget position.

The Leader suggested that further work should be undertaken on the rolling reserve and possible alternatives for funding such expenditure.

In response to a member's question, it was confirmed that all existing local plan policies, including those relating to affordable housing and public open spaces, would remain in place until the new Local Development Framework was introduced. The Leader emphasised that it was important to make this very clear to the public.

Resolved:

- a) To note and approve in principle the Draft Local Development Scheme for Wiltshire for submission to the Government Office for the South West, and to agree that the Service Director, Economy & Enterprise be authorised to make any final amendments to the detail, in the interests of clarification and accuracy.**
- b) To agree the terms of reference for the Local Development Framework (LDF) Member Group (as set out in Appendix 2 to the report), including the agreement for nominated members serving on the Group to continue from 1 April 2009 until June 2009, and to request the Leaders of the five authorities to nominate one member each to serve on the Member Group.**
- c) To authorise the Service Director, Economy & Enterprise to be responsible for the work of the forward planning function of the Council, and to make appropriate arrangements for district council staff to be directly responsible to the Service Director, Economy & Enterprise.**
- d) To acknowledge the LDF as a corporate priority and recognise the need to properly resource the service.**
- e) To agree that the LDF Member Group should approve the West of Swindon Study and consultation arrangements.**
- f) To note that consultation on the Draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report will start in January 2009, and that a report of the outcome and the proposed final Scoping Report will be presented to the Implementation Executive in April 2009.**
- g) To note that a Statement of Community Involvement will be prepared for consideration by the Implementation Executive on 1 April 2009.**

Reasons for Proposals:

The Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transitional Arrangements) (No.2) Regulations 2008 that came into force on 28 November 2008 which makes

successor councils responsible for discharging in advance of the reorganisation date the local functions under Part 2 of the 2004 Planning Act. Thus they are responsible for performing the strategic spatial planning function for the new unitary area including development plan preparation; and which requires the successor council as local planning authority, to submit a Local Development Scheme for Wiltshire to the Secretary of State not later than three months before the reorganisation date of 1 April 2009

161. Learning Disability – Supported Living Framework Agreement

The Leader reported that the report on the Learning Disability – Supported Living Framework Agreement had been withdrawn as it required further work with the PCT. A further paper would be prepared for consideration at a future meeting of the IE.

162. Partnership Alcohol Strategy

The Implementation Executive considered the report of the Director of Public Health which set out actions to tackle health harm, violence, crime and anti-social behaviour associated with alcohol, whilst ensuring that people are able to enjoy alcohol safely and responsibly. An implementation plan would be developed in conjunction with all partner organisations across Wiltshire and with the involvement of service users to ensure a co-ordinated and effective approach to reducing the negative impact of alcohol misuse on individuals and communities in Wiltshire.

The Director of Public Health highlighted that the document aimed at a dialogue and building up a relationship with citizens, rather than incorporating a lecturing style on the effects of alcohol.

Members recognised the prominence of alcohol-related problems in Wiltshire and the knock-on effects of this in many areas of society, including children and families. Consideration was also given to the potential future role of area boards to tackle specific issues.

It was suggested that regular update reports should be produced to generate a baseline for future activity and that this could inform the considerations of area boards.

Resolved:

a) To approve the Wiltshire Alcohol Strategy.

b) To request a progress report early in the new authority and an annual report on progress thereafter.

Reason for Proposal:

Government requires all Community Safety Partnerships (comprising local authorities, police authorities, fire & rescue authorities, PCTs and civil society organisations) have a local alcohol strategy in place. The Wiltshire Alcohol Strategy 2009-2012 will play a key role in co-ordinating the resources and activities of public and voluntary services in Wiltshire to ensure that alcohol related harm is tackled appropriately and effectively.

163. Trade Union Time Off and Facilities Agreement

The Implementation Executive considered the report of the Assistant Director, LGR Staffing Transition which set out options on an agreement with trade unions on time off and facilities to apply with the new Wiltshire Council. The report also proposed to set up a members' forum within the new authority.

The Assistant Director, LGR Staffing Transition and Gavin Brooks, the Unison Regional Organiser, introduced the report and highlighted that an agreement between the new authority and trade unions would have to be reached in order to ensure effective future work of the trade unions.

Mr Baker, one of the IE lead members on Human Resources, reported that the IE lead members should be asked to consider this issue further. He therefore suggested, and Mr Phillips agreed, that further work on the recommendations contained within in the report would be undertaken by the IE lead members.

The Leader agreed with this course of action but also proposed that more consultation should take place with the Joint Consultative Committee as well.

Resolved:

a) To agree in principle to an agreement for reasonable paid time off but to authorise further negotiations within the Joint Consultative Committee and the IE lead members on Human Resources with a view to reducing the amount of time off sought to a more operationally viable and financially affordable level.

b) To agree in principle that accommodation be provided but to authorise further negotiations within the Joint Consultative Committee and the IE lead members on Human Resources on the precise amount and type of accommodation to be provided to and between the Trade Unions.

c) To agree that there should be a Members Forum within the new Council but to leave the determination of the terms of reference, membership and operating method to the new Council.

Reason for Proposal:

The Trade Unions requested an agreement on Time Off and Facilities for Trade Union Representatives to apply in Wiltshire Council.

164. Benefits Identification and Realisation – An Organisational Framework

The Implementation Executive considered the joint report of the Head of Financial Planning and the Programme Office Manager which detailed current progress towards the adoption of a consistent benefits realisation approach for implementation across the new council and provided an update on benefits realisation across the One Council Programme.

In response to a member's comment, it was suggested to include an update on the council tax and cash receipt system within SAP in the next Progress Report.

Resolved

To note the report.

165. Towards One Council Progress Report

The Implementation Executive considered the report of the Programme Director which outlined the main activity that had occurred since the meeting on 13 November.

Members requested an update report on the appointments process to a January meeting of the IE.

Resolved:

To note the Progress Report.

166. Financial Update

The Implementation Executive considered the report of the Chief Financial Officer which identified progress along the schedule of key finance activity taking place between now and February 2009.

Resolved:

To note the Financial Update.

167. Outline Work Programme

The Implementation Executive received the Outline Work Programme for future business.

The meeting closed at 5.40pm.