

THE EXECUTIVE

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive held on Thursday 9th March 2006 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Monkton Park, Chippenham commencing at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor C. O’Gorman, Leader in the Chair

Councillors C. R. Coleman, A. L. Davis, H. M. Dixon, S. K. Doubell,
D. J. E. Evans, D. M. Moore, G. Offord, C. Reid and
O. J. Thomas.

Non-Executive Councillors Present: Councillors M. P. Hatton, T. J. Northey,
T. R. Sturgis, J. P. S. S. Thomson, R. L. Tonge and A. J. Trotman.

Officers Present: D. Burbidge (Chief Executive), L. Bell (Strategic Manager Community & Environment), S. Bowcock (Operations Co-Ordinator), H. Braid (Policy & Democratic Services Officer), N. Fenwick (Strategic Manager Customer Services), P. Jeremiah (Legal Services Team Leader), E. Lee (Principal Community Development Officer), A. Madin (Assistant to the Executive), J. Moody (Partnership Development Officer), S. Pangbourne (Strategic Manager Corporate Services), P. Southway (Recovery Team Leader) and D. Stirling (Estate & Design Tem Leader).

E180. Apologies for Absence

None.

E181. Public Question Time/Receipt of Petitions

None.

E182. Questions from Non-Executive Councillors

None.



E183. Minutes

The Minutes of the Executive meetings held on 9th and 16th February 2006 (circulated with the agenda) were considered.

Resolved that the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 9th and 16th February 2006 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

E184. Declarations of InterestExecutive Members

Name	Item	Type	Nature	Action
Cllr D. M. Moore	Item 19 – Outcomes of the Review of Wiltshire Wildlife Trust as a Key Partner Using the Partnership Evaluation Tool	Personal	Member of the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Board	Remained in the meeting during consideration of this item.
Cllr O. J. Thomas	Item 20 – Capital Partnership Funding Scheme	Personal	Member of Wootton Bassett Town Council	Remained in the meeting during consideration of this item.

E185. Leader's Announcements

The Leader made the following announcements:

Urgent Item of Business

In accordance with Regulation 16 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 having regard to the special circumstances pertaining in this matter – namely to enable the Council's response to be reported at the meeting of the South West Regional Assembly tomorrow, I am of the opinion that, despite its non-inclusion on the Agenda, the matter of the Greater Western Franchise Timetable should be considered at this meeting as a matter of urgency. This item will be taken after these announcements.

Agenda Papers

I would draw your attention to the paperwork for this evening's meeting. You should have before you the main agenda; "to follow" papers circulated on the 2nd of March; and additional papers made available to you this evening which include the urgent report and the IEG6 statement.

E186. Greater Western Franchise Timetable

Consideration was given to the urgent report (circulated at the meeting) which informed Members of the consultation being undertaken by the First Group in respect of the proposed timetable for the new franchise, commencing in December 2006.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The proposals will result in a reduction in train services for the region.
- The impact of the proposals upon communities and the economy of the region.

Resolved

- (1) That authority be delegated to the Spatial Planning Team Leader, in consultation with the Lead Member for the Local Plan and Local Development Framework, to respond to First Group's consultation confirming North Wiltshire District Council's support for the response of the South West Regional Assembly to First Group's proposals.
- (2) The Council's support for the response of the South West Regional Assembly in this matter be confirmed at the Assembly meeting being held on 10th March 2006.
- (3) The Spatial Planning Team Leader be requested to bring before the Executive a report setting out the implications for North Wiltshire of the London "Crossrail" proposals.

E187. Statement of Community Involvement – Recommendations of the Public Spaces & Local Plans Panel

At its meeting on 28th February 2006, the Public Spaces & Local Plans Panel considered a report in respect of the submission Statement of Community Involvement and made the following recommendations to the Executive.

- (1) That Citizens Panels, Planning Aid and Local Architectural or Design Panel be removed from page 55 of the SCI and considered when the document is next reviewed.
- (2) That subject to the above amendment, the Statement of Community Involvement be endorsed. (Minute PS54 refers.)

Consideration was given to Report No.7 (circulated with the agenda), together with an amended page 26 of the Statement of Community Involvement (circulated at the meeting).

Resolved that

- (1) Citizens Panels, Planning Aid and Local Architectural or Design Panel be removed from page 55 of the Statement of Community Involvement and considered when the document is next reviewed.
- (2) The revision to page 26, paragraph 6.3, of the Statement of Community Involvement be endorsed.
- (3) Subject to the above amendments, the Statement of Community Involvement be endorsed.

E188. The North Wiltshire District Council Local Development Scheme and the Proposed Bowood Estate Area Action Plan – Recommendation of the Public Spaces & Local Plans Panel

At its meeting on 28th February 2006, the Public Spaces & Local Plans Panel considered a report in respect of the proposed Bowood Estate Action Plan and made the following recommendation to the Executive:

“That a Bowood Estate Area Action Plan be included in the revised Local Development Scheme, subject to the approval of the Government Office of the South West, the Planning Inspectorate and the Secretary of State.” (Minute PS55 refers.)

Consideration was given to Report No.8 (circulated with the agenda), together with a map of the Development Proposal Plans – Bowood Estate Land Ownership (circulated on 2nd March 2006).

Resolved that a Bowood Estate Area Action Plan be included in the revised Local Development Scheme, subject to the approval of the Government Office of the South West, the Planning Inspectorate and the Secretary of State.

E189. Procurement – Recommendation of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

At its meeting on 16th February 2006, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered a report in respect of the Procurement Strategy and made the following recommendation to the Executive:

“That a local performance indicator be developed, with the target to reduce invoices by 25% in 2006/07 and that the results be reported to the Finance & Performance Monitoring Sub-Committee.”
(Minute O132 refers.)

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The ODPM estimates that it costs approximately £70 to process invoices and payments. As the Council processes some 11,000 cheques every year, a reduction of 25% will result in substantial Gershon efficiency savings.

Resolved that a local performance indicator be developed, with the target to reduce invoices by 25% in 2006/07 and that the results be reported to the Finance & Performance Monitoring Sub-Committee.

E190. Performance Management Software – Recommendation of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

At its meeting on 6th February 2006, the Finance & Performance Monitoring Sub-Committee considered a briefing note in respect of performance management software. The views of the Sub-Committee were considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 16th February 2006, which made the following recommendation to the Executive:

“That the procurement of Performance Management Software be pursued.”
(Minute O136 refers.)

Resolved that the procurement of Performance Management Software be pursued.

E191. The Carbon Trust – Large Scale Programme to Reduce Energy Consumption

Consideration was given to Report No.11 (circulated with the agenda) which presented the recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in respect of the energy audit report submitted by the Carbon Trust and which sought approval of a project based programme which will critically review the potential cost-benefits of the Carbon Trust proposals.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- There are some issues to be resolved prior to the commencement of the full programme including negotiations with Jarvis Facilities Management and consideration of the District's Leisure Centres.
- There are several projects already underway, including the use of green fuel. Various other projects can commence in the near future.
- An outline timetable of the actions to be taken will be circulated to Members.

Resolved that

- (1) The following recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee be approved, but with the commencement of an investment programme in 2007/08:

- (i) That the recommendations of the report be implemented as a priority "invest-to-save" project for the financial year 2006/07;
 - (ii) That a dedicated officer resource be identified with sufficient time and authority to implement the project;
 - (iii) That consideration be given to resourcing the post from within the organisation and within resource;
 - (iv) That consideration be given as to the role of a lead Member and Champion within the project;
 - (v) That consideration be given to an annual audit of the implementation of the project against the recommendations made in the Carbon Trust report;
 - (vi) That implementation of the project be taken as an opportunity to establish the Authority as a sustainable energy exemplar;
 - (vii) That work be undertaken with partners to promote sustainable energy uses including the Wiltshire Procurement Federation;
 - (viii) That work be undertaken with Town and Parish Councils, possibly under the auspices of the Area Committees, to combine resources to promote sustainable energy use in local communities;
 - (ix) Notwithstanding vehicular use being outside the remit of the Carbon Trust report, that consideration be given to the use of alternative fuels within the vehicles managed by the Council;
 - (x) That the issue of employee use of sustainable transport be addressed through pay and rewards review.
- (2) A feasibility study on the individual projects within the overall project be initiated to ensure that projected energy savings are realistic, achievable and critically evaluated over time.
- (3) A Member Champion be appointed, with an Officer support group, to drive and monitor the project based on a tightly controlled performance management programme, to receive reports ensuring delivery within the capital budget to ensure delivery of forecasted energy savings.

- (4) Resources within existing revenue budgets be identified and deployed to co-ordinate contract specifications and to implement each "mini-project".
- (5) The Overview & Scrutiny Committee be asked to monitor and evaluate the energy reduction programme to ensure objectives and targets are achieved.

E192. Parking, Access and Transportation

Consideration was given to Report No.12 (circulated on 2nd March 2006) which asked for consideration of the extension of the temporary notice with regard to car parking charges and which also provided a general update in respect of the Parking, Access & Transportation Strategy.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The movement of traffic between the North and South of Calne Town Centre following the implementation of the car parking charges.
- There needed to be a period of stability to allow the current charging regime to become embedded.
- That no further changes to the charging regime will be agreed until a detailed report setting out the financial implications of such a change has been considered by the Executive.
- A copy of the consultation letter sent to Town and Parish Councils in the District will be provided to Members.

Resolved that

- (1) The report of the Parking, Access & Transportation Champion be noted.
- (2) The current temporary parking notices for car parking charges at the District Council's car parks be extended to the end of September 2007, ie twelve months after the introduction of Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement, except as provided at (3) below.
- (3) Charges at the Castle Combe car and coach park be suspended during 2006 until after the introduction of Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement planned for September 2006.
- (4) That following the introduction of Decriminalisation of Parking Enforcement, a report be presented to the Executive setting out the full implications of any changes to car parking charges in the District Council's car parks.

E193. Business Continuity Plan

Consideration was given to Report No.13 (circulated with the agenda) which sought approval of a Business Continuity Plan.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Reference to the Chief Executive's current Personal Assistant will be removed from page 8 of the Plan.

Resolved that that Business Continuity Plan be approved.

E194. Write Offs

Consideration was given to Report Nos.14(a), 14(b), 14(c) and 14(d) (circulated with the agenda) which sought approval to write off outstanding monies in respect of Council Tax, Housing Benefits, Non-Domestic Rates and Sundry Debtor Accounts.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The tenacity of the Recovery Team in pursuing outstanding monies.
- An assurance that write-offs in respect of future Festivals will not arise.
- Information will be provided to Members in respect of the level of write-offs in previous years, together with details of the provision made in the budget for write-offs.

Resolved that

- (1) The Council Tax accounts totalling £46,661.14 (as shown in Appendix 1 of Report No.14(a)) be written off.
- (2) The Housing Benefit Overpayment accounts totalling £19,599.67 (as shown in Appendix 1 of Report No.14(b)) be written off.
- (3) The Non-Domestic Rate accounts totalling £77,530.67 (as shown in Appendix 1 of Report No.14(c)) be written off.
- (4) The Sundry Debtor accounts totalling £22,525.81 (as shown in Appendix 1 of Report No.14(d)) be written off.

E195. Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy 2006/07

Consideration was given to Report No.15 (circulated with the agenda) which presented the Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for consideration and recommendation to Council.

Recommended to Council

- (1) **The actions proposed within the Treasury Management Statement (outlined in Section 5 of the report) be approved.**
- (2) **The Investment Strategy (outlined in paragraphs 6.4 to 6.9 of the report) be approved.**

E196. Mobile Skate Park – Wiltshire Alternative Youth Sports Partnership

Consideration was given to Report No.16 (circulated with the agenda) which sought endorsement for the transfer of the mobile skate park to the Wiltshire Alternative Youth Sports (WAYS) Partnership, following the decision of the Executive on 2nd February, and consideration of the concerns raised by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 16th February 2006.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The Council's funding for WAYS had been agreed as part of the budget setting process.
- The possibilities for WAYS to draw down funding from other organisations.
- All of the District Councils in the County and Swindon Borough Council were involved with the WAYS Partnership.

Resolved that

- (1) The transfer of the mobile skate park facility to the Wiltshire Alternative Youth Sports Partnership be endorsed.
- (2) A one-off contribution of £1,000 be made to assist the Wiltshire Alternative Youth Sports Partnership with the set-up costs of the project.
- (3) Authority be delegated to the Community & Environment Strategic Manager and the Legal Services Team Leader to progress the transfer.

E197. Development of a Youth Strategy

Consideration was given to Report No.17 (circulated with the agenda) which provided an update on the development of a Youth Strategy for North Wiltshire District Council and sought agreement of a timescale for the development of key actions in the Strategy.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The involvement of young people in various events organised by the District Council.

Resolved that

- (1) The progress of the development of the Youth Strategy be noted.
- (2) The timetable for consultation and adoption of the Youth Strategy be approved.

E198. Area Committees and the Voice to Choice Project

Consideration was given to Report No.18 (circulated with the agenda) which provided information regarding the Wiltshire County Council project "Voice to Choice". Consideration was also given to a Report of the Wiltshire County Council Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee entitled "Taking Forward the Voice to Choice Project", dated 15th March 2006 (circulated at the meeting).

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- Whether the way to develop joined up community working should be by way of a flexible, organic approach rather than an imposed bureaucratic system.
- Many of the objectives of the Community Area Action Plans are being achieved through the Area Committee system.
- The Executive needs more time to review the additional papers that have been provided by Wiltshire County Council.
- The proposed timetable of Wiltshire County Council which will see the proposals being considered by the Cabinet on 21st April 2006.
- The proposals are only draft at this stage and will be reviewed following feedback from the District Councils involved.
- The legislative and constitutional problems encountered when trying to establish a framework which can operate legally.
- Any framework needs to be sustainable and effective, rather than another layer of bureaucracy developed to meet a target.
- Whether the current proposals are too rigid.

Resolved that

- (1) The initiative to improve joined up working with Area Committees is welcomed and the Executive will consider the further detailed information provided prior to making a final decision as to North Wiltshire District Council's involvement in the pilot project.
- (2) The Executive will give consideration to initiating a facilitated meeting between Area Committees and the Community Area Partnerships to consider how these bodies can work more effectively together to deliver Local Area Plans.

E199. Outcomes of the Review of Wiltshire Wildlife Trust as a Key Partner Using the Partnership Evaluation Tool

Consideration was given to Report No.19 (circulated with the agenda) which provided details of the review of Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (the Trust) as a key partner and detailed a proposed way forward to strengthen the partnership.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The report focuses upon revenue and not capital funding to the Trust.
- DEFRA funds the Trust for its recycling work, which put the Trust in direct competition with the Council, as the Council has targets to meet in respect of recycling.
- None of the funding from this Council is used by the Trust to assist in its recycling work.
- The actions that have been achieved through the partnership.
- The Council will always undertake a thorough assessment before awarding funding to the Trust, to ensure that Best Value is achieved.

Resolved that

- (1) The outcomes and recommendations of the review of Wiltshire Wildlife Trust be noted.
- (2) The development of an action plan that brings together all of the review recommendations and Officers' work to implement them during 2006/07 be approved.
- (3) An update on the progress of implementing the review recommendations be brought to the Executive in September 2006.

E200. Executive Capital Partnership Funding Scheme

Consideration was given to Report No.20 (circulated with the agenda) which provided details of two applications to the Executive Capital Partnership Funding Scheme.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The potential benefits to the District of the Jubilee Lake project.
- Box Parish Council should be able to draw down funding from other organisations based on the £30,000 already awarded by the Corsham Area (4) Committee.
- The Wiltshire & Swindon Sports Partnership may be a possible source of funding for the Box Pavilion project.
- Box Parish Council will be able to apply for Capital Partnership Funding when the project has progressed.

Resolved that

- (1) Funding of £20,000 towards the Jubilee Lake project be approved, subject to:
 - (i) The funds being drawn down within two years of the award being made.
 - (ii) The balance of funding being in place.
 - (iii) Appropriate recognition being given to North Wiltshire District Council as a major funding partner.
 - (iv) The applicant agreeing to undertake an appropriate evaluation of the project.
- (4) The application for funding towards Box Pavilion be refused.

E201. Proposed Increase of Commercial Waste Charges for 2006/07

Consideration was given to Report No.21 (circulated with the agenda) which sought approval to increase the Council's commercial waste collection charges.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- It is not currently possible for the Council to recycle commercial waste. The Wiltshire Waste Partnership is looking at how this can be achieved. The issue is related to government incentives and there are plans to lobby the government through the Local Government Association.
- It is anticipated that the Council will achieve a net income from commercial waste charges of £169,000 during 2005/06. Members will be provided with the figures for previous years.

Resolved that

- (1) An increase to the collection charge to the Council's commercial waste customers by 10% for the year 2006/07 be approved.
- (2) Authority be delegated to the Team Leader for Cleansing & Amenities, in consultation with the Customer Services Strategic Manager and the Section 151 Officer, to offer discounts on large contracts as appropriate, in order to be competitive with the private sector.
- (3) Authority be delegated to the Team Leader for Cleansing & Amenities, in consultation with the Customer Services Strategic Manager and the Section 151 Officer, to set future commercial waste charges.

E202. Implementing E-Government

Consideration was given to Report No.22 (circulated with the agenda) which presented the current draft of the Implementing E-Government (IEG) Return 2006. A copy of the IEG6 Return was circulated at the meeting.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- It is essential to raise public awareness of the electronic delivery of Council services to maximise efficiency savings.
- The 2006 North Wiltshire Festival will focus upon access to services.

Resolved that authority be delegated to the Strategic Manager Customer Services (Officer E-Champion), in consultation with the Lead Member for Customer Focus (Member E-Champion) to approve the Implementing E-Government Return 2006.

E203. Feasibility Study into the Provision of a Low Cost Telephone Number for Benefit Claimants

Consideration was given to Report No.23 (circulated with the agenda) which presented the results of a feasibility study into the provision of a low cost telephone number for Benefit claimants.

Resolved that the implementation of a freephone 0800 telephone number for Benefits customers be approved for a period of 12 months.

E204. Asset Management Plan 2006-08

Consideration was given to Report No.24 (circulated with the agenda) which presented the Asset Management Plan for approval and adoption.

Resolved that the Asset Management Plan 2006-08 (as appended to Report No.24) be approved.

E205. Public Conveniences Task Group Final Report (1st & 2nd Stage)

At its meeting on 16th February 2006, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the report of the Public Conveniences Task Group Final Report and made the following recommendation to the Executive:

“That the report of the task group be endorsed and implemented, with the additional comment that Parish and Town Councils be given first refusal on any devolved facilities.”

(Minute O130 refers.)

Consideration was given to Report No.25 (circulated at the meeting) which provided the report of the Public Conveniences Scrutiny Task Group.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The issues associated with the future of Council owned public conveniences, including maintenance costs, security and staffing.
- Costs will be incurred whether the conveniences remain open or close until a final decision is made.
- Cricklade public conveniences serve and tourist need and so should be retained and enhanced.
- The future of the public conveniences at Calne Town Hall will be considered.
- The consultation undertaken with Parish and Town Councils as part of the scrutiny review.
- The possibility of devolving public conveniences to Parish and Town Councils.

Resolved that

- (1) A report be brought to the Executive meeting in April which details the full implications of each of the recommendations contained within the final report of the Public Conveniences Task Group.

- (2) The report at (1) above sets out options for the future of the public conveniences at the Town Hall, Calne; Cross Hayes, Malmesbury; Biddestone; Box; Lyneham; Station Road, Wootton Bassett; Purton and Colerne and how these options will achieve the £50,000 saving agreed in the 2006/07 Budget.
- (3) The public conveniences in Cricklade be retained and enhanced to provide better access for disabled persons and generally refreshed to achieve an improved standard.

The meeting commenced at 7.00pm and concluded at 8.55pm.

There were 9 members of the public present.

Signed:

Dated: