

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive held on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2006 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Monkton Park, Chippenham commencing at 6.30 p.m.**

**Present:** Councillor C. O’Gorman, Leader ..... in the Chair  
Councillors H. M. Dixon, D. J. E. Evans and O. J. Thomas.

**Non-Executive Councillors Present:** Councillor T. R. Sturgis

**Officers Present:** D. Burbidge (Chief Executive), D. Ashton (Interim Chief Accountant), H. Braid (Policy & Democratic Services Officer), A. Davies (Planning Services Strategic Manager), P. Jeremiah (Legal Services Team Leader), J. O’Brien (Housing Team Leader), S. Pangbourne (Strategic Manager Corporate Services) and P. Tovey (Chief Accountant).

**E18. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors P. G. Allnatt, S. K. Doubell, R. J. Henning and D. M. Moore.

**E19. Public Question Time/Receipt of Petitions**

No public questions had been submitted.

**E20. Questions from Non-Executive Councillors**

Councillor T. R. Sturgis had submitted questions in respect of Agenda Item 7 - Revenue Outturn 2005/06. The questions, together with the responses provided, are detailed below:

**1. Can the Leader explain the huge variations in the net cost of services between the two budgets. (Original and Revised)**

Variations in the net cost of services between the original and the revised budget were set out in the report to the Executive on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2005 when the revised budget was agreed. These variations were made as a result of changes that were having an effect on the Council’s finances. The main changes made are reproduced in the following table:



	£'000
Increased investment income as a result of rising interest rates	-193
Increased business rates for Monkton Park	36
Concessionary Travel	50
Reduction in car park income following outcome of consultation on revised charges	50
Approved additional funding in Customer Services to manage backlog pressures and improve customer contact response	136
Spring Quarry - rent no longer receivable following sale	22
One-off costs of approved early retirement ( agreed that this would be first call on 2004/05 underspend in Revenue Outturn report presented to Executive 19 July 2005)	430
Reduction in Local Land Charges income	90
Increased Licensing Income	-49
Wiltshire Compact – carry forward of underspend	4
Comino system – this is a virement between services, enabling the licence costs of the Comino system to be met by the ITC section.	Net nil

**2. Can the Leader confirm this year's budget book set out with Executive minutes 9<sup>th</sup> February is accurate.**

The budget book set out in February was accurate given all the known factors at that time. As budget monitoring proceeds during the year, there may be other factors that need to be taken into account.

**3. Will the Leader make available monthly actual v. budget using the format set out in the budget book in Appendix 2 of the minutes of 9<sup>th</sup> February.**

We are seeking to improve the budget monitoring process this year and monthly reports (for budget monitoring between June and February) will come forward to the Executive. The summary page of the budget monitor reports can be rescheduled to show expenditure and income as well as net costs (as shown on the first page of Appendix 2). It would not be practical to break down the monthly information against all the individual cost centres detailed on pages 2 & 3 of Appendix 2. Doing this would require a disproportionate amount of additional time from officers and would detract and distract from the main purpose of budget monitoring which is to identify the main trends.

**E21. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2006 (circulated with the agenda) were considered.

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2006 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**E22. Declarations of Interest**

None.

**E23. Leader's Announcements**

None.

**E24. Revenue Outturn 2005/06**

Consideration was given to Report No.7 (circulated with the agenda) which advised the financial outturn against the Council's revised budget for 2005/06.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The reasons for the variations in the original and revised budget which had been detailed in the responses provided to questions submitted by Councillor T. R. Sturgis.
- Members are aware of the work that has been undertaken to ensure the more robust reporting of financial information.
- Clarification will be provided to Members as to financial information provided to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2006 in respect of the Planning Delivery Grant in comparison to that provided in the report being considered by the Executive.

**Resolved** that

- (1) The Revenue Outturn 2005/06 against the budget be noted.
- (2) The carry forward of specific underspent budgets totalling £137,000 be authorised.

**E25. Capital Outturn 2005/06**

Consideration was given to Report No.8 (circulated with the agenda) which reported upon expenditure against the Council's approved Capital Programme for 2005/2006.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The current reporting format seemed to indicate that slippage had occurred in respect of a number of projects, when in fact it had already been known that the projects would take more than one year to complete.
- Work was underway to provide profiled budgets which would enable capital project costings to be shown over a number of years.
- The slippage in respect of streetworks was a result of the Area Committees not allocating budgets available to them.

**Resolved that**

- (1) The expenditure against the capital programme for 2005/06 be noted.
- (2) It be noted that Officers have identified savings totalling £130k from existing schemes.
- (3) It be noted that the unspent balance on capital budgets will be carried forward.

**E26. Signatories to the Council's Bank Account and Investment Portfolios**

Consideration was given to Report No. 9 (circulated with the agenda) which addressed the changes to bank signatories required as a result of staff changes.

**Resolved that**

- (1) The Council's bankers, HSBC, be notified that as of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2006 the Council's list of approved bank mandate signatories is:
  - D. Hodges - Section 151 Officer
  - N. Fenwick - Strategic Manager Customer Services
  - E. Orchard - Human Resources Team Leader
  - P. Jeremiah - Monitoring Officer
  - S. Pangbourne - Strategic Manager Corporate Services
  - D. Ashton - Interim Chief Accountant
- (2) That the Council's Fund Managers – Invesco Asset Management limited and Investec asset Management Limited - be advised of the Council's authorised signatories as outlined in section (1) above.

## **E27. Consolidation of Car Parking Order**

Consideration was given to Report No.10 (circulated with the agenda) which sought authorisation for the Team Leader Legal Services to make a consolidation order for off-street parking, in order to bring it into line with arrangements for the decriminalisation of car parking enforcement within the District.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The Order which will appear in the press is not a notice inviting submissions, but an information notice.

**Resolved** that authority be given to the Team Leader Legal Services to make a Consolidation Order under Sections 32, 35 and Part IV of Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Regulation 21 and Schedule 4 of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996, so as to revoke the North Wiltshire District Council (Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2005 and replace it with a Consolidation Order in line with the decriminalisation regime to come into effect from 4 September 2006.

## **E28. Procurement of a New ICT Planning System**

Consideration was given to Report No.11 (circulated on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2006) which sought approval to allocate the balance of the 2006/07 Planning Delivery Grant towards the procurement of a new ICT Planning system and to authorise acquisition of the system.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- It is anticipated that the introduction of the new system will result in cashable savings of at least £12,000 per year. These savings will be complemented by improved flexibility and integration of teams.

**Resolved** that

- (1) An extra £76,000 be added to the current 'Improving the Customer Experience' project budget for the ICT Planning System, funded from the £70,000 balance of the 2006/07 Planning Delivery Grant. It being noted that the remaining £6,000 this will be repaid via revenue savings from the Planning budget in future years.
- (2) Authority be delegated to the Planning Services Strategic Manager, in consultation with the Legal Services Team Leader, to accept tender 'A' at a cost of £99,550 plus one years maintenance costs of £16,450 (£116,000) and £36,000 for hardware and integration costs – totalling £152,000.

**E29. Exclusion of Press and Public**

**Resolved** that in accordance with Regulation 21 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the following item of business involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as follows and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Agenda item/Report name	Paragraph(s) of the Act / Schedule describing the exemption
Item 13 – Implementation of a Homelessness Prevention Service	Paragraphs 2 & 4

**E30. Implementation of a Homelessness Prevention Service**

Consideration was given to Report No.13 (circulated with the agenda) which sought approval for the implementation plan for combining the existing Housing Advice Service and the Homelessness Service into a new Homelessness Prevention Service.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The difficulty in meeting BVPI data requirements in previous years, due to the robustness of information provided in respect of homelessness cases.
- National performance indicators will be used to assess effectiveness of the new service and enable progress to be reported to Members.
- Whilst there had been no consideration of scrutiny reports from other local authorities, consultation with other local authorities has taken place.

**Resolved** that the implementation plan for the provision of the new Housing Advice & Homelessness Prevention Service be approved.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 6.50pm.

There was one member of the public present.

Signed: .....

Dated: .....