

Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive held on Thursday 4th September 2008 at Monkton Park, Chippenham commencing at 7.00pm.

Present: Councillor A.M. Bucknell in the Chair

Councillors R.M.H. Berry, C. Crisp, V.H. Greenman, C.V. Ramsey, R. Sanderson and V.A. Vines

Non-Executive Councillors Present:

Councillors I.J. Henderson, E. Marston and A. Phillips

Officers Present:

S. McGregor (Assistant Chief Executive) and L. Pullin (Democratic Services Officer)

E44. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors N.M. Phillips and R.L. Tonge.

E45. Public Question Time/Receipt of Petitions

There were no public questions nor petitions received.

E46. Questions from Non-Executive Councillors

There were no questions from Non-Executive Councillors received.

E47. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 24th July were considered.

Resolved that the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on the 24th July 2008 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

E48. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

E49. Leader's Announcements

The Deputy Leader made the following announcements:

1. Colerne Parish Council has been awarded £25,876 from the Executive Community Awards Fund.

This is a contribution towards the conversion of the Old School in Colerne. The conversion which will cost £601,000 will provide four units of affordable accommodation, a Village playgroup, two community rooms, accommodation for the Parish Clerk and a large, dry secure storage facility. The building will provide disability access and utilise energy efficient measures.

This funding will be used to deliver one of the first phases of the overall conversion – the demolition of an old 1940's toilet block that will be rebuilt as a storage facility for bins, bicycles and playgroup equipment. In the short term the storage facility will be used as storage during the main building conversion.

The overall project will provide much needed affordable accommodation and is significant to Colerne and surrounding villages of Biddestone, North Wraxall and Box.

2. This is the last meeting of the Executive for Lisa Pullin who will be going off on maternity leave from the end of September. The Executive wish her good luck on the birth of her baby.

E50. Revenue Budget Monitor 2008/09

Consideration was given to Report No. 7 (circulated on 29th August 2008) which set out a high level Revenue budget monitor for Month 4 of the 2008/09 financial year, highlighting material known or anticipated variations in income and expenditure that could affect the Council by the end of the financial year.

Resolved that the Executive:

- (1) Note the report forecast under spend of circa £400K (after the re-allocation of funds for play areas, £180K); and
- (2) Delegate authority to Legal Services Manager, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and the Lead Member to amend the Car Parking Pay and Display tariffs, in accordance with paragraph 4.1. of the Report.

E51. Capital Budget Monitor 2008/09

Consideration was given to Report No. 8 (circulated on 29th August 2008) which informed the Executive of the latest position and forecast outturn on the 2008/09 Capital Programme and noted change to the Risk Assessment Table.

Resolved that the Executive:

- (1) Note the figures contained in Annex 1 in relation to the Capital Programme for 2008/09 and the contents of the Report.
- (2) Note the information on Capital Schemes at Annex 2 of the Report.
- (3) Note the Capital Risk Assessment contained in Annex 3 of the Report.
- (4) Note that the Capital programme is part of the ongoing consultation with Wiltshire County Council as a result of the Unitary proposal.

E52. Transitional Corporate Plan Progress Update – First Quarter 2008/09

Consideration was given to Report No. 9 (circulated with the Agenda) which provided an update and exceptions report on the delivery and performance of the Transitional Corporate Plan for the first quarter of 2008/09.

An update from the Cleansing & Amenities service on the actions in the Corporate Plan was circulated at the meeting.

Resolved that the Executive notes the first quarter exception report for delivery and performance of actions under the priority areas in the Transitional Corporate Plan.

E53. Review of Community Funding Awards 2008/09

Consideration was given to Report No. 10 (circulated on 29th August 2008) which presented feedback to Members on the funding spend of each of the Area Committees from the Community Awards budget for 2008/09.

Appendix 2 to the report was circulated at the meeting.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- That £10,000 had been awarded to each of the Area Committees to spend on streetscene and physical environment improvements.

Resolved that the Executive agree to reallocate a total of £50,000 from under spending in year budgets to the Area Committee Awards, this amount to be distributed equally as £10,000 for each of the five areas.

E54. Request for Affordable Housing Grant (AHG) to Provide Affordable Housing in the District – Sutton Lane, Sutton Benger and The Piazza, Chippenham

Consideration was given to Report No. 11 (circulated with the Agenda) which sought authorisation for the allocation Affordable Housing Grant (AHG) to enable Jephson Housing Association to provide 7 affordable homes in Sutton Benger and Sarsen Housing Association to convert 3 affordable homes from shared ownership to rent in Chippenham.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- That the Housing Corporation had agreed to fully fund the development at Fiddle Farm, Cricklade which had released previously committed Affordable Housing Grant for the projects at Sutton Lane and The Piazza.

Resolved that the Executive:

- (1) Authorise the commitment of Affordable Housing Grant of £180,500; and
- (2) Delegate authority to the Legal Services Manger to agree a nominations agreement with the respective Housing Associations.

E55. Customer Relations, Service Area Update – Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit

Consideration was given to Report No. 12 (circulated with the Agenda) which provided a position statement in respect of the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit service and to a summary of the significant performance improvements achieved throughout 2007/08 together with an overview of ongoing and future developments planned for the service.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The Post Office initiative that was being piloted to provide customers living in rural areas with the option of reporting changes affecting their benefit claim at their local Post Office; and
- That staff were doing an excellent job on achieving improvements to the service as part of the Council's priority issues.

Resolved that the Executive:

- (1) Note the significant improvement in performance achieved in Housing and Council Tax Benefit administration; and
- (2) Note details of ongoing and planned service improvements.

- (3) Wishes to commend all staff involved with achieving the huge improvements to the efficiency of the service.

E56. Customer Relations, Service Area Update – Revenues

Consideration was given to Report No. 13 (circulated with the Agenda) which provided an overview of the service improvements achieved within the Revenues service together with an update on planned future development.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- The possible future effects of the credit crunch on the revenues collection service.

Resolved that the Executive

- (1) Note the service improvements.
- (2) Wishes to commend all staff involved with achieving the huge improvements to the efficiency of the service.

E57. Customer Relations, Service Area Update – Customer Liaison

Consideration was given to Report No. 14 (circulated with the Agenda) which provided an update on the actions taken to improve the Council's Customer Focus.

Issues discussed during consideration of this item included:

- How the Audit Commission's concerns had been addressed.

Resolved that the Executive

- (1) Note the contents of the report.
- (2) Wishes to commend all staff involved with achieving the huge improvements to the efficiency of the service.

The meeting commenced at 7.00pm and concluded at 7.28pm.

There were no members of the public were present.