

IMPLEMENTATION EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the Meeting Held on 22 April 2009

In Attendance

Wiltshire County Council

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

Representing the Former Kennet District Council

Mr Lionel Grundy
Mr Philip Brown

Representing the Former North Wiltshire District Council

Mr Dick Tonge
Mrs Allison Bucknell

Representing the Former West Wiltshire District Council

Mr Tony Phillips
Mr Rod Eaton

263. Apologies

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

264. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2009 were confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the addition of a request from Mrs Douglas that in relation to the Salisbury Vision the membership of the Vision Group should include a member of the local Area Board.

265. Leader's Announcements

The Chairman reported that there had been positive developments in terms of the Council's investments in Icelandic Banks. The Council had £9 million invested in Heritable (£8 million former Wiltshire County Council; £1m former North Wiltshire District Council), and £3 million invested in Landsbanki (former North Wiltshire District Council).

In terms of the Heritable investments the Council is likely to be reimbursed 15% towards the end of July/early August. The total reimbursement is likely to be up to 80%. A further report is due in 6 months which will confirm the overall estimated return and indicative timings of further reimbursements. A key issue is the Heritable Bank's Administrators securing the best return on the sale of assets and the timescales needed to do this.

With regard to the Landsbanki investment, as the Council will receive preferential treatment status for depositors, there is a very good chance the Council will be reimbursed a very significant proportion of it. However this is dependent upon decisions by the Icelandic court and the Icelandic parliament.

It should also be noted that it has been indicated that reimbursement will be based upon the principal amount plus interest determined from October 2008.

Members agreed that a positive press release should be issued to this effect.

266. Members' Interests

No interests were declared.

267. Public Participation

None.

268. Adoption of the Wiltshire & Swindon Minerals Core Strategy 2006-2026

The Implementation Executive considered the report of the Service Director, Economy and Enterprise, which proposed that the Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Core Strategy, as amended by the changes identified in the Planning Inspector's binding Report, be recommended to Full Council for adoption.

Members requested that the Implementation Executive should be informed when Swindon Borough Council had agreed to adopt the Strategy.

Resolved:

To recommend to Full Council that the Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Core Strategy, as amended by the changes identified in the Inspector's binding Report, is adopted.

Reason for Proposal

The Minerals Core Strategy will form part of the Council's Policy Framework. In line with the Local Government Act it must first be approved by the Implementation Executive before it is agreed by Full Council. The Inspector's Report is binding upon the Councils (Wiltshire and Swindon) and hence the recommendations it presents must be acted upon. As the document has been found sound, it follows that it should be adopted as soon as reasonably practicable, in order to ensure up-to-date minerals policy is in place for Wiltshire.

269. Department of Community Services – Learning Disability: Supported Living Framework Agreements

The Implementation Executive considered the report of the Service Director, Adult Care: Strategy and Commissioning, which sought approval for the undertaking of a procurement process to secure a range of framework contracts with independent providers of supported living services within Wiltshire.

The Deputy Leader introduced the report and outlined that the total spend on these contracts was in the region of £16m with some individual contracts being in excess of £1m. The approval of the IE was therefore required.

In response to queries from Members it was confirmed that there were currently 105 people with learning disabilities being cared for outside of the County boundary, and that the procurement process detailed in the report would encourage the provision of the services they require within Wiltshire.

The Deputy Leader also provided further details of the community-based supported living arrangements mentioned in the report's proposal. Under these arrangements small groups of people with learning disabilities live in shared accommodation (rather than residential care) while still receiving tailored support from qualified professionals. The Deputy Leader invited interested Members to accompany him on a visit to some examples of this kind of accommodation.

Following a Member query, the Deputy Leader reported that the care services provided externally are currently inspected by the former Commission for Social Care Inspection. Arrangements were currently being put in place to monitor service quality internally as well, and the Council was moving towards a general policy of only accepting services rated as 'Good' or 'Excellent'.

The Leader requested a briefing paper be circulated to IE Members providing an update on the recent work of the Community Services department in relation to care for the elderly.

Resolved:

- a. To authorise the Director of Community Services to undertake a procurement process to secure framework arrangements providing for a range of appropriately qualified and experienced service providers to work with the Council to provide community based supported living arrangements for individuals with a learning disability.**

- b. To approve the monitoring of the procurement process (and subsequent contract management) through the Learning Disability Commissioning Board.**

Reason for Proposal

To satisfy the commissioning objectives of the Learning Disability Commissioning Board, to support the objectives detailed in the “Valuing People Now” paper and to align the purchasing of services in line with the Councils Business BMP.

270. The Restructure of the Department for Children and Education: Joint Commissioning of Children’s Services

The Implementation Executive considered the report of the Corporate Director, Children and Education, which described the progress so far in developing the joint commissioning of children’s services in Wiltshire. It also set out recommendations to the NHS Wiltshire (PCT) Board and Implementation Executive to appoint a joint Service Director post between the Council and NHS Wiltshire and to agree to establish the governance arrangements to delegate authority of NHS Wiltshire’s responsibilities for the commissioning of children’s services to the Council.

The WC Cabinet Member for Education and Youth Development introduced the report emphasised that this initiative represented a step change in bringing the Council and the PCT together in terms of joint commissioning.

Sally Sandcroft, the Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professionals (the Director lead for Children’s commissioning in NHS Wiltshire), confirmed this step change in terms of close working and improved communications which supported the national policy direction.

In response to concerns expressed by a Member that this work would not disadvantage voluntary sector organisations, the Leader requested that a letter be sent to the representative of the Voluntary Sector Forum informing them of recent changes to the commissioning of Children’s Services.

Resolved:

- a. To approve the appointment of a joint Service Director for children’s commissioning and performance, subject to agreeing final terms and conditions.**
- b. To approve a recommendation to the Children’s Trust Board that the membership of the Children’s Trust Board Executive is reviewed and the Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professionals (the Director lead for children’s commissioning in NHS Wiltshire), and a Non Executive Director from NHS Wiltshire are included in the membership.**
- c. To approve that a strategic commissioning team is established and led by the Service Director for children’s commissioning and performance.**
- d. To approve that NHS Wiltshire and Wiltshire Council work towards establishing governance arrangements to delegate authority to the Council**

for NHS Wiltshire's commissioning responsibilities for children. This would be the subject of a future report.

Reason for Proposal

Wiltshire Council as the lead agency for children's services and NHS Wiltshire have been active partners in the Children's Trust Board arrangements. They have successfully worked together on shaping new services, such as improving child and adolescent mental health specialist services and safeguarding children

These partnership successes, and the recognition of the importance of joint working in achieving improved outcomes for children and young people, have led to a desire by both the Council and NHS Wiltshire to go further and faster in terms of joint working.

271. Reduction in Council Housing Rents for 2009/10

The Implementation Executive considered the report of the Service Director, Housing, and the Accountancy Services Manager, expounding recent revisions made by Central Government to the formula it uses to determine the Housing Revenue Account subsidy, and the consequent ability of this Council to alter the 5.44% average increase in rents for council houses it agreed in February 2009.

The Deputy Leader introduced the report and highlighted the implications of agreeing this reduction as outlined in paragraphs 3 and 4 of the report. He understood these costs could be absorbed by the service but it was important to ensure that tenants understood that this was the result of action by the Government and that it was not a mistake by the Council.

The Leader agreed and requested that a letter be sent to the relevant Government Minister reminding him of the statutory cycle for budget setting and that such late changes as this resulted in additional costs of reissuing bills to all council house tenants. Members suggested that these additional costs should be equated to the opportunity costs of simple housing improvements.

Following queries from Members, the Service Director, Housing confirmed that only the Housing Revenue Account will be affected by the changes to the Housing Revenue Account formula.

Resolved:

To accept and approve the application of the revised HRA subsidy formula for 2009/10 giving rise to new levels of rent increase of between 1.54 and 3.56%, replacing the level of rent increases agreed in February 2009 of between 4.56 and 6.81%.

Reasons for Proposal

To ensure that council rent increases are kept to a minimum whilst ensuring that net income to the Housing Revenue Account is maximised.

272. Update on Appointments Process

The Implementation Executive considered an update on the Council's current position in relation to the progress of the Appointments process, as at 21st April 2009.

The Assistant Director LGR Transition confirmed that 88% of staff were matched to jobs in the new structure and that 203 staff remained in the Redeployment Pool. Only 136 staff had not been notified at that date.

The Leader expressed concern at the number of staff remaining in the 'Don't know' category particularly in certain areas. There was general agreement that at the next meetings the IE would receive more detailed information on target figures and dates relating to the appointments process.

273. Outline Work Programme

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

Due to the size of the agenda for the next meeting it was agreed that it would begin at 1.00pm.

274. Exclusion of the Public

Resolved:

To agree 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 No. 275 below because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 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.

275. Staffing Issues Referred from Salisbury District Council

The Implementation Executive considered the confidential report of the Service Director, Legal & Democratic Services, considering the recommendations of the Appointments Sub-Committee of Salisbury District Council held on 30th March 2009.

A letter addressed to the Service Director, Legal & Democratic Services, from the Council's District Auditors was tabled at the meeting.

Resolved:

That in light of the questions raised by Wiltshire Council's District Auditor in the letter received today, the Solicitor be asked to prepare a report and further consideration of this matter be deferred until the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 5.00pm.