

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

13 September 2011

Present: Councillor M Stanley in the Chair

Councillors Davis, Fox, Hayfield, Lewis, May, Moore, Morson, B Moss, Phillips, Simpson, Smith, Sweet, Watkins and Winter.

Councillor Pickard was also in attendance.

23 **Declarations of Personal or Prejudicial Interest.**

Any personal interests arising from the membership of Warwickshire County Council of Councillors Fox, Hayfield, May, B Moss and Sweet and membership of the various Town/Parish Councils of Councillors Davis (Atherstone), Fox (Shustoke), Lewis (Kingsbury), Moore (Baddesley Ensor), B Moss (Kingsbury), Morson (Dordon), Phillips (Kingsbury), M Stanley (Polesworth) and Winter (Dordon) were deemed to be declared at this meeting.

24 **Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 27 June 2011.**

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 27 June 2011, copies having been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

25 **Financial Statements 2010/11**

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted the Annual Financial Statements for 2010/11 for approval.

Resolved:

That the Financial Statements 2010/2011 be approved subject to audit.

26 **External Auditors' Report**

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report informing Members of changes to the 2010/11 Statement of Accounts following the audit and the External Auditors' report to those charged with governance.

Alison Breedon and Leon Mayfield from PricewaterhouseCoopers were in attendance at the meeting and presented their report on which Members asked a number of questions.

Resolved:

That the contents of the External Auditors' report be noted.

27 Council Vision, Priorities and Corporate Plan Key Actions – Implications Arising from the 2011 Elections

The Chief Executive reported further on potential changes to the Council's Vision, Priorities and Corporate Plan Key Actions following the elections in May 2011. The Board was asked to agree a suggested course of action.

Recommended:

- a That the Council's Vision and Priorities be confirmed as set out in Appendix 1 to the report of the Chief Executive; and**
- b That Appendix 2 be adopted as the format for the Council's Priorities and Corporate Plan Key Actions and that further reports be brought on any proposals for the areas in italics in Appendix 2 which require additional budget provision to take forward in the current financial year.**

28 Corporate Plan 2012/13 – Key Corporate issues

The Chief Executive reported on the key corporate issues facing the Council over the next 18 months and sought agreement to addressing these issues during the formulation of the 2012/13 Budget and Corporate Plan.

Recommended:

That the issues raised in the report of the Chief Executive are the main areas which should be considered for inclusion in the 2012/13 Corporate Plan.

29 Financial Strategy 2012–16

The Deputy Chief Executive reported on the Authority's Financial Strategy, projected forward the Authority's General Fund budgets to 2015/16, and suggested a detailed budget approach for the 2012/13 General Fund Budget.

Recommended:

- a That the Financial Strategy shown as Appendix A to the report of the Deputy Chief Executive be approved;**

- b That the General Fund budget projections for 2012/13 to 2015/16 be noted;**
- c That the budget approach, set out in paragraph 12.1 to 12.2 of the report, be adopted; and**
- d That growth bids be assessed according to the criteria set out in 9.2 of the report.**

30 Earmarked Reserves 2011/12

As requested at the last meeting of the Council the Deputy Chief Executive reported on the balances in the reserves at 31 March 2011. The Board was asked to agree a suggested course of action.

Recommended:

- a That earmarked reserves of £111,985.81 be moved into the General Fund balance, £100,000 into a one-off initiative reserve and £5,765.50 into the Housing Revenue Account balance; and**
- b That the remaining reserves held at 31 March 2011 (detailed in Appendix A) and the planned use of reserves in 2011/12 be approved.**

31 Council Office Accommodation

Members received and considered the public report on the Council Office Accommodation project.

At this point in the meeting it was proposed by Councillor M Stanley, seconded by Councillor Winter and

Resolved:

That the two reports on the Council Office Accommodation project be considered together and that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of this item, on the grounds it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Schedule 12A to the Act.

The Board was informed further on the proposals for the work to the Council House and Members were asked to agree a suggested course of action.

Recommended:

- a That the Council agrees to pursue Option 2 (Full Mechanical and Electrical Refurbishment) as set out in the body of the report of Management Team at section 5.2 as its preferred option for the refurbishment of the Council House;
- b That a specialist contractor to project manage the design, tendering and delivery of the preferred option is appointed as soon as possible;
- c That a budget as set out in the report be established to fund the appointment and initial fees of that contractor;
- d That once the refurbishments are completed, all staff currently located at Old Bank House be moved to the main Council House building to free up Old Bank House for disposal or rental to a third party;
- e That the agreed preferred mechanism for progress on the project being reported back to Members on an ongoing basis be meetings of the Special Sub-Group;
- f That the most appropriate methods of keeping both staff and the public up to date with progress on this project in the future should include North Talk, the staff Insider newsletter and the Council's web-site; and
- g That recommendations (a) to (f) above be made available to the public.

32 **Review of Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries in England**

The Chief Executive reported on the proposals published by the Boundary Commission for England in respect of its initial proposals for the review of Parliamentary Constituency Boundaries in England. Members were asked to agree a suggested course of action.

Recommended:

That matter be referred to the Special Sub-Group to agree the Council's response to the initial proposals from the Boundary Commission for England.

33 **Changes to Boards and the Special Sub-Group**

The Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council sought approval to changes in the Constitution and terms of reference of the Policy Boards and the Special Sub-Group and the creation of

Sub-Committees to deal with Housing and Safer Communities matters. Revised recommendations were circulated at the meeting.

Recommended:

- a That the number of Members on the Executive, Resources and Community and Environment Boards be reduced to nine;**
- b That substitutes for all Boards be allowed in accordance with the scheme set out in revised Standing Order No 23 in the Appendices to the report of the Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council;**
- c That responsibility for Human Resource matters be given to the Special Sub-Group;**
- d That Appeals Panels consist of either the Chairman of the Special Sub-Group or the Chairman of the Resources Board together with three other Members from either the Special Sub-Group or the Resources Board and that all the Council's policies that refer to Appeals Panels or similar be amended accordingly;**
- e That a Sub-Committee consisting of 5 Members be appointed with delegated powers over Housing matters as set out in the attached Appendix;**
- f That a Sub-Committee consisting of 5 Members of the Executive Board be appointed with delegated powers over Safer Communities issues;**
- g That the changes to the Constitution detailed in the Appendices to the report be approved;**
- h That the above changes be reviewed by a cross party task and finish group with a view to evaluating whether other forms of decision making structures would be more effective; and**
- i That a replacement for Cllr A Stanley be appointed as Portfolio Holder for Community Life.**

34 Executive and Planning and Development Board Terms of Reference

The Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council sought approval to changes in the terms of reference of the Executive and Planning and Development Boards.

Recommended:

That changes to the Constitution detailed in the Appendices to the report of the Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council be approved.

35 Public Speaking at Planning and Development Board Meetings

The Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council sought approval for a scheme to allow the public to speak on planning applications considered by the Planning and Development Board.

Recommended:

- a That the scheme for public speaking at the Planning and Development Board detailed in the Appendix to the report of the Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council be adopted; and**
- b That the scheme be reviewed in twelve months time.**

36 Draft Core Strategy

The Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council reported on the draft Core Strategy and provided information on the accompanying documents for public consultation.

Recommended:

- a That the Draft Core Strategy be approved for consultation;**
- b That representations be reported to the LDF Sub-Committee for their consideration;**
- c That the LDF Sub-Committee make recommendations to this Board on changes to the Draft Core Strategy, if required; and**
- d That the Draft Core Strategy be considered as a material planning consideration.**

37 A5 Strategy 2011 - 2026

The Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council reported on the development of and consultation on a Strategy for the A5 Transport Corridor. The Board was asked to agree a suggested course of action.

Recommended:

- a That the comments from the Board on the draft strategy be fed into the consultation process; and
- b That the date of the launch of the Draft Strategy for consultation and event on Friday the 30 September 2011 be noted.

38 Warwickshire Compact 2011

The Assistant Director (Leisure and Community Development) reported on the production of a refreshed Warwickshire Compact and sought authority for the Leader of the Council to sign and endorse the Compact on behalf of the Borough Council.

Recommended:

- a That the principles and commitments within the revised Warwickshire Compact 2011, attached at Appendix A to the report of the Assistant Director (Leisure and Community Development), be endorsed and that the Leader of the Council be authorised to sign the Compact on behalf of the Council; and
- b That due account be taken of the Compact's principles and commitments in the preparation and implementation of Council policy and all associated strategic plans and procedures, where these may have an impact on relations with voluntary and community sector organisations.

39 Business Rates Retention

The Deputy Chief Executive reported that the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had issued a consultation paper together with 8 further technical papers regarding proposals for business rates retention by local authorities. He sought approval, in consultation with the Chairman of the Board and the Leader of the Conservative Group to agree a response to the consultation.

Recommended:

- a The report be noted; and
- b That authority be given to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with Chairman of Board and Leader of Conservative Group to formulate the Council's response.

40 **Budgetary Control Report 2011/12 Period Ending 31 August 2011**

The Assistant Director (Finance and Human Resources) reported on the revenue expenditure and income for the period from 1 April 2011 to 31 August 2011. The 2011/2012 budget and the actual position for the period, compared with the estimate at that date, was given, together with an estimate of the out-turn position for services reporting to this Board.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

41 **Progress Report on Achievement of Corporate Plan and Performance Indicator Targets – April 2011 to June 2011**

The Chief Executive informed Members of the progress with the achievement of the Corporate Plan and Performance Indicator targets relevant to the Executive Board for April to June 2011.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

42 **The Open Public Services White Paper**

The Chief Executive informed Members of the Open Public Services White Paper, the consultation exercise currently taking place and sought authority for the Chief Executive to agree a response following consultation with leading Members.

Recommended:

That the contents of the Open Public Services White Paper be noted and the Chief Executive be authorised to respond to the consultation and to the approach from the County Council following consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition.

43 **Minutes of the meetings of the Local Development Framework Sub-Committee held on 6 July 2011 and 31 August 2011**

The minutes of the meetings of the Local Development Framework Sub-Committee held on 6 July 2011 and 31 August 2011 were received and noted.

44 **Draft National Planning Policy Framework**

The Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council sought views on the Draft National Planning Policy Guidance which brought together Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance Notes and some Circulars into a single consolidated document.

Recommended:

- a That the proposed changes be noted; and**
- b That the observations included in the report, together with any others received from Members, be sent in response to the consultation.**

45 Draft Plan Making Regulations

The Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council sought views on the Government's proposed new regulations governing the process by which local councils prepare their development plan and associated documents.

Recommended:

- a That the changes being suggested are noted; and**
- b That the comments in the report of the Assistant Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council be forwarded as the Council's response to the consultation.**

46 Exclusion of the Public and Press

Resolved:

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Schedule 12A to the Act.

47 Minutes of the meetings of the Special Sub-Group held on 22 August 2011 and 13 September 2011

The minutes of the meetings of the Special Sub-Group held on 22 August 2011 were received and noted.

The minutes of the meetings of the Special Sub-Group held on 13 September 2011 were received and noted and

Recommended:

That, following the trial period, the Council be recommended to make the interim Management Structure agreed in May 2010 permanent in accordance with the recommendations set out in the report, including the consequential savings and reduction in the Senior Management establishment.

M Stanley
Chairman