

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE CABINET

Wednesday, 18th May 2005 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs. M. M. T. Taylor (Deputy Executive Leader) (in the Chair), B. L. Fuller C.B.E. Q.F.S.M., Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths, R. Hollingworth and P. J. Whittaker.

1/05 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor D. C. Norton

2/05 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Executive Cabinet held on 13th April 2005 were submitted.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

3/05 **TENDERS COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the Tenders Committee held on 7th April 2005 were submitted.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes be noted.

4/05 **SPORTS CENTRE/SCHOOL DRIVE CAR PARK BUSINESS CASE**

Having considered a proposal to amend the limited period allowed for free parking for customers of the Customer Service Centre, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the issues relating to the business case as set out in the report be noted;
- (b) that the allocation of parking provision for customers of the Customer Service Centre be limited to 30 minutes waiting with no return within two hours.

5/05 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY**

The Minutes of the Local Development Framework Working Party held on 19th April 2005 were submitted.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes be approved and adopted.

6/05 **MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP**

The Minutes of the Member Development Working Group held on 12th May 2005 were submitted.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes be approved and adopted.

7/05 **FINANCIAL SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN 2005/06**

Consideration was given to the Financial Services Business Plan for 2005/06. During the discussion Members and the Corporate Director (Resources) paid tribute to the efforts and achievements of the Corporate Finance Manager and her staff. The Corporate Director (Resources) also introduced Mr. J. Kirke, the new Interim Head of Financial Services to Members. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the Business Plan be approved.

8/05

TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT

Having considered the proposed Treasury Management Strategy for 2005/06 which included the Annual Investment Strategy, it was

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the Treasury Management Strategy as detailed in the report be approved;
- (b) that in accordance with Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003, the Council set the Authorised Limit for borrowing at £6,000,000;
- (c) that the Council approve the maximum level of investment to be held within each organisation as detailed in paragraph 10.2 of the report.

RESOLVED: that a review of the Treasury Management service provision by HSBC be undertaken by officers and reported to Members.

9/05

ANNUAL EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

The Cabinet considered a report on the Annual Efficiency Statement for 2005/06 which detailed the Council's approach to delivering the required "Gershon" savings. The Statement had been submitted to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the Annual Efficiency Statement for 2005/06 be noted and endorsed.

10/05

LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Cabinet considered a proposed Local Code of Corporate Governance which would provide evidence of the Council's commitment to the principles of good corporate governance and a sound framework for the further development of effective procedures and practices. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that the Local Code of Corporate Governance be approved and adopted.

11/05

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Having considered the information relating to the Council's performance during 2004/05 which included national performance indicators and some local indicator detail, it was

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

12/05

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY (ICT) STRATEGY

Consideration was given to the proposed ICT Strategy for 2005/08 which defined the strategic direction of ICT over that period in line with the Council's Corporate Plan and e-Government vision, together with proposals for the implementation of the Strategy. During the discussion Members referred to the need to plan for business continuity in the event of a major emergency. It was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the ICT Strategy as now submitted be approved;
- (b) that the e-Government Project Team act as the ICT Strategy Programme Board.

13/05

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY (ICT) SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN 2005/06

Having considered the ICT Services Business Plan for 2005/06, it was

RESOLVED: that the Business Plan be approved.

14/05

HIGH HEDGES

The Cabinet considered a report on the proposed procedures and fee structure to be adopted to enable the Council to meet the requirements of new Regulations on 'High Hedges' which would come into effect from 1st June 2005. Members felt that the proposed standard fee should be higher in order to cover the full related staffing costs, including on-costs and support costs. It was therefore

RESOLVED:

- (a) that a standard fee of £500 per application be set;
- (b) that approval be given to the repayment of 75% of the fee if an application is invalid;
- (c) that approval be given to the adoption of a reduced fee of £200 for individuals on a low income as defined in paragraph 4.2.9 of the report;
- (d) that the principle of delegation of authority to officers as set out in paragraph 4.2.13 of the report be endorsed, subject to the exceptions identified; and that the Standards Committee be requested to approve the delegation;
- (e) that the proposed application form and guidance notes as set out in the appendices to the report be adopted for use by the Council;
- (f) that a full review of the 'High Hedges' system be undertaken after 6 months to assess performance and operation of the scheme.

15/05

RESTRUCTURING UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 225/04, consideration was given to a report on the outcome of the consultation on proposed changes to the senior management structure within the Council, together with the proposed next steps.

The Chief Executive referred to comments received from staff since the report had been circulated and advised that the Cemeteries function would now be located within Legal and Democratic Services rather than within Culture and Community Services. Members were also advised that other issues had come to light which required an extension to the consultation response from the Senior Management Team to the staff concerned and the Trade Unions. It was noted that all of the quotations had now been received for the assessment/development centres and that a preferred company had been chosen whose quotation was below £30,000, but that further discussions were required to finalise the details. Members were also informed that an Interim HR adviser to provide dedicated support for the restructuring process and an Interim Assistant Chief Executive had now been appointed.

Members referred to the recommendation of the Standards Committee regarding the constitution of the Appointments Committee which would be considered at the Special Meeting of the Council on 24th May 2005. Members felt that it was more important for the Committee to comprise people with appropriate experience rather than it being politically balanced. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the minor amendments and next steps arising from the consultation to reorganise the senior management structure of the organisation as set out in sections 4 and 5 of the report and appendices and as updated at the meeting, be noted and approved;
- (b) that the proposals, contracting arrangements and the financing of the assessment/development centres and the interim support for HR and the interim posts of Assistant Chief Executive and Head of Financial Services, be endorsed.

16/05

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED: that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting during the consideration of the item of business the subject of the following Minute on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of "Exempt Information" as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act, the relevant paragraph of that part being as set out below:-

Minute No. Paragraph(s)
17/05 1

17/05

RESTRUCTURING UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 16/05 above, the Cabinet was asked to consider proposals which affected the financial implications of the proposed new senior management structure. The Chief Executive also referred to issues which could slightly delay the projected timeline set out in appendix E to the report. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED: that following external evaluation of the new posts and to reflect the suggested extended salary range for the following three posts, the salary provision be increased by a combined total of £17,000 including on-costs:

Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Head of Financial Services
Head of Planning and Environment

The Meeting closed at 7.35 p.m.

Chairman