

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 4 APRIL 2017, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor L Haysey (Chairman/Leader)
Councillors E Buckmaster, G McAndrew and
G Williamson.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors A Alder, M Allen, P Ballam,
S Bull, M Casey, M Freeman, J Jones,
M McMullen, T Page, P Phillips and
P Ruffles.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

David Allen	- Waste Services Manager
Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Isabel Brittain	- Head of Strategic Finance and Property
Jonathan Geall	- Head of Housing and Health
Jess Khanom	- Head of Operations
Alison Stuart	- Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Adele Taylor	- Director

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WASTE AND STREET CLEANSING VEHICLES

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report seeking to secure, in principle, capital

funding for waste collection and street cleansing vehicles which would be required for the new joint waste and cleansing contract due to commence in May 2018. The Leader commented that the options detailed in the report, provided flexibility in terms of either buying the vehicles or leasing them.

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing referred to the tax (VAT) advantages associated with lease purchase and buying outright.

In response to a query from Councillor J Jones, the Waste Services Manager explained that some vehicles (e.g. such as those used for the collection of clinical waste), would be shared with North Herts District Council.

In response to queries from Councillor M Casey and Councillor P Ballam, the Head of Strategic Finance and Property explained the Council's rationale for borrowing money versus using its reserves. She undertook to write to Members explaining the Council's level of immediate resources in the bank. The Executive Member explained that what was being proposed provided the Council with more flexible options in terms of the tendering process.

In response to further queries regarding logos and the sharing of vehicles, the Waste Services Manager explained how all vehicles were clearly marked and what could be used to identify vehicles if they were involved in an accident.

The Executive supported the recommendation, as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that Capital funding in the range of £3.5 million to £4 million for the purchase of vehicles required to deliver the District's waste and street cleansing service from May 2018, be approved, subject to tender evaluation indicating that option provides a substantial saving to the Council.

666 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors G Jones and S Rutland-Barsby.

667 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader reminded everyone that the meeting was being webcast.

668 MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 21 March 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

669 PROPERTY INVESTMENT COMPANY

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report summarising the background around the development of a property investment company, wholly owned by the Council as part of an approach to diversifying its investment portfolio aimed at generating a revenue income stream. This would be used to fund the Council's priorities in the context of diminishing subsidies and grants from the government.

The Executive Member explained how this would work, the legal basis of establishing the proposed company and potential community benefits which could be derived in relation to the formation of a property investment company, and referred to the Council's social housing responsibilities. The Executive Member assured Members that the Council would not be able to proceed further and beyond the recommendations as detailed, until the business plan had been reviewed in greater depth.

The Executive approved the recommendation, as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) in principle approval be granted to develop a property investment company, the incorporation and trading of which is subject to future approval of a full financial business plan for the company; and

(B) Articles of Association and a Shareholder Agreement be drafted for consideration alongside the business plan at a future date.

670 CORPORATE SERVICE PLAN 2017/18

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report which presented a draft of the Council's service plan which outlined its priorities for the next year (2017/18) and key outcomes it hoped to achieve.

The Leader referred to the choice of colours used within Essential Reference Paper "B" of the report detailed and asked that Officers use more defined colours in future reports.

The Executive approved the recommendation, as detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the comments of the joint meeting of Scrutiny Committee, be received; and

(B) 2017/18 draft service plans, designed to support delivery of Corporate Strategic Plan objectives, be endorsed.

671 RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report setting out proposed changes to the Risk Management Strategy. He explained that there were no significant changes, only minor ones, to ensure that the strategy was still "fit for purpose".

In response to a question from Councillor M Freeman regarding self-insurance, the Head of Strategic Finance and Property explained that currently, the Council paid around

£200,000 for insurances and that she was in the process of reviewing other options.

The Executive approved the recommendation, as detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the comments of Audit and Governance Committee be received; and

(B) the Risk Management Strategy be approved.

672 QUARTERLY CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK - QUARTER 3
(DECEMBER 2016)

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report setting out the Council's finances, performance and strategic risk monitoring as at December 2016. The Executive Member provided a summary of the report.

The Executive approved the recommendations, as detailed.

RESOLVED – (A) the revenue budget forecast overspend of £89k in 2016/17 be noted;

(B) the capital budget forecast underspend of £1.122m be noted;

(C) the reported performance for the period October 2016 to December 2016 be noted; and

(D) the risk management controls be approved.

The meeting closed at 7.25 pm