

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 1 DECEMBER 2010, AT 4.00
PM

PRESENT: Councillor A P Jackson (Chairman/Leader)
Councillors M R Alexander, M G Carver,
L O Haysey and R L Parker.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews, K A Barnes,
A D Dodd, R Gilbert, M Newman,
P A Ruffles, V Shaw and M Wood.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Anne Freimanis	- Chief Executive
Cliff Cardoza	- Head of Environmental Services
Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Caroline Goss	- Communications Officer
Philip Hamberger	- Programme Director of Change
Martin Ibrahim	- Senior Democratic Services Officer
Alan Madin	- Director of Internal Services
George A Robertson	- Director of Customer and Community Services

422 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor M J Tindale.

423 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader welcomed the press and public to the meeting. He also welcomed Councillor M Newman to his first meeting since being elected to the Council.

He reminded Members that, "purdah" rules applied until the Sawbridgeworth by-election was held on 23 December 2010. Purdah rules existed to ensure that there was no risk of public funds being used and/or actions undertaken to support one particular political party or individual.

The Leader advised that he had agreed to accept onto the agenda as a matter of urgency, an additional item relating to the Council's Treasury Management Strategy, in order to avoid delay in considering possible changes to the Strategy before setting the budget for 2011/12.

424 CASTLE WEIR MICRO HYDRO SCHEME (1)

The Executive Member for Community Safety and Protection submitted a report on a capital investment proposal for the installation of a micro hydro generation scheme at Castle Weir, Hertford.

The Executive recalled that, this scheme had been raised as part of the refurbishment of Hertford Theatre, when a decision had been taken to request that a business case be developed and considered by Environment Scrutiny Committee. Such a business case was submitted to the Committee on 16 November 2010, who supported the scheme enthusiastically and commended the business case for the installation.

The Executive considered the business case as now submitted and noted the recent clarification that had been

received in respect of “feed in tariff payments”. In addition to the energy saving and significant carbon reduction that would be achieved, it was noted that there would likely be a high level of public and media interest, as hydro power schemes were relatively rare in the UK. Also, it was believed that this would be one of the first examples of a community theatre in the UK to be powered directly and to a significant degree by hydro electricity.

Various Members expressed their support for the proposed scheme.

The Executive supported the proposals as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that the sum of up to £165,000 be included in the Capital Programme for 2011/12.

(see also Minute 431 below)

425 **REFUSE AND RECYCLING CONTRACT OPTIONS (1)**

The Executive considered a report on the outcome of the tender evaluation process for the Refuse, Recycling and Street Cleansing contract. The Executive Member for Community Safety and Protection advised that the contract had been awarded to Veolia Environmental Services. The contract would commence in May 2011 and would result in revenue savings of £1.469m.

The Executive was advised that a number of options for a variety of activities were available for inclusion within the contract, if the Council was so minded. Details of these options were set out in the report now submitted and were considered by the Executive. It was noted that some of these options, if taken up, would result in additional costs, whilst others were already included within the tendered cost.

The Executive considered each option in turn and supported the inclusion of:

- **Collection of other plastics (types 1 – 6).**
- **Emptying on-street recycling bins.**
- **Market and Car Park Waste Collection/Cleansing.**
- **Public Convenience cleaning and opening.**
- **Street Washing.**
- **Graffiti removal.**

It was noted that the inclusion of other plastics would increase revenue costs by up to £260k and up to £40k capital costs, thus reducing the overall saving.

In response to Members' questions, the Head of Environmental Services detailed the types of plastics that would be collected and commented that the public would be advised of examples of recyclable plastic. He stated that the new contract would have no impact on existing Council staff.

Members wished to place on record their gratitude for the efforts of all Officers involved in the contract preparations.

The Executive supported the proposals as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that the following options be included within the Refuse, Recycling and Street Cleansing contract:

- (A) Collection of other plastics (types 1 – 6).**
- (B) Emptying on-street recycling bins.**
- (C) Market and Car Park Waste Collection/Cleansing.**
- (D) Public Convenience cleaning and opening.**
- (E) Street Washing.**
- (F) Graffiti removal.**

(see also Minute 432 below)

426 WALLFIELDS REFURBISHMENT

The Executive considered a report on the outcome of tenders for the refurbishment of Wallfields and the options for upgrading ITC cabling and other additional items.

The Executive noted the scope of the works included in the original specification and that a number of additional items had been included within the tendering process as options that might achieve savings if carried out as part of the overall refurbishment rather than at a later date. These items were detailed at paragraph 2.3 of the report now submitted.

The Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting held on 30 November 2010, had considered these items and the Director of Internal Services provided a verbal update on their comments. He advised that the Committee had supported the upgrading of cabling to Cat 6A on the basis that an additional £15k expenditure now would likely be more economic. The Committee expressed some concern over excluding the second lift and requested that Officers should bring forward a further business case sooner rather than later. The Committee had accepted the deferral of the stairwells/toilets items on the basis that these would be included in the general maintenance programme. However, these items should be looked at sooner rather than later. Finally, the Committee had noted the deferral of the cooling/ventilation items and the exclusion of the solar heating item.

The Leader commented that the items proposed for deferral should not be “lost” and that Officers should reconsider them at the earliest opportunity.

The Executive supported the proposals as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED - that (A) an amendment to the capital programme to provide additional funding

for the Wallfields Refurbishment scheme to meet the costs of replacement data switches and cabling, to minimum standard of Category 6a at a cost of up to £104,000, be approved;

(B) other works, as explained in paragraphs 2.15 to 2.19 of the report submitted, be deferred, subject to Officers giving further consideration to such items at the earliest opportunity;

(C) the progress of the tender negotiations be noted and Officers be instructed to obtain the most advantageous price for the works agreed above during post tender negotiation; and

(D) it be noted that post-tender negotiations might delay commencement of the works until January 2011, in which case completion might be deferred to August 2011.

427

BISHOP'S STORTFORD 20 20 VISION AND MILL SITE BRIEF

The Leader of the Council submitted a report on the progress being made by the Bishop's Stortford 20 20 Group, which sought approval for the adoption a development brief for the area known as the Mill site in Bishop's Stortford.

The Leader referred to "A Vision for Bishop's Stortford", which had identified a number of sites which had the potential to contribute to the delivery of the Vision and desired outcomes. In order to provide a means of positively influencing any development proposals that might come forward for the sites, the 20 20 Group had undertaken to promote the development of a site specific brief for each of these sites, commencing with the area which includes the flour mill. The Leader emphasised that the purpose of a brief was to set out clear guidelines for potential developers on the local expectations for parts of the site to be retained or developed for the

benefits of the town.

The Leader referred to recent communications with site owners and reiterated that the brief was merely an outline, should any development be proposed in the future. He also referred to a letter from the Mill site owners which had been sent to all Executive Members and provided reassurance on recent speculation expressed in the local newspapers.

In response to a Member's question, the Director of Customer and Community Services referred to the opening paragraph of the brief, which clarified the area referred to. He clarified the legal position of the brief, which if adopted, would be a material consideration for development control purposes. The Executive Member for Planning Policy and Transport advised on the context of the brief in respect of the Local Development Framework process.

The Leader referred to further comments that had been received from the 20 20 Group which were of a minor nature and suggested that Officers be delegated authority to make further non-material changes.

The Executive supported the proposals as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the work of the Bishop's Stortford 20 20 group be endorsed;

(B) the Bishop's Stortford Mill Site Development Brief, as now submitted, be:

- (1) adopted as the Council's vision and objectives for the site;
- (2) used for development control purposes in determining planning applications relating to the site;
- (3) used to inform emerging Local Development

Framework strategies and policies; and

(C) the Director of Customer and Community Services, in consultation with the Head of Planning and Building Control and the Leader of the Council, be authorised to make minor and stylistic changes to the Brief arising from further comments received.

428 AMENDMENT TO TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Executive considered a report proposing an amendment to the Council's Treasury Management Strategy. The Leader had agreed to accept this item onto the agenda as a matter of urgency, in order to avoid delay in considering possible changes to the Strategy before setting the budget for 2011/12. Consideration of the matter now would also provide an opportunity to take advantage of options that had been the subject of recent discussions with Sector, the Council's investment advisers.

The Executive noted that investment income in 2010/11 was forecast to be some £850k below budget and this reduced return was reflected in the Medium Term Financial Plan. Discussions with Sector on options to improve returns had identified the use of structured medium fixed term deposits as a means to achieve improved returns. This option required the Council to reconsider the balance between risk and returns.

The Director of Internal Services provided a verbal update on the deliberations of the Corporate Business Scrutiny Committee, which had considered this matter at its meeting held on 30 November 2010. The Director advised that the Committee, whilst having some reservations, had supported the proposed amendment.

The Director advised that the preferred option would be to use medium fixed term deposits with major UK banks in tranches of up to £10m.

The Executive considered the balance between risk and probable returns and agreed to support the proposal as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that an amendment to the Treasury Management Strategy to permit in house investment in medium fixed term deposits, as detailed at paragraphs 2.4 – 2.6 of the report submitted, be approved.

429 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 9 November 2010 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

430 ISSUES ARISING FROM SCRUTINY

The Executive received a report detailing those issues referred to it by the Scrutiny Committees. Issues relating to specific reports for the Executive were considered and detailed at the relevant report of the Executive Member.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

431 CASTLE WEIR MICRO HYDRO SCHEME (2)

The Executive considered and supported the business case for the installation of a micro hydro power scheme at Castle Weir, Hertford.

RESOLVED – that (A) the comments from the meeting of the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 16 November 2010, be received;

(B) the business case for the design and build of a micro hydro scheme at Castle Weir, Hertford, set out within the report be agreed in principle; and

(C) the decision to proceed with the tender for the

design and build of a micro hydro power scheme at Castle Weir, Hertford, be delegated to the Director of Customer and Community Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Community Safety and Protection.

(see also Minute 424 above)

432 REFUSE AND RECYCLING CONTRACT OPTIONS (2)

The Executive noted the outcome of the tender evaluation process for the Refuse, Recycling and Street Cleansing contract.

RESOLVED – that the award of the contract to Veolia Environmental Services be noted.

(see also Minute 425 above)

The meeting closed at 5.30 pm

Chairman
Date