

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

12 January 2016

5.30 - 9.30 pm

Present: Councillors Gawthrop (Chair), Perry (Vice-Chair), Baigent, Gehring, Gillespie, Pitt, Ratcliffe, Robertson, C. Smart and M. Smart

Principal Accountant (Services), Business Transformation: Chris Humphris

Head of Legal Services: Simon Pugh

Urban Design and Conservation Manager; Glen Richardson

Environmental Health Manager: Yvonne O' Donnell

Fleet Manager: David Cox

Commercial Operations Manager: Sean Cleary

Project Engineer, Streets and Open Spaces: John Richards

Principal Conservation and Design Officer: Christian Brady

Senior Engineer, Streets and Open Spaces: Declan O'Halloran

Committee Manger: Claire Tunncliffe

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

16/37/ENV Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

16/38/ENV Declarations of Interest

No declarations were declared.

16/39/ENV Minutes

Minutes of the meetings held on 6 October were approved and signed as a correct record.

16/40/ENV Public Questions

1) Dr Michael Fox:

Does the Council believe particularly in the case of dog barking, that it's recently introduced more punitive policy of seeking a noise abatement order at the earliest opportunity has produced better results than early engagement and dialogue with the owners of potentially offending dogs.

The Environmental Health Manager responded that there had been no changes in policy to seek a noise abatement order at the earliest opportunity. Due process would always be followed in line with agreed policy.

On the advice from the Head of Legal Services the second question from Dr Fox was not discussed as it related to live legal proceedings

2) Mrs Penny Heath:

- i. Could the committee explain what safeguards were in place to protect one of the City Councils most important assets, Queens Green, a Grade 2, piece of common land and part of the world famous Backs.
- ii. Queens Green has slowly morphed from a quiet piece of common land into a municipal 'park' with benches and bins plonked at all angles since Tourists were allowed to be dropped off on the Backs.
- iii. Many residents were uncomfortable that tourism is running the show and no one is accountable.

The Green Open Space Manager replied that the existing open spaces of environmental and recreational importance in the City were currently protected through Policy 4/2 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2006. This was likely to be superseded by Policy 67 in the draft local plan. Queens Green was one of those open spaces. The policy stated development would not be permitted which would result in the loss of open space of environmental and/or recreational importance.

The Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2011 included an assessment of the sites value. This Strategy shows whether each site was important for environmental and/or recreational reasons, according to the assessment criteria.

Historically, the Council had protected open spaces for environmental and/or recreational importance. In addition to assessing all sites against the established criteria for environmental and recreational importance, recent audit work had included a quality assessment.

At the last audit completed by Streets and Open Space, Queens Green scored 60% for quality. The site had limited disabled access, offered a limited range of activities and the recreational value is scored low.

The provision of both bins and benches was important to ensure that the environmental and recreational contribution of Queens Green were maintained and therefore warranted the open protected status.

There was no Conservation Management Plan for Queens Green, but there was a Landscape Management Plan created for the Backs by a collaboration of Colleges and the City Council for the Backs, Queens Green had been included in this.

- 3) Councillor Hipkin stated the following points relating to item 7 of the agenda.
- i. Welcomed the recommendation.
 - ii. The proposal was a demonstration of community involvement.
 - iii. Barrow Road was a unique example of suburban architecture of the Arts & Craft movement, the layout of the road is similar to that of Letchworth Garden City.
 - iv. While modifications of the street scene had not always been successful, it had many qualities, such as the green open verges, of the layout and architecture that made Barrow Road such an unusual street in Cambridge.
 - v. An area with conservation status did not mean restriction for future planning applications.

16/41/ENV Planning Policy & Transport Portfolio Revenue and Capital Budgets

Matter for Decision

To consider the budget proposals relating to the Planning Policy & Transport portfolio which were included in the Budget-Setting Report 2016/17 to be considered at the following meetings:

- 18 January 2016: Strategy & Resources
- 21 January 2016: The Executive
- 8 February 2016: Strategy & Resources
- 25 February 2016: Meeting of Full Council

Decision of the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

Review of Charges:

- i. Approved the proposed charges for this portfolio's services and facilities, as shown in Appendix A of the Officer's report.

Revenue:

- ii. Considered the revenue budget proposals as shown in Appendix B of the Officer's report.

Capital:

- iii. Considered the capital budget proposals as shown in Appendix C of the Officer's report.
- iv. Adjusted capital funding for items 2 (c) of the Officer's report.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Principal Accountant which detailed the budget proposals relating to the Planning Policy & Transport portfolio.

In response to the Committee's comments the Director of Environment responded with the following:

- i. Regarding Cambridge University's offer to pay for a full time planning officer post; this would not be the first time that the City Council had entered into a Planning Performance Agreement with an applicant.
- ii. A Planning Performance Agreement was an established practice which allowed the City Council to enter an agreement with the applicant to undertake work within a set time scale and ensure staff resources were in place. This would have no impact upon the decision making process.
- iii. Planning Performance Agreements were supported by national guidance and further information could be provided to the Committee. This was an accepted practice on major growth sites which required specialist planning officers. Without these agreements this would put additional pressure on staff resources.
- iv. The existence of a Planning Performance Agreement meant that the statutory time limits for determining the application no longer applied (to the extent that the agreement specified a longer period for the decision, in which case the agreement would count in the same way as an agreed extension of time).

The Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport stated a minimal increase had been agreed in parking charges for 2015/16 and there had been an over achievement in revenue.

As the cost to the proposed improvements to the Council's Car Parks could be met without raising charges it was felt unnecessary to do so for 2016/17.

The Committee **resolved 6 Votes to 1** to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor and (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor

16/42/ENV Review of the Cambridge Core Area Conservation Area Appraisal

Matter for Decision

To approve the Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal review for public consultation.

Decision of the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

- i. Approved the Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal review for public consultation.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Principal Conservation and Design Officer which referred to an update and review of the Cambridge Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal. The report sought approval for public consultation on the review document.

In response to the Committee's comments the Urban Design and Conservation Manager and Principal Conservation and Design Officer responded with the following:

- i. Noted the comments with regards to minor typographical errors, page numbering and layout of the document.

- ii. Had been working with Belfour Beatty and Cambridgeshire County Council on the street lighting replacement programme in the City Centre for the past five years. An agreement had been reached and work had begun in the City Centre.
- iii. Particular emphasis had been made on street lighting replacement in the historic core of the City to ensure this would be sensitive to the surroundings, particularly the Richardson Candles along King's Parade.
- iv. Future development of the Market Place could be part of the public realm strategy but an access study would have to be undertaken in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council.
- v. With regards to large vehicles entering the City Centre this would be a policy decision and not one that that could be resolved from this appraisal.
- vi. The consultation process would be a web based document.

The Committee **resolved unanimously** to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the amended recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor and (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor

16/43/ENV Pro-active Conservation Programme

Matter for Decision

To approve the pro-active conservation programme and agree the preparation of a draft conservation area appraisal for Barrow Road.

Decision of the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

- i. Agreed the pro-active conservation programme as set out in the Officer's report and Appendix 1 of the Officer's report.
- ii. Agreed to the preparation of a draft conservation area appraisal for Barrow Road as set out in this report.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

Councillor Avery stated the following points:

- i. Welcomed the recommendation which had the support of residents of Barrow Road.
- ii. Impressed with the working relationship between residents and Officers.
- iii. Barrow Road was seen as a key part of the development of the history of Cambridge and it was important to preserve this history.

The Committee received a report from the Principal Conservation and Design Officer which referred to work that had been completed as part of the Council's pro-active conservation work program to date and the projected work for 2016-17.

The report also sought approval from the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport on a specific request to designate Barrow Road a conservation area.

In response to the Committee's comments the Urban Design and Conservation Manager and Principal Conservation and Design Officer responded with the following:

- i. With regards to the Article 4 Direction referenced in the report concerning the Mill Road Conservation Area this would allow the City Council to remove permitted development rights. This meant the occupant would have to submit a planning application for work which normally did not need one, as the work had been deemed not to be in keeping with the area of acknowledged importance. This would allow officers and Councillors to consider certain matters further.
- ii. Article 4 Directions could not be issued retrospectively.
- iii. Residents of Barrow Road had put forward a proposal to contribute towards the costs to undertake a draft conservation area appraisal but it would be the decision of the City Council to decide if Barrow Road warranted conservation status.
- iv. Officers worked closely with residents association and ward councillors to highlight the issues of rendering and cleaning of the brick work on what was acceptable in a conservation area.
- v. City Council Conservation Officers were involved in City Deal projects.
- vi. Parking issues could and are addressed in conservation reports but this was a separate policy issue for the relevant local authorities.

The Committee **resolved unanimously** to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the amended recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor and (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor

16/44/ENV Replacement of Car Parking Equipment at Queen Anne Terrace, Grafton East and Grafton West Multi-Storey Car Parks

Matter for Decision

To consider the replacement of the current parking operating system and equipment at Grafton East, West and Queen Anne Terrace multi-storey car parks.

Decision of the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

- i. Approved the replacement of car parking control equipment at Grafton East, West and Queen Anne Terrace Multi Storey Car Parks, as detailed in the attached appendices, which has been properly planned and is ready for implementation.
- ii. Recommend the replacement of car parking control equipment at Grafton East, West and Queen Anne Terrace Multi Storey Car Parks is put forward for funding approval in the Budget Setting Report (BSR).
- iii. Agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Environment, following consultation with Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport, to exercise the option in the 2013 contract with APT-Skidata Limited to order the supply and installation of replacement of car parking control equipment at Grafton East, West and Queen Anne Terrace Multi Storey Car Parks.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Commercial Operations Manager which referred to the replacement of the current parking operating system and equipment at Grafton East, West and Queen Anne Terrace multi-storey car parks.

The new system would include 'pay on foot technology' to control access to and facilitate payment for parking across the three multi-storey car parks, and enable the Council to explore other payment options such as web-based, cashless payment systems and allow the introduction of pre-booking facilities and mobile wallets.

In response to the Committee's comments the Commercial Operations Manager replied the new equipment would allow for future new technology in contactless payment, pay by phone and direct payment via phone apps.

The Committee **resolved unanimously** to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor and (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

16/45/ENV Car Parks Card Payment Processing Services

Matter for Decision

To approve a project to procure and award two separate contracts to provide authorisation and processing services for card payments in the City's off-street car parks.

Decision of the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

- i. Approved the carrying out and completion of the procurement of a payment service provider to accept card payments for all Cambridge City Council multi-storey car parks. The contract will be for 3 years with a 2 year optional extension period. The value of this new contract would be approximately £150,000 over five years based on the charges made by our current contractor. Charges may vary dependant on the number and value of card transactions.

- ii. Approved the carrying out and completion of the procurement of an acquiring bank to arrange the acceptance and approval for all card payments across all Cambridge City Council multi-storey car parks. The contract will be for 3 years with a 2 year optional extension period. The value of this new contract would be approximately £605,000 over five years based on the charges made by our current contractor. Charges could vary dependant on the number and value of card transactions.
- iii. Noted there were no Capital costs arising from this scheme. The revenue costs associated with this contract would be paid from existing revenue budgets subject to:
 - If the quotation or tender sum exceeded the estimated contract value by more than 15% then the permission of the Executive Councillor and Director of Business Transformation would be sought prior to proceeding.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Commercial Operations Manager which referred to a project to procure and award two separate contracts to provide authorisation and processing services for card payments in the City's off-street car parks.

In response to the Committee's comments the Commercial Operations Manager responded with the following:

- i. The highest value of risk would be £20,000; the risk would be minimal.
- ii. There would be the options of same day or next day transfer.

The Committee **resolved** unanimously to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor and (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

16/46/ENV Environment & Waste Portfolio Revenue and Capital Budgets

Matter for Decision

To consider the budget proposals relating to this Environment, Waste and Public Portfolio which were included in the Budget-Setting Report 2016/17 to be considered at the following meetings:

- 18 January 2016: Strategy & Resources
- 21 January 2016: The Executive
- 8 February 2016: Strategy & Resources
- 25 February 2016: Meeting of Full Council

Decision of the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

Approved the proposed charges for this portfolio's services and facilities, as shown in Appendix A of the Officer's report.

Revenue:

- i. Consider the revenue budget proposals as shown in Appendix B of the Officer's report.

Capital:

- ii. Consider the capital budget proposals as shown in Appendix C of the Officer's report.
- iii. Adjust capital funding for items 2 (c) as shown in the Officer's report.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Principal Accountant which detailed the budget proposals relating to the Environment and Waste portfolio.

In response to questions the Principal Accountant and Executive Councillor for Environment and Waste responded with the following:

- i. With regards to the updated cost of the North West Cambridge collection vehicle, this would be purchased to meet the underground waste collection which had been an integrated part of the design of the development to increase recycling rates. This would also help to meet the urban design targets. The City Council would pay for the portion of the vehicle which would be the equivalent to the cost of a City Council

standard refuse truck, the vast bulk of the cost would be met by the University of Cambridge. If the vehicle broke down a truck would be hired for the period of down time.

- ii. The electric vehicle for the pest control team would be the second van for their department.
- iii. Smaller electrical vehicles were viable for the Council as the power was not there for larger vehicles. These smaller electric vehicles would be charged from Mill Road Depot but additional charge points could be considered.
- iv. Electric vehicles that were to be purchased would hold a charge for 100 miles.
- v. The electric vehicles would come with a 100,000 mile warranty. Servicing the vehicle would be cheaper as there would be no components to change such as oil or filters. The heating system of these vehicles run separately to the battery and therefore the charge would last longer.
- vi. The increase to the Hazardous Domestic Collections for Shared Waste Service was to cover the harmonisation fees to cover the services that were being offered. These charges were the first stage to work towards a same single charge for all the local authorities concerned.
- vii. Agreed it was important to maintain the post of the Recycling Officer but the budget was limited and the City Council were currently looking at different ways to improve recycling under the current volunteer recycling scheme.
- viii. Recycling figures for Cambridge had reduced by 1%, split equally between green and blue waste.

The Committee **resolved 7 votes to 0** endorsed the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor and (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

16/47/ENV Fleet Replacements 2016/17 to 2019/20

Matter for Decision

To consider the purchase of the Council's fleet vehicles, plant and equipment scheduled for replacement in the financial year 2016/17.

Decision of the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

- i. Approved the Fleet Replacements project 2016/17, as detailed in the attached appendices of the Officer's report which had been properly planned and is ready for implementation.
- ii. Agreed to delegate to the Director of Environment to call-off and award a specific contract or specific contracts from appropriate framework agreements of The Procurement Partnership Limited (TPPL), Crown Commercial Service (CCS) or Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) for the purchase of vehicles as set out in the Project Control Document attached to the Officer's report.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Fleet Manager which referred to the purchase of the Council's fleet vehicles, plant and equipment scheduled for replacement in the financial year 2016/17, as part of a rolling programme necessary to replace out of life vehicles and those with unsustainable maintenance costs.

In response to the Committee's comments the Fleet Manager and Executive Councillor for Environment & Waste responded with the following:

- i. It was not currently possible to have electric refuse vehicles as they were simply too large to charge.
- ii. Alternative energies such as cooking oil had not been considered to fuel the Council vehicles.
- iii. The maximum number of electric vehicles that the Council could afford had been proposed.

The Committee **resolved** unanimously to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor and (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

16/48/ENV Options Regarding Silver Street Public Toilets

Matter for Decision

To agree to support further investigation of the options for improving the existing toilets as laid out in Officer's report.

Decision of the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

- i. Agreed to support the recommendations for further investigation of the options for improving the existing toilets as laid out in the Officer's report.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Senior Engineer, Streets and Open Spaces, which referred to investigation work undertaken to date on improving the existing City Council provided public toilets located beneath the Silver Street river bridge approach.

The report proposed that further work should be undertaken on four options in order to inform further consideration, and discussions with planning, conservation and heritage interests.

Draft architectural drawings of the suggested proposals were handed round for the Committee's information.

In response to the Committee's comments the Project Engineer and Senior Engineer, Streets and Open Spaces, noted the Committee's advice that option 4 should not be further investigated. This related to the proposal of providing new remote provision on Queens Green.

- i. The Committee **resolved** unanimously to endorse further investigation of the options for improving the existing toilets as laid out in the Officer's report.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor and (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

The meeting ended at 9.30 pm

CHAIR

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