

Public Document Pack
Community Services Scrutiny Committee
Thursday, 13 January 2011

COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 January 2011
1.30 - 5.40 pm

Executive Councillors:

Cllr Cantrill, Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation

Cllr Bick, Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health

Cllr Smart, Executive Councillor for Housing

Scrutiny Committee Members: Councillors Kightley (Chair), Blackhurst, Brown, Shah, Todd-Jones and Walker

Non-voting co-optees:

Diane Best and Anna Vine-Lott (Tenant/Leaseholder Representatives)

Officers Present:

Liz Bisset (Director of Customer and Community Services)

Debbie Kaye (Head of Active Communities)

Ken Hay (Head of Community Development)

Alan Carter (Head of Housing Strategy)

Ian Ross (Recreational Services Manager)

Alistair Wilson (Green Space Manager)

Ian Ross (Recreation Services Manager)

John Preston (Historic Environment Manager)

Elaine Midgley (Arts Development Manager)

Chris Humphris (Principal Accountant)

Jackie Hanson (Support Services and Centres Manager)

Glenn Burgess (Committee Manager)

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

11/1/CS Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Al Bander, Kerr and Sanders, and Tenant Representative Brian Haywood.

11/2/CS Minutes

The minutes of the 14 October 2010 and 9 December 2010 meetings were approved and signed as a correct record.

11/3/CS Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Item	Interest
Brown	11/15/CS	Personal: Wife works for the Citizens Advice Bureau.
Brown	11/10/CS	Personal: Member of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mental Health Trust.
Brown	11/5/CS	Prejudicial: Member of Ravensworth Gardens Residents Association.
Blackhurst	11/12/CS	Personal: Wife a member of Trumpington Residents Association.
Shah	11/12/CS	Personal: Member of Indian Cultural Association.
Todd-Jones	11/9/CS	Personal: User of the changing facilities at Hobbs Pavilion.
Todd-Jones	11/12/CS	Personal: Trustee of Arbury Community Association.

11/4/CS Public Questions

Rosemary Jones addressed the committee and asked the following questions:

1) Is it a mistake to consider the tree a threat to the War Memorial (or the railings)?

- The roots which would have extended in the direction of the Memorial have been held in check by three vertical stone (not wood) slabs, which were dug in between the tree and the Memorial when the tree was planted, and as probably noted in the Church's records.
- The tree was planted in such a position that even 70 plus years later there is still a significant gap between its trunk and the Memorial (and the railings), and where that gap is most narrow, a ladder can replace the scaffolding intended to assist the renovation.
- The branches overhanging the Memorial can be pruned without irrevocably damaging the tree, or preventing it from continuing to absorb vehicle emitted CO₂, conserve local wildlife and provide much needed shade. That it may look lopsided as a result of being pruned is not a reason to fell it. Aesthetics should never be a reason for killing anything.

2) Why is relocating the War Memorial further back not considered a better option?

- If moved to a quieter and less polluted place (and away from the phone boxes), will the Memorial cover more unmarked graves than are being covered in its present position?
- Does the Anglican Church object, and despite the Archbishop of Canterbury saying 'There is a gospel imperative to exercise good stewardship of the natural environment'?
- As the War Memorial Trust will fund relocation in situations where a memorial is under threat, and the Royal British Legion are looking forward to another Cambridge WW1 memorial being relocated further away from the traffic, will the Trust definitely reject a request for funding including relocation, or should such a request now be made?

- Can the Territorial Army's offer to do the work be accepted, and how will this affect the costing of the project? Also, are architects absolutely necessary to its completion?
- Could all the options be costed on three estimates, including the cost of felling the tree?

3) Has it been established that the tree is not protected by environmental law?

4. Are Council decisions exempt from Government directives on local democracy?

- The majority of residents participating in the tree questionnaire say that no healthy tree should be felled, and during a recent survey at the site, everyone answering the question 'Would you prefer this tree to be felled or trimmed to enable the Memorial to be renovated?' preferred the trimming option. Is this relevant to the decision making?

5) What sort of message does the Council want to convey by its decision?

- Flooding, drought, mudslides and wildfires are killing people, depriving millions of their livelihoods and causing food shortages, and politicians everywhere are encouraging a more respectful attitude to the natural environment, so surely neglecting to find a way for the War Memorial and the tree (and its ecosystem) to continue to coexist is out of step with Councils everywhere and would set a bad example to the students (including overseas students) and the young people whose future depends on our actions today?
- If the Council decides to fell the tree, how will it explain that to the older people, who have grown up with it and to whom it is a well loved landmark? (I have met three who said that they are now saddened every time they walk past it).

The Green Space Manager thanked Mrs Jones and noted the comments. He confirmed that as the vertical edging stones were only 250mm deep they would not act as an effective root barrier. It was also noted that whilst the tree could be pruned, the roots would continue to cause damage to the war memorial.

The Historic Environment Manager confirmed that, as the tree was church property, it was not within the gift of the Council to move it. It was also noted that the Dias and Advisory Committee had met on the 1st October 2010 and supported the officer's recommendation.

Dick Baxter (Friends of Midsummer Common – FoMC) addressed the committee and asked the following question:

"Table 2 in the officer's report shows Midsummer Common as the top recipient of "large" and "major" events in the City - 4 of each but not all confirmed yet. FoMC has no real objection to this. The paper goes on to say that both of these events impact heavily on the local environment and might cause damage. Bonfire night in 2010 was a rainy event, which left major damage to the Common with rutted grassland and long-lasting mud on the footpaths. The return of Strawberry Fair in 2011 will need careful planning by all parties to avoid adverse impacts on the neighbouring residential areas."

Paragraph 3.9 in the paper calls on the EMF Group to consider 4 objectives when planning with events. I believe "legal considerations" should be added to the list. Local legislation does restrict the real extent and duration of events on Midsummer Common. And commoners have a legal right to graze cattle on many green spaces in the city. Many people enjoy seeing cattle graze on Midsummer Common and express dismay when they are taken away for events. Ways must be found to better use the pound to harbour cattle during most of the events."

The Head of Arts and Recreation thanked Mr Baxter and noted the comments regarding legal considerations and grazing. She agreed that the damage caused to the common after the Bonfire night celebrations was unfortunate but emphasised that the wet weather, followed by freezing temperatures, had resulted in a delay in the ground reinstatement.

The Green Space Manager confirmed that the Council had recently purchased a trailer and therefore no longer had to rely on external hauliers to transport the cattle. It was hoped that this would reduce the amount of time that cattle were absent from the common. It was however noted that as a result of some events, the grass needed time to regenerate prior to returning the cattle to graze.

The Chair thanked the public speakers for their contributions.

11/5/CS Revenue and Capital Budgets 2010/11 (Revised), 2011/12 and 2012/13 (Forecast)

Matter for decision: The officer's report set out the overall base revenue and capital budget position for the Arts and Recreation Portfolio. The report compared the proposed revised budget to the budget as at September 2010 and detailed the budget proposals for 2011/12 and 2012/13.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation:

- Review of Charges:
 - a) Approved the proposed charges for Arts and Recreation, as shown in Appendix B of the officer's report.
- Revenue Budgets:
 - b) Approved, with any amendments, the current year funding requests and savings, (shown in Appendix A of the officer's report) and the resulting revised revenue budgets for 2010/11 (shown in Table 1 of the officer's report) for submission to the Executive.
 - c) Agreed proposals for revenue savings and unavoidable bids, as set out in Appendix C of the officer's report, which had been incorporated into the budgets presented for this portfolio.
 - d) Agreed proposals for Priority Policy Fund (PPF) bids, as set out in Appendix E of the officer's report (including the additions as tabled at the meeting).
 - e) Approved the budget for 2011/12 as shown in Table 2 of the officer's report, for submission to the Executive.
 - f) Agreed the additional proposals for Capital Bids
- Capital:
 - f) Sought approval from the Executive to carry forward resources from 2010/11, as detailed in Appendix G of the officer's report, to fund rephased capital spending.
 - g) Approved capital bids, as identified in Appendix H of the officer's report (including the additions as tabled at the meeting) for submission to the Executive for inclusion in the Capital Plan or addition to the Hold List.
 - h) Approved the revised Capital Plan for 2010/11, as detailed in Appendix J of the officer's report, to be updated for any amendments detailed in (f) and (g) above.
 - i) Approved the following project appraisal as detailed in Appendix K of the officer's report:

1. Corn Exchange winches

Reason for the Decision: As set out in the officer's report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: As set out in the officer's report.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Committee received a report from the Principal Accountant. An amendment to Appendix E (Priority Policy Fund Bids) and Appendix H (Capital Bids) of the officer's report was tabled.

In response concerns raised by Councillor Walker and Todd-Jones about the reduction in the Leisure Grants of £20,000, the Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation confirmed the following:

- i. The Leisure Grants budget had not been cut.
- ii. Historically the budget would be subject to an automatic annual increase, but on this occasion it had been decided not to include this.
- iii. The Council would continue to fund and offer support to a diverse selection of organisations.
- iv. Any organisation historically receiving funding from the Council would continue to do so.

In response to further concerns about the Council's ability to spend the £3 million of S106 funding over the next two years, the Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation and the Director of Environment confirmed the following:

- i. A new Project Delivery Team consisting of five posts had been created to help deliver the S106 projects.
- ii. A specific officer would be given responsibility for monitoring all S106 Projects from implementation to completion.
- iii. Executive Councillors and officers were working together closely to push the projects forward.
- iv. Due to the consultation requirements of some of the S106 projects the two-year delivery period may be challenging.

In response to a question regarding Ravensworth Gardens remedial and improvement work, the Green Spaces Manager confirmed that discussions were ongoing between the Council and the Residents Association. It was however recognised as an important open space for the area.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations in the report by 4 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted): None

11/6/CS Cambridge City Council Events Framework

Matter for decision: Approval of an Events Management Framework, which provides guidance on the number and types of events that can be programmed on the city's open spaces.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation:

- Approved the proposed approach relating to:
 - Classification & definitions of events;
 - Guidelines for the number of events in each park listed;
 - Standards to be incorporated in the application process to promote sustainable activity at events.

Reason for the Decision: To assist in managing the impact on popular open spaces and the people that live near them, as well as enabling a balanced approach to usage and programming.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: As set out in the officer's report.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Committee received a report from the Head of Arts and Recreation.

In response to member's questions about how the Council monitored the effect of any events on the surrounding area, it was confirmed that issues such as anti-social behaviour, noise and loss of amenity space were all considered as part of the framework. It was also noted that early discussion with Residents Associations and Friends Groups was an important part of the process. The Head of Arts and Recreation agreed to provide a briefing note for Ward Councillors explaining this in more detail.

In response to member's questions regarding ground reinstatement, the Green Space Manger confirmed the following:

- i. The likely impact on the ground would be taken into account prior to permission for an event being granted.
- ii. A deposit would be taken from the event organiser to cover the potential cost of ground reinstatement.
- iii. All Ward Councils would be notified and given the opportunity to comment and suggest conditions when event applications were received.
- iv. Whilst weather did have a big impact, timescales for any ground reinstatement would be agreed with the event organiser.

In response to a concern raised by a member regarding law and order issues, the Green Space Manger confirmed the following:

- i. Licences were required for all of the Councils open spaces.
- ii. The Police had the ability to review these licences if they felt they were not meeting the licensing objectives.
- iii. All potential issues would be discussed by the Safety Advisory Group, which had representation from the Police, the Fire Service and the Ambulance Service.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations in the report by 6 votes to 0 (unanimous).

The Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted): None

11/7/CS Holy Trinity Churchyard - War Memorial

Matter for decision: Removal of trees in order to facilitate repair of the War Memorial shelter and to allow it to be seen.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation:

- Supported the Planning Committee decision to fell:
 - the Western Red Cedar
 - two holly trees; and
 - instructed officers to replant suitable species in alternative locations.

Reason for the Decision: The project to refurbish the War Memorial shelter followed a Council resolution on 11 September 2008.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: As set out in the officer's report.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Committee received a report from the Green Space Manager.

In response to member's questions about the Western Red Cedar, the Green Space Manager confirmed the following:

- i. The tree was approximately 60 years old and could live to be over 100 years old.
- ii. Pruning would not be a suitable option as the tree would continue to grow and cause further damage to the war memorial.
- iii. Pruning would also result in a very lop-sided canopy and was not considered good arboricultural practice.
- iv. A root barrier would severely affect the tree and eventually result in it failing.

The Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation confirmed that the agreed Tree Protocol had been followed and the Planning Committee had given a recommendation to fell the trees.

Councillor Todd-Jones formally proposed that the Red Cedar be pruned instead of being felled. Councillor Walker seconded this proposal.

On a show of hands the proposal was lost by 4 votes to 2.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations in the report by 4 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted): None

11/8/CS Cambridge City Council's Draft Arts Strategy 2011-2014

Matter for decision: Approval of the draft Arts Strategy for public consultation from January – March 2011.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation:

- Approved the draft Arts Strategy, incorporating the revisions as highlighted in the erratum paper (as circulated at the meeting), for public consultation from January to March 2011, after which time a final draft will be produced for scrutiny and approval.

Reason for the Decision: The new Arts Strategy would provide a vision for the Council's role within city arts activity and indicate priorities for managing its engagement with the arts over the next three years.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: As set out in the officer's report.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Committee received a report from the Head of Arts and Recreation. An erratum paper relating to pages 10 and 16 of the draft strategy was tabled. In response to member's questions the Head of Arts and Recreation confirmed the following:

- i. Over £220,000 of Leisure Grants had been allocated to art providers, with officers providing additional moral support.

- ii. The Arts Strategy sought to strengthen the Council's relationships with strategic partners and stakeholders.
- iii. The consultation would be launched on 14 January, with a public event taking place on 18 January.
- iv. Member's views regarding the need for the engagement and involvement of Residents Association would be fed into the consultation.

In response to member's questions regarding the Corn Exchange, the Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation confirmed that the Corn Exchange remained a key art facility for the city of Cambridge. He also noted that the Council had committed to managing the Corn Exchange in the medium term and had put an action plan in place to aid this.

He confirmed that the aim of the Arts Strategy was to increase participation in the arts across the whole city.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations in the report by 6 votes to 0 (unanimous).

The Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted): None

11/9/CS Capital Scheme - Hobbs Pavilion

Matter for decision: Working in partnership with the Mai Thai Restaurant, the refurbishment and extension of Hobbs Pavilion (on Parkers Piece) to provide the City Council with three new changing rooms, a multi purpose room, new grounds keeper room and equipment storage areas, and for the restaurant an additional secure and hygienic food storage facility

Decision of Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation:

- Financial
 - Recommended the capital scheme (which was not included in the Council's Capital Plan) for approval by Council, subject to resources being available to fund the capital cost associated with the Scheme.

The total capital cost of the project was estimated to be £240,000, funded from Formal Open Spaces S106 contributions.

- There were no additional revenue implications arising from the project.

- Procurement

- Approved the procurement of the contractor.
- If the quotation or tender sum exceeded the estimated contract value by more than 15% the permission of the Executive Councillor and Director of Finance would be sought prior to proceeding.

Reason for the Decision: Current changing facilities were very dated, were not DDA compliant, and did not provide the experience expected by today's sports user. The Mai Thai Restaurant also required dedicated storage to help it fully comply with current legislation.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: As set out in the officer's report.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Committee received a report from the Recreation Services Manager.

In response to member's questions the Recreation Services Manager confirmed the following:

- i. The scheme had already received planning permission.
- ii. A procurement exercise would need to be undertaken.
- iii. The Mai Thai Restaurant would be funding their element of the extension.

The Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation reiterated the Council's commitment to sport in the city. He noted that this scheme and the funding proposed for Parkside Pools was an example of this commitment.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations in the report by 6 votes to 0 (unanimous).

The Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted): None

11/10/CS Leisure funding for voluntary and not for profit organisations 2011-12

Matter for decision: Approval of Leisure grants for 2011/12.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation:

- Agreed the recommendations for Leisure grants to voluntary and not-for-profit organisations in 2011/12 as set out in Appendix 1 of the officers report, subject to confirmation of the Council's 2011/12 budget in February 2011 and, in some cases, to the provision of further information from applicants.

Reason for the Decision: As set out in the officer's report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: As set out in the officer's report.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Committee received a report from the Support Services and Centres Manager.

A member questioned why the Squeaky Gate Project had only been offered 10% of their initial bid. In response the Support Services and Centres Manager confirmed the following:

- i. The Council had yet to receive any budgets, accounts or monitoring information relating to funds the group had been allocated earlier in the year.
- ii. The bid related to a new project based solely around education, which fell outside of the remit of this funding.
- iii. The group were looking into many other sources of funding.
- iv. The Council were keen to support the project, but not to be the sole funder.

Councillor Walker emphasised the need to fund a wide range of community groups and projects. This view was supported by the Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation, and it was noted that he would like to see a greater diversity of smaller community groups bidding for and receiving grants.

The Support Services and Centres Manager confirmed that the Council had a very open application process and publicity and advertising was being undertaken to encourage new groups to apply for funding.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations in the report by 6 votes to 0 (unanimous).

The Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted): None

11/11/CS Revenue and Capital Budgets 2010/11 (Revised), 2011/12 and 2012/13 (Forecast)

Matter for decision: The officer's report set out the overall base revenue and capital budget position for the Community Development & Health Portfolio. The report compared the proposed revised budget to the budget as at September 2010 and detailed the budget proposals for 2011/12 and 2012/13.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health:

- Review of Charges:
a) Approved the proposed charges for Community Development & Health services and facilities, as shown in Appendix B of the officer's report.
- Revenue Budgets:
b) Approved, with any amendments, the current year funding requests and savings, (shown in Appendix A of the officer's report) and the resulting revised revenue budgets for 2010/11 (shown in Table 1 of the officer's report) for submission to the Executive.

- c) Agreed proposals for revenue savings and unavoidable bids, as set out in Appendix C of the officer's report, which have been incorporated into the budgets presented for this portfolio.
 - d) Agreed the Priority Policy Fund (PPF) bid, as shown in Appendix E of the officer's report (including the additions as tabled at the meeting).
 - e) Approved the budget for 2011/12 as shown in Table 2 of the officer's report, for submission to the Executive.
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- Capital:
 - f) Sought approval from the Executive to carry forward resources from 2010/11, as detailed in Appendix G of the officer's report, to fund rephased capital spending.
 - g) Approved capital bids, as identified in Appendix H of the officer's report (including the additions as tabled at the meeting) for submission to the Executive for inclusion in the Capital Plan or addition to the Hold List, as indicated.
 - h) Confirmed that there were no items covered by this portfolio to add to the Council's Hold List, for submission to the Executive.
 - i) Approved the revised Capital Plan for 2010/11, as detailed in Appendix J of the officer's report, to be updated for any amendments detailed in (f), (g) and (h) above.
 - j) Approved the following project appraisals as detailed in Appendix K of the officer's report:

1. Replacement of CCTV Communications Equipment

Reason for the Decision: As set out in the officer's report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: As set out in the officer's report.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Committee received a report from the Principal Accountant. An amendment to Appendix E (Priority Policy Fund Bids) and Appendix H (Capital Bids) of the officer's report was tabled.

In response to concerns raised by Councillor Walker regarding the reduction in Safer City Grants, the Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health confirmed the following:

- i. The grant had been frozen over several years.
- ii. Due to the reduced demand for revenue grants it would be difficult to justify a higher allocation.
- iii. The funding of the Street Pastors had not been lost. This previously came from the Safer City Grant but was now covered by a separate bid.

Regarding the City Centre Youth Venue Project (SC283) the Head of Community Development confirmed the following:

- i. Development opportunities in the city centre were being looked into.
- ii. If the funds could not be spent within 12 months it was being suggested that discussions be held with the County Council and the voluntary sector about a more appropriate use for the money.

Regarding the New Town Development Capital Grants Programme (PR025) the Head of Community Development confirmed the following:

- i. Two projects had been planned for the Accordia development and discussions were ongoing between officers and residents.

Regarding the Play Boat (SC404) the Head of Community Development confirmed the following:

- ii. The project was nearing completion.
- iii. The boat should be sailing on the River Cam by the end of January.
- iv. Plans were in place to invite all Councillors to the launch.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations in the report by 3 votes to 0 (unanimous).

The Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted): None

11/12/CS Funding for Community Development activities

Matter for decision: Approval of Community Development Grants for 2011/12, along with an update on the review of economic policy grants and the proposal to merge these objectives with the community development priorities. Also the development of a local Prevent strategy and the allocation of government funding for this programme.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health:

- Agreed the integration of the Economic Policy grants budget and objectives within the Community Development grants programme as detailed in Appendix 1 of the officers report.
- Agreed the recommendations for Community Development grants to voluntary and not-for-profit organisations in 2011/12 as set out in Appendix 2 of the officers report, subject to confirmation of the Council's 2011/12 budget in February 2011 and, in some cases, to the provision of further information from applicants.
- Approved the allocation of £130,000 of government funding focusing on the needs of young people at risk of radicalisation, promoting community cohesion and supporting families and communities to become more resilient to the pressures and influences leading to radicalisation.

Reason for the Decision: As set out in the officer's report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: As set out in the officer's report.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Committee received a report from the Support Services and Centres Manager.

Councillor Walker expressed concern that the funding had been reduced. The Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health stated that unfortunately this was as a result of the current financial climate across the Council.

In response to member's questions regarding the Prevent Strategy, the Head of Community Development confirmed the following:

- i. The reduction in the funding from £190,000 to £130,000 was as a result of the coalition government's emergency budget.
- ii. The funding would need to be allocated this year but did not have to be spent.
- iii. The government had announced a review of the Prevent Strategy and acknowledged that the wider issue of radicalisation needed to be addressed.
- iv. A panel would be set up to promote the availability of the funding and any decisions would be fed back to the Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health and the Opposition Spokes.
- v. Council officers had held initial discussions with representatives of the Muslim community.

In response to a members question regarding bids for older peoples activities, the Support Services and Centres Manager confirmed the following:

- i. The number of bids received for older peoples activities was consistent with previous years.
- ii. Officers were attempting to raise the profile of the funding to older peoples groups and organisations.
- iii. Community initiatives and Area Committees tended to receive more applications for funding from older peoples groups and organisations.

Regarding the Cambridge and District Community Mediation Services, the Support Services and Centres Manager confirmed the following:

- i. Officers were working closely with the service and considerable funding had been allocated for current projects.
- ii. Whilst only a small amount had been allocated for the new training programme, the service did have numerous other funding sources available to them.

Regarding the Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum, the Support Services and Centres Manager confirmed the following:

- i. £25,000 had been allocated from Infrastructure.
- ii. £5,000 had been allocated from BME.
- iii. £3,000 had been allocated from Community Cohesion.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations in the report by 6 votes to 0 (unanimous).

The Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted): None

11/13/CS Bereavement Services (Cemeteries and Crematorium) Business Plan 2011-2016

Matter for decision: Update and refresh of the 2006-07 Plan for Cambridge's Bereavement Services.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health:

- Mercury Abatement

Agreed:

- To robustly manage the timely implementation of the Mercury Abatement investment programme, in order to minimise financial and operational risks (Section 6.2 of the Business Plan).
- To investigate the potential benefits of joining the CAMEO Mercury credit scheme once details were published (Section 6.2.2 of the Business Plan).
- To develop cost and process a programme of building works, repairs and maintenance through the Capital Plan (Section 6.2.3 of the Business Plan).

- Commemorations

Agreed:

- To work closely through a supply partnership with an experienced specialist supplier to develop extend and market commemorations (memorial choices) and to review progress after 12 months of operation (Section 6.3 of the Business Plan).

- Management Issues

Agreed:

- To prepare a detailed specification, and undertake soft market testing to ensure that the current management arrangements are achieving value for money and meeting service standards (Section 6.4.1 of the Business Plan).
- To identify the best model for the future management of grounds maintenance (Section 6.4.1 of the Business Plan).
- To carry out a comprehensive review of working practices for the management of cremation activities in order to identify the most energy efficient and cost-effective ways to manage cremations operations (Section 6.4.2 of the Business Plan).
- To review the structure of the whole service in year 2, in conjunction with the other recommendations for reviewing and reorganising the operations of cremations and grounds maintenance, with a view to meeting any shortfalls in the skills and experience required in the areas of procurement, marketing, business finance, IT and administration (Section 6.4.2/3 of the Business Plan).

- New Processes

Agreed:

- To develop the option of a green burial in the portfolio of customer services available and to develop suitable expertise within existing resources to accommodate demand for such burials (Section 6.5.1 of the Business Plan).
- To maintain a watching brief over cryomation, promession and similar technologies and report back to members accordingly (Section 6.5.2 and 6.5.3 of the Business Plan).

- Additional Services

Agreed:

- To explore the business case further for providing a flower shop in Year 2 of this business plan (Section 6.6.1 of the Business Plan).
- To explore the business case further for providing catering services at the Crematorium in Year 3 of this business plan (Section 6.6.2 of the Business Plan).
- To promote a 24-Hour Booking Service as a priority in Year 1 (Section 6.6.3 of the Business Plan).

- To examine the business case for developing the Deceased On-Line scheme in Year 2 (Section 6.6.4 of the Business Plan).
- To investigate whether an option now exists to purchase additional land to increase the capacity of the service (Section 6.6.5 of the Business Plan).
- To examine the business case for offering a more comprehensive service to the public, subject to additional land becoming available (Section 6.6.6 of the Business Plan).

- Environmental Scheme Adoptions

Agreed:

- To join the Plastic Recycling Scheme (Section 6.7.1 of the Business Plan).
- To join the Carbon Footprint Scheme (Section 6.7.2 of the Business Plan).

- Monitoring Performance

Agreed:

- To move internally towards a business unit base for accounting for the service to enable improved benchmarking on a business basis against a mixed economy of others (Section 7.1 of the Business Plan).

Reason for the Decision: Update and refresh based on an assessment of the service and what challenges and opportunities exist for it in the future. The new plan sets out a development programme for the future, which aims to continue improving the service to customers and also meets sensible financial criteria.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: As set out in the officer's report.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health introduced the item and gave some background to the proposals and the recommendations.

The Committee received a report from the Head of Specialist Services.

In response to member's questions the Head of Specialist Services confirmed the following:

- i. A dedicated team would be set up to manage the Memorial Service.
- ii. All staff would receive training from a prescribed supplier regarding sensitivity issues.
- iii. A review of staff would be undertaken to ensure the right skill mix for any new operational arrangements.
- iv. The Mercury Abatement project would take up to 4 months to complete but a full service would be maintained during the construction period.

In response to member's questions the Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health confirmed the following:

- i. The new Memorial Service would be managed in a modest and sensitive way.
- ii. No decision had been made on pet cremations, and any further discussion would be brought back to this committee.
- iii. Once the future of the A14 had been confirmed the issue of noise mitigation by vegetation or shielding could be looked at in more detail.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations in the report by 6 votes to 0 (unanimous).

The Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted): None

11/14/CS Revenue and Capital Budgets 2010/11 (Revised), 2011/12 and 2012/13 (Forecast)

Matter for decision: The officer's report set out the overall base revenue budget position for the Housing portfolio. The report compared the proposed revised budget to the current budget at September 2010 and detailed the proposed budget for 2011/12 and forecast for 2012/13.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing:

- Review of Charges:

a) Approved the proposed charges for Housing services and facilities, as shown in Appendix B of the officer's report.

- Revenue Budgets:

b) Approved, with any amendments, the current year funding requests and savings, (shown in Appendix A of the officer's report) and the resulting revised revenue budgets for 2010/11 (shown in Table 1 of the officer's report) for submission to the Executive.

c) Agreed proposals for revenue savings and unavoidable bids, as set out in Appendix C of the officer's report and summarised in Table 1 of the officer's report, which have been incorporated into the budgets presented for this portfolio.

d) Approved the budget for 2011/12 as shown in Table 2 of the officer's report, for submission to the Executive.

- Capital:

e) Sought approval from the Executive to carry forward resources from 2010/11, as detailed in Appendix G of the officer's report, to fund rephased capital spending.

f) Approved capital bids, as identified in Appendix H of the officer's report (including the additions as tabled at the meeting) for submission to the Executive for inclusion in the Housing Capital Programme and Capital Plan.

g) Approved the revised Capital Plan for 2010/11, as detailed in Appendix J of the officer's report, to be updated for any amendments detailed in (f) above.

h) Approved the revised Housing Capital Investment Programme for 2010/11 to 2015/16, as detailed in Appendix K of the officer's report (as amended at the meeting) and the associated notes, to include approval of in year savings in capital budgets, re-allocation of budgets for decent homes works, rephasing of existing projects and schemes and approval of capital bids (as detailed in Appendix H of the officer's report - including the additions as tabled at the meeting), submitted as part of the 2011/12 budget process.

j) Approved the use of £331,000 of Developer's Contributions, identified for investment in affordable housing, towards the cost of the redevelopment of Seymour Court, with the balance of funding to be met through Homes and Communities Agency grant (if available), housing capital balances and an element of prudential borrowing if required (although it is not anticipated that this will be required).

k) Approved a Housing Capital Allowance for 2011/12 of £13,930,000.

Reason for the Decision: As set out in the officer's report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: As set out in the officer's report.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Committee received a report from the Principal Accountant. An amendment to Appendix E (Priority Policy Fund Bids), Appendix H (Capital Bids) and Appendix K (Housing Capital Investment Plan – HRA & GF) of the officer's report was tabled.

In response to a members question regarding the Community Safety Nurse (PPF2484), the Head of Housing Strategy confirmed that a Local Public Sector Agreement had previously funded this for a two-year period. As the funding ended in March 2011 the Council had now agreed to fund 50%, with the remaining 50% coming from the GP Commissions clusters.

Regarding the underachievement in Home Aid agency income, (RB2660) the Head of Housing Strategy confirmed the following:

- i. The income was less than anticipated and was demand led.
- ii. In order to qualify for Home Aid a recommendation from an Occupational Therapist was required.
- iii. The underspend was as a result of the recommendations not coming through quick enough.
- iv. Improved marketing and looking at the possibility of a shared services may be beneficial.

Regarding the reduction in budgets for the Homelessness Costs, (RB2668) the Head of Housing Strategy confirmed the following:

- i. The City Council were exploring the option of a shared service with South Cambs District Council and Huntingdonshire District Council.
- ii. Officers were hoping to bring a further update to this committee in March 2011.

Regarding funding for travellers, the Head of Housing Strategy and the Executive Councillor for Housing confirmed the following:

- i. As the government was now less prescriptive regarding this funding, the Council were reviewing demand.
- ii. Work would continue to identify additional sites.
- iii. A cross member Gypsy and Travellers Working Group had been set up to look at these issues in more detail.

Regarding the restructure of the Safer Communities service area, the Head of Housing Strategy confirmed the following:

- i. When the Safer Communities Manager retired it provided an opportunity to review the structure of the service.
- ii. The Strategic Management post and the Project Officer post were combined.
- iii. A Project officer post was dropped from full time to 0.75FTE with the possibility of some joint working with South Cambs District Council extending the post at a later date.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations in the report by 3 votes to 0 (unanimous).

The Executive Councillor for Housing approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted): None

11/15/CS Housing General Fund Grants to Voluntary Organisations for 2011/12

Matter for decision: Review of the grants awarded by the Community Services Scrutiny Committee from the Housing General Fund for 2010/11 in the context of the corporate policy and recommendations to continue to grant fund the organisations during 2011/12.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing:

- Agreed, subject to the budget setting process and formal adoption by Council of the 2011/12 budget, the funding to the voluntary sector organisations as detailed in the officers report.

Reason for the Decision: As set out in the officer's report.

Any alternative options considered and rejected: As set out in the officer's report.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Committee received a report from the Head of Housing Strategy.

Regarding the Cambridge Women and Homeless Group (CWHG), the Head of Housing Strategy and the Executive Councillor for Housing confirmed the following:

- i. The £5000 grant previously given mostly covered the administration costs of the organisation. As CWHG now operated under the umbrella of the CHS Group this was no longer necessary.
- ii. The building used by CWHG was owned by the CHS Group and they had been operating as a satellite organisation for a number of years.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and endorsed the recommendations in the report by 5 votes to 0 (unanimous).

The Executive Councillor for Housing approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted): None

11/16/CS Record of Urgent Decisions taken by Executive Councillors

The Committee noted the following urgent decisions made by the Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation:

- Project Appraisal: Additional Play Pieces (Lammas Land)
- New Play Area (VIE Site)
- VIE Site – Public Open Space

The meeting ended at 5.40 pm

CHAIR

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