

CABINET

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 6th September 2011 at Retford Town Hall

Present: Councillor G A N Oxby (Chair),
Councillors J Evans, S A Greaves, J A Leigh, S May and A Rhodes.

Liaison Members: Councillors H Burton, M W Quigley, S Toms and C Wanless.

Officers: D Armiger, S Brown, K Childs, P Clark, C Forster, C Frost, J Hamilton,
M Hill, D Hunter, E Prime and R Theakstone.

Standards Members: Dr G D Woodman.

Also present: Councillors J Anderton, D Challinor, J Scott and Mrs K Sutton.

42. QUESTION TIME - PUBLIC

Council Procedure Rules were suspended for fifteen minutes to allow questions from the public; however, no members of the public were present.

43. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D R Pressley.

44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

(a) Members

There were no declarations of interest by Members.

(b) Officers

There were no declarations of interest by officers.

45. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 23TH JUNE AND 5TH JULY 2011

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 23rd June and 5th July 2011 be approved.

46. MINUTES FOR ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

RESOLVED that the Minutes for Action and Implementation be received.

47. OUTSTANDING MINUTES LIST

RESOLVED that the Outstanding Minutes List be received.

(Councillor M W Quigley joined the meeting at this point.)

SECTION A – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PUBLIC

Key Decisions

48. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – FINANCE AND PROPERTY – COUNCILLOR J EVANS

(a) Budget Monitoring and Capital Programme Update to 30th June 2011 (Key Decision No 291)

Members were informed of: the spending position for the period 1st April to 30th June 2011 for the Council's General Fund, Housing Revenue and Capital Programme; any significant variances from the approved budgets; the proposed resourcing of the Capital Programme and the level of Council capital resources available, including capital receipts; updates on regeneration projects and sites that are not monitored through the Council's Capital Programme; Treasury Management budget issues; and the regular quarterly update on performance against the approved Treasury Management Prudential Indicators for the period ending 30th June 2011.

Members' approval was also sought for variations and additions to the existing Capital Programme.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

The budget monitoring provides managers' forecasts and is for information only. There are some potential risks that the actual outturn variance could be substantially different from that currently shown, as it is very early in the financial year. Moreover, income is very volatile, and an improvement or deterioration in the economy, even a large planning application, could have a significant impact on the forecasted outturn. The report sets managers' projections and, as such, the financial risks that may occur by 31st March 2012.

The Council has responsibility for delivering its Capital Programme on time and not doing so could undermine the achievement of its objectives. The Regeneration and Property Group will continue to monitor future programmes on a monthly basis.

There may be changes to the way the Capital Programme is financed as officers review the most appropriate methodology as part of the closedown process for 2011/12.

RESOLVED that:

1. The position with regard to budget monitoring be noted and reports be presented to Cabinet which recommend how the following amounts will be saved for the budget in 2011/12: Director of Community Services - £473,000; Director of Resources - £32,000; Director of Corporate Services - £19,000.
2. The 'other variations' to the 2011/12 Capital Programme totalling £4.758m, as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report, be approved.
3. The proposed resourcing of the Capital Programme and the level of capital receipts currently available to fund any further capital expenditure be noted.
4. The update on the Langold Lake regeneration project be noted.
5. The quarterly update on performance against the approved Treasury Management Prudential Indicators for the period ending 30th June 2011 be noted.
6. The weekly investment balances made throughout the first quarter of the financial year, in conjunction with the Security, Liquidity and Yield benchmarking data for the Council.

49. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE – COUNCILLOR J A LEIGH

(a) Food Safety Service Plan 2011/2012 (Key Decision No 307)

Members' approval was sought for the Food Safety Service Plan 2011/2012 in accordance with Chapter, 1, paragraph 10 and Chapter 2, paragraph 3.1 of the Food Standard Agency's (FSA) Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement. The Plan was appended for Cabinet and Liaison Members and had been deposited in the Members' Room.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Production and approval of a Food Safety Service Plan is a legal requirement under Chapter, 1, paragraph 10 and Chapter 2, paragraph 3.1 of the Food Standard Agency's (FSA) Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement. There is therefore no other option than to produce a Service Plan

Failure to produce a Food Safety Service Plan could lead to the FSA taking formal action to ensure that such a Plan is produced.

RESOLVED that the Food Safety Service Plan for 2011/2012 be approved and referred to full Council for endorsement and adoption.

(b) Health and Safety Service Plan 2011/2012 (Key Decision No 308)

Members' approval was sought for the Health and Safety Safety Service Plan 2011/2012 in accordance with the Health and Safety Commission's (HSC) Section 18 Guidance Note to Local Authorities No 3 – Requirement to Produce a Service Plan, including the Investigation of Complaints. The Plan was appended for Cabinet and Liaison Members and had been deposited in the Members' Room.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Production and approval of a Health and Safety Service Plan is a legal requirement under the Health and Safety Commission's (HSC) Section 18 Guidance Note to Local Authorities No 3 – Requirement to Produce a Service Plan, including the Investigation of Complaint. There is therefore no other option than to produce a Service Plan

Failure to produce a Health and Safety Service Plan could lead to the HSC taking formal action to ensure that such a Plan is produced.

RESOLVED that the Health and Safety Service Plan for 2011/2012 be approved and referred to full Council for endorsement and adoption.

(c) Bassetlaw Games (Key Decision No 309)

Members' support was sought for the Council to work with partners to assist in facilitating and delivering events and activities under the programme title of 'Bassetlaw Games' to commemorate the staging of the London 2012 Olympics.

Members' approval was sought for the allocation of contingency resources to the Bassetlaw Games Steering Group to assist in the administration of the Group co-ordination of future events and the establishment of a contingency fund for identified expenditure.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

If no additional resources are to be agreed and the Sports Development Team is to subsume the full-time administration and co-ordination of the Bassetlaw Games' events and competitions, this will result in a number of agreed actions detailed in the Sports Development Service Plan not being delivered.

RESOLVED that:

1. A revenue budget of £25,000 to the Bassetlaw Games initiative be approved and funded from the LAA Performance Reward Grant 2011. This contingency budget to be delegated to the Director of Community Services and allocated, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Leisure, to the Steering Group on the completion of an agreed business plan and activity timetable.
2. The Steering Group to comprise the Cabinet Member for Environment and Leisure, the Deputy Leader and the Young People's Champion, with other Members being invited on an ad hoc basis to assist in the work of the Steering Group or sub-groups.
3. The allocation of officer time for the administration and co-ordination of the Steering Group's activities be agreed.
4. The Steering Group to report back to Cabinet on progress of the Bassetlaw Games initiative as the programme of events develops.

50. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – HOUSING – COUNCILLOR A RHODES

(a) Empty Homes Strategy (Key Decision No 310)

Members' approval was sought for the Empty Homes Strategy which was appended for Cabinet and Liaison Members and had been deposited in the Members' Room. The report outlined: financial incentive; tackling empty homes in Bassetlaw; assistance for owners; activity to date; and reducing Council Tax.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Options include: to approve the Strategy; to suggest a revised Strategy; to approve the repayable grant conditions detailed in Appendix III of the report; to approve the Private Sector Leasing scheme detailed in Appendix III; not to approve or to suggest a revised scheme.

If Members choose not to approve a private sector leasing scheme this will reduce the options available to the Council to get empty homes brought back into use.

Investing part of any future New Homes Bonus payments into tackling empty homes would provide ongoing resources to help bring empty homes back into use.

To reduce the level of Council Tax by 25% for owners working with the Council to bring an empty home back into use with the current year will provide an incentive to owners to take action.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Empty Homes Strategy be approved.
2. The repayable grant conditions detailed in Appendix III of the report be approved.
3. The Private Sector Leasing Scheme detailed in Appendix III of the report be approved.
4. Delegated authority be given to the Cabinet Member for Housing to agree any minor adjustments to the repayable grant.
5. It be agreed to invest part of any future New Homes Bonus payments into tackling empty homes.

(b) Installation of Photovoltaic Installations (Key Decision No 311)

Members' approval was sought to install photovoltaic (PV) panels to properties within the Council's housing stock.

Local government housing authorities have been set provisional targets by central Government to reduce carbon emissions from their housing stock by 15%. In addition, there is an EU target for local authorities to ensure at least 20% of their housing stock has access to renewable energy for heating and power.

Three of the market leaders in the field were interviewed in May and June 2011 for the installation of PV panels to approximately 500 properties across the District. E.ON provided the most advantageous offer which comprises a one-off payment of £400,000, surveying of properties, free PV panel installations and future maintenance. No capital outlay is required from the Council and/or A1 Housing at any stage. E-ON will receive funding over a 25 year period from the Government's feed-in tariff scheme for the generation of power and heat from renewable sources.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendation

To not agree to the proposed PV scheme will mean that the Council will not be able to take advantage of the current feed-in tariff scheme, resulting in a loss of £400,000 and the opportunity for tenants to reduce their energy costs.

To agree to the proposed PV scheme will mean that the Council can take advantage of the feed-in tariff scheme of £400,000 and the opportunity for tenants to reduce their energy costs by up to £150 per annum.

RESOLVED that:

1. The proposed photovoltaic scheme with E-ON be approved and work be commenced as soon as possible to ensure the current feed-in tariff is realised.
2. Thanks be recorded to the Director of Community Services and the Council's Solicitor for their quick work in preparation for the Cabinet report.

Other Decisions

51. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – POLICY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – COUNCILLOR G A N OXBY

(a) Forward Plan – September to November 2011

Members were presented with the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the coming four months.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

The report is for noting.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan for the period September to November 2011 be approved, subject to Key Decision No 309 being renamed 'Bassetlaw Games'.

(b) Council's Progress on Equality and Diversity Issues

Members were provided with an update on equality and diversity matters and approval was sought for recommendations to address the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Public Sector Equality Duty and its implementation and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 were outlined in the report. Details of two recent cases involving Birmingham City Council and equalities legislation were appended to the report.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Cabinet has already endorsed the current approach towards equalities work in the Council. The Council is required to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty requirements.

RESOLVED that:

1. The update on equality and diversity issues be noted.
2. Councillor Graham Oxby be appointed as the Council's Equality Champion.
3. The draft report on the Council's Compliance with Equality Duties be presented to the December 2011 meeting of Cabinet.
4. Officers be instructed to commence work on the development of equality objectives in order to meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty and report progress to the February 2012 meeting of Cabinet.

(c) Appointment of Honorary Aldermen

Members were presented with a request for the appointment of former Councillors Michael Pugsley and Miss Mary Stokes to Honorary Aldermen and approval was sought to recommend to full Council the consideration of this request in accordance with the legal process for so doing. The rights and privileges of an Honorary Alderman were appended to the report, together with the criteria and procedural aspects of conferring the title.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

It is important for the public to recognise the significant time and personal commitments Elected Members give to their communities. It is also important that Elected Members feel valued for having made significant contributions to their communities. The appointment as an Honorary Alderman provides that opportunity.

RESOLVED that the proposal for ex-Councillors Michael Pugsley and Miss Mary Stokes to be appointed as Honorary Aldermen be approved and an extraordinary meeting of Council be convened for ratifying the proposal and conferring the honour.

52. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – FINANCE AND PROPERTY – COUNCILLOR J EVANS

(a) General Fund Revenue Budget Overspend 2011/12

Members were presented with proposed savings to meet the budget shortfall for the Resources Directorate of £32,000 which were detailed in the report at paragraph 3.6 and which are achievable now and have already been executed through management action.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Savings need to be made to arrest the projected position for the 2011/12 financial year. Members can approve or not approve the recommendations, but if not approved, other savings totalling the target need to be identified.

Given the significant downturn in fees and charges income and the aggregate savings made over the preceding financial years, Bassetlaw's flexibility has been diminished as the local and national fiscal position has hardened. Any organisation which has made savings of £6.07m over a protracted period will have less contingency and financial flexibility which is why the Council is being proactive now.

RESOLVED that:

1. The action taken by officers to address the forecasted overspend within the year be noted.
2. A further budget monitoring report to be submitted to the November 2011 meeting of Cabinet.

(b) Proposed Letting of Unit 5 Canalside Workshops, Leverton Road, Retford, DN22 6QF

Members were presented with a request by a prospective tenant (a registered charity, namely HOPE) to rent Unit 5 Canalside Workshops, Leverton Road, Retford, at below market level, on the grounds of the charitable work they undertake and that the property's size and condition are limiting factors in terms of letting possibilities.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Option One – Given current market conditions and current overheads, agreement to letting to the charity with conditions is recommended.

Option Two – Not to grant consent to rent to the prospective tenant which will result in the charity having to find alternative premises, a loss of income to the Council, albeit at below market level, and also that the Council will continue to have the ongoing costs as detailed in the report. The property will continue to be marketed accordingly.

RESOLVED that the consent to rent be granted with the following conditions:

1. Agree the lower rent due to special conditions at the rate of £4,000 per annum plus service charge costs.
2. Agree a minimum lease term commitment of three years.
3. Enter a lease agreement that will be contracted out of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 for secured tenancies, thereby allowing control over the future use of the premises on expiry of the term, and/or on renewal allowing the option to renew at market rates.

(c) Pedestrian and Vehicular Access over Council Land

Members were presented with options available to the Council in relation to the management of public access over garage sites. This arose in October 2010 when a complaint was made by a resident who was unhappy about paying a licence fee when others did not. A total of 43 garage plot sites were reviewed including 12 non-operational sites. To properly document the unauthorised use, a maximum of 101 vehicular and 41 pedestrian access licences are required.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Option One - Do nothing. This will lead to private owners establishing prescriptive rights of access over Council land and could lead to the potential sale or redevelopment of Council land being prejudiced.

Option Two – Do not charge for access over Council land or through garage sites. There are a significant number of sites where residents have been paying for many years without issue. A1 Housing manages significantly more sites where income is produced and the loss of income could prejudice repair and maintenance of garage sites. It would require a significant amount of staff time to calculate any refunds to regular payers and those who have just taken up agreements.

Option Three – Continue to charge at the previously set rates for pedestrian and vehicular access. There are a few ongoing issues with residents; however, these are mostly at specific locations. These were largely resolved once it had been established that users

had prescriptive rights of way. The large majority of users that have been contacted have either agreed to pay or agreed to cease using Council land for access.

Option Four – Not to charge for pedestrian or vehicular access at specific locations. Examples of this could be where access is not being gained through a Council garage site, or access to land that will be required for future operational purposes or for disposal. Appropriate licences could be granted subject to an administration fee. Should owners sell their property at some future date, a licence can be offered on the same basis to the new occupier.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Council continues to charge for pedestrian and vehicular access licences.
2. At specific locations where access is being gained over non-operational land or sites of no strategic value, appropriate licences should be granted subject to the payment of one-off administration fees.
3. New licences should be granted to new owners/occupiers of properties subject to the payment of the appropriate fee and administration charge.
4. A working party, led by the Cabinet Member, be established to review the current policy in the near future to ensure appropriateness.
5. Thanks be recorded to Councillor J Potts for her assistance in clarifying issues in the Manton area.

53. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – HOUSING – COUNCILLOR A RHODES

(a) Airey Housing, Common Lane, Harworth

Members' approval was sought for officers to discuss with residents and other parties potential options for delivering improvement works to the non-traditional housing stock on Common Lane, Harworth.

There are some 847 Council owned properties classified as non-traditional stock as a result of their method of construction. One type is Airey houses, of which there are 76 in the District with 18 being on Common Lane, Harworth, 16 of which are still in Council ownership. The Council recently obtained some funding from the Homes and Communities Agency to undertake a research project to look at the options for addressing the issues on the Common Lane site.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

At this stage, initial discussions of options can be held by officers without any commitment on behalf of the Council. This approach will provide a useful opportunity to explore ways of dealing with the site and to bring forward a solution that is beneficial to all parties.

RESOLVED that:

1. The principle of reviewing the options for dealing with the non-traditional stock on the Common Lane, Harworth, site be supported in principle.
2. Officers be authorised to discuss the potential redevelopment options relating to the site with all interested parties. The aim of these discussions should be to seek a solution that secures the maximum economic, social and amenity benefit.
3. Officers report back the outcome of the discussions to a future meeting of Cabinet.

54. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – REVENUES, CUSTOMER AND SUPPORT SERVICES – COUNCILLOR S MAY

(a) General Fund Revenue Budget Overspend 2011/12

Members were updated on the approach needed to meet the budget shortfall for the Corporate Services Directorate of £19,000 which were detailed in the report at paragraph 3.6.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Savings need to be made to arrest the projected position for the 2011/12 financial year. Members can approve or not approve the recommendations, but if not approved, other savings totalling the target need to be identified.

Given the significant downturn in fees and charges income and the aggregate savings made over the preceding financial years, Bassetlaw's flexibility has been diminished as the local and national fiscal position has hardened. Any organisation which has made savings of £6.07m over a protracted period will have less contingency and financial flexibility which is why the Council is being proactive now.

RESOLVED that the proposed action to be undertaken to address the budget pressure through the planned restructure of the remaining parts of Support Services be noted, with the initial report to be presented to the October 2011 meeting of Cabinet.

55. REPORTING MINUTES

(a) Parish Councils Liaison Group – 19th January 2011

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Councils Liaison Group held on 19th January 2011 be received.

(b) Council's Health and Safety Committee – 12th April 2011

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Council's Health and Safety Committee held on 12th April 2011 be received.

56. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and after considering the public interest test as set out by the officer in the body of the report, Members agreed that the following items of business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1,2 and 3, and therefore, in accordance with Section 100A of the Act, the press and public be excluded from the meeting:

Agenda Item No 15(a) – Funding of Bevercotes Appeal Costs (Key Decision No 306) - Paragraph 3

Agenda Item No 16(a) – Planning Appeal Costs – Earth Holme Plantation, Bevercotes – Request for Additional Funding – Paragraph 3

Agenda Item No 17(a) – Swimming Development Review – Paragraph 2

Agenda Item No 18(a) – Manton Community Alliance – Paragraphs 1 and 2

Agenda Item No 19(a) – Support Services – Service Challenge – Stage 2 – Paragraph 2

Agenda Item No 19(b) – Support Services – Service Challenge – I C T – Paragraph 2

(The Chairman granted permission to those Elected Members present who were not on Cabinet and the member of Standards Committee to remain in the meeting.)

SECTION B – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PRIVATE

Key Decisions

57. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – FINANCE AND PROPERTY – COUNCILLOR J EVANS

(a) Funding of Bevercotes Appeal Costs (Key Decision No 306)

Members were presented with recommendations about how the funding of the first tranche of costs for the Bevercotes Colliery planning application can be dealt with. A replacement page was tabled at the meeting which gave the Legal reference and comments.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

The Council has a legal requirement to meet the appellants' costs.

RESOLVED that:

1. The 2011/12 costs for the Bevercotes planning appeal up to £125,000 are met from the LAA Reward Grant.
2. Any balance of appeal costs which would become payable in 2012/13 needs to be considered as part of the forthcoming revenue budget considerations.

Other Decisions

58. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – COMMUNITY ROSPERITY – COUNCILLOR D R PRESSLEY

(a) Planning Appeal Costs – Earth Holme Plantation, Bevercotes – Request for Additional Funding

(This report was presented by Councillor G A N Oxby in the absence of Councillor D R Pressley.)

Members' approval was sought for additional funding to be made available to address the recent costs awarded against the Council in relation to the Planning Appeal at Earth Holme Plantation, Bevercotes.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Having considered the legal issues surrounding this matter, it has been concluded that the Council has no option but to pay the costs associated with this Appeal.

RESOLVED that delegated authority be given to the Council Solicitor to negotiate a settlement of costs awarded against the Council in relation to the Earth Holme Plantation appeal to a maximum sum of £250,000.

59. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE – COUNCILLOR J A LEIGH

(a) Swimming Development Review

Members were presented with proposed changes to the delivery of swimming development functions in the District following the removal of partnership funding ie Nottinghamshire County

Council has removed 25% of its contribution for the current year and will cease to provide any funding from 2012/13. The current budget and redundancy costs were appended to the report.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Option One – To do nothing and maintain the status quo. This will incur an additional cost of £3,000 in the current year and at least £12,000 in future years.

Option Two – To adopt the proposals that the posts of Swimming Development Officer and the Swim Squad Coaches be reviewed in line with Council procedures.

RESOLVED that:

1. The proposed new structure, which removes the Bassetlaw Swim Squad cost centre, be approved.
2. Authority be delegated to the Director of Community Services to proceed with detailed matters not covered in the report, with reference at all times to the enabling process.
3. The Council's consultation and enabling process with staff and their representatives be commenced and a further report be submitted to a future meeting of Cabinet.

60. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – POLICY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – COUNCILLOR G A N OXBY

(a) Manton Community Alliance

Confirmation by Members was sought that, following the placement of officers from the Manton Community Alliance (MCA) Project within the redeployment pool, the notice period of termination of employment needs to be initiated. The proposed termination date is 31st December 2011.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

That Members agree to the cessation of the MCA Project week ending 31st December 2011 and staff be formally declared at risk of redundancy.

RESOLVED that the cessation of the Manton Community Alliance Project on 31st December 2011 be confirmed and termination of employment notices are issued to staff on or before 30th September 2011.

61. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – REVENUES, CUSTOMER AND SUPPORT SERVICES – COUNCILLOR S MAY

(a) Support Services – Service Challenge – Stage 2

Members' approval was sought for final approval for proposed changes to the staff structure within Support Services in response to the budget process and issues identified from staff consultation on the recent Service Review. Initial proposals were presented to Cabinet on 5th April 2011 and this report, together with trade union comments, were appended to the report.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

There is an option to do nothing and maintain the status quo and not to realise any potential from expanding procurement activity.

All Service areas of the Council are subject to the requirement to be subject to periodic reviews of Value For Money and Efficiency. The expectations are even more so for Support Services who do not predominantly provide frontline services.

There is a need to consider the line management responsibilities following previous proposals and the issues identified in the report.

There is the option to adopt or adapt the proposals in full or part.

The proposals presented within the report provide a structure that better aligns with the organisational and operational needs of the Authority. It ensures that the imperative of the budget process are met. It endeavours to offer some stability to individual members of staff.

RESOLVED that:

1. The transfer of the Procurement function from Support Services to Finance and Property Services with the posts proposed within the report be approved.
2. The proposed structure for the Procurement function within the Finance and Property Service be approved.
3. The revised structure for the Central Support Team within Support Services be approved.

(b) Support Services – Service Challenge - ICT

Members were updated on the outcome of the formal consultation process approved on 5th April 2011 relating to the proposed restructure of the management arrangements for the ICT and GIS/Land Charges units, and approval was sought for the proposed arrangements. Initial proposals were presented to Cabinet on 5th April 2011 and this report, together with trade union comments, were appended to the report.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

The Council is facing significant pressure both structurally and financially, therefore the need to review and restructure all services is of paramount importance. ICT will play an increasingly important part of enabling more innovative and cost-effective ways of delivering services. The proposals seek to centralise ICT, rationalise management arrangements and build in strategic ICT expertise, and prepare the Council for the significant changes ahead.

Members have the option of either progressing or not progressing with the proposals for restructuring ICT. Should the decision be made not to move to implementation then this could have an impact on the Council's ability to deliver against the more demanding Government agenda. The current structure does not provide a cost-effective option to align itself with these requirements. The Council's strategic ICT capacity will not be improved, therefore expertise will need to be "bought in" to assist the Council in preparing for the merging agenda.

RESOLVED that implementation of the proposed new management structure for ICT be approved, whereupon affected staff be formally declared at risk of redundancy.

62. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

As there was no other business to be considered, the Chairman closed the meeting, after thanking officers and Cabinet Members for their input.