

**HOUSING, NEIGHBOURHOODS AND REGULATION POLICY
DEVELOPMENT GROUP AUGUMENTED BY THE
DEVELOPMENT, REGENERATION AND SKILLS POLICY
DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

MEETING, 10TH NOVEMBER, 2010

Present – Councillors Peel (Chairman), Harkin (Vice-Chairman), Mrs. Brierley, Critchley (as deputy for Councillor R. Barrow), Harkin, Iqbal, Mrs. Ronson (as deputy for Councillor D. Wilkinson), A. N. Spencer and J. Walsh (as deputy for Councillor Woodward).

Members of the Development, Regeneration and Skills Policy Development group invited for minutes 19 and 20:-
Councillor Cox

Also in attendance

Mr. K. Davies	Director of Development and Regeneration
Mr. A. Eastwood	Director of Chief Executive's Department
Mrs. M. Stoney	Assistant Director Legal Services
Mr. T. Hill	Chief Planning Officer
Mr. J. Smethurst	Chief Housing Officer
Mr. S. Jordan	Head of Housing Strategy and Quality Assurance
Ms. J. Pollard	Head of Finance
Mrs. V. Ridge	Principal Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors R. Barrow, Ibrahim, D. Wilkinson and Woodward.

Councillor Peel in the Chair

18. MINUTES

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Policy Development Group held on 7th October, 2010 were submitted and signed as a correct record.

19. SAVINGS AND EFFICIENCY REPORT – DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION – 2011/2012 TO 2013/2014

A joint report of the Directors of Development and Regeneration and Corporate Resources was submitted which set out the department's response to corporate financial guidance for the period 2011/2012 to 2013/2014.

Members were advised that the guidance required the Development and Regeneration Department to identify savings totalling 10% of its base budget, plus fund essential demand led growth for 2011/2012. Furthermore, the department should plan for savings at the following levels:-

2012/13	10%
2013/14	5%

The report outlined the options identified to meet the corporate redirection target and demand led growth. The options had been identified as those which could be achieved without having an impact upon services provided and were detailed as follows:-

Development and Regeneration

TABLE TWO

Division		Description of Option	FTE Change	£'000
Service Efficiency Options Development and Regeneration	D1	Planning Division Value for Money Review	*(24.8) 0	400
	D2	Management of Cash Limited Resources	0	89
			*(24.8) 0	489

Housing Services	H1	Joint Procurement Pilot	0	30
	H2	Management of Cash Limited Resources	0	89
			0	119
		Total Savings and Efficiencies	*(24.8) 0	608

Bolton at Home

Division		Description of Option	FTE Change	£'000
Service Efficiency Options				
Bolton at Home	B1	Reduce the subsidy to Bolton @ Home (Elderly Persons Review)	0	162
			0	162
		Total Savings and Efficiencies	0	162

Members were also advised that the department received a number of grants which helped to fund some of the activities delivered by the department and work was currently being undertaken to assess the implications of the loss of those grants and an update would be provided in due course.

In conclusion, the entire £770,000 redirection target required had been identified as efficiency options and it would be possible to implement these options without an impact upon front line service delivery.

It was agreed that the report be noted.

20. GREATER MANCHESTER SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report which detailed the three topic papers which had been published as part of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework.

Members were advised that AGMA was currently preparing the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) to underpin the delivery of the Greater Manchester Strategy. It was stated that, as part of the process of preparation, members of AGMA were being consulted upon the key issues which the GMSF should address and the outcomes it should deliver.

The report stated that following the three initial Topic Papers in August, further papers had now been prepared and were being circulated to partnerships and groups within AGMA. The topic papers were attached to the report and were based on the following areas, viz:-

- Economy;
- Town Centres; and
- Infrastructure.

A brief presentation was also given to members which provided information in relation to the following issues, viz-

- What was the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and it's vision;
- The challenges and opportunities;
- The processes;
- Creating successful places – principles for housing investment and development;
- Town Centres and large employment sites; and
- Indicative timescales.

A discussion ensued with regard to the aims and benefits of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework for Bolton.

It was agreed that the report be noted.

21. REGULATORY SERVICES

The Director of Chief Executive's Department submitted a report which set out the results of the consultation process on proposals to restructure Regulatory Services to take into account a reduction in funding from 2011/2012 onwards.

Members were reminded that the Executive Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Regulation at his meeting on 27th July, 2010 approved a report on the Regulatory Services Savings and Efficiencies review and the proposed restructure of the Division for consultation with Unions, staff and service users. The overall level of savings to be achieved was £513,000. However, since the report had been written the amount of budget reduction required had been amended as it had come to light during the consultation period that the year 1 savings of 5% had been included in the figure of £513,000 for permanent budget reduction. Consequently, these were now to be treated as one off in year savings thereby reducing the budgetary reduction target to £434,000. It was stated that the underlying rationale for the review was the need to generate cost efficiencies to meet corporate budgetary targets imposed on the Authority by the Government spending reductions.

Information was provided within the report on the key elements of the formal consultation and the key issues raised. A copy of the formal Unison response to the proposals was set out in detail at Appendix A2 to the report. Appendix A3 set out the questions raised by the unions and staff, including matters raised at the weekly DJCC meetings together with the Project Board's response. In addition, Unison had also put forward five proposals for reducing the number of jobs that would be made redundant and these were outlined in the report.

The report also summarised the management's response to the unions proposals.

In terms of the impact on the staffing levels the revised reductions to staff were detailed in Appendix A4. The revised ring fence arrangements for Option 1 was set out in Appendix A5 and in respect of Option 2 this was outlined in Appendix A6. It was stated that these should be regarded as indicative only at the present time,

however, it was clear that the number of staff ultimately facing redundancy would have significantly reduced from the 11 FTE originally anticipated to 4FTE.

An Equality Impact Assessment had been undertaken on the proposals and this was detailed in Appendix A7 to the report.

It was agreed that the report be noted and that Option 1 be deleted prior to its submission to the Executive Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Regulation.

22. ANIMAL AID – ADOPTION OF THE COMPASSIONATE CHARTER

The Director of the Chief Executive's Department submitted a report that suggested an appropriate response to the petition submitted to the Council at its meeting on 9th December, 2009 by the campaigning group Animal Aid requesting the Council to adopt an overarching ethical policy that would help animals, people and the planet as set out in the Group's Compassionate Charter.

The Charter identified the eight specific actions that it requested the Council to implement in adopting the Charter as follows:-

1. Purchase only cruelty-free toiletries and cleaning products;
2. Ban circuses with animals from Council land;
3. Ban the giving of pets as prizes at funfairs
4. Promote and subsidise spaying and neutering programmes;
5. Ban the sale of foie gras and veal on Council premises;
6. Go fur-free;
7. Use only humane, non-lethal methods of wildlife management;
8. Make the town a plastic bag free zone.

The report explained that the Council had already agreed to implement a number of the above and the others could be adopted with some modifications as there would be financial implications to the Council from adopting the Animal Aid Charter in its current form. Consequently, it was proposed that the principles could be adopted

in the modified form set out below taking into account the comments now made by members.

“The Council agrees that compassion in the treatment of animals is an important principle and should not be contrary to the economy or the farming community.

The Council proposes to adopt the following principles:-

1. The continued use of cleaning products in Council premises which are cruelty-free
2. Not to permit circuses which have wild animals onto its land
3. Not to allow animals to be given as prizes at any events on its land or premises
4. The promotion and support of organisations promoting spaying and neutering of animals through education work with residents in association with the Dog Unit in Environmental Services.
5. To continue the Council’s stance on the ban of natural furs on its Mayoral insignia.
6. To continue the Council’s stance on the ban of foie gras from all its Council premises.
7. To consider humane ways to deal efficiently with pest control requirements.
8. To encourage the minimisation of plastic and other non bio-degradable waste in the Borough, through education work with schools and residents by the Environmental Cleaning and Waste Management Department of the Council.

It was agreed that the modified form of the Compassionate Charter which takes into account members comments be submitted to the Executive Member for Strategy and External Relations.

(The meeting started at 2.30 p.m. and finished at 3.45 p.m.)

