

CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

A record of decisions made by the Executive Member with responsibility for Corporate Strategy and Finance on:-

WEDNESDAY, 8th AUGUST, 2007

following consideration of the matters detailed below in the presence of:-

Councillor Morris	Executive Member Corporate Strategy and Finance
Councillor J. Walsh	Major Opposition Spokesperson
Councillor Hayes	Minor Opposition Spokesperson
Mr. S. Harriss	Chief Executive
Mr. A. Eastwood	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Mr. K. Davies	Director of Development and Regeneration
Mrs. S. Curran	Deputy Director of Corporate Resources
Mrs. B. Newman	Policy Accountant
Mr. P. Marsh	Assistant Director Corporate Property Services
Ms. C. James	Head of Strategic Projects
Mr. A. Jennings	Democratic Services Manager

25. MONITORING OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISIONS

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report which monitored the progress of decisions within the portfolio of the Executive Member Corporate Strategy and Finance.

The Executive Member Corporate Strategy and Finance NOTED the progress of the decisions taken.

26. LAA – UPDATE ON THE ANNUAL REVIEW AND NEXT STEPS FOR THE NEW STYLE LAA

The Chief Executive submitted a report which provided the Executive Member with an update on Bolton's LAA Annual Review for 2006/07.

The Annual Review involved the submission of a self assessment from Bolton that had been reviewed by GONW and formed the basis of discussion at the Annual Review meeting held on the 18th June. GONW had now drafted their Annual Review report which would be subject to national moderation . The Chief Executive submitted the GONW highlight report on Bolton's LAA.

GONW had made a number of comments against the areas of risk to achievement that had been recognised by Bolton Vision partners in the self assessment. At present 25 out of 74 LAA indicators were off target and these included a handful of Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA 2). The LAA Lead Agencies Group had determined actions for improvement in LPSA 2 performance at its meeting on the 3rd August 2007 with improvement plans for all other LAA targets to be agreed via the LAA Lead Agencies Group shortly. These improvement plans would also be submitted as part of the Performance Dashboard that would be considered on a frequent basis by the Executive

A response to this draft Annual Review report had been sent to GONW on behalf of Bolton Vision partnership. The final Annual Review report would be circulated in due course.

The report also outlined the next steps in the LAA process including the timetable for progress of the various stages leading up to Ministerial sign off of the new style LAA which was expected to occur in June 2008.

It was expected that the introduction of the new style LAA would allow the Government to significantly rationalise the number of targets for local areas , the expectation being that local areas would be expected to choose the 35 targets from a suite of 200 (plus 18 specific educational attainment targets). Local areas would also be encouraged to have locally sensitive targets in the new style LAA ,although the Government would not monitor these.

The Executive Member NOTED - the updates on the LAA Annual Review 2006/07 and the latest position regarding the new style LAAs to become operational in 2008.

27. CENTRAL DEPARTMENTS SERVICE AND FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT , FIRST QUARTER 2007/08

The Chief Executive submitted a report that provided an overview on the key financial and service performance data from the central departments following the end of the first quarter, 2007/2008.

The report provided information as follows:-

- Performance of the Departments BVPIs was good, with 92% showing an improvement compared with the same period last year.
- Delivery of Service Improvement Action Plans (SIAPs) milestones was strong with 70% of Q1 tasks being achieved.
- Compliance with corporate customer care standards was good (84% complaints made to the three central departments had been responded to in the required timescale) .

- The revenue monitor showed no variances to the budget at this stage.
- Legal Services' trading account was predicted to break even.
- The impact of growth included in the 2007/2008 budget.
- Reserves with deficit balances, the predicted movement on those balances, and noted the plans to repay those deficits.
- The contribution the three Departments were making towards achieving the Authority's overall Gershon efficiency targets.
- Capital expenditure was largely on track, although slippage was predicted for the Asset Management Plan as outcomes of the Council's change programme were awaited.
- Risks had been identified, and Risk Management Action plans were in place to manage those risks.

The appendices to the report provided more information with respect to the above.

The Executive Member AGREED –

- (i) to receive future quarterly updates of service and financial monitoring and to address other financial matters arising with the Director of Corporate Resources ;and ENDORSED**
- (ii) the updates on the improvement actions for priority BVPIs detailed in Appendix B .**

28. CORPORATE RESOURCES DEPARTMENT PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – QUARTER 1 2007/08

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report that provided the Executive Member with information on the Corporate Resources Department performance indicators for quarter 1 of 2007/08 .

Performance for all indicators at quarter 1 indicated that 84% of indicators were meeting the target and a list of all the performance indicators was attached at Appendix B.

Following an enquiry from the Executive Member the Deputy Director of Finance indicated that she would investigate the suitability of including guidance on the payment of sub contractors by main contractors within a suitable timescale in tender documentation .

The Executive Member NOTED the report .

29. COMMUNITY STRATEGY – BOLTON : OUR VISION 2007-2017 AND BOLTON VISION PARTNERSHIP

The Chief Executive submitted a report that introduced the final refreshed Community Strategy and informed the Executive Member of the proposals agreed by the Vision Steering Group at its meeting on the 26th June 2007, regarding the principles for the high level partnerships within the Local Strategic Partnership to ensure that it was best placed to deliver the outcomes for the people of Bolton over the coming years as set out in the Community Strategy Bolton: Our vision: 2007 – 2017 and that they were aligned to the priority themes of the Community Strategy and Children's Trust.

A copy of the report was attached , together with the Appendix which outlined the proposed partnership arrangements for the future.

The Executive Member AGREED - the high level partnership arrangements agreed by the Vision Steering Group on the 26th June 2007 and that officers implement the revised Bolton Vision partnership arrangements and ensure that the mechanisms below the high level partnerships are fit for purpose to deliver the agreed Community Strategy outcomes.

30. LICENSING OF STRETCHED LIMOUSINES

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report that detailed a proposed policy for the licensing of stretched limousines as private hire vehicles .

The report informed the Executive Member that ,for a number of years , ‘stretched limousines’ had operated in an unregulated manner due to confusion about their status and whether they were private hire vehicles or public service vehicles (PSV’s).

As the number and popularity of the vehicles had grown so had the risks associated with their unregulated use which had caused regulators to take action. Following discussions between representatives of the AGMA Licensing Managers Group and the Vehicle Operator Standards Agency (VOSA) a common approach had been proposed which had the support of both the Police and the Department for Transport.

The AGMA Licensing Managers Group & VOSA had agreed that, where a ‘stretched limousine’ had less than nine passenger seats, it should be regulated as a PHV. Any vehicle which needed a licence was required to pass a mechanical fitness test before the licence would be granted and the driver of any licensed PHV must hold a PHV driver licence. All drivers were ‘vetted’ before the licence was issued.

Vehicles with nine or more passenger seats would have their ‘type approval’ status checked and, provided that it was correct, their use would be regulated as PSV’s, by VOSA.

A draft policy document and common conditions had been developed by the AGMA Group and were attached at Appendix 1.

The Executive Member AGREED –

(i) That in the interests of public safety, the conditions detailed in Appendix 1 ,together with the matters in Paragraph 3.2 of the report, be adopted by the Council as the conditions which ‘stretched’ limousines are required to comply with from 1 June 2007 , subject to the following;

(a) that the vehicles be not allowed to display advertisements, other than adverts for the operator of the vehicle ;and

(b) that with respect to ‘special effects’ within the vehicle these should be judged on a case by case basis and only be allowed with the written authority of the Council with the necessary safeguards ,particularly the use of blacked out windows ,both internally and externally, to avoid distraction to the driver and other road users.

(ii) That the fees for a private hire vehicle licence for a limousine should be £140 per six months, £196 per twelve months (for vehicles up to three years old) and £95 for a re-test (all fees subject to the ongoing review);and

(iii) That all known proprietors of stretched limousines in the Borough be contacted by the Licensing Unit and informed of the policy change and that they are given such information and assistance as is necessary to enable them to apply for the licences which are required by the policy.

31. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY – REVIEW OF 2006/07 ACTIVITIES

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a review of the Authority's activities in 2006/07 as compared to the Treasury Management Strategy as agreed by the Executive in 2006 .

The Executive Member NOTED the report .

32. 207 ST. GEORGES ROAD ,BOLTON

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report which sought the Executive Member's approval for the disposal of 207 St Georges Road on the basis of a 999 year leasehold interest .

The sale of the property would provide a capital receipt and remove the liability for repair and maintenance and business rates .

The Executive Member DEFERRED the report and requested the Director of Corporate Resources to investigate what the Council owns on the St George's Road frontage .

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

The background papers and reports in relation to the following items were considered confidential as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that it be deemed that, in all the circumstances of each case, the public interest in their exemption outweighs the public interest in their disclosure.

33. CAR PARK TENDERING PROCESS

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report which provided an update on the progress made in seeking tenders for the Council's car parking arrangements and to agree a shortlist for the final tender stage.

The Executive Member was reminded that ,following a comprehensive parking study undertaken for the town centre considering the current parking provision and the planned developments within the town, a need for a long term strategic parking strategy and new build programme had been determined. Consequently, the Council decided to seek interest from the private sector for a strategic partner to design, build ,finance and operate new multi storey car parks and to manage the remaining parking provision on a long term basis.

An assessment of the submissions had been undertaken and an evaluation was contained in the appendix to the report .

The Executive Member AGREED - that the 3 companies recommended in the report be short listed to tender for the final stage in the Council’s process to engage a car park developer/ operator and that an appropriate Project Manager be appointed to assist in the remaining stages of the tender and contracting process.

34. LITTLE BOLTON TOWN HALL AND 34 ALL SAINTS STREET

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report that sought the Executive Member’s authority to dispose of Little Bolton Town Hall and 34 All Saints Street following the withdrawal of the original purchaser .

A further tendering exercise had been undertaken and details of the tenders received were set out in the report .

The Executive Member AGREED –

- (i) to the disposal of the property to Tenderer 2 ;**
- (ii) that the capital receipt received for the property be not ringfenced for the THI Common Fund and that a bid be made to the capital fund to match the Heritage Lottery Fund contribution for the Little Bolton Townscape Heritage Initiative ;**

- (iii) to the Director of Legal & Democratic Services completing the legal formalities;and
- (iv) to the Director of Corporate Resources requesting the Museums Service to assess the historical items within the building with a view to their removal/safekeeping and/or the developer utilising them as part of the development .

35. PROPOSED EXTENSION TO REGENT PARK GOLF COURSE

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report which requested the Executive Member's approval to the provisionally agreed terms for the extension of Regent Park Golf Course westwards onto part of the former Lostock Hall Farm .

The Executive Member AGREED – the provisionally agreed terms for the development agreement and subsequent revised lease to Regent Park Golf Course Ltd ,as now detailed ,and to the Director of Legal & Democratic Services completing the necessary legal formalities.

24. WRITE OFF OF UNCOLLECTABLE DEBT

The Executive Member AGREED the write offs as detailed in the report.

DECISION MONITORING
EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR
CORPORATE STRATEGY AND FINANCE

Date of Meeting	<u>Item and Decision</u>	Action and Progress
26th February, 2007	LAND AT SINGING CLOUGH, KEARSLEY	
	The Executive Member AUTHORISED - The necessary site investigation works to be undertaken on land at Singing Clough, Kearsley.	Ward Councillors and local residents to be informed. Site preparation and ground investigation works w/c 6.8.07
26th February, 2007	COLLEGES CO-LOCATION PROJECT	
	The Executive Member APPROVED – (i) The acquisition of the College Campus; and (ii) The disposal of the Haywood School site an appropriate market value.	Awaiting results of site investigations to enable values to be finalised
19th March, 2007	COMMERCE HOUSE	
	The Executive Member APPROVED – The exercising of the break clause to terminate the lease of Commerce House with effect from 1st November, 2007.	Surrender to be completed shortly
6 th JUNE, 2007	MERE HALL The Executive Member Development AGREED , subject to the agreement of the Boards of the Mere Hall Company Ltd and Community Support and Development Centre within a two month period ;	Awaiting response from meeting of Mere Hall Board. And Board of CSDC

	<p>(i) to the proposed merger of CSDC with Mere Hall (Bolton) Limited including the transfer of the already committed funds for staffing and that Mere Hall Limited manage the CSDC and extend its service delivery within the community with a view to exploiting the expertise within the Centre in opening the accessibility to Mere Hall for community usage;</p> <p>(ii) to the Director of Legal and Democratic Services introducing a joint diary for the use of rooms at Mere Hall in order to maximise usage and increase income whilst preserving the needs of the Registrar, Births, Deaths and Marriages, including re-classifying some/all of the space as not part of the shared area within the Management Agreement with a potential for either the Company or the Registrar taking up space and operating it under charged arrangements;</p> <p>(iii) to assist the Mere Hall Company with any application to the Heritage Lottery Fund with regards to the need for a lease on the cottages for at least 10 years; and</p> <p>(iv) that if the recommendations are acceptable to the Boards of the Company and CSDC full monitoring reports and / or an increase in the number of places on the new board be pursued by the Director of Legal and Democratic Services .</p>	
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6 TH JUNE 2007	<p>TESTING DEMAND FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE LICENCES</p> <p>The Executive Member AGREED that the restriction should remain as at present and that an unmet demand survey should be carried out in September 2007 to determine whether or not the correct number of hackney carriage licences are in issue or whether additional licences should be issued to satisfy any unmet demand and that the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to agree the provider of the survey in consultation with the Executive Member.</p>	Negotiations ongoing with lowest tenderer; Initial meeting with preferred contractor arranged
9 TH JULY ,2007	<p>CENTRAL DEPARTMENTS PERFORMANCE AND OUTTURN 2006/07</p> <p>The Executive Member AGREED –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the Central Departments' service and financial performance, as detailed in the report ; (ii) that full quarterly updates on progress be submitted in order to improve the three bottom quartile indicators identified in 2006/07 that have been outlined in Appendix A ; (iii) the transfers to and from reserves made in 2006/2007 and noted the balances on reserve accounts as at 31st March 2007 ; (iv) the revenue outturn for the Legal Services Trading Account ; and (v) the capital spend for 2006/2007 and the roll forward of the capital programme for 2007/2008 onwards. 	Actions have been implemented

	<p>CORPORATE PERFORMANCE DEPARTMENT- PERFORMANCE INFORMATION</p> <p>The Executive Member AGREED –</p> <p>(i) the targets for 2007/08 in the light of the 2006/07 performance and the actions that are planned to achieve those targets ; and</p> <p>(ii) the planned action in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in creditor payments (BVPI8) ; • Improve collection of Council tax and Business Rates (BVPI9&10) ; • Accessibility of public buildings (BVPI156) ; and • Improvements in the Contact Centre and One Stop Shop . <p>FARNWORTH MARKET PRECINCT</p> <p>The Executive Member AGREED –</p> <p>(I) that prudential borrowing be used to bridge the funding gap identified ;</p> <p>(ii) to the grant of a 250 year lease ,preceded by a building agreement ,as detailed in the report ;</p> <p>(iii) to the provision of a temporary market facility as detailed in option c of the report .</p>	<p>Agreed actions being implemented and performance monitored</p>
	<p>LAND AT LEVER STREET ,LITTLE LEVER</p> <p>The Executive Member AGREED the terms and conditions ,now detailed ,and that the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to complete the necessary legal documentation.</p>	<p>Legal Services instructed. Draft documentation sent to purchaser</p>

	ODEON CINEMA ,ASHBURNER STREET	
	The Executive Member AGREED – to the additional area ,now indicated ,within the proposed lease of the cinema site on the terms outlined and that the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to complete the necessary formalities regarding the revised lease and revised management agreement with APCOA .	Legal to be instructed