

CORPORATE RESOURCES

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

TUESDAY, 24th FEBRUARY, 2009

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

Councillor Mrs Thomas	Executive Member Corporate Resources
Councillor J. Walsh	Major Opposition Spokesperson
Councillor Hayes	Minor Opposition Spokesperson
Mr. S. Arnfield	Director of Corporate Resources
Mr. A. Eastwood	Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Mr. N. Maher	Head of Policy Improvement and Area Working
Mr. A. Jennings	Democratic Services

56. 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 Resources.

The Executive Member Corporate Resources NOTED the progress of the decisions taken.

57. TIF REFERENDUM COSTS

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report that set out the costs of both ERS and Manchester City Council for conducting the TIF referendum on behalf of Bolton Council.

The Executive Member was reminded that the AGMA executive had agreed to carry out a local poll (referred to as the TIF Referendum) under section 116 of the Local Government Act 2003 in respect of consulting the public on the issue of the Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) which included the congestion charge.

The AGMA Executive had agreed that the AGMA authorities concerned would bear a proportion of the costs associated with the conduct of the referendum based upon each of their electorates.

AGMA had also agreed that a procurement process be carried out via Manchester City Council for a supplier to conduct the referendum on behalf of AGMA and Electoral Reform Services (ERS) were the successful supplier.

The final ERS cost for Bolton was £170,871.44 with the final cost for Manchester City Council's administrative support being £53,735, giving a total cost of £224,606.44.

The Director of Corporate Resources indicated that funds had been set aside from interest savings to cover the costs.

The report would also be considered by the Executive Member Strategy and External Relationships on 25th February, 2009.

The Executive Member AGREED payment of £170,871.44 to ERS and that ,with respect to the Manchester City Council costs, the Director of Legal and Democratic Services submit a further breakdown of the overall costs relating to media and television etc to determine how much of this cost related to the abortive adverts in light of the Advertising Standards Authority ruling on the content of such, with such information being submitted to the Executive Member Strategy and External Relationships.

58. AREA FORUMS AND AREA WORKING ROUND THREE

The Chief Executive submitted a report that updated the Executive Member on the progress in implementing the review of round three of area forum meetings, together with information on the key priorities for moving forward.

It was explained that attendance had greatly improved in round three with some meetings gaining 50 to 60 plus local residents in attendance. Almost 570 members of the public had attended round three forums which equated to an increase of 33% on the previous round. However, there were still a small number of forums where attendance could be improved and these were the focus of further support from the Chief Executive.

Members had now approved a high level of spend on projects in the first three rounds and efforts were being made to maximise spend before year end. Current spend at the end of round three was over 50% of Area Based Grant and forum budgets; 40% of highways budgets and 75% of voluntary sector grants. However, the bulk of spend usually occurred in the final quarter of the year and it was stressed that forums needed to be in a position to agree their priorities and commission spend in the first quarter of 2009/10 to ensure that budgets were allocated early and projects delivered before the final quarter of 2009/10.

The Council had agreed to further increase the level of funding delegated to area forums to spend locally. The revised allocation was as follows:-

- voluntary sector grants (£45,000) – each ward had £2,000 and there was a borough wide allocation of £5,000 to support projects covering several wards;
- highways maintenance (£204,900) - £10,245 per ward;
- ward based budget (£250,000, plus an additional £250,000) - £25,000 per ward;
- area based grant (£250,000) – allocation based upon 25% weighting for population and 75% weighting for deprivation; and

- youth service provision (£200,000) – an allocation of £10,000 per ward had been agreed for 2009/10.

Round four meetings would review the big issues identified and agree which ones remained outstanding to be rolled forward into 2009/10. Forums would be encouraged to prioritise the three top local priorities to be progressed in 2009/10 which would give a clear focus for activity and budget spend.

Publicity would be developed further using facilities such as the One Stop Shop Access Bolton. Electronic communication was the preferred media for many people but the area working service relied almost exclusively on producing printed media to communicate with the client base. It was recognised that this needed to develop in order to maximise the use of email, text messaging, internet and visual messages in high footfall areas such as the One Stop Shop, libraries, health centres, post offices and supermarkets.

Furthermore, Neighbourhood Managers and Neighbourhood Action Plans were now in place for the neighbourhood renewal areas of the Borough. In these areas area co-ordinators and neighbourhood managers would be working closely together with members and the community to deliver improvements against locally agreed priorities.

In neighbourhood management areas it had been agreed that there would be a Director lead for neighbourhood management. The neighbourhood manager would be the single point of contact for members and area working would form part of that overall approach.

The Executive Member AGREED the areas for further development as detailed in the report.

59. AGGREGATE FINANCIAL MONITOR THIRD QUARTER 2008/09

The Director of Corporate Resources submitted a report that advised the Executive Member of the outcome of the third quarter Aggregate Financial Monitoring exercise for 2008/09

and considered the following.

- General Fund Revenue Monitoring;
- Aggregate Capital Monitoring; and
- Monitoring of the Prudential Guidelines

Overall there was a net decrease in revenue balances of £10,000 compared with the half year report considered on January , 2009 which was the net effect of a number of relatively small movements.

A number of other pressures and risks were noted at this time.

Projected Capital Expenditure had decreased by £2,887,000. The change was largely made up of slippage on property and technology schemes on Central Departments and Adult and Community Services partially offset by additional approvals for Car Parks and reinstatement of slipped schemes on Development and Regeneration. Expenditure at the projected level could be fully funded.

Monitoring of Prudential Indicators showed that no indicators were beyond those recommended to Council on 25th February , 2009.

The current forecast of available balances at 31st March, 2009 was £7,604,000

Capital Expenditure could also be contained within available resources

Monitoring of Prudential Indicators showed that no indicators were beyond those approved by Council. However current projections suggested Capital Financing needed to be marginally increased to accommodate potential prudential borrowing in respect of Car Parks and vehicle purchases which had been incorporated in the recommendation to Council on 25th February, 2009, along with capital expenditure projections based on the half year monitoring position.

The Executive Member NOTED the report.