

## **DIRECT SERVICES MANAGEMENT BOARD**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 5 February 2002**

In the Conference Room, The Gatehouse, Mill Road Depot  
4.30 – 6.20pm

Present: Councillors White (Chair), Dixon, Howell, Slatter, Smart  
Also present: Councillor Dryden (speaking with the Chair's permission)

Officers: Graham Watts, David Horspool, David Poole, Dave Coventry, Yvonne Perry, Janet Wilson, David Wood, Glen Wooldrige, Angus MacQueen

Union Representative: Richard O'Leary (GMB)

## **1 MINUTES**

### **(i) PVCU and Building Projects (minute number 6, 20 November 2001)**

In answer to a question from the Chair, the Director of City Services provided members with the financial details of the PVCU contract with Babergh District Council.

### **(ii) Waste Management (minute number 6, 20 November 2001)**

In response to a question from the Chair, the Director of City Services advised that, despite the introduction of the kerbside recycling service on 1 October 2001, the amount of refuse collected from wheelie bins had increased for the period October 2001 to January 2002 when compared with October 2000 to January 2001.

In answer to a question from the Chair, the Director of City Services said that abandoned burnt-out vehicles were removed after 48 hours' notice if they had no number plate. If they did have a number plate, the usual seven days' notice for removal of abandoned vehicles was applied, in case an insurance claim was pending. The Government was currently consulting on introducing a 24 hours notice period. The Council always reported burnt-out wrecks to the Police, who removed them if they were causing a dangerous obstruction.

### **(iii) Streetscene (minute number 7, 20 November 2001)**

The Director of City Services reported that City Services now had full management responsibility for bus shelters. He stressed the need for urgent reporting of any damage to bus shelters, so that repairs and clearance of debris could be carried out with the minimum of delay.

### **(iv) Adoption**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2001 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## **2 APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Reed.

## **3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **4 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

No members of the public wished to address the Board.

## **5 MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 30 NOVEMBER 2001**

The Director of City Services presented a report which described the financial and operational performance of City Services for the period ending 30 November 2001. He added that the first sentence of paragraph 3.1 should begin “Commercial waste turnover...”, rather than “Turnover...” Discussion took place regarding the aspects of the report listed below.

### **Building Maintenance**

In answer to questions from members, the Director of City Services said that he believed that the targets for void properties were measured in “real” days (ie including non-working days), but he would check this and report back to the next meeting.

*Action by: Director of City Services*

### **Waste Management**

In answer to members’ questions, the Director of City Services made the following points:

- There had been problems with the crates for recyclables blowing in the wind. However, there was little that could be done to address this, apart from collection staff leaving the crates upside down once they had emptied them.
- Mobile recycling units were being considered for use by people living in blocks of flats.
- There was a value to the dry recyclables collected but not enough to pay for the service. He would present to the next meeting a “before and after” weight comparison for all collected dry recyclables.

*Action by: Director of City Services*

- Malicious disposal of needles was being closely monitored, with a view to sharing this information with the Police in an effort to reduce the number of incidents.

The Board noted the report.

## 6 CITY SERVICES DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN

The Director of City Services considered the City Services Draft Business Plan for 2002/03.

Members expressed concern that, under the new political management arrangements to be introduced in May 2002, it was proposed that the Board would cease to exist. The work of City Services would be overseen by individual portfolio holders and scrutinised by the main committees. Members felt that it would be important to retain arrangements for monitoring the profitable business of City Services and overseeing its infrastructure.

In answer to members' questions, officers made the following points:

- On Indicator D2 – percentage of repair jobs for which an appointment was made and kept by the authority – no target had yet been set, as the future of this Indicator was being considered by Housing Services.
- On Indicators BV73 – average time taken to complete non-urgent repair jobs – and LP1 – tenants' overall satisfaction with the repairs service – the targets for 2002/03 had been set at a reasonable level for the resources available.
- Officers would investigate the possibility of introducing a local indicator to measure the time between the reporting of a repair requirement and the first visit.

*Action by: Director of Community Services and Director of City Services*

- Under the new political structures, City Services budgets would be managed by the relevant portfolio holders as part of the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account. This would overcome the problem of how to deal with surpluses and deficits.
- The work that City Services carried out for other authorities was managed as a commercial concern. This work helped to maintain stability against fluctuating requirements from inside the Council.
- New Government proposals might allow City Services to tender for work for non-government organisations; however, even if this was to become the case, it might still be prudent for City Services to concentrate on its current market, where it was successful.
- The Council had expanded advertising of its expertise in disabled adaptations to South Cambridgeshire.

**Resolved** (with no votes against) that the Draft Business Plan be submitted to City Board.

## 7 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE REQUIREMENTS FOR 2002/03

The Director of City Services presented a report which described some of City Services' capital expenditure requirements for the financial year 2002/03.

In answer to a question from Councillor Slatter, the Director of City Services said that,

should City Board decide not to approve the expenditure for the Mill Road Depot Improvement of Environmental Aspects – Waste Compound Development Project, he would investigate whether individual aspects of the Project could be funded, in particular the management of the contamination of ground water waste.

**Resolved** (with no votes against) that the schemes described in the project appraisals appended to the report, totalling £240,350, be approved for submission to City Board for inclusion in the Capital Plan, noting the priority expressed in paragraph 5.2 of the report.

## **8 BEST VALUE – HOUSING REPAIRS FUNDAMENTAL SERVICE REVIEW PROJECT DEFINITION**

The Director of Community Services presented a report which set out the Project Definition for the Best Value Fundamental Service Review of Housing Repairs. He described the aims of the Review in more detail by means of a presentation.

**Resolved** (with no votes against) that the Project Definition for the Best Value Fundamental Service Review of Housing Repairs be approved.

## **9 CITY RANGERS – MONITORING AND DATA ANALYSIS**

The Director of City Services presented performance information on the City Rangers service.

In response to a question from Councillor Slatter, the Director of City Services stated that it was important for the Rangers to record when a job had been completed, so that the case could be closed or passed on to another agency. Other City Services staff also recorded the completion of jobs for which they had been responsible.

In answer to a question from Councillor Howell, the Director of City Services said that every effort would be made to ensure that the recording of the monitoring information did not become too much of a burden for the Rangers. The information would not only be used for monitoring, but would also be helpful in targeting areas of particular concern.

Members were happy with the format of the information, although Councillor Dixon asked that anti-social behaviour and criminal behaviour be separated into two different categories.

Councillor Dryden praised the work of his local Ranger.

The Board noted the performance information.

The meeting ended at 6.20pm.

**CHAIR**