

DIRECT SERVICES MANAGEMENT BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 25 March 2002

In the Conference Room, The Gatehouse, Mill Road Depot

4.30 – 5.45pm

Present: Councillors White (Chair), Dixon, Howell, Slatter, Smart

Officers: Graham Watts, David Horspool, Dave Coventry, Lance Kester, Mark Orbell, Yvonne Perry, Janet Wilson, Glen Wooldrige, Angus MacQueen

Union Representative: Richard O'Leary (GMB)

1 MINUTES

(i) Dry Recyclables (minute number 5, 5 February 2002)

In answer to a question from Councillor Slatter, the Director of City Services reported that the second round of dry recyclable collections had now been introduced. Figures relating to the impact of dry recyclable collections on the amount of domestic refuse collected would be calculated and circulated to all members of the Board during the first half of April.

Action by: Director of City Services

(ii) Adoption

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2002 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

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 31 JANUARY 2002

The Director of City Services presented a report which described the financial and operational performance of City Services for the period ending 31 January 2002. Discussion took place regarding the aspects of the report listed below.

Waste Management

In response to questions from Councillor Howell, the Director of City Services explained that the bad debts referred to in paragraph 4.1 of the report had been the result of a failure to issue certain invoices. This had occurred in the days of the client/contractor split, and systems were now in place which should ensure that there no similar errors in the future. A review had been carried out to establish that invoices had been issued for all other work undertaken over the past two years. Councillor Howell expressed concern that this situation had occurred and stressed the importance of ensuring that it did not happen again.

The Chair reported that City Services now had over 60% of the market share for commercial waste collection, and congratulated officers on this achievement.

Streetscene

In answer to questions from Councillor Slatter, the Director of City Services explained that gritting of roads was most effective when the temperature was just below freezing. Gritting had therefore been profitable this year, even though the winter had been relatively mild. Depending on the outcome of negotiations, it was possible that City Services would not carry out winter gritting in the future.

The Board noted the report.

6 CITY SERVICES BUSINESS PLAN

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

Councillor Dixon pointed out that the contents page should read “10 months” rather than “7 months” under “Financial Data 2001/02”.

In answer to a question from Councillor Howell, the Director of City Services said that City Services liaised closely with City Homes during the business-planning process. He was confident that City Services would be able to respond to changes in circumstance, for example if City Homes decided to reprioritise its spending as a result of the Government’s new Decent Homes Standards.

The Board noted the Plan.

7 CITY SERVICES FINANCIAL REPORTING AND BUDGETING

The Director of Finance presented a report which outlined issues arising from the current approach to financial reporting and budgeting for City Services, particularly in light of the change to new political management arrangements from May 2002.

The Director of Finance explained that, since the report had been written, the Periodic Electoral Review and Local Government Act Sub-Committee had recommended that City Services’ external work be included within the Commercial and Human Resources portfolio, rather than the City Board portfolio as stated in the second bullet point of section 5 of the report. The Sub-Committee had also recommended that overview of

City Services as a whole be included within the Leader's portfolio; this should be added to the fifth bullet point of section 5 of the report.

The Director of Finance reported that the external auditors had indicated their support for the proposals.

Resolved (with no votes against) that the principles for future financial reporting and budgeting for City Services functions be approved, as set out in section 5 of the report, subject to the following amendments:

- Under the second bullet point of paragraph 5.3 of the report, it was proposed that City Services' external work would be included within the Commercial and Human Resources portfolio, rather than the City Board (Leader's) portfolio.
- Under the fifth bullet point of paragraph 5.3 of the report, it was proposed that overview of City Services as a whole would be included within the Leader's portfolio.

8 "PAPERLESS CAB"

The Director of City Services gave a presentation on the operation of the new "paperless cab" system and answered members' questions.

Mr O'Leary paid tribute to the management for developing the system in full consultation with the trade union.

9 FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE WORK OF THE DIRECT SERVICES MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Board noted that this was its last meeting, as it would cease to exist under the Council's new Constitution, which would be adopted in May 2002. The allocation of the Board's duties under the new Constitution, as set out on the agenda, was noted, subject to the following amendments (also described under section 7 above):

- It was proposed that business planning (incorporating external work) would be included within the Commercial and Human Resources portfolio, rather than that of the Leader.
- It was proposed that overview of City Services as a whole would be included within the Leader's portfolio.

10 CHAIR'S STATEMENT

The Chair thanked all the staff of City Services for their hard work over the two years that he had been Chair. He also thanked the members of the Board for their support.

The meeting ended at 5.45pm.

CHAIR