

STRATEGY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**9 February 2007**

6.00pm –6.54pm

PRESENT: Councillors Blackhurst, Boyce, Bruce (Chair), Herbert, Hymans, Shah and Ward (Vice-Chair).

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Ian Nimmo-Smith, The Leader. Councillor C Rosenstiel, Executive Councillor for Environmental Services, Cllr Bradnack (the Chair permitted contributions from Cllr Bradnack for both items [Council Procedure Rule 39.2.3])

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**07/STR/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Armstrong and Stafford.

07/STR/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

07/STR/18 – Cllr Herbert declared a personal interest as his partner worked for Cambridgeshire Horizons.

07/STR/16 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present.

07/STR/17 DRAFT REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS REVISED 2006/07 AND PROPOSED 2007/08 – LABOUR AMENDMENT

The Chair ruled that under 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 the late item from the Director of Finance [Labour Group Amendment] should be considered despite not being made publicly available for this scrutiny committee five clear days prior to the meeting.

The Scrutiny Committee had the following papers:

- Labour Amendment (updated 9 February)
- Executive Budget update (two new items (i) control equipment for boilers in Corn Exchange and (ii) Fisher Square Environmental Improvements from the Hold List to the Capital Plan)
- Updated Capital Plan items for King George V Recreation Ground and Dec Youth Bus following Project Appraisal approval in November 2006

The Director of Finance advised the Scrutiny Committee that a further update on both the Executive and Labour Budgets would be required once notification of the LABGI grant was received from Government.

The following questions were put by Liberal Democrat members on the items in the Labour Amendment and answered as listed:

Appendix F – UR 1130 ‘remove memorial safety officer’ – confirmed that this post was yet to be filled

Appendix F – S1367 ‘modernise scrutiny process’ – replacing current scrutiny committees with a single scrutiny process would deliver the saving

Appendix F – S1372 ‘reduce abandoned vehicles budget’ – budget will be underspent this year following the introduction of a free collection service by scrap dealers for cars which had up to December been voluntarily surrendered by their owners to the Council. (The Director of City Services advised that new Regulations were introduced on 1 January 2007 which will reduce the need for the Council service other than for non-whole expired vehicles e.g. burn outs/parts removed. A review of this service would be undertaken in 2008/09).

Appendix I – PPF 1356 ‘bulk waste collection for people in need’ - £40,000 was on the basis of not applying a means test

Appendix I – PPF 1360 ‘extra mobile CCTV cameras’ – confirmed that this was two cameras

Appendix I - PPF 1369 ‘mini bring site trial’ - there is capacity depending on how the resource earmarked for increasing recycling in flats is to be used.

07/STR/18 **CAMBRIDGESHIRE GROWTH – JOINT PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS**

In introducing the report, the Chief Executive advised the Scrutiny Committee that much was still to be agreed between the authorities, Cambridgeshire Horizons and central Government (DCLG). There were on-going discussions about the statutory underpinning of the proposed joint planning arrangements as well as the resourcing and staffing detail.

The Leader thanked the Director of Environment & Planning, Chief Executive, Head of Legal & Democratic Services and Executive Councillor for Planning & Transport for their work in getting DCLG approval thus far and having produced a package of more appropriate arrangements than those first proposed in November 2006.

In response to a question from Councillor Herbert, it was confirmed that the Joint Strategic Growth Implementation Committee was a committee of Cambridgeshire Horizons and would not be exercising any local authority functions. However, the new arrangements would give the three local authorities more opportunity to have a say in how the growth agenda was managed and developed. It would also improve co-ordination between the three local authorities.

The Scrutiny Committee noted that the report would be included on the Council Agenda for determination on 22 February.

The meeting ended at 6.54pm

CHAIR