

CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES DECISION MEETING

RECORD OF DECISIONS taken by the Cabinet Member for Resources, Councillor Hugh Mason, at his decision meeting held on Tuesday, 29 September 2009 at 9.30am in the Guildhall, Portsmouth.

Councillor Donna Jones (Opposition Spokesperson, Conservative Group) and officers were welcomed to the meeting by Councillor Mason.

16 Apologies (AI 1)

No apologies had been received.

17 Declaration of Members' Interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

18 Corporate Transport Efficiency Review (AI 3)

(TAKE IN REPORT BY THE HEAD OF AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT)

Jon Bell, the Head of Audit and Performance Improvement introduced the report stating that approval for the findings and recommendations of the corporate transport review were sought. He added that this work had been carried out as part of the Efficiency Review and had been reported to the Efficiency Board, chaired by Cabinet Member Hugh Mason. The new post, which did not require Cabinet Member approval, was being recruited to at present. Mr Bell added further that the savings identified in the review would increase year on year.

Following a question from Councillor Mason about how these savings would be monitored, Mr Bell stated that the savings were in the budget and that failure to make them would result in an overspend. Councillor Donna Jones suggested that a report to review progress be brought to the Cabinet Member for consideration once the Transport Manager had been in post for 6 months. Cabinet Member Hugh Mason agreed.

Councillor Donna Jones also asked about the potential for shared services. Mr Bell responded that this was an aspiration but that Portsmouth City Council needed to see these savings coming through before moving on to the next stage of sharing services.

DECISIONS: The Cabinet Member for Resources agreed that:

- 1. The council forms an Integrated Transport Unit (ITU) with responsibility for the management and operation of the city council transport and that the set up costs of £3,000 be met from savings in year 1. The term "city council transport" covers fleet, commissioned and grey fleet.**

- 2. The ITU develops the outline strategy and policy for the use of transport within Portsmouth City Council (PCC) based on these following recommendations and taking into consideration statutory requirements and other council policies including sustainability and carbon reduction management.**
- 3. The purchase of IT software to support the ITU at the cost of £45,500 plus ongoing revenue costs of £6,500 be funded from savings achieved.**
- 4. The role of Transport Manager (Band 8) be created and reside within the ITU at a cost of £10,000 in year 1 and then £35,000 per annum, funded from savings achieved from 2010/11 onwards. The role is currently being evaluated and should it be assessed higher than Band 8, the increased cost will be met from the Traffic and Transportation Portfolio cash limit. The duties to include:**
 - That all council vehicles are pooled to maximise sharing opportunities, and managed within the ITU by the Transport Manager.**
 - All vehicle purchasing and leasing arrangements to be subject to a financial appraisal and involve consultation with the Transport Manager.**
 - Rationalisation of the vehicle fleet with the elimination of spare capacity.**
 - Assess the potential income stream from employees and voluntary sector hiring PCC vehicles outside of work hours.**
 - Evaluate the feasibility of Social Care utilising bus lanes.**
 - Team leader for the ITU.**
- 5. All commissioned transport requirements be brought together and procured and managed centrally and the opportunities to generate savings from improved procurement methods noted.**
- 6. The opportunities for potential cashable savings in Special Education Needs (SEN) transport be progressed.**
- 7. The eligibility criteria for children travelling unaccompanied be reviewed.**
- 8. Stricter rules and regulations be implemented for the monitoring and authorisation of employees using their own vehicles and taxi use for work purposes (grey fleet). It is recommended that a policy for staff related travel be introduced.**

- **Guidance should be issued to managers not to authorise employees use of their own vehicles for journeys greater than 100 miles. If employees choose to use their own vehicles for journeys further than 100 miles, then the cheapest alternative should be paid.**
 - **A minimum target of a 10% reduction in travel costs for all staff should be implemented.**
9. **The financial appraisal in paragraph 4 of the report was approved.**

19 Voluntary and Community Sector Grants 2010/2011 (AI 4)

(TAKE IN REPORT BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT)

Mrs Delyth Horsely introduced the report and stated that this process had been followed successfully last year. In response to a question from Councillor Mason about whether this process would be used on an on-going basis or for this year only, Mrs Horsely stated that it would be reassessed on an annual basis. She added that organisations not invited to reapply would be signposted to other sources of funding including grass-roots grants.

Councillor Jones expressed some reservations about the process excluding third sector organisations and asked officers to consider issuing application forms to any other voluntary organisations in the city which requested them and to process their applications.

DECISION:

At his decision meeting, the Cabinet Member for Resources agreed that the council should not advertise an open-for-all grants programme for 2010-12011 but that organisations which are currently receiving grant funding should be invited to re-apply.

Councillor Mason did however ask officers to issue application forms to any other voluntary organisations in the city which requested them and to process their applications.

20 Budget Monitoring 2009/10 – Revenue Cash Limit and Capital Programme

(TAKE IN REPORT BY THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR & SECTION 151 OFFICER)

Ms Susan Page introduced the report and provided members with a summary as at the end of the first quarter and stated that the portfolio had a forecast underspend of £13,253.

There was some discussion about the Staff Club, staff restaurant, slippage of the new telephone exchange and the unusually small variance in the budget at this stage. Councillor Jones asked about funding for the Gatcombe Park wall and was reassured that the work would be completed this year.

DECISION:

That the position regarding the revenue forecast for 2009/10 and the forecast capital programme expenditure be noted.

21 Dates of future meetings

DECISION: That future Cabinet Member for Resources meetings will take place as follows:

Tuesday 1 December 2009 at 9.30am (to replace the meeting scheduled for 26 November 2009)

Thursday 28 January 2010 at 9.00am (to replace the meeting scheduled for 21 January 2010)

Thursday 25 March 2010 at 9.30am (to replace the meeting scheduled for 18 March 2010)

The meeting concluded at 9.55am.

.....
Councillor Hugh Mason
Cabinet Member for Resources