

CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES

THE RECORD OF DECISIONS taken by Councillor Hugh Mason as Cabinet Member for Resources at his special decision meeting held at 9.30 am on Friday 1 April 2011 in Conference Room J, Civic Offices, Portsmouth.

Councillor Hugh Mason welcomed group spokespersons, Councillor Donna Jones and Councillor David Horne and officers to the meeting.

16 Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

There were no apologies for absence.

17 Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of interests.

18 Exclusion of Press and Public

The Cabinet Member for Resources decided that under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the press and public be excluded for the consideration of the following item on the grounds that the report contain information defined as exempt in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972.

19 Merefield House Relocation of Service and Customer Access Improvements to Civic Offices - Capital Scheme Approval (AI 4)

The Cabinet Member for Resources explained that he had deferred his decision from the last meeting as he wanted more detail about the capital expenditure outlined in the exempt appendix. The Head of Asset Management, Tony Nicholas said that the figures in the exempt appendix were contingency estimates and that he expected the final figures to be lower but that the Merefield House relocation is a complex project that necessitates a series of different moves in order to create the space necessary for the teams being located and introduce the facilities necessary to integrate Children's Services into the Civic Offices.

As each of these moves takes place, new office standards would be introduced to reduce the space used per work station, thereby enabling the number of staff being accommodated in the Civic Offices to be increased.

The ground floor reception area of the Civic Offices requires detailed planning and improvement to provide the appropriate meeting facilities for Children's services and to enable improvements to the Customer Service arrangements currently provided.

With regard to furniture, it had been assumed that some of the furniture used at Merefield House would not survive a move and it was possible that furniture would have to be bought in order to fit the new space in the Civic Offices. Mr Nicholas explained that expenditure would take place where absolutely necessary and that he expected the project to be completed for less than the budget estimated in the appendix.

With regard to communication costs, these were in respect of a service requirement and Louise Wilders, Head of Customer, Community & Democratic Services explained that there would be costs associated with the move for example the basic literature cost of changing letter headings, the numbers of key stakeholders, information flow to schools, police etc. She went on to explain that this is also a transformational project in that it represents a change in the way PCC operates.

The Head of Asset Management explained that there would be savings due to the avoidance of the maintenance and running costs associated with occupying Merefield House and that there would be a capital receipt as a result of a disposal of the building.

The Cabinet Member for Resources asked that a formal report on progress be brought back to the Resources portfolio.

DECISION:

- (1) That the Head of Asset Management Services be authorised to proceed with the implementation of this capital scheme at an estimated cost of £616,000 funded from the capital estimate provision for this scheme contained with the approved capital programme;**
- (2) That the Head of Asset Management be authorised to proceed to invite competitive tenders for the relevant parcels of work, in order to secure best value in the completion of this scheme.**

The meeting ended at 10.00 am.

VJP/DMF
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