

CENTRAL SERVICES CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 36

Brighton & Hove City Council

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

CENTRAL SERVICES CABINET MEMBER MEETING

4.30pm, 12 OCTOBER 2009

COMMITTEE ROOM 3, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Fallon-Khan (Cabinet Member)

Also in attendance: Councillor Hamilton, Opposition Spokesperson, Labour

Other Members present: Councillor Young

PART ONE

16. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

16a Declarations of Interest

16.1 There were none.

16b Exclusion of Press and Public

16.2 In accordance with section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ('the Act'), the Cabinet Member for Central Services considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during an item of business on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press or public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as defined in section 100A(3) of the Act) or exempt information (as defined in section 100I(1) of the Act).

16.3 **RESOLVED** – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the Item 31 in Part 2 of the agenda.

17. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

17.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2009 be approved and signed by the Cabinet Member as a correct record.

18. CABINET MEMBER'S COMMUNICATIONS

18.1 There were none.

19. ITEMS RESERVED FOR DISCUSSION

19.1 All items were reserved by the Cabinet Member.

20. PETITIONS

20.1 There were none.

21. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

21.1 There were none.

22. DEPUTATIONS

22.1 There were none.

23. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

23.1 There were none.

24. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

24.1 The Cabinet Member reported that a written question from Councillors had been received.

24.2 At the Enterprise, Employment and Major Projects Cabinet Member Meeting held on 10 June 2009, Councillor Turton had asked if any of the new eco apprenticeships were behind the council's agenda and asked whether the opportunities of the Memorandum of Understanding (between the City Council and the National Apprenticeship Service) would enable the active encouragement of eco apprenticeships.

24.3 The Cabinet Member had circulated the following response:

"There are over 180 different types of Apprenticeship available and these cover a range of potential 'Eco Apprenticeships' in Amenity Horticulture, Environmental Conservation, Construction, Planning and the Built Environment and Engineering/Manufacturing. City College Brighton & Hove, the Friends Centre and two Universities are planning to arrange a meeting in response to the Commission's report exploring the potential skills requirements of the Green Sector in the city to ensure that the city's providers can meet the requirements of existing and new Green sector employers in the city and wider sub-region. This will explore some of the innovative practice already in place at colleges such as Kingston College and Carshalton College which, in February 2009, opened a Power Centre that provides training in a range of emerging industries including Solar Heating (see <http://www.kingston-college.ac.uk/news/4/70/a-powerful-alliance.html?arc=2/2009>).

The city is particularly keen to explore Level 1-3 provision with Friends looking at 'preparation for' courses. This will all feed into the BRII (Business Retention and Inward Investment Strategy) plan to ensure that we have an agreed way forward on developing and providing these emerging training opportunities that can be included in any negotiations the Economic Development Team and wider BHCC departments may have with new/existing employers in these sectors.”

- 24.4 The Cabinet Member noted that Councillor Turton had not attended the meeting to hear the response to his question and agreed that a copy of the above response be sent to Councillor Turton.

25. NOTICES OF MOTIONS

- 25.1 There were none.

26. LEGAL SERVICES FRAMEWORK

- 26.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Strategy & Governance concerning the legal services framework (for copy, see minute book).

- 26.2 The Cabinet Member reported that the purpose of the framework agreement, which included the District and Borough Councils in West and East Sussex, East and West Sussex County Councils, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Authority and the city council, was to provide external legal services at a reduced rate.

- 26.3 The Cabinet Member pointed out that the agreement, a scheme of shared services, should enable all the participating authorities to benefit from economies of scale offered by solicitors and barristers and noted that efficiencies should also be achieved from being able to select from a pre-approved list for each category of work, rather than start from scratch for each piece of work. He noted that there were no disadvantages for Brighton & Hove City Council in participating in this agreement.

- 26.4 The Opposition Spokesperson, Labour, welcomed the report.

- 26.5 **RESOLVED** – That, having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Member accepted the following recommendation:

- (1) That the Head of Law be authorised to enter into a Consortium Agreement to achieve a joint procurement framework agreement for external legal services with all or any of the Unitary, County, District, Borough and Fire and Rescue Authorities in West and East Sussex (the Consortium Authorities) to be led by Arun District Council, and take any steps necessary or incidental to implementing the framework agreement.

27. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH PROCUREMENT

- 27.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Strategy & Governance concerning the occupational health procurement process, which aimed to ensure that an effective and efficient occupational health service was provided across the council

which, in turn, would create organisational savings by reducing staff absence and also have a direct impact on the services delivered to customers (for copy see minute book).

- 27.2 The Opposition Spokesperson noted that delays in reporting from occupational health officers occurred and sought assurances that such delays would not constitute a barrier to a better service delivery.
- 27.3 The Director of Strategy & Governance noted the concerns raised. He explained that the arrangements proposed were new for Brighton & Hove specifically and he was confident that this new system would improve things further. The Director also indicated that the council's current suppliers would be allowed to tender and reported that some of them had been doing a very good job up until now.
- 27.4 **RESOLVED** – That, having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Member accepted the following recommendation:
- (1) That the award of the Occupational Health contract be delegated to officers.

28. ICT FUND 2009-2010

- 28.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Finance & Resources, which set out proposals for the use of the 2009/10 ICT fund and detailed how the expenditure would help support the council's business objectives (for copy see minute book).
- 28.2 The Opposition Spokesperson noted that the Audit Committee had previously raised concerns about the ICT spending. He sought assurance that the proposals and investments set out in the report would be kept under control.
- 28.3 The Cabinet Member noted the concerns raised and reassured the Opposition Spokesperson that officers would do all that was possible to maintain the level of expenditure detailed in the report.
- 28.4 **RESOLVED** - That, having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Member accepted the following recommendation:
- (1) That the allocation of the ICT Fund as set out in the report be agreed.

29. COMMERCIAL PORTFOLIO ESTATE MANAGEMENT CONSULTANCY (1 APRIL 2005 - 31 MARCH 2012)

- 29.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Finance & Resources, concerning the commercial portfolio estate management consultancy, from the period 1 April 2005 - 31 March 2012 (for copy see minutes book).
- 29.2 The Assistant Director, Property and Design, highlighted the fact that the original report that was considered at the Policy & Resources Committee in December 2004 omitted to include a provision for delegating to the authorised officer (Director of Finance & Resources) authority to extend these contracts on behalf of the council. She explained that the current report sought to rectify that omission in order to enable the Director of

Finance & Resources to extend these contracts for the two year extensions allowed under each contract.

- 29.3 The Assistant Director reported that the existing portfolio agents, Cluttons and Smiths Gore who had previously won the contracts, had since been working well with the council. She noted that it was the council's intention to extend those contracts, subject to the approval of this Cabinet Member meeting, in order to ensure continuity of service.
- 29.4 **RESOLVED** – That, having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Member accepted the following recommendation:
- (1) That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Finance & Resources to extend the council's existing contracts for commercial portfolio estate management consultancy by two years.

30. PROPERTY DISPOSALS - UPDATE

- 30.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Finance & Resources which gave an annual update on property disposals within the non-operational (investment) and operational portfolios, which incorporated a review of disposals undertaken over the past year (for copy see minute book).
- 30.2 The Assistant Director, Property & Design, noted that despite the economic situation, good progress and outcomes had been achieved. She pointed out, however, that officers recognised the need to continue to prepare and to place the council in a good position so that when the market improved, the council would be ready to compete.
- 30.3 **RESOLVED** - That, having considered the information and the reasons set out in the report, the Cabinet Member accepted the following recommendation:
- (1) That the contents of the report, the implications the implications of the current property climate and the progress achieved on disposals over 2008 – 09, together with impending transactions, be noted.

31. PROPERTY DISPOSALS - UPDATE [EXEMPT CATEGORIES 1 AND 3]

- 31.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Finance & Resources which gave an annual update on property disposals within the non-operational (investment) and operational portfolios, which was complemented by further information contained in Appendix A to the report (circulated to Members only).
- 31.2 The Cabinet Member and the Opposition Spokesperson noted the update on the disposal transactions that had taken place in 2008/09, and currently into 2009/10, and those which were still ongoing.

31.3 RESOLVED –

- (1) That the recommendations detailed in Item 30 in Part 1 of the Agenda be adopted.
- (2) That Item 31 remains exempt from disclosure to the press and public.

The meeting concluded at 4.40pm

Signed

Cabinet Member

Dated this day of