

MINUTES OF THE FORWARD PLAN SELECT COMMITTEE
Tuesday, 27th January 2004 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillor R Blackman (Chair), Councillor Dromey (Vice-Chair) and Councillor Taylor.

Also present was Councillor Coughlin.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Davies.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were none at this meeting.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting – 6th January 2004

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th January 2004 be received and approved as an accurate record subject to an amendment on page 9, Item 8, Youth and Community Review, which should read as:

“In response to questions, Philip Churton (Head of Estate Management) advised the Select Committee that repayments to cover the debt owed by the group in occupation at the Learie Constantine Centre were due to commence on 31st January 2004 and that defaulting would not be condoned.”

3. Matters Arising

There were none.

4. Deputations

There were none.

5. Call-in of Executive Decisions

There were none at this meeting.

6. The Executive List of Decisions – 7th January 2004

At its meeting on 6th January 2004, the Forward Plan Select Committee considered three items that had been called-in following the meeting of

the Executive on 8th December 2003. The Select Committee's recommendations on Dollis Hill House, Conservation Area Review and Award of Contract for Supply of Standard and Kosher Frozen Meals were reported back to the Executive on 7th January 2004.

RESOLVED:-

that the Executive's decisions from its meeting on 7th January 2004 be noted.

7. Information Update – Review of Transport Grant to Voluntary Organisations

At its meeting on 26th November 2003, the Select Committee requested an update regarding the Review of Transport Grant to Voluntary Organisations. Mike Bibby (Strategy Planning and Performance Manager) provided a verbal update for the Select Committee and explained that a report would be presented to the Executive in March 2004. It was noted that six organisations had not responded to a request for clarification as to whether further funding was necessary and had since been contacted again. Four of the organisations had since responded to further correspondence. Regarding the remaining two organisations that had failed to respond, Mike Bibby confirmed that the BADP did not want to apply for a grant and all attempts to contact the North Kensington Stroke Club had been unsuccessful. It was noted that the NKSC had not attempted to draw a grant for 2 years.

Members noted that a list detailing each of the organisations and outlining alternative funding options and cost assessments would go to the Executive in March 2004. Members would be asked to approve the funding criteria and also approve the allocation of grants for each of the organisations against these criteria.

In response to questions about the necessity of information about service users, Mike Bibby explained that the majority of organisations had readily provided this information following assurances from the Department about confidentiality and data protection. Regarding the need to ensure service usage by Brent residents, Mr Bibby explained that enough information had been provided to ensure that Brent residents were using the organisations' services. In response to a question about the differences in grant payments to each of the organisations, Mr Bibby explained that the allocation of grants was largely historical and not subject to the review that had been undertaken.

RESOLVED:-

that the update be noted.

8. **IT Facilities for Members 2003**

The Executive considered this report at its meeting on 7th January 2004. Following its meeting on 6th January 2004 where there was some discussion about this item; the Forward Plan Select Committee had requested the opportunity to consider the report further. Dane Wright (Strategy and Service Development Manager, IT) and the Lead Member for Corporate Resources updated the Select Committee about the current situation regarding IT facilities for Members, including the decision by the Executive to pay all ADSL broadband costs that would be incurred by Members involved in the scheme. The Select Committee noted that there would be a three month roll out from April 2004, not two years as previously agreed, and that £50,000 would be allocated to provide for a consultant who would facilitate implementation of the scheme. In order to encourage Member participation in the scheme different IT hardware was being considered and more VPM networks in other Council buildings were being assessed.

Councillor Coughlin commented on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (ODPM's) priorities for the Government's E-agenda and confirmed that this would make e-government more prescriptive and would identify ways in which to enhance the provision and usage of IT facilities by Members. Dane Wright explained that now that the pilot scheme was concluding the focus was on identifying a suitable programme to take forward in 2003/2004.

Some Members enquired about the personal cost implications of the programme and were advised that there would be no financial burden to Members. Regarding the issue of IT training, the Chair suggested that Members' who were IT literate or were enrolled the ECDL training course should be considered as priorities for the programme. Members noted that whilst some form of IT training would be beneficial for the majority of Members and would ensure that the IT facilities were not wasted; this could slow down implementation of the programme. Members were advised that the ECDL course was modular and therefore Members with varying degrees of competency could undertake training that would meet their particular needs.

In response to questions about the use of Outlook Express and Lotus Notes by Members on the portable IT facilities, Dane Wright confirmed that he was not aware of any technical reason why Members could not use Outlook Express rather than the in-house database. He confirmed that he would clarify this matter following the meeting. Dane Wright

then went on to clarify compatibility in supporting already installed broadband facilities, the cost and administrative implications of this and that connection would be per household.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the contents of the report be noted;
- (ii) that the Select Committee acknowledges that this proposal be given high priority consideration for funding in 2004/5 and in future years as part of the Council's E-Government programme;
- (iii) that the Select Committee notes the points raised by both the lead officer and the Lead Member for Corporate Resources;
- (iv) that the Forward Plan Select Committee take ownership of this matter and feedback to the Lead Member at a later date before a review off the IT Facilities for Members Programme is taken back to the Executive; and
- (v) that Dane Wright provide Members of the Select Committee with clarification about whether Outlook Express could be used on the laptop facilities or whether Members would be restricted to using Lotus Notes.

9. **Briefing Notes requested by the Select Committee arising from consideration of the Forward Plan (*Issue 14 – 2003/04*)**

- ***Stonebridge School Accommodation***

RESOLVED:-

that the contents of the briefing note on Stonebridge School Accommodation be noted.

- ***John Billam***

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that clarification be provided to the Select Committee regarding whether the lease has been signed; and
- (ii) that this item be brought back to a future meeting of the Select Committee for a further update at which time the lead officer be requested to attend the meeting and respond to Members' questioning.

- ***Street Trees – Proposed Removal and Replacement***

RESOLVED:-

that the contents of the briefing note be noted.

10. **Briefing Notes requested by the Select Committee arising from consideration of the Forward Plan (*Issue 14 – 2003/04*)**

- ***Willesden Sports Centre PFI – Final Business Case***

Members of the Select Committee commented on the lack of information in the briefing note and sought clarification about the key issues in the business case and the potential decision that would be taken by the Executive. The Legal Advisor to the Select Committee confirmed that the business case had not yet been formulated as this depended on the outcome of current negotiations.

RESOLVED:-

that a more in-depth briefing note be presented to the Select Committee at its meeting in February 2004 outlining the key issues that are currently being negotiated regarding the PFI and the implications of these negotiations for the business plan and the decision that will be taken by the Executive.

- ***Future Direction of Bridge Park***

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the contents of the briefing note be noted; and
- (ii) that a more detailed briefing note and/or report be presented to the Forward Plan Select Committee at its meeting in March 2004 to enable consideration of the decision that will be taken by the Executive.

11. **The Forward Plan (*Issue 18 2003 – 2004*)**

Issue 19 of the Forward Plan (9th February 2003 to 5th June 2004) was circulated to Members at the meeting following publication of the latest version on 26.01.04. Members of the Select Committee then highlighted a number of issues where further information was requested.

RESOLVED:-

that information on the following items be provided at future meetings of the Forward Plan Select Committee:-

(i) **Voluntary Sector Grants Criteria**

Members requested a briefing note on this item at the next meeting to update them about the decision that was due to be taken by Executive on 8th March 2004. The lead officer and Lead Member would be invited to attend the meeting.

(ii) **Green Paper**

Members asked for greater clarity on the Forward Plan regarding the nature and content of the Green Paper.

(iii) **Mapesbury Dell Door Step Green**

The Select Committee asked for greater clarity on the Forward Plan regarding this item and enquired as to whether consultation had been undertaken with the relevant ward councillors.

(iv) **Capital Spend on Carriageways and Footways**

Request for a briefing note on this item at the next meeting and for the relevant lead officer to be invited to respond to Members' questioning.

(v) **Wembley stadium Station Bridge / Link**

Request for a briefing note at the February meeting of the Select Committee. The Chair will confirm whether the lead officer is to be requested to attend the meeting following consideration of the briefing note before circulation.

(vi) **Estate Access Corridor – Bridge over Chiltern Line**

Request for a briefing note at the February meeting of the Select Committee. The Chair will confirm whether the lead officer is to be requested to attend the meeting following consideration of the briefing note before circulation.

(vii) **Stadium Access Corridor – Private Means of Access**

The Select Committee acknowledged that this item might be considered at the next meeting of the Highways Committee on 10th February 2004 but requested an update to the next meeting of the Select Committee on the key issues. Members also

sought clarification about the consultation that had been undertaken.

(viii) **South Kilburn Master Plan**

Members sought clarification about the date on which this item would be presented to the Executive for consideration and requested that at the relevant future meeting of the Forward Plan Select Committee, an update be provided on the current situation and the anticipated decision to be taken by the Executive. Members stressed that they did not need to see the final report but wanted the opportunity to consider the key issues and an outline of all the proposed major changes.

(ix) **Meals award of Asian and Caribbean Frozen Meals**

Having considered a briefing note on this item at its meeting on 6th January 2004, the Select Committee requested further clarification about the tender process and an explanation as to why only one organisation had completed the process but had been deemed not to be viable. Members also enquired about what was proactively being done to seek other offers. Consequently, the Select Committee requested a further update/briefing note on the issues raised for presentation at the February 2004 meeting.

12. **Items considered by the Executive that were not included in the Forward Plan**

There were none at this meeting.

13. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Forward Plan Select Committee is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 25th February 2004.

14. **Any Other Urgent Business**

There was none at this meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.55pm

R BLACKMAN
Chair

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