

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE
Monday, 24th May 2004 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Coughlin (Vice-Chair), and Councillors Beswick, Fox, Jones, D Long, Lyon, R S Patel and Thomas¹.

1. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

None declared.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 26th April be approved as an accurate record.

3. Race Equality Scheme

This report introduced the draft of Brent Council's Race Equality Scheme for 2004 to 2006. The Director of Human Resources' representative outlined the consultation process that had been undertaken in preparation of the scheme which had been extensive. The scheme would run for two years in line with the Corporate Strategy and it was hoped that the Authority would achieve Level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government by April 2006. The Action Plan had been integrated into the scheme and a summary of the plan would be circulated to staff in July with the full report widely circulated.

Members welcomed the report and paid tribute to the Diversity Team for the report and the extensive consultation, noting that the scheme had the full support from stakeholders.

RESOLVED:

that approval in principle be given to the draft document in the Appendix to the report from the Director of Human Resources and that delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive to finalise the scheme for publication as Brent's Race Equality Scheme for 2004 to 2006.

4. Treasury Management: Annual Investment Strategy 2004/5

This report detailed the proposed Annual Investment Strategy for 2004/05. The Director of Finance reminded that it was for Full Council to approve the strategy and for the Executive to monitor adherence and delivery. The strategy was based on prudent investment and minimisation of risk and improved investment opportunities would sought to minimise borrowing risks.

¹ As amended at 14th June meeting

RESOLVED:

that the Annual Investment Strategy for 2004/05 recommended to Full Council for consideration.

5. Pension Arrangements for Transferred Staff

This report addressed Brent Council's responsibilities for pension provision for former Council staff under the Two Tier Workforce Code issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). The report had also been considered by the General Purposes Committee on 27th April 2004.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Council's policy concerning bulk transfer agreements be as set out in paragraph 3.8 below, and that the Director of Finance be authorised to decide whether in any particular case there are exceptional circumstances justifying the Council departing from the normal approach to bulk transfer agreements set out in the ODPM's Code;
- (ii) that the Director of Finance be authorised to decide in any particular case whether a payment should be made from the Council's general funds to secure a bulk transfer where a contract is being retendered, seeking member approval where the cost is more than £100,000;
- (iii) that the Council's policy concerning the securing of a pension scheme for former Council staff transferring to a private or voluntary sector employer be as set out in paragraph 3.7 below and be reviewed if and when directions are issued by the Government under sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 2003;
- (iv) that the Director of Finance be authorised to decide whether in any particular case there are exceptional circumstances justifying the Council not requiring an alternative pension scheme to the LGPS being offered by a contractor to be broadly comparable to the LGPS;
- (iv) that the Council's approach to protecting the pension position of former Council staff transferring to other public bodies operating non-local government pension schemes be the same as the approach adopted by the Council in the case of staff transferring to private or voluntary sector contractors;
- (v) that it be noted that the General Purposes Committee at its meeting of 27th April 2004 agreed recommendations (i)-(v) in so far as they relate to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

6. Social Services Capital Programme 2004-04, 2005-06 and 2006-07 – Scheme Approval

This report sought approval for Schemes to be funded from the 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-7 Capital Budget. Councillor Fox (Lead Member) welcomed the much needed additional funding.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the 2004-05 and outline 2005-06 and 2006-7 schemes included in the Social Services Capital Programme (Appendix 1) be agreed;
- (ii) that it be noted that the Draft Programme contains contingency sums which will be held against requirements likely to arise later in the year, a further report to be submitted to approval this expenditure.

7. Lifelong Learning and Cultural Services Fees and Charges Schedules 2004/5

This report set out proposals for changes to the Fees and Charges Schedules of services in the Lifelong Learning and Cultural Services Division of Education, Arts and Libraries. The Lead Member, Councillor Lyon, advised that the new fees were still below average, with the exception of archive charges.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that approval be given to BACES' fees and charges for the academic year 2004/5, as set out in Appendix A;
- (ii) that approval be given to Heritage Services' fees and charges for 2004/5, as set out in Appendices B and C;
- (iii) that Library Service fees and charges be reviewed following the outcomes of the Fees and Charges Best Value Review and any changes implemented in tandem with revised opening hours later in the year;
- (iv) that approval be given to the charges for the Gordon Brown Outdoor Education Centre for the academic year 2004/5, as set out in Appendix D;
- (v) that that the fees and charges for the Welsh Harp Environmental Education Centre be reviewed by the Head of Centre and presented for approval, with a view to implementation following the improvements to be put in place at the centre with the expected grant from the New Opportunities Fund.

8. Capital Investment 2004/5: Allocation of Education, Arts and Libraries Capital Funding

This report advised the Executive of the capital funding allocated by Full Council to EAL for 2004/05, seeks agreement that monies from 2003/04 which are unallocated to schemes be utilised in 2004/05 and asked the Executive to agree the priority schemes for 2004/05. The report also updated Members on the submission made to the DfES by the Director of Education, Arts and Libraries for resources under the Government's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme.

Councillor Lyon pointed out that for the first time, the programme had a multi year approach, up to 2006/7 and expressed a wish that the Schools Partnering Scheme (a new source of capital funding) proceed as soon as possible. He welcomed the report and paid tribute to the work of staff, in particular those from Education, Arts and Libraries.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that agreement in principle be given, subject to the final out-turn of the 2003/04 Capital Budget, to allocate the resources from 2003/04 hitherto unallocated to schemes in 2003/04 (estimated at £2,718,000) to schemes commencing in 2004/05 supported by new funding streams ("New Start schemes");
- (ii) that it be noted that the available resource for New Start Schemes in 2004/05 is £8,330,574 which is comprised of £5,612,574 (see calculation in financial implications) from the Full Council allocation for 2004/05 and £2,718,000 carried forward from 2003/04 (subject to members agreeing recommendation 2.1);
- (iii) that it be noted that the figure of £5,612,574 referred to in recommendation 2.2 above excludes the sum of £2,000,000 which officers are seeking to source from the development of a new capital scheme for schools ("School Partnering Scheme"). A further report will be submitted to the Executive on the allocation of these resources, subject to further advice from the Borough Solicitor;
- (iv) that approval be given to £8,330,574 being allocated for New Start Schemes in schools in accordance with the priority schemes detailed in Appendix 1 and the revised hut removal priorities in Appendix 2 to this Report;
- (v) that members note the levels of funding currently made available for schools based schemes (excluding the School Partnering Scheme) in future years as part of the Forecast Capital Programme 2004/05 & Future Years, approved by Full Council on 1 March 2004, of: £3,301,000 for 2005/06, £3,300,000 for 2006/2007 and £1,989,000 for 2007/08.
- (vi) that should appropriate additional resources be identified, for example through Reviews of the Capital Budget or as a result of bidding for additional external capital funding, they be re-allocated, as

per the prioritised list of schemes set out in Appendix 1 which could not be funded from existing resources;

- (vii) that progress on the LEA's submission for resources under the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) be noted as described in paragraphs 7.19 to 7.21, and the action taken so far aimed at enhancing the site at John Kelly (Boys and Girls) Schools endorsed so that it may be better fit for the 21st Century and the proposed action in respect of contributions by schools as detailed in paragraph 7.23 be noted.

9. Any Other Urgent Business

None

10. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED:-

that the press and public be now excluded from the meeting as the following item contains exempt information as specified in Schedule 1 of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, namely:-

Any terms proposed, or to be proposed, by or to the Authority in the course of negotiations for a contract or for the acquisition or disposal or property or supply of goods or services.

11. Brent Transport Service East Lane Business Park – lease renewal

This report sought the Executive's consent to the renewal of the Council's lease of the above property on the terms detailed in this report.

RESOLVED:-

that approval be given to extend the Council's lease of the offices and workshop in the East Lane Business Park for a term of years from 2nd December 2003 to 28th September 2008 from expiry of the lease on the main terms set out in the Detail of this report and such other terms which the Manager of Corporate Property Services consider to be in the best interest of the Council.

The meeting ended at 7.15 pm

D COUGHLIN
Vice-Chair in the Chair
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