



# Finance Working Party

Minutes of a meeting held on Thursday 21 September 2011 at 7.30 pm, Members' Room, East Northamptonshire House, Thrapston

## Present:

Councillors: Steven North (Chairman)

Roger Glithero  
Glenvil Greenwood Smith

Philip Hardcastle  
Richard Lewis

Officers: David Oliver (DO)  
Keith Osborne (KO) minutes

Rosanne Fleming (RF)

## Action

### 1.0 MINUTES

1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2011 were received and approved.

### 2.0 APOLOGIES

2.1 Councillor David Brackenbury sent his apologies.

### 3.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations.

### 4.0 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

4.1 The Working Party received the revenue budget monitoring report comparing the actual spend on revenue items from 1 April to 30 June 2011, with the approved budget for 2011/12.

4.2 The Finance Manager reported that on the total budget had been revised to £10,720,430, an increase of £170,550. The following supplementary estimates had been approved during the year:-

- |                                 |         |
|---------------------------------|---------|
| • Extension on housing contract | £43,350 |
| • Rolled forward from 2010/11   | £97,200 |
| • Public conveniences extension | £25,000 |
| • Northants Waste Partnership   | £5,000. |

4.3 RF advised Members of the main variations which were under and over budget. Members and officers continued to identify savings through monthly budget monitoring and as a result of the challenge through quarterly performance clinics.

4.4 Councillor North asked for an explanation on the high expenditure at this stage on Parking Services and it was **agreed** that further details would be circulated

**RF**

to the Working Party.

- 4.5 Members noted the variations reported and that no further action was required at this stage of the financial year.

## **5.0 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING**

- 5.1 Members considered the capital budget monitoring report comparing the actual spend on capital items from 1 April to 30 June 2011, against the approved capital budget for 2011/12.

- 5.2 The Finance Manager reported that the capital budget for 2011/12 now stood at £3,250,240 compared with £3,721,240 in the approved budget. This was due to a saving on the SAN server (£31,000) and a rescheduling of the Nene Centre roof repair (£440,000). One further potential saving had been identified in relation to Stanwick Lakes; £50,000 of expenditure to support new parking arrangements had been agreed, against an original capital allocation of £81,500.

- 5.3 The current capital position was noted. Members asked that future monitoring reports should omit details of capital allocations for years beyond 5 years. i.e. remove the 'future years' column

RF

## **6.0 REVIEW OF ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN**

- 6.1 The Finance Manager submitted a report asking Members to review the council's asset base of land and buildings. A list of assets, including initial assessment of potential use, and the "book value" of assets at 1 April 2009, was tabled, with suggestions regarding any action to be taken.

- 6.2 The Working Party highlighted nine areas where it felt that action should be taken other than that suggested in the report, or valuations should be obtained. These were noted by the officers and further reports would be submitted to the working party.

- 6.3 It was **agreed** that a tour of assets - to be specified by members of the working party – be undertaken.

RF

## **7.0 THRAPSTON PARKING OPTIONS**

- 7.1 The Working Party considered a report from the Executive Director informing it of the result of the latest discussions with Thrapston Town Council relating to additional parking provision, and seeking views on the possible use of the Manor Close site, and at Cosy Nook, either as a short term or longer term car park and whether the council should enter into a lease with the Town Council.

- 7.2 Members were aware of the need for additional public parking in the town, and in particular, specific provision of parking for disabled people. Details of the two sites, with rough cost estimates, plus professional fees and planning application costs, were as follows:-

- Cosy Nook – owned by this council - could provide 28 spaces (£65,000)
- Manor Close – owned by the County Council, with planning permission for housing – could provide 70 spaces (£75,000).

**Action**

- 7.3 Either site could be leased to the Town Council for parking purposes in the short-medium term whilst longer-term proposals for both sites were developed. A comparison of the merits and issues of both sites was submitted to the working party.
- 7.4 Members were mindful of the proposed supermarket developments for the town and felt that the council should keep its options open in relation to the longer term. It was noted that an approach had been made to the council to purchase the land at Cosy Nook.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:**

- (1) That the council pursues the purchase of the site of Manor Close for short term parking. **RF**
- (2) That the site at Cosy Nook be retained by the council and its future use be considered in the light of the outcome of planning proposals for the town. ... **RF**

**Chairman**