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**COUNCIL MEETING**

**24 November 2005 – 7.00 pm**

**PRESENT:**

The Mayor, Councillor Jermany (in the Chair); Councillors Ames, Barker, Blyth, Castle, Coleman, Collins, Cook, Cunniffe, Easter, Giles, Hacon, Hodds, Howard, Jeal, Lawley, Linden, Page, Peck, Plant, Robinson, Shrimplin, Smith, Tate, Taylor, D Thompson, Wainwright, B Walker, Weymouth and Williamson.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Burroughs.

Mr R Packham (Chief Executive Officer), Mr B Sharma (Corporate Director – Resources), Mr C Skinner (Head of Member and Legal Services) and Mr R Hodds (Member Services Manager).

**1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- (a) Councillor Williamson declared an interest in his capacity as a member of the Primary Care Trust.

**2. MINUTES**

The minutes of 27 October 2005 were confirmed.

Arising from the above minutes, Councillor Easter sought clarification as to when the Market Executive Advisory Group's report in respect of their review into the Six and Two Day Market would be circulated to the market traders. The Corporate Director (Resources) confirmed that this report would be made available to the market traders within the next seven days.

**3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Members were advised that no questions had been raised by a member of the public.

**4. REPORTS TO COUNCIL FOR DECISION**

- (a) **2005/06 Original Budget – Amendment – Supplementary Budget**

Members considered the report of the Group Accountant (Monitoring) which identified the requirement for a supplementary estimate to allocate the funding received from the

Department for Work and Pensions in respect of the new Housing Benefit software, additional direct revenue costs and associated implementation costs.

Proposer: Councillor Smith

Seconder: Councillor Coleman

That approval be given to supplementary budgets for 2005/06 as follows:-

- Additional capital programme expenditure - £35,900
- Revenue expenditure - £502,883
- DWP income – (£494,742)

CARRIED

**(b) Norfolk District Councils Concessionary Bus Travel Scheme**

Council considered the report of the Group Accountant (Monitoring) on the Norfolk District Councils Concessionary Bus Travel Scheme. Members were advised that as from the 1 April 2006 the Government was introducing free travel for older persons (over 60) and people meeting the disability eligibility criteria as defined in the Transport Act 2000.

The Leader reported that, with regard to the free travel scheme, this particular issue had been the subject of discussion by Norfolk District Councils at a meeting held on 23 November 2005. He advised Council that further discussion on this issue would be held with the relevant bus operators.

Proposer: Councillor Coleman

Seconder: Councillor Smith

(i) That the Council meets its obligations as a Travel Concession Authority (TCA) under the Transport Acts 1985 and 2000 by providing free travel as a joint participant in the county-wide Norfolk District Councils Concessionary Bus Travel Scheme with effect from the 1 April 2006, subject to adequate Government funding, and subject to the outcome of further discussions being held with the bus operators as discussed at the meeting of District Councils in Norfolk on 23 November 2005.

(ii) That, subject to adequate funding, the purchase of a database management system be undertaken, with the costs likely to be available from the additional funding for concessionary fares being provided by the Government.

(iii) That the recommendation to extend the principle of the scheme on the grounds of equality to provide an alternative of either travel vouchers or transport tokens on a trial involving 100 people be reconsidered in 12 months time.

CARRIED

**(c) Setting up of an Audit and Risk Committee**

Council considered the report of the Corporate Director (Resources) seeking approval for the setting up of an Audit and Risk Committee. Members were advised that the need for such a Committee had been identified both by the work required to provide the Annual Statement of Internal Control and by the CPA Self-Assessment that had recently been completed.

Proposer: Councillor Smith

Seconder: Councillor Collins

That approval be given to the establishment of an Audit and Risk Committee with the Terms of Reference as outlined in the Corporate Director(Resources)'s report and that the Committee comprise Councillors Collins, Easter, Giles, Hodds (Chairman), Plant and Williamson (substitute C Walker), and that the Cabinet Member (Resources) attend all meetings as an observer only.

CARRIED

## **5. MINUTES OF MEETINGS**

Council received, for information, the following minutes:-

- (a) **Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Policy Development Committee, Standards Committee, Regulatory Committees, The Executive and Council**
  - (i) Development Control Committee of 27 October 2005
  - (ii) Council of 27 October 2005
  - (iii) Policy Development Committee of 7 November 2005
  - (iv) Standards Committee of 11 November 2005
  - (v) Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 14 November 2005
  - (vi) The Executive of 16 November 2005
  - (vii) Development Control Committee of 17 November 2005
  - (viii) Licensing Committee of 21 November 2005

During discussion of the above minutes the following issues were discussed:-

- **Consideration of Call-In – Appointment of Consultants/Waiving of Standing Orders – ENV17**

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee referred to the Scrutiny Committee's discussions in respect of the call-in on consultation ENV17 relating to the needs-based survey. He commented on the delay with regard to the production of the report on this issue.

The Cabinet Member (Environmental Services) was asked to comment on the following questions:-

- Why was this issue not dealt with in a speedy fashion?
- Has there been a lack of strategic thinking on this issue in view of the fact that there have been two committees looking at this, namely the Marina Centre Liaison Committee and the Marina Executive Advisory Group?
- Did the Executive receive advice that this should be dealt with quickly by the Officers?
- Why has the Executive Advisory Group had their powers taken away by the Executive?

- When is the Leader going to give a report on the TUPE arrangements for employees?
- Why has there never been a contingency plan on this issue and is there something going on in the background?
- What happens if there is no settlement in respect of the Leisure Connection issue before 1 April 2006?

The Cabinet Member (Environmental Services) and the Leader responded to the above questions by stating that the delay on this issue was because of the uncertainty with regard to the Marina situation in respect of the discussions with Leisure Connection. It was also felt that the two committees considering the Marina Centre were complementary to each other and were not in conflict. The Cabinet Member (Environmental Services) stated that the Executive did not receive advice from Officers stating that the matter should be dealt with quickly and that this issue would be resolved in the near future. It was not felt that the Executive Advisory Group's powers had been taken away by Council, and the Leader confirmed that he would be reporting on all relevant matters (including TUPE issues if relevant) by mid-December. The Leader also confirmed that there had been no decisions taken with regard to the future of the Marina Centre and that all options/alternatives would be openly discussed as and when appropriate.

- **Review of Member Services**

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee commented that he did not feel that the review of the service was premature at this stage and he referred to the sections of the Local Government Act relating to Overview and Scrutiny Committee that he felt would be useful for all Members of Council to receive.

- **Investigation into the possible provision of Beach Chalets**

The Shadow Leader commented on the investigation by the Policy Development Committee into the possible provision of beach chalets and made the following points:-

- (a) Consultations with local hut manufacturers had not taken place
- (b) An exaggerated view had been taken of issues relating to vandalism and lawlessness
- (c) There had been a misrepresentation of planning policy TR21.

In response, the Chairman of the Policy Development Committee stated that any consultations with hut manufacturers would have been undertaken later in the process should this matter have been pursued by the Committee. He also disagreed with the comments in respect of vandalism and lawlessness and that with regard to policy TR21 the Committee had taken the Officer's advice in respect of this policy statement.

- **Hackney Carriage Drivers – Car Horns**

Councillor Jeal stated that at the meeting of the Licensing Committee on the 21 November, he had asked for that Committee to consider issues relating to taxi drivers sounding their car horns after 8.00 pm at night.

Council agreed that the Licensing Committee should consider this issue at their next meeting.



**9. GROUP MEETINGS – JANUARY 2006**

Members were reminded that Group Meetings were scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 11 January 2006 but that this date now coincided with a Member presentation on the Urban Regeneration Company it was agreed that the Group Meetings would be amended as follows:-

Conservative Group – Tuesday, 10 January 2006 at 6.30 pm

Labour Group – Wednesday, 4 January 2006 at 6.30 pm

**10 CLOSURE OF MEETING**

The meeting ended at 8.05 pm.