

ACTION NOTES FROM STAR CHAMBER HELD ON 26 NOVEMBER 2008

PRESENT: Councillors S Charles (Chair), J Barry, E Blamire, A Bryning, S Burns, J Fletcher, J Gilbert, D Kerr
M Cullinan, P Loker, H McManus, R Muckle, J Barlow (notes)

1 APOLOGIES

Councillors R Mace and E Archer. Nadine Muschamp, Head of Financial Services.

2 LAST MEETING NOTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The action notes from previous meetings were accepted.

The following briefing notes requested at earlier meetings were available at the meeting:

- Plastic Waste Collection – Review of Rounds
- Cost of Bulky Waste Collection – Other Authorities
- Proposal to Mothball Toilets
- Progress report on use of Laptops at Meetings

3 MTFS UPDATE

The Corporate Director (Finance and Performance) reported verbally there was no change however awaited confirmation of concessionary travel funding was likely to have a detrimental impact on the draft budget.

4 SAVINGS AND GROWTH – LATEST SUMMARY

Members considered the current summaries and requested these be further broken down, i.e. showing summary of accepted, provisionally accepted, provisionally rejected, and rejected savings, and similarly for growth, and that these be distributed as soon as possible.

Star Chamber considered both new and outstanding savings and growth proposals as follows.

SAVINGS PROPOSALS

- (a) *Democratic Services – reduction in printing and stationery costs as a result of increased electronic provision of agenda, minutes and other documentation.*

It was agreed to include this on the proposed list of savings.

- (b) *Democratic Services – Discontinuation of distribution service to Members*

Further information requested to include impact on the Member support services, a comparison of cost of using postal services, and further work on costings of the proposal.

- (c) *Democratic Services – Beadle Services*

It was agreed to include this on the proposed list of savings.

- (d) *Cultural Services – Closure of One or More Community Swimming Pools*

Further information would be brought back to Star Chamber to include alternative pool options, consequent savings from support services if closed, figures for usage of the pools, and capacity for extra usage at Salt Ayre. It was agreed to include this on the list of provisional savings.

- (e) *Cultural Services – Closure of The Dome*

It was agreed to accept this as a proposed saving and that it be brought to the next Cabinet meeting as an item of urgent business.

- (f) *Cultural Services – Review of Museums Partnership*

The Partnership agreement was currently being scrutinised for savings and efficiencies and would be reported to Star Chamber in January 2009.

- (g) *Cultural Services – Summer Playschemes*

The Corporate Director (Regeneration) had tasked the Head of Cultural Services to investigate sponsorship of Playschemes by major local businesses as part of their community responsibilities. It was agreed however not to accept this as a proposed savings.

- (h) *Cultural Services – Withdraw from Participation in the International Youth Games*

It was agreed to include this option on the proposed list and to report into the next Cabinet meeting as an urgent business item.

- (i) *Cultural Services – Withdrawal Festivals Innovation Fund (FIF)*

It was agreed to add this to the list of proposed savings pending consideration of a report to Cabinet.

(j) *Cultural Services – Closure of The Platform*

It was agreed not to accept this for inclusion on the list of proposed savings.

(k) *Economic Development – Marketing*

(l) *Economic Development – Tourism Marketing*

(m) *Economic Development – Tourism – Removal of exhibitions and photography budgets*

The Corporate Director (Regeneration) was undergoing a corporate review of marketing to deliver efficiencies and savings across all service areas. It was agreed not to include these particular savings proposals because they would be included in the corporate review.

(n) *Economic Development – Tourism policy – BRADA*

(o) *Economic Development – Tourism policy – Lancs & Blackpool Tourist Board*

Information on the corporate costs of attendance at conferences was requested and would be reported back to a future meeting.

It was agreed not to accept these two savings proposal.

(p) *Economic Development – Tourist Information Centres*

It was agreed not to accept this saving proposal.

GROWTH PROPOSALS

Democratic / Property Services – Modernisation of meeting facilities

There was no support for this proposal, unless it could be incorporated into the overarching Access To Services Review as an efficiency.

Members were reminded by the Corporate Director (Finance and Performance) that until Members confirmed their corporate priorities, the Access To Services review was currently on hold until officers knew whether budgets were to be allocated.

Star Chamber requested a further report on the latest position with the ATS Review.

(q) *Council Housing x 6 Growth Proposals*

The Corporate Director (Community Services) explained that all these proposals would be funded from the Housing Revenue Account and would have no impact on the General Fund. Each would be considered in the January report to Cabinet on the Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme.

(r) *Economic Development – Rent Grant*

Further information was required on what other options could be offered to assist local businesses and information regarding previous take-up success. It was agreed to defer a decision on this proposal pending further information.

5 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11.00 am Wednesday 3 December, Committee B, Lancaster Town Hall.

RCM/JEB/26 November 2008