

SPECIAL COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 28th OCTOBER, 2002

PRESENT:- Councillor Kevin Small in the Chair; Councillors Mike Bawden, David Cox, Ian Dobie and Mike Every.

Councillor David Glaholm attended the meeting in respect of Minute 44.

Chair -
Councillor KEVIN SMALL

Vice-Chair –
Councillor DAVID COX

MINUTES FOR REPORT

39. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting.

40. Confirmation of Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 18th October, 2002, be confirmed and signed.

41. Section 100B(4)(b), Local Government Act 1972

In accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chair determined that an additional item concerning “Mechanics Institution – Funding of Urgent Works” be considered as a matter of urgency to enable the Council to be aware of issues raised by English Heritage at the Mechanics Institute Task Group concerning the funding of urgent works to the property.

42. Section 100A(4), Local Government Act 1972

That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in Item 6 of the Notice of the Meeting on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act. (Minute 46 refers.)

43. Public Question Time

No questions were asked in accordance with Standing Order 28.

44. Fair Share Funding Application – Transforming Your Space

The Director of Environmental Services and the Head of Lifelong Learning submitted a joint report dated 18th October, 2002, concerning the outline proposals from

partner organisations to be submitted as part of the Council's strategic bid for £256,535 of funding over three years from the New Opportunities Fund (Transforming Your Space).

Resolved – (1) That, noting that funding of £818,000 will be made available to the Penhill area of Swindon from the New Opportunities Fund, and that selected projects will be able to be put forward for consideration as part of that funding, the outline proposals set out in 1 and 2 of Appendix 1 to the joint report be selected as part of the strategic bid by the Council to the New Opportunities Fund Transforming Your Space initiative.

(2) That, further to the decision in (1) above, the Council hopes that as part of the detailed proposals to be developed for Central Ward, partner organisations will consider the opportunity for works to be carried out at Faringdon Park to improve the local environment.

(3) That the outline proposal 3 (for the former Whitworth Ward), as set out in Appendix 1 to the joint report, be a "reserve" option to be put forward if required as part of the strategic bid by the Council to the New Opportunities Fund Transforming Your Space initiative.

(4) That there be no commitment on the part of the Council to funding any ongoing revenue costs beyond the initial life of the selected projects.

45. Mechanics Institution – Funding of Urgent Works

Mr Robert Bruce, Team Leader – Conservation and Design, Environmental Services Department, reported on issues raised by the meeting of the Mechanics Institute Task Group held on 24th October, 2002, concerning (a) the physical condition of the Mechanics Institution and the need for urgent repairs, (b) a statement by the Chair of English Heritage that English Heritage would be prepared to make a grant to the Council of 80% of the total costs of the urgent works required should it not prove possible for these costs to be recovered from the owners, (c) possible future partnership working with the New Mechanics Institution Preservation Trust and Great Western Enterprise with regard to the future of the building, and (d) opposition by English Heritage to outstanding planning applications regarding the conversion of the building for hotel use.

Resolved – That a further report be submitted to the Cabinet on 6th November, 2002, on the funding of urgent works to the Mechanics Institution and in the interim the Director of Environmental Services seek confirmation from English Heritage of its commitment to grant the Council 80% of the total costs of urgent works required, should it not be possible to recover these costs from the owners.

46. Staffing Matters – Housing and Social Services

The Head of Core Personnel reported on the progress of negotiations of a voluntary severance agreement with employee 426559A of the Housing and Social Services Department.

Resolved - That the report be noted and should a voluntary severance agreement not be concluded with employee 426559A by Midday on Monday, 4th November, 2002, the Head of Core Personnel be authorised to pursue the other options available to the Council to terminate the employment of employee 426559A.