

## **SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

At a meeting of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee held on  
Thursday, 27 November 2003

PRESENT: Councillor SGM Kindersley – Chairman  
Councillor MP Howell – Vice-Chairman

Councillors:	SJ Agnew	RE Barrett
	RF Bryant	EW Bullman
	NN Cathcart	Mrs J Hughes
	Mrs GJ Smith	LJ Wilson

Councillors CC Barker, RF Collinson and RT Summerfield were in attendance, by invitation.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor EL Monks, WH Saberton, PL Stroude and DALG Wherrell.

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from the following members of the Committee: Councillors EL Monks, WH Saberton PL Stroude and DALG Wherrell, and the following Councillors: DR Bard, JD Batchelor, Mrs EM Hezell and Mrs DSK Spink.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor NN Cathcart declared a personal interest as a trustee of the Farmhouse Museum and took no part in the debate on CIP bid 5(d).

### **3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

None.

### **4. CONTINUOUS IMPROVMENT PLAN - AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

The Chairman explained that as the Continuous Improvement Plans had not been in the public domain for 5 clear working days it was necessary for him to accept them as an emergency item. On behalf of the Committee he expressed his concern that report writers had failed to meet their agreed deadlines to allow the CIP report to be dispatched on time.

Councillor Mrs GJ Smith stated that there was too much paperwork in front of the Committee and that this reinforced the need for a dedicated Scrutiny Officer who could have summarised this report and highlighted the relevant base budgets and Priority Indicators. Paperwork was circulated at the meeting indicating which performance indicators the Council was failing in and the CIP bids they related to. The Performance Improvement Officer explained that Members needed to examine these bids in full and summarising them would deny member involvement in these important decisions.

The Chairman stated that the Committee would not be discussing the CIP bids that were less than £10,000 as these were small amounts that departments should be able to fund

through virement. The Finance and Resources Director disagreed with the assertion that all CIP bids under £10,000 could be funded through virement. It was noted that all these bids added up to approximately £150,000.

The Chairman explained that the budget could only accept a minority of bids, so each bid would be rejected unless the Committee could establish a good reason to accept it.

It was agreed that it would have been beneficial if information on the base budgets accompanied each CIP bid.

**1(a) To Appoint a Senior Housing Strategic Enabling Officer to Support Work on the Local and Sub-Regional Strategic Housing Agendas**

The Development Services Director explained that the Planning department had too few staff that had experience of affordable housing and the bid would help to reverse this. He added that affordable housing would be built in Northstowe and Arbury Camps but the flexibility to force affordable housing in the smaller villages did not exist. It was noted that affordable housing was important for the local economy.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

**1(b) To Roll Forward and Allocate the Available Negative Housing Subsidy of £960,000 in 2003/04 for Rural Affordable Housing Schemes in 2004/05**

The Finance and Resources Director explained that previous funding awarded to Social Housing from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was replaced with Local Authority Social Housing Grants (LASHG) funding. However, it was now clear that there would be no funding from LASHG and this bid was to award the funding to Social Housing in the knowledge that it would not be replaced.

Members of the Committee suggested that:

- affordable housing could only be built in new developments where their provision would form part of the agreement with the developer.
- it was impossible to build affordable housing in small developments in our existing villages.
- there were other more deserving bids than this one.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

**1(c) To Appoint a Partnership Projects Officer**

It was suggested that this bid would benefit the City Council who should therefore pay half the costs.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

**1(d) Contribution to County/Sub-Regional Research Facility**

The Committee voted by 5 votes to 2 to **RECOMMEND** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

**2(a) Employment of Housing Advice (Homeless Prevention) Officer**

The Performance Improvement Officer informed the Committee that there were two

failing performance indicators related to this post, in particular the number of nights that homeless people spend in Bed & Breakfast accommodation.

It was suggested that internal re-organisation could provide the necessary hours for this post. In response to questioning the Head of Shire Homes explained that the postholder could prevent stays in Bed & Breakfast by advising people before they become homeless and preventing family breakdown. It was noted that this appointment would be for 18 months, after which their performance would be evaluated.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet to **REJECT** this bid.

**2(b) Additional Bed and Breakfast Costs (Precautionary Amount) &  
2(c) Additional Bed and Breakfast Costs (Addition to Budget)**

It was understood that this year's budget of £40,000 would be overspent by an estimated £100,000. This meant that extra money would not only have to be found for this year but for subsequent years to avoid future overspends. It was noted that each night a homeless person spend in a Bed & Breakfast cost the Council £30-£50. It was suggested that it would be cheaper for the Council to own its own hostel. However, this idea was rejected on practical grounds.

It was understood that these costs were unavoidable.

**3(a) Data Image Processing**

Concern was expressed that this request could be a duplication of IEG bids. It was asserted that the cost of DIP should not be passed on to the departments. The Head of Shire Homes reported that the funding for this would be sought this year as part of a corporate exercise to ensure that DIP work was completed before the move to Cambourne. This represents HRA funding.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet to **REJECT** this bid.

**3(b) Independent Tenant Advisor Consultancy**

The Head of Shire Homes reported that this could be funded from the HRA budget.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet to **REJECT** this bid.

**3(c) Tenants' Handbook**

The Head of Shire Homes reported that this could be funded from the HRA budget.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet to **REJECT** this bid.

**4(a) Recruitment of an Occupational Therapist**

The Committee noted that they had expressed support for this post at the meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2003.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet to **AGREE** this bid.

**4(b) Pilot Provision of Solar Panels in Tenants' Homes**

The Head of Shire Homes explained that the Strategic Development Officer was

overseeing this partnership project with the City Council. This is HRA funding.

Members of the Committee expressed the following views:

- This partnership should be supported in the hope that the pilot will develop into something larger.
- Fuel efficiency was important.
- Concern was expressed at the cost of the pilot.
- A list of expected achievements of the pilot was requested.

The Strategic Development Officer explained the installation of solar hot water systems would reduce CO<sup>2</sup> emissions and other Greenhouse gases, which were essential to help offset climate change. The pilot would aim to provide training to both housing staff and contractors on how to install these systems on council owned housing stock. He explained the estimated cost would be £1,680 per system, which would include an installation grant of £500 from the DTI's Clear Skies initiative. This cost would compare favourably with a typical 'off the shelf system' costing between £2,500 to £3,000. The Strategic Development Officer also reported that discussions had been held with Heatrae Sadia who had recently developed a new type of hot water cylinder with a dual coil specifically designed for installing solar hot water systems. Heatrae Sadia have offered to provide the Council with two of these prototypes free of charge to enable the cylinders to be fully tested prior to mass production.

This is HRA funding.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet to **AGREE** this bid.

#### **4(c) Asbestos Software and Hardware Equipment**

It was noted that the management of asbestos would probably be a statutory requirement next year. The Head of Shire homes explained it was important to carry out a survey of which houses had asbestos and this would inform the stock condition survey and help the Council to achieve the decent homes standard. It was noted that asbestos was not harmful unless disturbed so knowing the location of asbestos in the Council houses in the District would help to protect our tenants. This would ensure that any renovations carried out on these properties would be done in the knowledge that asbestos was present.

This is HRA funding.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet to **AGREE** this bid.

#### **4(d) Employment of Two Additional Staff Members Following Reorganisation of the Technical Service**

It was noted that the funding for this bid would be coming from the Housing Revenue Account.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet to **REJECT** this bid.

### **5. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

#### **5(a) Community Provision Officer**

The Head of Community Services stated that this bid was to ensure that the Section 106 agreements would ensure facilities of a high standard, with a high technical specification.

It was noted that the Committee had discussed the need for this post at its meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

The Head of Community Services confirmed that this officer would advise on Section 106 agreements outside Northstowe.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

#### **5(b) Employment of a South Cambs Parish Plans Officer on a Two-Year Trial Basis**

The Head of Community Services explained that the Council did not have the capacity to handle the growing demand from parishes regarding their parish plans. He warned that there would be no substantial underspend in the Community Services budget this year that could be used to fund this post. He concluded that for parish plans to be successful they would require extra resources from the Council.

It was noted that if this officer was appointed, the £6,000 grant currently contributed towards the countywide post based at Cambridgeshire ACRE would be withdrawn.

Members of the Committee expressed the following opposing views:

- Parishes did not require this post and were producing parish plans without it.
- This officer would allow parish councils to formulate their parish plans.

A vote was taken and by 4 votes to 5 the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

#### **5(c) Partnership Contribution Towards a South Cambs Youth Participation Project Phase 2 Co-ordinator (SCYPP)**

The Committee agreed that this was an excellent idea. The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

#### **5(d) Increasing Farmland Museum & Denny Abbey Grant by £10,000**

It was suggested that this was a grant increase that would be better discussed by Cabinet with the other museum grants than as part of a separate CIP bid. The Head of Community Services explained that this was a one-off bid to increase the museums budget to allow an extra £10,000 to be paid to Farmland Museum and Denny Abbey.

Councillor Barker suggested that any increase in the museum budget should be decided by the portfolio holder.

It was asserted that this bid should be supported because it was a museum in our District and that the Cambridge area was below average in terms of museum visits per head of population.

Committee voted 3 votes to 3 and so there was no recommendation.

#### **5(e) Expansion of the South Cambs "Fitness 4 Health" Programme**

The Committee agreed that this was an excellent example of preventative health measures and they **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

## **6. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

### **6(a) Consultation and Survey Costs on the Evaluation of the Integrate Wheeled Bin Scheme**

The Chairman stated that the wheeled bin scheme was in the process of being implemented and a survey of satisfaction levels could not fundamentally alter this policy.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

### **6(b) Extension of the Contract of One of the Refuse and Recycling Support Officers for one year**

The Chairman suggested that the contract be extended for six months instead of a year.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

### **6(c) Consultation, Survey and Research Costs Associated with the Production of the Waste Management Strategy, Waste Minimisation Strategy and Cleaner Streets Strategy**

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

### **6(d) Mechanisation of the Street Cleaning Service**

Members of the Committee expressed the following views:

- The District's highways required an improved cleaning service, but were not this Council's responsibility.
- The District's village streets were this authority's responsibility but did not require an improved cleaning service.
- Parked cars would hinder any mechanised service

The Chief Environmental Health Officer reminded the Committee that the Best Value Review of 1999 had revealed street cleaning to be a high priority amongst our residents. The Chairman stated that street cleaning was not one of the Council's Priorities.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

### **6(e) Installation of 20 Plastic Recycling Banks at 16 Recycling Centres, Including Main Supermarket Sites in the District**

In response to questioning, the Chief Environmental Services Officer stated that although the District's supermarkets had recycling centres, none of them had plastic recycling, and so this was an ideal location for a plastic recycling bank.

It was agreed that plastic recycling was required as it was the only obvious material that the Council did not offer to recycle. It was suggested that one plastic recycling bank was required in each village.

The Chief Environmental Health Officer explained that a kerbside collection for plastics could not be provided. He expressed the hope that the £49,600 required would be met by DEFRA.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

**7(a) Extend Temporary Post of Caseworker and New Fixed Term Post of Trainee Technical Officer**

It was understood that the net cost of this bid to the Council would be less than £10,000.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

**7(b) Additional Disabled Facility Grants**

It was understood that government would reimburse 60% of the £50,000 cost.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

**7(c) Live On-Line Air Quality Information on Web**

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

**7(d) Document Imaging Processing (DIP)**

Concern was expressed that the cost of DIP was being passed onto the Council's departments when it had been understood that these costs were to be covered by one central fund.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

**7(e) Additional Members of Staff to Meet the Challenge of the Licensing Act 2003**

It was understood that after the income from fees were taken into account this bid would actually make the Council money.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

**7(f) Half Time EHO to Deal With Private Sector Housing**

The Chief Environmental Health Officer explained that this post was necessary to ensure the introduction of the new Health and Safety housing fitness regime.

The Committee expressed its support for this, due to the importance of supporting vulnerable people in private housing.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

**7(g) Development of Transactional Website to Provide Electronic Access to Services Via the Web**

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

**7. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - PLANNING**

**8(a) Printing Statement of Community Involvement**

Concern was expressed at the amount of paper, printing this statement would use. It was suggested that the investment the Council had made in IT and the Government's e-government strategy, made it more appropriate to ensure that the document could be accessed electronically, with a limited number of paper copies for those who ask for it.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

**8(b) Consultation and Inquiry into Statement of Community Involvement**

The Development Services Director stated that this bid might not be necessary and information was expected from Government.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

**8(c) Printing Deposit Local Development Framework**

Support was expressed for this bid, as a wide distribution of the Local Development Framework was important. However, it was also suggested that a large number of paper copies was unnecessary if the document could be accessed electronically.

The Development Services Director explained that Local Plans 1 & 2 had been distributed on government guidelines and he advised that Local Plan 3 should not be an exception. Councillor RT Summerfield stated that if this was an annual cost then it should have been budgeted for and should not be the subject of a CIP bid, which was for additional funding.

There being considerable doubt over whether this was eligible the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

**8(d) Action Area Plan Workshops**

It was suggested that it was the responsibility of Parish Councils to consult with the community about planning issues. The Development Services Director replied that the District would continue to experience an unprecedented rate of growth and it was important to give the public a chance to interact with the decision makers and express their views.

Concern was expressed that three of the seven suggested workshops would consult outside the area of the District. The Development Services Director replied that workshops for discussing Northstowe had been agreed at a strategic level. These had proved very useful and involved parish councillors. Councillor RF Collinson confirmed that workshops for the northern fringe had proved valuable.

It was suggested that the City Council contribute for the cost of the workshops that affect them.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

**8(e) Consultation on Local Development Framework**

Councillor Summerfield stated if this had been carried out in previous years it was not a request for new funding and therefore should not be a CIP bid.



Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

#### **8(f) Consultation on Site-Specific Objections to the Local Development Framework**

It was noted that if this consultation had been carried out in previous years it was not a request for new funding and therefore should not be a CIP bid.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

#### **8(g) Flood Risk Assessment**

Members of the Committee expressed the following views:

- flood control was the responsibility of the Environment Agency, not the Council;
- a flood survey had already been done and a new assessment should only be carried out if new information was likely to be found.

The Development Services Director replied that assessing the flood risk was essential before any development was built and Lincolnshire had already carried out such an assessment. The importance of not building on a flood plain was recognised and the effect this had on housing insurance was noted.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

#### **8(h) Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Appraisal**

It was noted that this was not yet a strategic requirement. There was no evidence that this CIP would improve services in response to 2004/05 priorities. Concern was expressed that this CIP was a duplication of the bid for a Strategic Planning Officer.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

#### **9(a) Principal Officer (Northstowe)**

The Development Services Director explained that the experience of Cambourne had demonstrated that a Principle Officer would be required for Northstowe as the first planning applications were expected in the middle of next year.

It was agreed that the development of Northstowe was a high priority for the Council and the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

#### **9(b) Service Officer (Northstowe)**

The Development Services Director explained that the experience of Cambourne had demonstrated that a Service Officer would be required for Northstowe as the first planning applications were expected in the middle of next year.

It was suggested that at a similar stage in Cambourne's development a single officer had been sufficient and so a Service Officer for Northstowe was not required. The Development Services Director replied that Northstowe would be double the size of Cambourne and so double the staff would be required. It was noted that revenue generated from planning fees was less than might be expected for large sites as a number of properties could be submitted as part of a single application.

It was agreed that the development of Northstowe was a high priority for the Council and the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

**9(c) Principal Officer (Cambridge East / Eastern Northern Fringe Development)**  
**&**

**9(d) Service Officer (Cambridge East / Eastern Northern Fringe Development)**

In response to questioning, the Development Services Director explained that the northern fringe was entirely within the District. However the administrative boundary of both the City Council and this authority bisects the eastern area for development and so some form of joint working would have to be investigated.

It was suggested that when Cambourne was completed the Cambourne planning staff could transfer to work on the new developments. The Development Services Director explained that only a third of Cambourne had been built and so in the immediate future it would be impossible to transfer staff.

It was stated that it was unnecessary to appoint two new officers for the northern fringe development as only 1,000 houses would be built.

It was unclear from the agenda whether funding for this post would be required in 2004/05 or 2005/06. The Development Services Director reported that the posts of Principal Officer and Service Officer would be required late in the next financial year. He agreed to provide more precise information to resolve this query for Cabinet's discussion of this bid on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2003.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** these bids.

**10(a) Rationalisation of the Trees & Landscape Assistant Post**

The Chairman asked why extra funding was required for the rationalisation of the post that existed. The Development Services Director explained that the Trees and Landscape section required a tree preservation order database. The work would take at least 2 years and so a full time appointment was appropriate.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

## **8. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - REVENUE & BENEFITS**

**12(a) To Provide Financial Childcare Assistance for Eligible Employees to Take Effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2004**

The Finance and Resources Director explained that staff had been led to believe that childcare assistance would be improved with the move to Cambourne. He added that the bid had originally been £80,000 but had been reduced to an ongoing cost of £50,000. He recommended that the Committee support this bid, as the Council should provide this service as a good employer.

The Committee expressed concern about the cost of this bid, although it was supported due to the benefits to our staff.

A vote was taken and by 3 votes to 2 the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

**12(b) To Provide a Management Development Programme Every Two Years**

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

**12(c) To Fund the Implications from the Introduction of Single Status, Which Requires the Harmonisation of Terms and Conditions of Staff**

The Finance and Resources Director explained that single status was a requirement under the NJC Agreement for Local Government services.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

**12(d) Customer Services Manager**

The Committee noted that they had expressed support for this post at the meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2003.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

**9. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - FINANCE & RESOURCES****11(a) Replacement of the Council's Cash Receipting System**

The Finance and Resources Director explained that the success of this bid was vital if the Council was to honour its commitments regarding the Contact Centre and the Cambridge Office.

The Committee **recommended** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

**10. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - ICT****13(a) ICT Support Officer**

The Finance and Resources Director explained that this bid would allow skilled ICT officers to concentrate on the work they have been trained to do instead of working on administrative staff.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

**13(b) Web Services Officer**

It was noted that the Committee had discussed this post at the meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> November and had suggested that the post should be fixed term. The Finance and Resources Director reported that this post was proposed as a 3 year contract. The Chairman replied that a 6 month contract would be more appropriate.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid but on a 6 month contract not a 3 year one.

**13(c) Networking Costs for Cambourne and the Cambridge Office**

The Finance and Resources Director explained that this bid was essential if the Council was to honour its commitment of offering a full service to residents at the Cambridge Office. He expressed the hope that an additional £180,000 that was required would be met through virement and special approvals this financial year.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

### **13(d) Completion of the Corporate DIP Implementation**

Concern was expressed by members of the Committee at the huge cost of this bid and the lack of foresight in the drawing up of the paper reduction guidelines.

The Finance and Resources Director explained that more information was required on this bid and that the work carried out this financial year would influence the amount of funding required for backscanning. It was hoped that no paper that needed to be scanned would be moved to Cambourne.

Despite reservations the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

### **13(e) Maintenance and Improvement of the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG)**

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

### **13(f) GIS and Planning Systems Development**

The Finance and Resources Director explained that this was a one off installation cost.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

### **13(g) To Transfer Additional Front-Office Services to the Contact Centre**

The Finance and Resources Director stated that this was to enable the Council to divide into front line and back office staff. He explained that it was hoped that savings would result from the restructuring of back office functions.

Members of the Committee made the following suggestions:

- If restructuring will reduce the revenue costs, the capital costs should be met from the reserves.
- This will be detrimental to current staff and make it difficult to attract new staff.
- There had been no prior indication that the costs of this project would be so high.

The Finance and Resources Director explained that the original ITNET bid had included a projected cost of £1.75 million and on these figures the Council were within budget, with phase 1 costing £1 million and phase 2 costing £0.75 million.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to reserve judgement on this bid but **RECOMMENDED TO OFFICERS** that a more detailed report be presented to Cabinet on this bid.

### **13(h) To Standardise Network Printers at Cambourne**

The Finance and Resources Director explained that this would reduce revenue costs on inkjet cartridges and would end up saving the Council money in the long term.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

**11. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - DEMOCRATIC SERVICES****14a) New and Replacement Computers for Members Following June Elections**

The Chairman suggested that it would be more appropriate to upgrade computers gradually than all at once.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

**12. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - SUSTAINABILITY, COMMUNITY SERVICES AND TOURISM****15(a) European Climate Change Menu Programme (ECCMP)**

The Strategic Development Officer stated that this bid was for £20,000 over two years to commit the Council to a cross departmental approach to reducing the District's CO<sup>2</sup> emissions.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

**15(b) Community Strategy Project Officer**

The Head of Community Services stated that community services required a lead officer to ensure effective service delivery. It was suggested that this officer could fulfil some of the work that would have been the responsibility of the Parish Plans Officer.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

**15(c) Sustainability Projects Fund**

The Strategic Development Officer explained that £30,000 was required to ensure a wide range of practical community-led projects were funded and supported. Councillor Collinson explained that this fund would aid the set up costs of these projects, which would otherwise continue unsupported.

The Committee recognised that extra funding was required to honour the pledges made in the Sustainability Best Value Review. However, it was suggested that the funding for these projects should come from a budget and not from a successful CIP bid.

The Strategic Development Officer explained that officers from other departments would be involved to help oversee the allocation of funding towards these projects. He also suggested some of the funding could be used to undertake a feasibility study to assess the likely benefits and implications of the Council setting up its own Renewable Energy Supply Company. Councillor CC Barker asserted that although Council could enable the setting up of a renewable energy company it would be wholly inappropriate for the authority to become a provider.

A vote was taken and by three votes to two the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

**15(d) Sustainability Planning Officer**

Councillor Collinson stated that the District was faced with a huge number of developments and it was impossible for the Strategic Development Officer to examine all planning applications at that was why this post was necessary. This bid enjoyed the

support of the Planning department.

It was suggested that the Planning department should contribute to this post, as it would be to their benefit. It was agreed that a sustainability input was required on all planning applications and the sooner the better.

A vote was taken and by 6 votes to 0 the Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet **AGREE** this bid.

#### **15(e) Voluntary Sector Forum**

The Head of Community Services stated that a Voluntary Sector Forum would provide co-ordination and support for the voluntary sector in the District.

It was suggested that £29,000 was a large amount of money that would be of more benefit if awarded directly to the charities operating in the area. In response the Head of Community Services informed the Committee that government funding was available for at least part of the costs, but he was hoping to secure funding from the Council should this option fail. It was suggested that this would be an excellent way of co-ordinating voluntary sector effort throughout the District.

A vote was taken and by 4 votes to 1 the Committee recommended that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

#### **15(f) Development/Training for Community Access Points**

The Committee recommended that Cabinet **REJECT** this bid.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to the officers who presented these bids to Committee.

### **13. TO NOTE THE DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

It was noted that future meetings would be held on:

2003: 18<sup>th</sup> December

2004: 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 11<sup>th</sup> March, 15<sup>th</sup> April and 13<sup>th</sup> May.

All at 2.00pm unless otherwise stated.

---

**The Meeting ended at 5.59 p.m.**

---