

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

NEW OFFICES WORKING GROUP

At a meeting held in the Committee Room 2 on 19th March 2004 at 2pm

- Present:** Councillor RT Summerfield – Chairman
- Councillors:** Mrs J Hughes, SGM Kindersley, JA Nicholas & Mrs DSK Spink
- Officers:** JS Ballantyne, Chief Executive
P Barnes, Special Projects Manager
J Garnham, Finance Project Officer
GJ Harlock, Finance & Resources Director
D Jennings, Human Resources Manager
CJ Taylor, Head of Legal Services
- Lambert Smith Hampton:** Matthew Williams

Councillors RE Barrett and SA Harangozo attended by invitation.

Apologies were received from Andrew Gordon.

1. MINUTES

- 1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd February 2004 were agreed as a correct record.

2. MATTERS ARISING

Cash Office (minute 2.4)

- 2.1 Matthew Williams reported that the developers had agreed to install ballistic resistant glass in the cash office at no extra cost.

Opening Ceremony (minute 6.5)

- 2.2 The Chief Executive stated that the Council would be flexible regarding the date for the official opening ceremony, as this would make it easier for prospective dignitaries to fit the opening ceremony into their schedule.

3. NOTES FROM CAMBOURNE OFFICERS GROUP (COG)

- 3.1 The Finance Project Officer summarised the latest business of the COG sub-groups.

Furniture, Space & Storage

- 3.2 Departments were continuing to dispose of documents that no longer needed to be retained and to DIP documents for retention. A shredding company had been contracted to shred confidential documents and departments would be informed of the dates this company would be visiting the office.

HR/ Travel

- 3.3 It was reported that a new Travel to Work Plan, which was a condition of the office move, would be presented for agreement at the next meeting of the

Group in April.

4. REFRESHMENTS FOR STAFF

4.1 The Finance Project Officer presented this report which outlined the options available for providing refreshments for staff at Cambourne.

Corrections to Report

4.2 It was understood that the estimated cost of the current "trolley service" had included the staff time. However, the cost of employing canteen staff would be incurred with or without the trolley service. As a consequence the estimated cost of the trolley service shown in paragraph 5 was altered from £8,260 to £6,310. In paragraph 10, the estimated additional cost of providing a free hot drinks vending machine on each floor instead of a trolley service was increased from £2,118 to £4,068 per annum for the first drink per member of staff per day. In paragraph 11, the estimated additional cost of providing a free hot drinks service on one floor was increased from £298 to £2,248 per annum for the first drink per member of staff per day.

4.3 It was noted that the preference of UNISON and the recommendation of the report was to retain the trolley service and not provide vending machines.

4.4 The Chairman expressed his support for vending machines on every floor, which matched the modern image appropriate for the new office. Members of the Group made the following points:

- The cost of the machines could be reduced by either making them token operated or restricting the times when the machines gave free vends.
- Vending machines should provide hot and cold water.
- Vending machines had been common in places of work for many years.
- Vending machines on every floor would ensure that staff did not have to walk a large distance with a tray of drinks.

4.5 It was noted that the vending machines could operate on cards given to staff, or could be free at certain times of the day, but could not operate on a token system.

4.6 The Chief Executive stated that a trolley service was preferable as it allowed staff to make drinks to their own individual tastes. The vending machine option was more expensive. The Finance and Resources Director informed the Group that many staff attended the canteen to buy sandwiches, which currently they could do whilst making their tea or coffee. The Human Resources Manager stated that staff were entitled to work breaks, especially if they were continuously using a PC and making a drink away from their desk allowed them to do so.

4.7 Councillor SGM Kindersley proposed that a vending machine, that can also provide hot and cold water, be placed on each floor and be free all day. This proposal was seconded by Councillor JA Nicholas.

4.8 A vote was taken and by 4 votes to 1 the Group:

4.9 **AGREED** that a vending machine, which can provide hot and cold water, be placed on all three floors. The machines will provide free vends all day.

5. CAMBOURNE DRAFT CAR PARKING POLICY

5.1 The Special Projects Officer introduced this report that informed the Group of

the draft car parking policy for the new office. He stated that the car park was in two sections, a visitor section of 34 spaces and a barrier controlled section of 205 spaces. Those who car share will be given priority parking, although so far only about 12 staff have expressed their intention to car share.

- 5.2 Members of the Group expressed concern at the suggestion that Councillors should park in the visitor section as 34 spaces would be insufficient. It was noted that 60 spaces inside the barrier were numbered, allowing parking to be booked.
- 5.3 Councillor SA Harangozo suggested that priority parking should be given to those who usually used alternative modes of transport or lived furthest away. However, it was understood that it was the availability of alternative transport and not distance from the office which determined how reliant staff would be on their car. The Group agreed that the rules regarding car parking needed to be easy to understand and it would be inappropriate to give priority parking on the availability of alternative transport. The Chief Executive explained that the relocation package assessed any increase in transport costs for staff.
- 5.4 Essential users will continue to be provided with access to the car park, but in line with current practice, they will not be guaranteed a parking space.
- 5.5 Councillor Mrs Spink suggested that car sharing with other organisations on the Business Park should be considered. The Special Projects Officer informed the group that discussion on this matter had been ongoing with Lesley Scobell, the travel coordinator for Cambourne Business Park. Postcodes of employees on the Business Park have been added to the Council's GIS system, to help identify potential car share opportunities.
- 5.6 The Group agreed that
- Spaces will be reserved for individuals such as Chief Officers or key elected Members; in their absence these places to be made available to other members or officers.
 - Councillors should have reserved spaces booked for scheduled meetings inside the barrier controlled section, as per current practice.
 - Car parking spaces will be designated for use by car sharers
 - The Council's parking policy should be reviewed 3 months after occupation.

6. APPOINTMENT OF REMOVAL COMPANY

- 6.1 The Finance Project Officer reported for information the decision taken jointly by the Resources and Staffing portfolio holder and the Finance and Resources Director to appoint Edes to remove filing, PCs and some furniture, from the existing offices at Hills Road, Station Road and Oakington, to the new offices at Cambourne.
- 6.2 It was noted that officers had restricted their consideration of removal companies to ESPO & OGC suppliers large enough to carry out the job from within their own company. However, it was understood that a full tendering exercise should have been carried out rather than reliance on this exemption in Contract Standing Orders. The contract was above level 3 and Contract Standing Orders require that a tender other than the lowest can only be awarded by the Council or the Executive - this requirement had not been followed.

- 6.3 It was understood that Harrow Green had provided the cheapest tender but this had been rejected as the officers were not convinced that the company had fully understood the ICT move requirements as they had designated only 3 ICT engineers. In a message to the Group, Councillor JD Batchelor stated that Harrow Green were a professional organisation, were unlikely to have underestimated the requirements of the job and expressed his surprise at the decision taken. However, the Special Projects Officer stated that there were over 500 items of IT equipment to move and install and he had advised against taking any risks in this process due to the importance of the equipment. The Chief Executive pointed out to the Group that if Harrow Green only provided 3 ICT staff to remove, pack and install each piece of IT equipment they would have to work 10 hours a day over the three days and would only have 5 minutes with each piece of equipment. This was in contrast to Edes who proposed 30 dedicated ICT staff, who would be able to have all IT equipment installed by the Saturday evening.
- 6.4 It was understood that on the suggestion of the Resources and Staffing portfolio holder, the Finance and Resources Director had contacted Edes and asked them to reduce their original quote to that of Breathe, as Edes were offering to move and set up all desktop PCs by Saturday evening. Edes had agreed to match Breathe's quote. Councillor Mrs J Hughes expressed her opposition to this practice, as it was unethical to inform one organisation of another's quote and she took no further part in the discussion.
- 6.5 It was understood that Edes would provide IT support to the Council for a short period immediately after the move to ensure that all equipment had been installed properly.

7. APPOINTMENT OF BUS COMPANIES (LATE ITEM)

- 7.1 The Finance Project Officer introduced this report on the options available for providing Council buses.
- 7.2 It was proposed that 3 buses would provide a service to and from the following sites:
- Ely
 - Cambridge railway station
 - Trumpington Road Park and Ride area
 - Cowley Road Park and Ride area
- One bus would go to both the railway station and Trumpington Park and Ride area.
- 7.3 It was noted that the County Council had not yet given permission to allow the Council's buses to use the Park and Ride sites. It was understood if permission was not forthcoming the Council's buses would have to pick up passengers from a convenient area close by the two park and ride sites. The Chief Executive and the Leader of Council agreed to contact their counterparts at the County Council in a final effort to gain access for the Council's buses.
- 7.4 It was understood that there would be a clause with the contracted bus companies allowing the Council to discontinue the service if it was not being used by staff. Councillor SA Harangozo expressed his concern that the bus services could be cancelled too easily. He stated that there were villages within a 3-4 mile radius of Cambourne which had no public transport links to the village and he suggested that a circular bus route could address this. It was understood that the Council would not be allowing members of the public

on its buses because the service would have to be registered and the transport commissioner required 8 weeks notice for any alteration in the timetable. It was hoped that as Cambourne grows in size, more bus services will be provided to it, although it was understood that the County Council had failed in its bid for rural bus funding. The Special Projects Officer stated that the X5 service from St Neots, which uses the A428, now stops at the Business Park. Whippet Coaches have also been approached to see if their 1/1A service from Huntingdon and St Ives could be diverted to service the Business Park. He added that the hotel in Cambourne would be paying £100,000 through a section 106 agreement to fund improvements to public transport on the A428. It was noted that it was possible that other organisations on the Business Park would be interested in joining the Council in providing a bus service to get their staff to Cambourne.

- 7.5 The Group agreed in principle to the following routes, subject to a further survey to determine potential usage and pick up points:
- Ely route – Cambridge & Ely Mini Bus Service - £93 per day
 - Cambridge railway station route, via Trumpington Road Park & Ride area – Myhill's Mini Buses/ Shubby's Travel Services - £125 per day
 - Cowley Road Park & Ride area route – Myhill's Mini Buses/ Shubby's Travel Services - £125 per day
- 7.6 The Group **AGREED** that officers, once usage has been established and before the end of the trial period, invite tenders for providing bus services from the end of the trial period for the remainder of the four years.
- 7.7 The Group **AGREED** to delegate responsibility for a final decision on the appointment of bus companies to the Finance and Resources Director and the Resources and Staffing portfolio holder.

8. CAMBOURNE PROJECT PLAN UPDATE

- 8.1 The Special Projects Officer reported that the building was substantially watertight and the developers had given permission to allow access to the IT room for the installation of the uninterruptible power supply. The Council Crest and lettering were scheduled to be fixed to the building on 24th March 2004. The Cash Office installation was complete, with ballistic resistant glass.

Date for Completion of Works

- 8.2 The Chief Executive reported that the completion date of 31st March 2004, which had been confirmed in February by the Director of Development Securities, now appeared unlikely. An e-mail from Peter Jarman of Wrenbridge giving an update on the latest position was circulated. The Group expressed its dissatisfaction at the progress made. The Head of Legal Services reported that the Council would withhold final payment until the work was complete. However, he added that a completion date of mid-April was six weeks ahead of the original schedule.
- 8.3 Matthew Williams reported that the developers had been let down by their supplier of windows and doors. A major effort had been made to catch-up and he did not foresee any further delays. He added that special parts needed to be ordered to complete the cladding but unlike the delivery of windows and doors, this would not delay other building works.

Security

- 8.4 It was understood that the developers planned to complete the 2nd and 1st floors by 31st March to allow Breathe to furnish them. It was expected that by the time Breathe had finished furnishing the top two floors, the developers will have completed the ground floor, thus allowing Breathe to complete the furnishing of the building. The developers wanted a legal agreement which would make the Council responsible for security on the top two floors whilst Breathe were furnishing them. The Head of Legal Services stated that more information was required on this proposal before the Council could agree to it. It was agreed that 24 hour professional security would be required.
- 8.5 The Group agreed that the developers should provide the Council with a new completion date, in writing, as mid-April was non-specific.
- 8.6 The Chief Executive and Head of Legal Services agreed to respond to Peter Jarman's e-mail. **JSB & CJT**

Staff Visits

- 8.7 It was agreed that staff visits should be arranged after the building work is completed.

Vacating 9-11 Hills Road

- 8.8 The Head of Legal Services informed the Group that the Council had waited until the new building was watertight before giving three month's notice at 9-11 Hills Road. This would mean that the Council would cease to be tenants of 9-11 Hills Road on 23rd June 2004. He added that he would be asking the University of Cambridge to charge rent at 1% over the basic rate, instead of the market rate from 1st June.

RISK REGISTER

- 8.9 The Special Projects Officer highlighted the alterations in the Risk Register. The probability of delays to practical completion date has increased to 4. The following risks have been removed from the register:
- City Council being unable to provide space for the Cambridge Office.
 - Building envelope not fully watertight.
 - Delivery delays with Velfac windows for front & rear of building.

9. HAUL ROAD

- 9.1 A letter and four maps from Peter Jarman of Wrenbridge were circulated at the meeting. It stated that the haul road alongside the Council's office could be used to allow development to the south until September 2005, but "as time goes on this is becoming less and less likely". The letter detailed the plan to allow construction traffic to plot 4000 by an access point to the North of the Council's new office, which negated the need for traffic to pass alongside the building. It was understood that construction access after September 2005 would require planning permission.
- 9.2 It was noted that the Haul Road will become a Greenway, with a narrow gravel road to allow emergency access.
- 9.3 Concern was expressed that the phase 2 diagram appeared to have removed the chicane in the haul road and moved the road closer to the Council office.

It was understood that construction traffic on the Spine Road was prohibited and surprise was expressed at the developers' suggestion that the Spine Road would be used for any construction traffic for developing sites behind the Council office after September 2005.

- 9.4 The Head of Legal Services highlighted the request by the developers to amend the agreement regarding the completion of the Greenway works. He recommended a retention of £100,000. Matthew Williams agreed that £100,000 was more realistic. The Group agreed with this proposal.
- 9.5 The Group supported the plan for the developers to use an alternative access point to plot 4000 but agreed that the developers needed to clarify their position regarding:
- The use of the Haul Road
 - The route of construction traffic to sites behind the Council office after September 2005.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cleaning Contract

- 10.1 It was noted that the Council had gone out to tender to secure an ESPO supplier for the cleaning contract for the new offices.

Address of New Office

- 10.2 It was understood that the address for the new office was:
South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne
Cambridge
CB3 6EA

Opening Time 4th May 2004

- 10.3 The Group debated the suggestion that on the first day after the move, the office should be open to the public at 10am. However, the Group agreed that the office should open at 9am and staff be encouraged to be at the office early.

The meeting ended at 4.30 pm
