

**MEETING OF THE UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL CONTRACTS BOARD held at COUNCIL OFFICES, SAFFRON WALDEN on 18 JUNE 2001 at 6pm**

Present:- Councillor R D Green – Chairman  
Councillors R A E Clifford, Mrs E Godwin, M L Foley, D M Jones,  
Mrs C M Little and R C Smith

Officers in attendance: - D Burridge, N Harris, M Ribbans and D Rivers

**CB62 APOLOGIES**

None

**CB63 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Board meeting held on 29 January 2001 were received as a correct record.

**CB64 PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2000/01**

The Principal Accountant presented the provisional financial performance for 2000/01. The results were shown gross and in advance of any profit share payments and subject to year end procedures and verification by the Council's auditors.

The provisional results outlined that the likely surplus of £173,700 was better than the revised estimate by £73,700.

RESOLVED that the report be received

**CB65 RESOURCES**

The Board received a report recommending that further staffing be applied to meet current contractual commitments.

From a process of 4 weeks time recording of activities undertaken by employees engaged on the Street Sweeping Contract it had been evidenced that commitments exceeded available staff resources by 46 hours per week.

It was proposed that one additional general operative be recruited to meet current contracts and the arrangements for the Recycling Collection be negotiated to meet service needs.

RESOLVED that

- 1 the Contract Services Manager progress negotiations with Environmental Services to arrange resources appropriate to the needs of the increased services

- 2 one additional post be created within the Dunmow operation at a cost of £16,000.

It was also

RECOMMENDED that

- 1 Environmental Services consider making an appropriate charge for collecting unwanted vehicles from an owner's property.
- 2 Environmental Services consider, where vehicles are abandoned, making efforts to trace and prosecute owners.

## **CB66 VEHICLE INSURANCE**

The Board received a report detailing the accidents involving Council vehicles since 1996. This showed that of the 35 vehicle claims made since 1 April 1996, 14 (40%) involved a recycling vehicle. In financial terms the total claim value was £107,503, of which £58,347 ((54%) were attributable to recycling.

It was proposed that use of agency drivers be discontinued in favour of directly employed drivers. Whilst it was difficult to confirm what improvement might be achieved by making this adjustment to working practices there existed the perception that drivers regularly employed on routes and acclimatised to their vehicle would exercise greater diligence.

RESOLVED that

- 1 the exclusive use of agency drivers be discontinued and directly employed HGV drivers be recruited in their place.
- 2 crews be trained in the reversing of vehicles.

## **CB67 RECRUITMENT**

Members received a report, in accordance with the agreed service plan, in respect of recruitment, and in particular the shortfall of craft workers.

The building industry, in general was, suffering an ongoing shortage of trades persons and the Uttlesford area currently enjoyed a very low level of unemployment. This has contributed to a lack of applicants for posts within the Building Maintenance Section. A number of initiatives had been introduced to address both short term and long recruitment. Further options were set out to address a continuing shortfall.

The following cautions were noted:

Any shortfall in craft workers had a direct and immediate impact upon services and income generation.

Any increase in pay would also need to apply to current employees. Any pay review would need to maintain the competitive nature of Contract Services.

RESOLVED that a review of pay for Building Maintenance operatives be undertaken.

#### **CB68 NEEDLESTICK PRECAUTIONS**

Members received a report identifying the arrangements made to minimise the risks to employees associated with discarded needles and syringes.

Due to the nature of their work employees must be made aware of the potential risks from needle stick injuries and be equipped to deal with any needles and syringes they may find in the course of their work.

Action had been taken to identify who might be at risk and training provided to identify where needles might be located and how collect and dispose of needles and syringes safely.

Employees had been informed of the associated risks and medical treatment needed in the case of needle stick injuries.

All employees completing works with a potential risk had assigned kits that were stored within close proximity to their work location.

RESOLVED that any further appropriate action be taken and that a clear message be given to staff that cost should not be a factor when providing appropriate personal protective equipment.

#### **CB69 PROGRESS REPORTS BY OPERATIONAL MANAGERS**

The Board received oral reports from the two Operations Managers.

##### **Newport operations**

The works at Thaxted Community Information Centre had been completed by the target date allowing the Services to be available to the Community on schedule.

RESOLVED that relevant Contract Services staff be informed that the board was impressed by the work done at Thaxted CIC.

The meeting concluded at 7.20pm.