

**DIRECT SERVICES BOARD
15 SEPTEMBER 1999**

Present: Councillors Sargeant (Chairman), Barnard, Bayle, Blatchford, Fawcett, Miss Haydon, Mrs Pile, Taylor and Veakins

227. Minutes

The minutes of the Board held on 26 May 1999 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

228. Exclusion of Public and Press

RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following Items which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following categories of Schedule 12A of that Act:

- (1) Information relating to employees
- (9) Information relating to terms for a contract
- (11) Information relating to labour relations consultations

229. Bracknell Sport & Leisure Centre and Coral Reef Progress Report (Item 1)

The Board considered the General Manager's progress report on the running of the Bracknell Sport & Leisure Centre and Coral Reef during the period January-March 1999.

The Board posed a number of questions regarding the report and arising from these noted, in particular, that the DSO had also now taken responsibility for the Downshire Golf Course where there was a need to undertake a number of remedial works. In addition, there were staff shortages at the course and advertisements had been placed with a view to filling the vacancies. It was noted that some of the problems had been anticipated, but any budgetary implications could not yet be determined. Booking levels appeared to be consistent with the previous year's.

The Board also noted that the DSO had been awarded a Chartermark for the third consecutive year and this was indicative of a continuing improvement in the standard of service. The Board congratulated the staff on this success and agreed that the Chairman should consult with the necessary officers to ensure that all staff were made aware of the Board's congratulations. In addition, the Board complimented the officers on the recognition that Coral Reef had received for value for money during a recent BBC television programme comparing it with similar facilities.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the progress report relating to Bracknell Sport & Leisure Centre and Coral Reef be noted; and,
- (ii) the decision made under urgency procedures to agree that the Leisure DSO should operate the Downshire Golf Complex be noted.

230. **Bracknell Sport & Leisure Centre and Coral Reef Annual Report (Item 2)**

The General Manager submitted the annual report for Bracknell Sport & Leisure Centre and Coral Reef giving details of the Leisure Direct Service Organisation's accounts for the financial year 1998/99. Under Section 11 of the Local Government Act 1988, the report was to be submitted to the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

RESOLVED that the annual report of the Leisure DSO be approved.

231. **Building Works - General Manager's Progress Report (Item 3)**

The Board considered the General Manager's progress report on the running of the Building Works DSO during the period January-March 1999.

The Board expressed its thanks to the officers who had prepared the Beacon status application. However, concern was expressed that there had been occasional incidents when only Member intervention had resulted in action being taken to remedy problems with some residents' properties. Of particular concern were cases which involved elderly residents. In response to this, the Board was informed that the managers of the DSO would investigate any incidents drawn to officers' attention; by investigating why such problems had occurred, the DSO was able to continue enhancing its service as steps could be taken to minimise such problems recurring. The officers indicated that they were satisfied that the service was one which looked to continuous improvement.

RESOLVED that

- (i) the application for Beacon Status in respect of the Housing Repairs Service be supported; and,
- (ii) the progress report relating to the Building Works DLO be noted.

232. **Building Works DLO – Annual Report (Item 4)**

The Board received the Building Works DLO annual report for the year 1998/99. Under Section 11 of the Local Government Act 1988, the report was to be submitted to the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

It was noted that the following figures should be inserted in the section headed "Other Information Required":

Total value of works won in competition	£3,767,000
Total value of works carried out by contractors	£2,924,000

RESOLVED that the annual report for the Building Works DLO be approved.

233. **Grounds Maintenance DSO – Progress Report (Item 5)**

The Board considered the Grounds Maintenance DSO Manager's report on the running of the DSO during the period January-March 1999.

The Board noted that the DSO had some concern about the amount of work being generated by works to old aged pensioners' gardens, but that the Housing Committee's existing policy was that their lawns should be cut on a fortnightly basis. In addition, works to trees overhanging the highway were also generating an additional burden on the DSO's resources. As a consequence, the possibility of employing an additional team was being pursued.

It was noted that the DSO was currently unclear about how many of the Borough's schools would be signing up to its service, but 2 had done so, with a decision from another 29 awaited.

The Board welcomed the progress being made and indicated, amongst other things, how well the town had looked during the summer as a result of the DSO's landscaping works.

RESOLVED that the Grounds Maintenance DSO progress report be noted.

234. **Grounds Maintenance DSO – Annual Report (Item 6)**

The Board received the Grounds Maintenance DSO annual report for 1998/99. Under Section 11 of the Local Government Act 1988, the report was to be submitted to the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

RESOLVED that the annual report of the Grounds Maintenance DSO be approved.

This meeting commenced at 5.30pm
and concluded at 6.30pm

CHAIRMAN