

Appendix F
as referred to in Minute 495

**FINANCE & PROPERTY SUB COMMITTEE
19 NOVEMBER 1997**

Present: Councillors Bettison (from 7.50), Egan, Fawcett, Mrs Hayes, Mrs Hirst,
Mrs Pile, Ryan, Wade and Wheaton

COUNCILLOR WADE IN THE CHAIR

23. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 7 October 1997 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

13 Voluntary Grants Panel - Minutes

Amend minute to read as follows:

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Voluntary Grants Panel held on 10 September 1997 be received and the recommendations regarding grants to voluntary bodies be adopted.

24. **Tendering for Insurances (Item 1)**

The Borough Finance Officer presented a report on the procedure for reviewing and renewing the Council's insurances through a full re-tendering exercise in readiness for 1 April 1998. The report outlined the process to be adopted in the re-tendering exercise and recommended the establishment of a special sub committee of five members to evaluate the bids and to accept the most cost affective tender.

RESOLVED that the approach being adopted in the re-tendering of the Council's insurances be noted; and

RECOMMENDED to Strategy & Policy Committee that a special sub committee be established consisting of five members with authority to evaluate the insurance tenders and to accept the most cost affective tender for the provision of the Council's insurance services from 1 April 1998.

25. **Provision of Payroll and Internal Audit Services (Item 2)**

The Sub Committee considered a report from the Director of Corporate Services regarding future provision of payroll and internal audit services.

At its meeting on 7 October 1997 the Sub Committee had authorised officers to discuss the feasibility of extending Berkshire County Council's contract for payroll services with CSL Managed Services to cover staff transferring to Bracknell Forest on 1 April 1998. The report outlined the progress made and sought authority from the Sub Committee to enter into detailed negotiations with CSL Managed Services with a view to concluding a one or two year agreement for payroll services.

In respect of internal audit services the Sub Committee noted that there were currently three vacancies in the Council's internal audit function. In the current market it was likely to be difficult to recruit sufficient numbers of qualified staff to ensure that the internal audit function could be adequately resourced. Consequently the report recommended that the Council also negotiate a contract with CSL Managed Services for the short term provision of internal audit activities.

The Director of Corporate Services confirmed that both the internal audit and payroll services would be the subject of a full competitive tendering exercise as soon as was practicable in the best interests of the Council.

RESOLVED that contract Standing Order 61 be waived and the Director of Corporate Services be authorised to negotiate and, in consultation with the Chairman, enter into:

- (i) a contract of up to two years duration with CSL Managed Services for the provision of payroll management services; and
- (ii) a contract up to the threshold set by the EU Services Procurement Directive for the provision of internal audit services, as set out in the report, commencing in January 1998.

COUNCILLOR BETTISON IN THE CHAIR

26. Corporate Maintenance Contracts (Item 3)

The Sub Committee received a report from the Borough Surveyor on arrangements for tendering for building maintenance services arising from the significant increase in buildings owned by the Council after 1 April 1998. It was noted that the contracts would be for reactive maintenance and the servicing of plant and other installations.

RESOLVED that

- (i) contract documents be prepared and tendered for reactive building maintenance and for the service maintenance noted in the report;
- (ii) the Borough Surveyor be authorised, in consultation with the Chairman to approve a tender list for the contract for reactive building maintenance;
- (iii) the Borough Surveyor be authorised, in consultation with the Chairman to accept the lowest tender for the contract for reactive building maintenance; and
- (iv) the Borough Surveyor be authorised, in consultation with the Chairman to accept the lowest tender for the contract for heating plant maintenance.

27. Modern Records Building, Darwin Close, Reading (Item 4)

The Sub Committee received a report on proposed expenditure on works to the former County Supplies depot at Darwin Close, Reading in order to accommodate the Modern records and Education Library Services which were being relocated from Shire Hall. The refurbishment cost was to be met equally by the six Berkshire unitary authorities and the report sought authorisation to confirm the Council's contribution to the expenditure.

The Director of Corporate Services advised that since the report had been written additional costs had been identified by Reading Borough Council in respect of information technology and removal costs. Accordingly a revised contribution of up to £69,000 was required.

It was noted that the Education Library Service had other premises in Reading in addition to those based at Shire Hall and it was agreed that the implications of this would be verified prior to confirming the Council's contribution.

RESOLVED that the Borough Solicitor be authorised to write to Reading Borough Council confirming that Reading Borough Council may secure the exclusion of works to former County suppliers depot, Darwin Close, Reading for the provision of Modern Records and Education Library Services and that this Council will bear one sixth of the costs up to a maximum of £69,000.

28. **Bracknell Boys Club (Item 5)**

The Acting Borough Leisure Officer presented a report regarding the Bracknell Boys Club which had applied to the Voluntary Grants Panel in September 1997 for a grant for repairs to the steps outside the club. A decision had been deferred pending further information on the club's financial position because it had a capital sum held in its reserves. It had now been established, to the satisfaction of the Borough Finance Officer, that this sum was earmarked for repairs to the roof.

The officers had visited the site and confirmed that the repairs were needed for health and safety reasons. The next meeting of the Voluntary Grants Panel was scheduled for late February 1998 and officers advised that it would be appropriate for the Sub Committee to make an early decision on this grant application.

RESOLVED that a grant of up to £4,400 be given to the Bracknell Boys Club for repairs to the steps outside the club.

29. **Signatories for Cash Management Funds (Item 6)**

The Borough Finance Officer advised the Sub Committee of the need to nominate authorised signatories for documentation required by the Council's Fund Managers.

RESOLVED that there shall be any one signature from either the Monitoring Officer, currently the Director of Corporate Services, Mr Timothy Ralph Wheadon, or the Section 151 Officer, currently the Borough Finance Officer, Mr Christopher John Herbert, on any documentation required by the Fund Managers.

30. **Signatories for Cheque Accounts (Item 7)**

The Borough Finance Officer advised the Sub Committee of the need to nominate authorised signatories for the Council's cheque accounts, following the retirement of the Head of Corporate Services.

RESOLVED that there shall be any one signature from the following on any cheques or transfers drawn on the Council's bank accounts:

Director of Corporate Services	Mr T R Wheadon
Borough Finance Officer	Mr C J Herbert
Assistant Borough Finance Officer	Mr P G Bailey
Principal Accountant	Mr P Robinson

31. **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 Items 8 and 9 which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of that Act:

- (1) Information relating to a particular employee
- (12) Information relating to legal proceedings

32. **Energy Supply Consultancy - Litigation (Item 8)**

The Borough Solicitor reported on litigation proceedings instituted against the Council by consultants previously engaged to negotiate energy contracts. The report sought authority to seek a negotiated settlement.

RESOLVED that the Borough Solicitor be authorised to explore the possibility of settling the claim made by Stevenson Cross Associates and, following consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Sub Committee, to conclude a negotiate settlement.

33. **Claim by Mrs J D - Personal Injury (Item 9)**

The Sub Committee considered a report seeking agreement to an ex gratia payment to Mrs J D in respect of injuries sustained whilst employed by the Council on a casual basis. It was noted that the proposed payment was within limits which had received the sanction of the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

RESOLVED that a without prejudice ex gratia payment of £250 be made to Mrs J D in full and final settlement of her claim for compensation.

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm
and concluded at 8.56pm.

CHAIRMAN