

COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Wednesday 9th January 2019 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor T. Munro in the Chair

Councillors T. Alexander, A. Anderson, R.J. Bowler, G. Buxton, T. Cannon, J. A. Clifton, T. J. Connerton, C. P. Cooper, P. A. Cooper, M.G. Crane, M.J. Dooley, S.W. Fritchley, H.J. Gilmour, R. A. Heffer, A. Joesbury, D. McGregor, C. Moesby, B.R. Murray-Carr, S. Peake, K. Reid, P. Smith, E. Stevenson, R. Turner, K.F. Walker, D.S. Watson and J. Wilson.

Officers:-

L. Hickin (Strategic Director - People), K. Hanson (Strategic Director - Place), S. Sternberg (Joint Head of Service for Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer), D. Clarke (Joint Head of Service – Finance and Revenues & Benefits), N. Calver (Governance Manager), P. Brown (Chief Executives and Partnership Manager), G. Birch (Evaluator GBA Limited) and P. Danek (NG20 Strategic Project Manager).

0572. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P. Barnes, J. E. Bennet, P. M. Bowmer, M. Dixey, J. Ritchie, J. E. Smith, S. J. Statter, A. M. Syrett and B. Watson.

0573. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared at this meeting.

0574. CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman of the Council, Councillor T. Munro, announced that his Civic Service would take place on Sunday 24th March at 3pm at St Lawrence's Church in Whitwell. Formal invitations would be distributed to Members in due course.

0575. QUESTIONS

No questions were submitted to this Meeting of Council from either the public under Rule 8 or Members under Rule 9 of the Council Procedure Rules.

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0576. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business considered at the meeting.

0577. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on Wednesday 5th December 2018 as set out in pages 4-9 of the agenda pack.

Proposed by Councillor P. Smith and seconded by Councillor R. J. Bowler.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 5th December 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(Governance Manager)

0578. MOTIONS

No Motions on notice were submitted by Members to this Meeting of Council under Rule 10 of the Council Procedure Rules.

0579. RECOMMENDED ITEMS

No recommended items were submitted to this Meeting of Council.

0580. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

Members gave consideration to a report of Councillor B. Watson Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resources and Renewable Energy. The report recommended that Council agree to continue with the current Local Council Tax Support Scheme into the 2019/2020 financial year.

It was noted that the scheme recommended to Council for adoption in respect of the next financial year (2019/20) was effectively a continuation of the existing arrangements. The key features of the proposed scheme were:

- Reduction arrangements would cover up to 91.5% of the Council Tax Liability;
- A taper rate of 20% would be operated reducing as Tax payers moved back into work;
- A full charge be allowed in respect of empty homes and holiday properties;
- A discount of 100% on the requirement to pay for unfurnished and unoccupied properties for a period of 3 months; and
- The level of subsidy provided to Parish Councils in respect of the Council Tax Support Scheme be reduced in respect of the 2019/2020 financial year.

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Members noted that any changes proposed to the scheme required public consultation and that any changes proposed for the 2020/2021 scheme should commence consultation in summer 2019. The results of any consultation exercise would be reported to Council as part of the process of adopting a scheme.

Proposed by Councillor D. McGregor and seconded by Councillor C. Moesby

RESOLVED that:

- 1) it be agreed to continue to operate a Local Council Tax support scheme for 2019/2020 based on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme England Regulations 2012 amended to reflect the following Local decisions concerning the key principles of the scheme:
 - For those of working age the maximum amount of Council Tax that is eligible for reduction is 91.5% of their full Council Tax liability; and
 - The Council continue its policy of disregarding war pensions for the purposes of calculating income in respect of Council Tax reduction scheme at an estimated total cost of £20,000.
- 2) The Chief Financial Officer be requested to use granted delegated powers to update the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme to reflect such uprating of premiums, allowances and non-dependent reductions as may be determined by the Department of Work and Pensions, and for other minor technical changes which may be required in line with the positions set out in the report.

(Chief Financial Officer)

0581. COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT FOR CARE LEAVERS

Councillor D. McGregor, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, presented a report of Councillor B. Watson Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resources and Renewable Energy on Council Tax Discount for Care Leavers seeking approval for a local Council Tax discount for Derbyshire Care Leavers until they reached the age of 25.

The Council was in receipt of a letter from Derbyshire County Council asking for the introduction of an exemption for Derbyshire Care Leavers under the age of 25 to be given Council Tax relief. This would be in order to offer those young people a few valuable years to learn how to manage their finances.

The introduction of such an implementation would be permissible under section 13a of The Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by section 10 of the Local Government Act of 2012). Any relief offered must meet the underlying principles offering value of money to Council Tax payers and the estimation given by the County Council for the cost of this scheme for the Bolsover District council would be approximately £3,500 per annum. It was noted by Members the cost would not be

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shared with other preceptors. It was recommended that the discount should be introduced on the 1st of April 2019 and the methodology by which discount would be applied was set out in 1.4 of the report. Officers confirmed that there was no obligation for the scheme to be approved by Bolsover District Council Members however, suggestion was put forward that if approved, review would take place to evaluate the financial implications of the scheme within the first year.

Members were very supportive of the principles within the scheme and the benefits that would be realised for young care leavers. However, concerns were raised around the full financing of the scheme to the District Council and the Chief Executive Officer requested to write on behalf of Members to Derbyshire County Council expressing the District Councils disappointment in the lack of an offer to share cost. In addition, Members wished for the response to include a request for those care leavers in receipt of the Council Tax relief to be offered training in personal money management.

Proposed by Councillor D. McGregor and seconded by Councillor C. Moesby

RESOLVED that:

- 1) a Local Council Tax discount for Care Leavers under the age of 25 be approved as set out in the report and be introduced from 1st April 2019;
- 2) the financial implications arising from the scheme be reviewed after six months; and
- 3) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to draft a letter to the Derbyshire County Council in response to funding the scheme.

(Chief Financial Officer / Chief Executive Officer)

0582. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT GRANT FOR PARISH COUNCILS

Members gave consideration to a report seeking approval to pay Parish Councils the remainder of the Council Tax Support Grant during 2019/2020 rather than over two financial years as previously agreed. The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor D. McGregor in his presentation of the report, referred Members to Appendix 1 and 2 which set out the previously agreed schedule of payments to Parish Councils and a proposed revised schedule of payment.

When Council Tax Support was introduced in 2013/14, the Council received a grant for this reason from Central Government as part of their Revenues Support Grant (RSG) of which a proportional amount was to be transferred to Parish Councils. During the first year this was approximately £423,000. Given that RSG was scheduled to come to an end in 2019/20, it was agreed that this grant would be phased out with the final payment to be made during 2020/2021.

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Transfer of the Grant was an administrative burden for the Council and receiving a different amount each year has proven confusing for Parish Councils. In order to alleviate both these matters, the report proposed that the remainder of the Grant be paid to Parish councils during the 2019/20 financial year. It was confirmed that there would be no additional cost to the Council for the proposal.

When questioned by Members Officers gave assurance that Parish Councils had been made aware of the proposals within the report and the outcome of Councillors decisions would be communicated back to Parish Councils at the earliest opportunity.

Proposed by Councillor D. McGregor and seconded by Councillor C. Moesby

RESOLVED that the remainder of the Council Tax Support Grant be paid to Parish Councils in full during 2019/2020 in line with the schedule set out in Appendix 2 of the report.

(Chief Financial Officer)

0583. REPORT ON URGENCY DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE EXECUTIVE

The Head of Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer presented a report advising of Key Decisions taken under the statutory special urgency rules at the last meeting of the Executive.

The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 require that all Key Decisions must be published 28 days prior to being made. Where this is not possible a decision may still be made as long as there was compliance with general exception provisions. Where it is impractical to comply with the general exception rules a Key Decision may only be taken in cases of special urgency. This is where the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Committee agrees that the decision is urgent and cannot be reasonably deferred.

The report advised that at the meeting of Executive on 3rd December 2018 the item "Provision of Facilities Management Services Bolsover District Council (Exempt – paragraphs 3 and 5)" was considered as a matter of special urgency and the relevant notice was issued to the public and Members as set out in Appendix 1 of the report. As the notice was not issued 5 clear days prior to the meeting and in order to comply with the regulations, this matter was reported to this Meeting of Council.

Members were satisfied with the Authorities compliance with the regulations and that special urgency be applied to this matter.

Moved by Councillor T. Munro and seconded by Councillor D. McGregor

RESOLVED that the decision taken by the Executive be noted.

(Monitoring Officer)

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0584. CHAIRMANS CLOSING REMARKS

Lead by the Chairman of the Council Councillor T. Munro, Members and Officers present took a moment of reflection to remember Bryan Mason, former Executive Director of Bolsover District Council.

Meeting concluded at 1024 hours.