

Minutes of a meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Wednesday 20th February 2019 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor R. Turner in the Chair

Councillors T. Alexander, A. Anderson, P. Barnes, T. E. Bennet, R.J. Bowler, P. M. Bowmer, 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, K. Reid, J. Ritchie, J. E. Smith, P. Smith, E. Stevenson, A. M. Syrett, K.F. Walker, B. Watson, D.S. Watson and J. Wilson.

Officers:-

D. Swaine (Chief Executive Officer) 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) and N. Calver (Governance Manager).

0688. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T. Munro and S. Peake

0689. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded that any Councillor in arrears of Council Tax by more than two months should not vote in decisions on, or which may effect, budget calculations, and must disclose at the meeting if any of the restrictions applied to them. Further, any Member who is a tenant of a Council property was required to declare an interest but had an automatic dispensation to remain in the room, speak and vote on the item.

The Monitoring Officer gave assurance that each Member of Council, as residents of the District, as Parish Councillors or County Councillors, had an automatic dispensation to remain in the room, speak and vote on item 8 (Medium Term Financial Plan - MTFP).

Councillor J. Smith declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in item 8 (MTFP) as a tenant of a Council property.

Councillor M. J. Dooley declared a disclosable personal interest in item 8 (MTPF) as a tenant of a Council property.

Councillor J. Ritchie declared a significant other interest in item 8 (MTPF) due to his appointment on the Dragonfly Board.

0690. CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS

In his absence the Chairman of the Council requested for Councillor R. Turner to report to Members that the Civic Service would be held on 23rd March at 3pm at St Lawrence's Church, Whitwell. A request was made for the 2nd April 2019 to be reserved in Members' diaries for a fashion show to raise funds for the Chairman's Charity.

0691. 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.

0692. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

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

0693. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on Wednesday 9th January 2019 as set out in pages 5-10 of the agenda pack.

Proposed by Councillor M. J. Dooley and seconded by Councillor D. McGregor.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 9th January 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

(Governance Manager)

0694. MOTIONS

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

0695. RECOMMENDED ITEMSAmendments to Council Procedure Rule 21.1

The Chairman advised that it was the wish of Members that the report detailing amendments to Council Procedure Rule 21.1 be deferred for consideration at this time and brought back to a future meeting of Council.

Proposed by Councillor A. M. Syrett and seconded by Councillor D. McGregor

RESOLVED that the item be deferred.

(Governance Manager)

0696. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2019/20 – 2022/23

The Council considered a report of the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources and Renewable Energy which recommended the approval of the proposed budget for 2019/20 for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan covering the years 2019/20 – 2022/23.

The report confirmed the position previously reported to the Executive with the estimated out turn for 2018/19, this being that the Council had achieved efficiencies of £1,039,000 which would be transferred to the Transformation Reserve where it could finance the Council's transformation plans, service developments and any restructuring costs.

It was reported that the Government had made changes the way that the New Homes Bonus (NHB) operated in 2017/18 – 2018/19. The number of years for payments to be received was reduced from 6 to 5 and then again reduced down to 4 years in 2018/19. A National baseline had been introduced set at 0.4%. Due to the uncertainty created around the future of NHB payments, prudent estimates had been included in the budget and unfortunately, provisional allocation figures decreased receipts even further for 2019/20 by £110,000 each year to 2022/23. This scheme was not confirmed beyond 2020 and there was a real risk that the scheme would either be ended at this point or its value eroded over the forthcoming years.

It was still too early to clarify the impact of the Fair Funding Review (FFR) but initial modelling indicated that resources would be redirected to those based on need which would impact negatively on most shire Districts. The risk of losses from the FFR was also much greater for District Councils due to their ability to raise Council Tax. This put a greater burden on local decision making in regard to Council Tax setting each year. Members were aware that on conclusion of the one year Business Rates pilot the Council would revert back to the previous funding regime and RSG would have been phased out. A consultation paper had been released at the end of 2018 advising

that Business Rates baselines had been reset and the impact of this had been built into the Budget to mitigate any losses caused by these funding changes.

In regard to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for 2018/19 rent levels were set in line with Government regulations with a reduction of 1% and a surplus of £1665.00 was estimated. The proposed budget for 2019/20 showed a surplus of £22,775 and details of this were detailed in Appendix 3 of the report. Although, the main source of income for the HRA was property rents, the HRA was also dependent for its financial stability on a range of other charges. For 2019/20 the charges were recommended to be increased by 2.4%. In preparing the budgets all known factors had been taken into account and included in assumptions.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendments) Regulations 2014, a recorded vote was taken on the motion (where matters affected the setting of the Council's Budget or Council Tax)

For the motion – 31

(Councillors T. Alexander, A. Anderson, P. Barnes, T. E. Bennet, R.J. Bowler, P. M. Bowmer, 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, K. Reid, J. Ritchie, J. E. Smith, P. Smith, E. Stevenson, A. M. Syrett, R. Turner, K.F. Walker, B. Watson, D.S. Watson and J. Wilson).

Against the motion – 0

Abstentions – 0

Moved by Councillor B. Watson and seconded by Councillor A. M. Syrett

RESOLVED that:

- 1) It be accepted that in the view of the Chief Financial Officer, the estimates included in the Medium Term Financial Plan 2019/20 – 2022/23 are robust and that the level of financial reserves, whilst at minimum levels, are adequate;
- 2) officers be requested to report back to Executive and the Budget Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis regarding the overall position in respect of the Council's budgets. These reports should include updates on achieving the savings and efficiencies necessary to secure a balanced budget for 2020/21 and future years;
- 3) a Council Tax increase of £5.12 be levied in respect of a notional band D property (2.99%);

- 4) the Medium Term Financial Plan in respect of the General Fund as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved as the current budget 2018/19, in respect of the budget 2019/20, and the financial projection of 2020/21 to 2022/23;
- 5) any underspend in respect of 2018/19 be transferred to the Transformation Reserve;
- 6) on the basis that income from Planning Fees may exceed £500,000 in 2019/20, the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader be granted delegated powers to authorise such additional resources as necessary to effectively manage the resultant increase in workload;
- 7) the Council set its rent levels in line with Government Regulations, reducing rent levels by 1% to apply 1st April 2019;
- 8) increases in respect of other charges as outlined in Appendix 3 Table 1 to the report be implemented with effect from 1st April 2019;
- 9) the Medium Term Financial Plan in respect of the Housing Revenue Account as set out in Appendix 3 of the report be approved as the current budget in respect of 2018/19, as the original budget in respect of 2019/20 and the final projection in respect of 2020/21 – 2022/23;
- 10) the Capital Programme as set out in Appendix 4 of the report be approved as the current budget in respect of 2018/19, and as the approved programme of 2019/20 – 2022/23; and
- 11) the Head of Property and Estates be granted delegated powers in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and the Asset Management Group to approve the utilisation of the £260,000 of AMP refurbished work, and such approvals be reported back to Executive through the Quarterly Budget Monitoring report.

(Section 151 Officer)

0697. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY REPORTS 2019/20 – 2022/23

Members gave consideration to a report of the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources and Renewable Energy which provided the necessary information to approve the Council's Treasury Management Strategies for 2019/20 to 2022/23.

The Councils Treasury Strategies included the Treasury Management Strategy, the Capital Strategy, and the Investment Strategy; all of which were appended to the report.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code requires for the Council to approve a Treasury Management Strategy before the commencement of each financial year. In addition, it requires for a Capital Strategy to be produced alongside the Treasury Management Strategy. Recent guidance produced by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government further requires for Local Authorities to produce a Corporate Investment Strategy. Therefore, in order to fulfil these requirements three separate Treasury Management Strategies were presented to Council for approval.

Proposed by Councillor B. Watson and seconded by Councillor A. M. Syrett

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Treasury Management Strategy be approved as set out in Appendix 1 to the report including the Borrowing Strategy, the Treasury Management Investment Strategy, Credential Indicators and the use of external Treasury Management Advisors to determine the latest assessment of the counter parties that meet the Council's criteria prior to investment being undertaken;
- 2) the Capital Strategy be approved as set out in Appendix 2 to the report including the Capital Financial Requirement, the Minimum Revenues Provision Statement of 2019/20 detailed within. In particular:
 - Authorised borrowing limit – £131,921,000
 - Operational boundary - £126,921,000
 - Capital Financing requirement - £121,921,000; and
- 3) The Corporate Investment Strategy as set out in Appendix 3 to the report be approved.

(Section 151 Officer)

Councillor J. Ritchie wished to have his abstention from the vote recorded at the in the Minutes.

0698. INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE STATUTORY ROLE OF THE SECTION 151 OFFICER

The Joint Chief Executive Officer presented a report to Council seeking approval for the Chief Accountant to be designated as the Section 151 Officer to the Council, on a temporary basis pending appointment of a new Head of Finance and Resources, and to outline the recruitment process for the post.

Members noted that the Joint Head of Finance and Resources had resigned from her post, with the role being vacant from the 1st April 2019. Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 required for all Councils to make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and secure that one of their Officers be responsible for the administration of those affairs.

Therefore, there was a statutory requirement for the Council to appoint a Section 151 Officer during the period of recruitment.

Whilst other options had been investigated, such as securing a temporary arrangement with another Council to meet the statutory requirement, these were not pursued and weight was given to the need to maintain momentum regarding delivery of the MTFP and to ensure that the Section 151 role was met in full. Council believed it required an experienced individual to lead the challenging budget setting and, it was confirmed that the Chief Accountant held the required qualifications and experience to fulfil the role and was currently acting as a Deputy Section 151 Officer.

Members noted that recruitment for the post of Joint Head of Finance and Resources would be undertaken in line with the Council's Recruitment and Selection policy and procedure. The process would be robust, challenging and transparent to ensure high quality and aspirational applicants were identified and interviewed.

Proposed by Councillor A. M. Syrett and seconded by D. McGregor

RESOLVED that the Chief Accountant be temporarily appointed as the Section 151 Officer from the 1st April 2019 pending the recruitment for the Joint Head of Finance and Resources post.

(Chief Executive Officer)

0699. CARBON REDUCTION PLAN

The Strategic Director – People gave a presentation to Members of Council on the Carbon Reduction Plan 2019 to 2030. It was defined that our Carbon Footprint was how we measure our impact on our environment and also the primary source of Climate Change and its negative impacts. With climate change being the second most pressing issue facing our world today there was a growing Global awareness with the effect of Carbon footprint on the planet and a growing appetite for change.

Members were leaders for this change and they could demonstrate this by reducing the use of the Councils consumable energy waste by reducing, reusing, recycling and rethinking the way in which things were done in order to move to a lower carbon lifestyle. The vision for the Authority was to become a District that:

“balances economic prosperity with environmental sustainability, improving the lives of our people for today and the future”.

The Carbon Reduction Plan set out how the Council could commit to this challenge and make changes going forward.

Members noted that the current emissions for the District had dropped over recent years, new technology had been installed in buildings, journeys had been rationalised, and solar power was more widely used. The Council's buildings and work places attributed to 70% of emissions with 15% attributed to its fleet. Targets had been set for 50% reduction in emissions by the District Council by 2030 and an 80% reduction by 2050.

Members were urged not to underestimate the influence that Local Authorities had across a range of sectors and the role that the Council could play in driving Economic Growth and Local Regeneration. In their role as community leaders and having influence in these areas in a way that results in emissions reductions, there is the chance of economic and social benefits for the Council and for the communities of the Bolsover District including:

- reduction in fuel poverty;
- financial and environmental improvement through sustainable buildings, renewable energy and waste reduction;
- infrastructure improvements through Planning;
- environments which have improved biodiversity value; and
- development and support for local jobs.

The Carbon Reduction Plan set out eight thematic areas by which the organisation wished to reduce its Carbon Emissions and these areas would be updated regularly. Council were informed that the Executive had agreed to establish a Carbon Reduction Sub-Group to manage, monitor and review its Carbon Reduction objectives. The Carbon Reduction Plan would become part of the corporate consciousness, becoming the responsibility of every employee and embedded into service plans.

Previously, the Authority had considered installing solar panels at its Waste Management Depot but, on cost analysis it had not been a viable option. The Strategic Director – People advised that this matter could be revisited. Members put forward suggestions such as replacing plastic bags for a more environmentally friendly option for litter pickers and moving towards paperless meetings.

Members wholeheartedly welcomed the presentation and the Carbon Reduction Plan and looked forward to working towards its aims and objectives.

Proposed by Councillor R. Turner and seconded by Councillor A. M. Syrett

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

(Strategic Director - Place)

0700. LEISURE – GETTING PEOPLE ACTIVE

The Strategic Director – People showed a short video to Members of Council updating them on the services provided by Leisure for the communities of Bolsover District. These services included swimming, gym facilities, football coaching, group exercise classes, GP referral, sports awards, partnership working, volunteering, and supporting sports clubs.

The Council had seen a 173% increase from 9,800 to 26,800 in monthly visits to its Leisure Facilities since GoActive at The Arc opened. Swimming lesson attendance had increased by 195% and the number attending public swim sessions had increased by 60%. 258 children aged between 2 and 6 had learnt to ride a bike through the balance ability programme and 7,936 people attended the gym every month (an increase of 412%).

The Council staged the 6th Annual School Bowls Championship with 12 schools taking part. 692 children between 10 and 11 years old received pre-tournament coaching and 105 took part in the competition.

The Council had delivered over 700 hours of activities to over 3,000 participants at Pleasley Vale Outdoor Activity Centre, including hosting the Adventure Fest. 21 schools and 8,765 pupils between September and November had taken part in over 13 different sports as part of the Council's school sports programme averaging 770 children per week.

10 Parish Councils had received support through the Active Communities Programme including Elmtun with Creswell, Old Bolsover and Blackwell.

Members thanked officers for the work undertaken to promote and support local leisure within the District.

Moved by Councillor R. Turner and seconded by Councillor M. J. Dooley

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

(Strategic Director - Place)

Meeting concluded at 11:12 hours