

EXECUTIVE

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Monday, 27th January 2025 at 10:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Steve Fritchley in the Chair

Councillors Anne Clarke, Mary Dooley, Duncan McGregor, Sandra Peake and John Ritchie.

Officers:- Karen Hanson (Chief Executive Officer), Steve Brunt (Strategic Director of Services), Jim Fieldsend (Monitoring Officer), Theresa Fletcher (Section 151 Officer), Mark Giles (Assistant Director Streetscene and Enforcement), Chris Fridlington (Director Development and Devolution) Richard Winter (Climate Change Officer), Lorri Darby (Developments and Contracts Officer, DMBL), and Alison Bluff (Governance).

Also in attendance at the meeting were Junior Cabinet Members Donna Hales, Duncan Haywood (representing Councillor Clive Moesby), Phil Smith and Jane Yates.

The meeting stood in one minutes silence in respect of International Holocaust Remembrance Day in memory of the victims of the Holocaust.

EX69-23/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Clive Moesby.

EX70-23/24 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

EX71-23/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

EX72-23/24 MINUTES - 21ST DECEMBER 2024

Moved by Councillor Duncan McGregor and seconded by Councillor John Ritchie

RESOLVED that the Minutes of an Executive meeting held on 21st December 2024 be approved as a correct record.

EXECUTIVE

NON KEY DECISIONS

EX73-23/24 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

Executive considered a detailed report, presented by Junior Cabinet Member Councillor Duncan Haywood, which sought Members approval of the current budget for 2024/25 and the proposed budget 2025/26, for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme as part of the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan, covering the years 2024/25 to 2028/29. The report also provided an overview of the Council's financial position in order to inform the decision-making process.

The Section 151 Officer referred Members to table one in the report which showed a shortfall in the General Fund of almost £1m in 2028/29, however, the Section 151 Officer noted she was confident that more income would have been received to cover this by 2028/29 and the shortfall would be zero. Council Tax would be increased by the maximum of 2.99% - this was assumed in all the Council's grant figures, and housing rents by 2.7%, which was Government policy: CPI plus 1%. As the cumulative effect of the rent increase took effect, this would make it easier in the HRA.8/29

Moved by Councillor Mary Dooley and seconded by Councillor John Ritchie

RESOLVED that: 1) all recommendations below be referred to the meeting of Council on 29th January 2025;

- 2) that in the view of the Section 151 Officer, that the estimates included in the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2024/25 to 2028/29, were robust and that the level of financial reserves whilst at minimum levels were adequate, be accepted,
- 3) officers report back to Executive and to the Finance and Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis regarding the overall position in respect of the Council's budgets,

GENERAL FUND

- 4) a Council Tax increase of £6.07 be levied in respect of a notional Band D property (2.99%),
- 5) the Medium-Term Financial Plan in respect of the General Fund as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be approved as the Revised Budget 2024/25, as the Original Budget in respect of 2025/26, and the financial projection in respect of 2026/27 to 2028/29,
- 6) any further under spend in respect of 2024/25 be transferred to the Council's General Fund Reserves,
- 7) on the basis that income from Planning Fees may exceed £0.500m in 2024/25, the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Leader, be granted delegated powers to authorise such additional resources as were necessary to effectively manage the resultant increase in workload.

EXECUTIVE

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

- 8) Council increases its rent levels by 2.7% to apply from 1st April 2025,
- 9) the increases in respect of other charges as outlined in Appendix 4 Table 1 of the report be implemented with effect from 1st April 2025,
- 10) the Medium-Term Financial Plan in respect of the Housing Revenue Account as set out in Appendix 3 and 4 of the report be approved as the Revised Budget in respect of 2024/25, as the Original Budget in respect of 2025/26, and the financial projection in respect of 2026/27 to 2028/29,
- 11) under spends in respect of 2024/25 to 2028/29 be transferred to the HRA Revenue Reserve.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 12) the Capital Programme as set out in Appendix 5 to the report be approved as the Revised Budget in respect of 2024/25, and as the Approved Programme for 2025/26 to 2028/29.

Reasons for Recommendation

The report presented a budget for approval by Council. It sought to ensure approval to budgets in respect of the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account and the Capital Programme.

Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

Alternative options were considered throughout the report.

EX74-23/24 LEASE OF 3 / 4 VERNON STREET, SHIREBROOK

Executive considered a detailed report, presented by Councillor John Ritchie, which sought Member's approval to enter into a lease agreement in relation to 3 / 4 Vernon Street, Shirebrook, on the terms as detailed in the report.

The interested party was in the neighbouring property, and the vacant unit presented an opportunity for them to expand their business operation without the need for them to relocate, disrupt staff and incur significant relocation costs.

The Developments and Contracts Officer had received a proposal for a 10-year lease term at a rental value of £15,000 per annum, fully repairing and insuring the unit. The proposal suggested a minimum one-year rent-free period to offset a proportion of the improvements which the interested party was proposing for the building and wider site. An upwards only rent review would be completed in the 5th year of the term - this would be based on market value.

Moved by Councillor John Ritchie and seconded by Councillor Duncan McGregor

RESOLVED that the Monitoring Officer is given delegated authority to finalise the heads of terms, including the schedule of works, and enter into a lease agreement based on the Heads of Terms negotiated which include a 12 month rent free period.

EXECUTIVE

Reasons for Recommendation

Securing the tenancy would both provide a suitable premises for a SME business to grow within the district and ensure occupation of the premises avoiding it falling into disrepair. Agreeing the tenancy would secure rental income of at least £15,000 per annum for the 10-year term. In addition, the business rate liability, currently £7,500 per annum would be passed onto the tenant.

With the Council's permission, the tenant proposed to complete extensive improvements to the internal of the building and the site compound. Necessitating the Council to complete only mandatory compliance works. An itemised list of works was attached in Appendix 1 to the report, this list was not exhaustive. It was proposed that necessary compliance works were funded via the Council's Transformation Reserve, as the Capital Budget allocated to the Facilities Management Team had been fully utilised on other projects for this financial year. A delegated decision would be completed to authorise and access the reserve funding when the itemised list was fully costed. This ensured the premises could be let and generate an immediate revenue stream. A proportion of the costs incurred for improvements would be offset within the rent-free period.

The timescales for completing the improvement works would be agreed between the interested party and the Council and would be written as a clause within the lease agreement. This would give the Council assurance that works would be completed within a specified time frame.

All the works would be documented in a schedule of works on completion. This ensured, at the end of the tenancy, that the Council recovered premises in a better condition than originally let, subject to general wear and tear.

Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

Not to proceed with the new tenancy may result in the interested party choosing to relocate their business to alternative premises and this could potentially fall outside the district. This would result in a loss of revenue income.

Should the Authority not proceed with the letting of the premises, they would need to complete dilapidation works to the premises to bring it up to the desirable standard for letting, this would be at a cost to the Council, as well as delaying any new tenancy.

The Council opt to dispose of the premises, foregoing any repairs. This would however lead to the loss of a revenue generating asset from within the Council's portfolio.

KEY DECISIONS

EX75-23/24 NEW DWELLINGS - ALDER CLOSE, SHIREBROOK

Executive considered a detailed report, presented by Councillor Sandra Peake, which sought Member's approval to construct nine new dwellings at Alder Close, Shirebrook. The report also sought approval to appoint Dragonfly Development Limited to deliver the new builds.

At the time of publication of this report, the scheme brought forward had not been granted planning permission, however, Councillor Ritchie confirmed that planning permission had been granted at Planning Committee held on 22nd January 2025.

EXECUTIVE

The scheme would provide a mix of nine houses comprising of 2 x 3 Bed Semi-Detached, 2 x 2 Bed Semi-Detached, 2 x 1 Bed Semi-Detached and 3 x 1 Bed Terraced. A site layout was shown at Appendix 1 to the report. The properties would meet National Design Guide Characteristics and were built to Design Team preferences. The external elevations of the properties had been designed to complement and enhance the surrounding area of Shirebrook.

The costs put forward by Dragonfly Development Limited had been independently assessed by Whiteley Eaves Ltd, who were appointed by the Council to act as Managing Agent, Quantity Surveyor and Principal Designer for Bolsover Homes schemes in a value for money assessment, and confirmed them to be competitive.

The construction of these new homes would provide the first nine of the 200 homes to meet the Council's priority of delivering 200 new homes through the Bolsover Homes Programme using Dragonfly Development Ltd by March 2028. Members were asked to note that this scheme was not included within the Bolsover Homes work programme when agreed by the Council in July 2020. However, following a review of available owned land by the Design Team it was decided that this was the optimal site to develop next. If Executive agreed to the capital expenditure budget as outlined within the report for the scheme, a report requesting its inclusion in the Bolsover Homes pipeline would be submitted to Council for approval before the scheme could proceed.

Homes England (HE) had indicated that they were likely to offer funding towards the scheme from their current funding pot in the amount of £500,000, subject to grant of planning permission and sign off at national panel, which was expected by the end of February 2025. HE had indicated that it would not be possible to provide this funding if the scheme completion date went beyond March 2026 as this was when the current round of funding must be spent. HE had also stated that there was no certainty that Bolsover Homes schemes would be eligible for any new funding rounds that may become available beyond March 2026.

Brownfield Housing Funding for this scheme was applied for from EMCCA, who had indicated they would contribute £170,000 towards the scheme provided it met their funding criteria and could be defrayed by March 2026. Both Homes England and EMCCA were aware of these two separate funding applications and had confirmed that both funding streams could be used for this scheme. Subject to Executive and Council approval, Dragonfly would be able to start on site in March 2025, which would allow time for the construction to be completed by March 2026, in line with funding deadlines.

Moved by Councillor Sandra Peake and seconded by Councillor John Ritchie

RESOLVED that: 1) Executive approves the capital expenditure budget as outlined within the report to deliver the Alder Close affordable housing building scheme in the amount of £2,035,877 (less £670,000) – Scenario 1, Table 1,

- 2) a report be submitted to Council to update the schemes included in the Bolsover Homes pipeline funding envelope of £36.2m for the Alder Close, Shirebrook scheme, which was currently not included,
- 3) Executive agrees that the Council enters into contract with Dragonfly Development Limited for the development of Alder Close as outlined in the report, subject to Council approval for inclusion in Bolsover Homes pipeline funding.

EXECUTIVE

Reasons for Recommendation

To continue to meet the growing demand for affordable housing in the district.

To deliver a more affordable rental residential development in the district.

To help to meet the Council Priority of delivering 200 new homes through the Bolsover Homes Programme using Dragonfly Development Ltd by March 2028.

To meet the timeline criteria of funders.

Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

The Council could decide not to proceed with the scheme. This was rejected as there was budget to proceed and not proceeding would not help to meet the Council's priority of delivering 200 new homes through the Bolsover Homes Programme using Dragonfly Development Ltd by March 2028.

EX76-23/24 LEASE OF 8A CAVENDISH WALK, BOLSOVER

Executive considered a detailed report, presented by Councillor John Ritchie, which sought Member's approval to enter into a lease agreement with Bolsover Community and Voluntary Service (BCVS) for 8a Cavendish Walk, Bolsover on the terms as detailed in the report.

BCVS were a vital voluntarily service working within communities across the Bolsover District and had occupied a prominent location within Bolsover's market square for the past two years. The service supported local community groups, enhanced social mobility, provided signposting, delivered funding surgeries, and supported Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE). In addition, BCVS offered training and personal development opportunities for young adults and those at risk within the local area. Rather than profit, their objective was to create social, cultural and environmental value within the community.

The services provided by BCVS had now expanded to the extent that they required larger premises to accommodate further growth. The expansion would facilitate additional staffing to enhance service delivery for new and existing services.

BCVS had submitted a proposal for a 5-year lease based on the market value of £5,250 per annum. The proposal suggested a 12-month rent free period following 100% cuts in discretionary grants by Derbyshire County Council. These cuts had directly impacted the voluntarily sector.

As part of the programmed regeneration projects, the Council would purchase BCVS current premise at 36/36a Market Place, Bolsover, which had necessitated BCVS to relocate to an alternative property. A recent valuation of 8a Cavendish Walk, Bolsover, undertaken by the Council's Senior Valuer, suggested an achievable rental of £5,250 per annum. Following recent viewings of the property, BCVS had submitted an offer for market value rent, subject to a 12-month rent-free period.

Moved by Councillor John Ritchie and seconded by Councillor Duncan McGregor

RESOLVED that the Council enters into a lease agreement on a 5-year lease term with a 12 month rent-free period.

EXECUTIVE

Reasons for Recommendation

Securing the tenancy would ensure occupation of the premises and avoid it falling into disrepair.

Agreeing the tenancy would secure rental income of at least £5,250 per annum for the 5-year term. In addition, the business rate liability, currently £4,191.60 per annum would be passed onto the tenant.

Supporting the relocation ensured BCVS were able to continue delivering vital services within the community.

Accommodating the services expansion, supported the Council's priority in strengthening the local communities' skills by delivering training and development opportunities. Retaining BCVS within the Bolsover high street demonstrated the Council's support of the voluntary sector and how it recognised the benefit it brought to the community.

Post Regeneration Fund project works, it was envisaged that BCVS would work alongside the Council within the community-based business hub proposed for the former White Swan public house, allowing 8a Cavendish Walk to be advertised on the open market for a further commercial letting.

Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

Not to proceed with the new tenancy may result in BCVS needing to relocate their services to alternative premises. Given the absence of alternative accommodation within the district, this could result in relocation outside of the Bolsover district. Not only would this be a financial cost to the Authority, should the building remain empty, but also a loss of a vital support service, potentially causing significant adverse effects to unmet needs and decreased support.

Should the Authority not proceed with the letting of the premises, they would need to advertise the property on the open market, delaying any new tenancy and its potential revenue stream.

EX77-23/24 FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR GREEN SKILLS HUB

Executive considered a detailed report, presented by Councillor John Ritchie, which sought approval for the Council to accept funding from East Midlands Investment Zone to complete a feasibility study into the proposed Green Skills Hub at Portland Drive, Shirebrook. The report also sought approval to appoint consultants to deliver the feasibility study.

The Council was developing a Green Skills Hub at Portland Drive, Shirebrook, funded through the UK Government Regeneration Fund. The Green Skills Hub was being developed as part of the long-term strategy to develop green and retrofit skills across the district and followed on from the successful retrofit skills projects that the Council had led on including Phases 1 and 2 of the Retrofit Pilot.

In November 2024, the Council submitted a bid to EMIZ (East Midlands Investment Zone) Strand A process for £249,914.25 for the development of the feasibility study into the Green Skills Hub. The bid was submitted with partners RLB (Rider Levett Bucknall) and was in partnership with local colleges, universities, and businesses. The bid was

EXECUTIVE

successful, and subject to EMCCA scrutiny, the support would be funded by EMCCA. The money awarded through the EMIZ process must be spent by March 2025. Though due to delays in awarding the funds this was being negotiated further into 2025-2026.

Moved by Councillor John Ritchie and seconded by Councillor Duncan McGregor

RESOLVED that: 1) the funding of £249,914.25 from East Midlands Investment Zone be accepted,

2) RLB Rider Levett Bucknall be appointed to deliver the project on behalf of Bolsover District Council.

Reasons for Recommendation

The first phase of the project would support officers across the Council and Dragonfly, develop the Green Skills Hub proposals at Portland Drive, Shirebrook, maximise its potential by ensuring the training and the facilities it would offer drove inclusive growth within the local economy and wider region by making sure the services it would offer were directly relevant to local residents, local communities, local colleges and universities and local businesses.

If the first phase of the project were successful, there was the potential to obtain additional funding for a follow-on project that would support the kit out of the building and its future operations including delivery of training courses.

However, the short timelines for award of the grant and spend meant that making a direct award of a contract to RLB to undertake part of the project was the only viable option, also considering the appointment of RLB to deliver the project would build on the recent projects they had delivered across green skills and retrofit.

Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

To withdraw the application for funding and return the award, would not stop the development of the Green Skills Hub, but would reduce its potential, and the development of the curriculum, and courses would still need to be undertaken. Additional resource funding, staff time and additional capital expenditure on kit would be needed to complete this exercise without the funding from EMIZ.

Councillor Fritchley noted this was his last Executive meeting as Leader of the Council and Councillor McGregor as Deputy Leader. He thanked everyone for their support over the previous six years and wished the new Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet all the best and success for the future. Councillor McGregor echoed these comments and stated that he and Councillor Fritchley would be around to support the new Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet.

Councillor Sandra Peake thanked Councillor Fritchley and McGregor and wished them all the best for the future.

The meeting concluded at 10:20 hours.