

Minutes of Policy & Finance Committee

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 20 March 2018, starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor K Hind (Chairman)

Councillors:

S Atkinson	A Knox
S Bibby	G Mirfin
A Brown	J Rogerson
M French	I Sayers
T Hill	D T Smith

In attendance: Chief Executive, Director of Resources, Director of Community Services, Head of Financial Services, Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

Also in attendance: Councillors M Fenton and N Walsh.

688 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors J Alcock, P Elms, S Hirst and R Swarbrick.

689 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2018, Special Policy and Finance Committee held on 6 February 2018 and Policy and Finance Sub-Committee held on 19 February were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

690 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

Councillors S Bibby, A Knox, I Sayers and J Rogerson all declared an interest in Agenda item 15 – Voluntary Organisation Grants 2018/19.

691 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

692 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2018/19

The Director of Resources submitted a report seeking Committee's approval for the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for the 2018/19 financial year.

The report outlined that Local Authorities are required to report on specific elements of their Treasury Management activities. These were included in the Treasury Management Strategy or in the Treasury Management Policies and Practices. The objectives of the strategy are to ensure within a clear framework that the Capital Investment Plans of Local Authorities are affordable, prudent and sustainable and decisions are taken in accordance with good professional advice

and in fullest understanding of the risks involved and how these risks will be managed to levels that are acceptable to the organisation.

A key recommendation of the Treasury Management Code of Practice is to include reports to Full Council or the delegated Committee (Policy and Finance Committee) specific elements of their Treasury Management activities deemed necessary to ensure that those responsible for Treasury Management are kept fully informed.

The Treasury Management Strategy covers the following areas:

- the current treasury and debt position;
- a review of the prospects for interest rates;
- the Council's Borrowing and Debt Strategy;
- the Council's Investment Strategy;
- the Capital Programme;
- limits on treasury management activities and Prudential indicators;
- Annual Investment Strategy; and
- Corporate Governance

*** RESOLVED: That Committee recommend to Council the Treasury Management Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report. ***

693 TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND PRACTICES 2018/19

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking Committee to review, approve and adopt the Treasury Management Policy Statement and Practices for 2018/19.

The Treasury Management Policies and Practices document governs the way we manage our investments. It is reviewed on an annual basis to comply with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code. The Code identifies 12 areas where statements of Treasury Management Practices should be developed to implement the full requirements of the Code.

The Treasury Management Practices are split into key principles and schedules which cover the detail of how the Council will apply the key principles in carrying out its operational treasury activities.

Since the Treasury Management Policy Statement and Treasury Management Practices were approved in March 2017 there had been a number of minor updates made to the schedules which have been highlighted within the document.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. formally adopt the Treasury Management Policies and Practices document as attached to the report incorporating:
 - Treasury Management Key Principles;

- Treasury Management Policy Statement;
- Treasury Management Clauses;
- Treasury Management Practices and Schedules

2. Recommend to Council the Treasury Management Policies and Practices 2018/19.

694 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2018/19 TO 2021/22

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking Committee to approve the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 to 2021/22. This was the Council's key financial planning document and aimed to provide an assurance that our spending plans are affordable over the medium term. It allows the Council to take budget and investment decisions in the shorter term but with the availability of information on our future financial position. It is then possible to assess how these decisions may impact on our financial stability.

The medium term financial strategy was split into two sections:

The first part provided details of the last forecast position that Committee considered in September 2017 and also provides the current contextual background from both a local and national perspective and also explains our key areas of income and expenditure and the position on the Capital Programme.

The second part covers the details that have previously been submitted to the Government with regard to our efficiency plan and also looks at the latest forecast medium revenue position, as well as the risk and sensitivity surrounding the forecast and the financial management arrangements that are in place.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy forms an integral part of the Council's financial planning process and whilst it is a document produced by the Finance team, it is important that it is understood and recognised by all staff and Members across the Council.

The document had been reviewed and considered by the Budget Working Group at their meeting on 14 February 2018 and following discussions on the various sections had been fully endorsed.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2018/19 to 2021/22.

695 GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

The Director of Resources submitted a report providing Members with details of the new requirements under GDPR and the implications for this Council. The report looked at the requirements under the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR for Members in their various roles as a Member of the Council, a representative of residents of their Ward and representing a Political Party.

The GDPR will apply in the UK from 25 May 2018, the Government had confirmed that the UK's decision to leave the EU would not affect the commencement of GDPR. Like the Data Protection Act, GDPR applies to personal data, however the GDPR's definition is more detailed and expansive, providing a wide range of personal identifiers that constitute personal data, reflecting the changes in technology and the way organisations collect information about people.

The Data Protection principles under GDPR set out the main responsibilities for organisations. The accountability principle requires that organisations put in place comprehensive but proportionate governance measures. The following procedure, policies and frameworks will become a requirement under GDPR and should minimise the risk of breaches and uphold the protection of personal data:

- Information Audit;
- Establish an information asset register;
- Privacy Impact Assessments;
- Documented procedures for Subject Access Request; and
- Privacy by design.

GDPR also creates some new rights for individuals and strengthens some that current exists under the Date Protection Act:

- the right to be informed;
- the right of access;
- the right to rectification;
- the right to erasure;
- the right to restrict processing;
- the right to data portability;
- the right to object;
- rights in relation to automated decision making and profiling.

The GDPR state that a Data Protection Officer should be designated by Local Authorities to take responsibility for data protection compliance. However it had been highlighted by GDPR and the Information Commissions Office that there had been issues around potential conflicts of interest for those holding the role of Date Protection Officer, in particular where the role of Data Protection Officer is held by someone in the ICT Section. As a result a potential conflict of interest had been identified for our current Data Protection Officer role and work was ongoing to identify how this conflict of interest could be addressed.

In the changeover to GDPR there was likely to be an extensive workload for the Data Protection Officer role in ensuring our compliance.

There were also implications for Members in their 3 different roles:

- As a Member of the Council, eg as a Member of a Committee; Members may be required to access personal information. However in this case it is the Council rather than the Councillor that determines what personal

information is used and how it is processed and the Councillor is therefore covered under the Council's Register;

- As a representative of residents of their Ward, eg dealing with complaints – there is a need that the Councillor would have to be registered in their own right; and
- Representing a Political Party, particularly at Election time – when acting on behalf of a Political Party Councillors were entitled to rely upon the Registration made by the Party.

Members discussed various aspects of this report including the importance to be covered by registration in all aspects of their individual roles. They also discussed the workload implications and the conflict of interests for the role of Data Protection Officer.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. agree that the Council should pay for the registration fees of all Members in respect of their constituency role at an annual cost of £1,600; and
2. note the potential that additional staffing resources may be needed in order to meet the statutory requirements of GDPR.

696 LOCAL TAXATION WRITE OFFS

Committee were asked to approve the write offs of certain Council Tax and Business Rate debts relating to a company that had been dissolved. Reasonable steps by various means had been taken to collect these debts.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve writing off £331.60 Council Tax and £1,189.45 Business Rates where it had not been possible to collect the amounts due.

697 ANNUAL REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS

The Chief Executive submitted a report that reviewed the Council's Standing Orders (Part 4 of the Council's Constitution) to ensure clarity and in readiness for approval of the Council's Constitution at its annual meeting in May.

The Council's Standing Orders are the rules which govern the conduct and proceedings of the Council's meetings (including those of its Committee's and Sub-Committees). Following the review 3 areas had been identified as requiring changes to their drafting to ensure clarity of meaning and completeness. The 3 areas are Standing Order 3 – Continuance of Committees; Standing Order 21 – Sub-Committees/Working Groups and Standing Order 21 – Order of Business.

The proposed amendments were shown as track changes in a copy of the Standing Orders document.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve the changes outlined in the report and shown as track changes in the Standing Orders document; and

*** 2. refer the proposed changes to the Council with a recommendation for their approval. ***

698 REFERRAL TO THIS COMMITTEE OF NOTICE OF MOTION FROM FULL COUNCIL RELATING TO SOCIAL MOBILITY

The Chief Executive submitted a report informing Committee that a Notice of Motion in the name of Councillor Alan Knox had been considered by Full Council on Tuesday, 6 March 2018 and supported. The Notice of Motion related to the latest Social Mobility Commission report published in November 2017 where the Ribble Valley ranks 311 out of 324 for social mobility amongst young people.

The Council resolved to set up an all-party Working Group to provide a report to Policy and Finance Committee no later than its September meeting.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. constitute a working group comprising of 1 Member from each of the Labour (Councillor M Fenton) and Liberal Democrat (Councillor A Knox) groups and 3 Members from the Conservative group (Councillors S Bibby, G Mirfin and J Rogerson);
2. agree that the terms of reference of the working group are 'to determine the reasons for the apparent lack of social mobility amongst young people in the Ribble Valley and to provide recommendations for the Council and partners as to how they should tackle the problems going forward'; and
3. agree the working group should finalise their report by 7 September 2018.

699 DRAFT CYCLE OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2018/19

The Chief Executive submitted a report requesting Committee's consideration of the proposed meeting cycle for Committees for the municipal year 2018/19. Members were informed that consideration had been given to various issues that had resulted in the summer cycle being condensed as far as possible and the meeting dates being arranged around the Easter holidays.

RESOLVED: That the draft meeting cycle as submitted be approved for ratification at the Annual Meeting on 8 May 2018 (Appendix to these minutes).

700 PEER CHALLENGE ACTION PLAN

The Director of Resources submitted a report outlining the draft Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan that had been devised to deal with the issues raised by the Peer Team. Included in the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge feedback had been a number of suggestions and observations that led to some key

recommendations for the Council. These had been considered and an Action Plan formulated.

Committee considered the Action Plan which highlighted the issue as raised within the LGA report followed by columns providing detailed actions, milestones, due dates and Lead Officers/Members.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan as outlined in the report.

701 CONCURRENT FUNCTIONS GRANT APPLICATIONS 2017/18

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking Committee to consider the additional allocation of Concurrent Function Grants for 2017/18. She reminded Committee that they had approved the Concurrent Function Grant allocations in January 2018; however it had subsequently been brought to our notice that some Parishes had not included some eligible expenditure which they now requested to be included.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the further allocation of 2017/18 Concurrent Function Grants as detailed below:

PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL	REASON	GRANT AMOUNT £
Gisburn	Additional grass cutting	167
Billington & Langho	Additional grass cutting	346
West Bradford	Additional grass cutting	147
Clitheroe	Maintenance of Cenotaph area in Castle grounds and Tom Robinson play area	300
Newton	Expenditure for Bowland Higher not included on claim submitted (part of old lengthsman scheme, therefore payable at 100%)	598
Bowland Forest Higher	Adjustment re lengthsman expenditure	1
Total		£1,559

(Councillor A Knox left the meeting)

702 VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION GRANT APPLICATIONS 2018/19

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking Committee to consider the allocation of Voluntary Organisation 2018/19 Grants as proposed by a working group of this Committee.

The Chief Executive informed Members that he believed this Council was very proud of its record of Members being involved with lots of voluntary groups across the borough and that as such Councillors who are representative on a

particular body but in his view need not leave the meeting but should not comment on the grant application from any body that they are involved with.

The Working Group deliberated 22 applications requesting support totalling £167,491. After careful consideration of all the grant applications received the working group had recommended grant allocations as circulated to the Committee totalling £109,250.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the allocation of grants as proposed by the Voluntary Grants Working Group for 2018/19 as set out below totalling £109,250:

Organisation Name	Grant Approved for 2018/19
Carers Link Lancashire	£2,000
Chipping Baby & Toddler Group	£500
Chipping Parish Council	£8,000
Chipping Show	£500
Citizens Advice Bureau Ribble Valley	£51,500
Clitheroe Community Bonfire and Firework Display	£750
Friends of St Pauls, Low Moor	£500
Goosnargh & Longridge Agricultural Show	£500
Hodder Valley Agricultural & Horticultural Society	£500
Home Start Pendle and Ribble Valley	£4,000
Lancashire Best Kept Village Competition	£500
Little Green Bus	£10,000
Longridge Field Day Events	£500
Ribble Valley Crossroads Care	£15,000
Ribble Valley Shop-mobility and Information Centre	£7,500
Ribble Valley Talking Newspaper	£500
Royal Lancashire Agricultural Society	£750
Whalley Pickwick Night Committee	£750
Bowland Mountain Rescue	£5,000
Total	£109,250

(Councillor A Knox returned to the meeting)

703

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2018/19

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information of the schemes which had been approved for inclusion in this Committee's 2018/19

Capital Programme. There were 3 approved schemes totalling £156,420. Detailed information for each scheme was included for information.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

704 REVENUE MONITORING 2017/18

The Director of Resources submitted a report informing Committee of the position for the first 10 months of this year's Revenue Budget as far as this Committee was concerned. This comparison was made against the revised estimate.

The comparison between the actual and budgeted expenditure shows an overspend of £44,467 on the first 10 months of the financial year 2018/19 after transfers to and from earmarked reserves. However there are some large fluctuations that make up this net figure, some of which will be offset by future income/expenditure.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

705 REVENUES AND BENEFITS GENERAL REPORT

Committee considered a report which covered the following areas:

- National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR);
- Council Tax;
- Sundry Debtors;
- Housing Benefit and Council Tax support performance;
- Housing Benefit overpayments.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

706 BUDGET WORKING GROUP

Committee received the minutes of the Budget Working Group meetings held on 30 November 2017, 18 January 2018 and 24 January 2018.

707 PRUDENTIAL CODE CHANGES

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information providing them with recent changes to the Prudential Code. This is professional Code of Practice to support the decisions Councils have to make to plan for capital investment at a local level.

Changes have been made to take into account many changes in Local Government since the production of the additional Prudential Code, particularly around austerity and commercialism. The report outlined the changes that had been made with risk being the key factor under the Code.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

708 REFERENCES FROM COMMITTEES

There were no References from Committee.

709 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies.

710 REFERENCES FROM COMMITTEE

There were no References from Committee.

711 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

That by virtue of the fact that the following item of business being exempt information under Category 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

712 LOCAL TAXATION WRITE OFFS

Committee considered a report asking them to approve the writing off of Council Tax debts and Business Rate debts where it had not been possible to collect the amount due.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the writing off £6,363.14 of Council Tax debts plus £480.00 costs and £25,248.47 Business Rates plus £60.00 costs where it has not been possible to collect the amount due.

The meeting closed at 7.55pm.

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact Jane Pearson (425111).

Ribble Valley Borough Council
Meeting Cycle 2018/19
(8 May 2018 – 14 May 2019)

MEETINGS	Day	TIME	1 ST CYCLE 2018	2 ND CYCLE 2018	3 RD CYCLE 2018	4 TH CYCLE 2019	5 TH CYCLE 2019
Community Services	Tues	6.30pm	22 May	4 Sept	30 Oct	8 Jan	12 March
Planning and Development	Thurs	6.30pm	24 May	6 Sept	1 Nov	10 Jan	14 March
Personnel	Wed	6.30pm	13 June	12 Sept	7 Nov	16 Jan	20 March
Health & Housing	Thurs	6.30pm	7 June	13 Sept	8 Nov	17 Jan	21 March
Licensing	Tues	6.30pm	12 June	18 Sept	13 Nov	29 Jan	26 March
Economic Development	Thurs	6.30pm	14 June	20 Sept	15 Nov	24 Jan	28 March
Policy & Finance	Tues	6.30pm	19 June	25 Sept	20 Nov	22 Jan + 5 Feb	2 April
Parish Liaison	Thurs	6.30pm	21 June	27 Sept	22 Nov	31 Jan	4 April
Planning & Development	Thurs	6.30pm	28 June + 2 August	4 Oct	29 Nov	7 Feb	11 April
Accounts & Audit	Wed	6.30pm	25 July		31 Oct	13 Feb	10 April
Full Council	Tues	6.30pm	10 July	16 Oct	11 Dec	5 March	30 April

2018
Offices Closed
Spring Bank : 28 May 2018
August Bank : 27 August 2018
Christmas : 24 - 28 December 2018

Annual Council : 8 May 2018

2019
Offices Closed
New Year : 31 Dec - 1 January 2019
Good Friday : 19 April 2019
Easter Monday : 22 April 2019
May Day : 6 May 2019

Borough & Parish Elections : 2 May 2019
Annual Council : 14 May 2019