

Minutes of Policy & Finance Committee

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 19 June 2018 starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor K Hind (Chairman)

Councillors:

J Alcock	G Mirfin
S Atkinson	J Rogerson
S Bibby	I Sayers
M French	D T Smith
S Hirst	R Swarbrick
A Knox	

In attendance: Chief Executive, Director of Resources, Director of Community Services, Head of Financial Services, Head of Regeneration and Housing and the ICT Manager.

Also in attendance: Councillor M Fenton.

98 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors R Bennett, A Brown and T Hill.

99 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2018 and the Sub-Committee meeting held on 10 April 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

100 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest.

101 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

102 APPOINTMENT OF WORKING GROUPS 2018/2019

The Chief Executive submitted a report for the appointment of Members to any working groups under the remit of the Policy and Finance Committee and to agree their membership. The working groups that currently come under the remit of this Committee are the:

- Communications Working Group
- Market Redevelopment Working Group
- Voluntary Organisation Grant Working Group
- Budget Working Group
- Social Mobility Task and Finish Working Group

It was felt that subject to another item later on the agenda, that the Market Redevelopment Working Group would no longer be required.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the continuance of the following working groups:

- Communications Working Group – Councillors K Hind, S Hind, G Mirfin, G Geldard and A Knox.
- Voluntary Organisation Grant Working Group – Councillors A Brown, S Hirst, T Hill and M Robinson.
- Budget Working Group – Councillors K Hind, R Swarbrick, S Hirst, S Atkinson, A Brown, J Rogerson and A Knox
- Social Mobility Task and Finish Working Group – Councillors S Bibby, M Fenton, A Knox, G Mirfin and J Rogerson.

103 ICT STRATEGY

The Director of Resources submitted a report seeking Members' approval of a draft ICT Strategy. The Council does not currently have a formal documented ICT strategy in place and at the recent Corporate Peer Challenge this had been raised as an issue and had subsequently been approved in the action plan following the peer challenge.

A draft ICT Strategy was included for Members' consideration. The key principles that had driven the strategy and action plan are business transformation, grow the right people skills and culture, build better tools processes and governance for officers, make better use of data, and improve performance and security. The action plan within the strategy had been produced following input from all Heads of Service and the Corporate Management Team. There were a number of areas that would need to be developed corporately whilst others would require more specific development within services by the relevant system champions. Where highlighted, budgets have already been approved for action or can be undertaken at no cost other than staff time and completed within existing revenue budgets. Where no budget had been approved, these would need to be considered further by service committees and Policy and Finance Committee.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the new ICT Strategy as appended to the report.

104 PROMOTIONAL WEBSITE

The Director of Resources submitted a report seeking approval from Members of the Council's new promotional website. As part of the work of the Council's Communications Working Group, Members considered that a separate promotional website was needed for the Council. It was agreed that such website should be overarching across all of the Council's other websites and would have more of a signposting function directing visitor traffic to our own sites and also those of other external bodies. The promotional website had been produced using the themes of live, work and play. A demonstration of the website was given for Members' information, and it was explained that there were no additional costs from the creation of the new website.

Members were generally impressed with the new website but pointed out that the strapline needs to be more prominent and the photographs used need to be up to date.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the new promotional website.

105 REFERENCE FROM COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE – FIRE PROTECTION WORKS AT LONGRIDGE DEPOT

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking Committee to consider a reference from Community Services Committee with regard to a request for a supplementary estimate of £8,180 for fire protection works at Longridge Depot. As reported to Community Services Committee the Longridge Depot requires significant works to bring it in line with the regulations. It was suggested that the repairs and maintenance earmarked reserve would be the most suitable earmarked reserve to be used.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the request for the supplementary estimate of £8,180 with the full amount to be financed from the repairs and maintenance earmarked reserve for the fire protection works at Longridge Depot.

106 REFERENCE FROM PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – APPOINT OF FULL TIME PRE-APPLICATION OFFICER

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking Committee to consider a reference from Personnel Committee with regard to a request for a supplementary estimate of £13,020 for the appointment of a full time Pre-Application Officer. This post is currently part time and included on that basis within budget. The pre-application post had been vacant since 18 February 2018 and had been advertised twice and on both occasions the applicants did not meet the required criteria to qualify for interview. It was felt necessary to advertise the post as a full time post to increase the likelihood of attracting the necessary candidates. The increased costs of £13,020 relates to all costs over and above that already budgeted for, for a full financial year.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the request for the supplementary estimate of £13,020 for a full year with the full amount to be financed from increases in pre-application planning fees. The financial impact for the current year to be brought into the budget calculated based on the start date of the new post holder.

107 CAPITAL SCHEME 2018/2019 – HOOK LIFT VEHICLE REPLACEMENT SCHEME

The Director of Resources submitted a report seeking approval from Members for a new capital programme scheme request for the current financial year. The grounds maintenance section operates a hook lift vehicle which has in the past been considered for replacement as part of the capital programme bidding rounds. Due to the inability to fund all prospective bids submitted as part of the capital programme bidding rounds, this vehicle replacement was not progressed with a view to examining alternative ways of working in order to remove the need for the vehicle. It had since been identified by the Head of Service that it was not possible to implement alternate ways of working that eliminate the need for the replacement vehicle as it is a bespoke vehicle used for delivering the grounds

maintenance programme at the Cemetery and on other sites around the borough. The capital scheme request proposes that the vehicle is replaced with a like for like vehicle at an estimated cost of £50,000 and it was proposed to finance this cost using the resources from the business rates growth earmarked reserve.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the capital scheme request of £50,000 for the hook lift vehicle replacement scheme and for this to be financed from the business rates growth earmarked reserve.

108 FIRE PROTECTION WORKS REQUIRED AFTER FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS

The Director of Community Services submitted a report informing Committee of the remedial works required after recent fire risk assessments at the over 60s club in Longridge. The building requires significant works to bring it in line with the regulations as failure to comply could result in a fine and/or incarceration. Responsibility for the Longridge over 60s club falls under Policy and Finance Committee and the statutory works required were detailed at a cost of £7,140.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve

1. the carrying out of the fire protection works as listed in the report; and
2. the request for the supplementary estimate of £7,140 with the full amount to be financed from the repairs and maintenance earmarked reserve.

109 REVIEW OF 2015-2019 CORPORATE STRATEGY

The Director of Resources submitted a report to review the Council's Corporate Strategy 2015-2019. The Corporate Strategy sets out the strategic direction of the Council for the period 2015 to 2019 providing a focus to ensure that the services we deliver meet the needs of our communities. The strategy has a four year scope but is reviewed annually to ensure that it continues to reflect the changes to our priorities that occur over time. Following the local elections taking place in May 2019, a new strategy will be developed with a four year lifespan covering 2019 to 2023. Changes had been made to the previous strategy to reflect the 2018 perception survey results.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the updated Corporate Strategy.

110 GDPR IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS REPORT AND DATA PROTECTION POLICY

The Director of Resources submitted a report providing Members with details of the progress being made in the implementation of the requirements under GDPR and also to seek the associated approval of the Council's new Data Protection Policy. The Data Protection Act 1998 had now been superseded by the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which introduces tougher fines for non-compliance and breaches and gives people more say over what companies can do with their data. GDPR had been reported to the Accounts and Audit Committee for discussion and consideration around governance issues.

It was reported that a large amount of detailed work had been undertaken across the Council and its services in preparation for the application of GDPR from 25 May 2018 and that there would be much ongoing monitoring and training work that would continue to take place. A summary of the progress was given which included work under the following:

- Awareness;
- Information the Council Holds;
- Communicating Privacy Information;
- Individuals' Rights;
- Subject Access Requests;
- Legal Basis for Processing;
- Consent;
- Children;
- Data Breaches:
- Data Protection by Design/Data Protection Impact Assessments;
- Data Protection Officer; and
- International.

As part of the compliance work with the GDPR a full review of the Data Protection Policy had taken place and had essentially been re-written.

With regard to the Data Protection Officer, following consideration by the Corporate Management Team, it had been agreed that the Data Protection Officer role would remain with the ICT Manager. Some Members expressed concern about this and asked that it be kept under review.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the new Data Protection Policy as attached to the report.

111 CAPITAL OUTTURN 2017/18

The Director of Resources submitted a report to review the final outturn of the 2017/18 Capital Programme for this Committee and to seek Member approval for the slippage of some capital scheme budgets from the 2017/18 financial year to the 2018/19 financial year.

The Capital Programme for this Committee consisted of 9 schemes totalling £102,700. This however had been amended at revised estimate stage which left 8 schemes totalling £147,700. Actual expenditure to date was £72,272. Five of the 8 schemes in the revised estimate capital programme were completed in year and there were no overspends against the budget set for 4 of the completed schemes. Three schemes were not completed in year which included the replacement server for Revenues and Benefits, new telephone system and part of the Civic Suite upgrade.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the slippage of the budget in to the 2018/19 financial year of £86,140 for the 3 schemes outlined.

112 UPDATE ON THE CONSULTATION PARTNERSHIP – INFUSION RESEARCH

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information on the change of approach to the Council's consultation and research requirements, following notification that the Infusion Research service had been withdrawn by Blackpool Council. The running of smaller surveys would continue to be carried out by ourselves with the IT Section hosting on-line surveys. We would continue however to require occasional help and advice, especially with larger more complex surveys and reports and will therefore retain a consultation budget of £6,500 to be used for corporate consultation requirements.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

113 PERCEPTION SURVEY 2018

The Director of Resources submitted a report informing Committee of the results of the Perception Survey 2018. This survey is an important indicator of how our residents feel about public services in the Ribble Valley and it was felt that opportunity should be taken to make the most of the data available and the chance to link the findings to our decision-making processes and strategic planning.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

114 OVERALL CAPITAL OUTTURN 2018/19

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information with details of the Capital Programme outturn for all Committees for the 2017/18 financial year.

During the year the Council had spent £723,401 of the 24 schemes in the revised capital programme; 12 had been completed, 5 were in progress, 4 had no expenditure on them and the budget slippage into 2018/19 had been requested totalling £551,090.

Details of all the schemes were included in the report for Committee's information.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

115 OVERALL REVENUE OUTTURN 2017/18

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information on the overall Revenue Outturn for the year ended 31 March 2018. The report outlined the final outturn position compared to the revised estimate; Committee variances; earmarked reserves; general fund balances; business rates; and the collection fund.

The final outturn of a deficit of £183,000 means that we have taken £100,000 less from general fund balances than was estimated when the revised estimates were prepared.

There had also been £299,000 more added to earmarked reserves than forecast at revised estimate.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

116 REVENUES AND BENEFITS GENERAL REPORT

Committee considered a report which covered the following:

- 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.

117 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES 2017/18

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information on the 2017/18 Treasury Management operations. The report outlined the following topics:

- Borrowing requirements;
- Investments;
- Prudential Indicators;
- Local Government Bonds Agency.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

118 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING 2018/19

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information on the Treasury Management activities for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 May 2018. The report outlined the following topics:

- Public Works Loan Board;
- Borrowing Requirements;
- Temporary Investments;
- Prudential Indicators;
- Local Government Bonds Agency;
- Approved Organisations;
- Recent Events; and
- Exposure to Risk.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

119 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 (RIPA)

The Council's Solicitor submitted a report for Committee's information upon the Council's use of its powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. There had been no use in the last 6 months.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

120 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES 2018/19

The Chief Executive submitted a report informing Members of the Outside Bodies that are under the remit of the Policy and Finance Committee and their membership.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

121 PARTNERSHIP WORKING UPDATE

The Chief Executive submitted a report providing Committee with an update on progress against the Community Strategy for Ribble Valley which was adopted in October 2014 and the work of the partnership team. The report gave a summary of the actions carried out over the past 2 years by the Partnership Officers as well as a summary of the actions currently being deployed in association with the town centre youth issues and a summary of the community strategy actions.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

122 COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP

Committee received the minutes of the Communications Working Group meetings held on 29 August 2017, 26 September 2017, 6 November 2017, 18 December 2017, 19 February 2018 and 20 March 2018

123 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

That by virtue of the fact of the following items of business being exempt information under Categories 1 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

124 DEPARTMENTAL RESTRUCTURING

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking Committee to agree changes to the Council's departmental restructure following the successful recruitment to the post of Director of Economic Development and Planning who will start her employment with the Council on 6 August 2018. It was proposed to transfer the Head of Planning Services and his staff from the Community Services Department to the new Economic Development and Planning Department and the Head of Regeneration and Housing and his staff from the Chief Executive's Department to the New Economic Development and Planning Department.

It was recommended that any decisions on tourism and planning enforcement, as well as the physical location of staff would be considered once the new Director had taken up post.

Other changes required would be to the Constitution, a Delegation Scheme, Lead Officers of Committees and stationery and signage etc.

Councillor Fenton was given permission to speak on this item and suggested that a Town Centre Manager to look after Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley, might be included at some stage.

RESOLVED: That Committee agree to the changes to the Council's Departmental Structure as outlined in the report.

125 LOCAL TAXATION WRITE-OFFS

Committee considered a report asking them to approve writing off Housing Benefit debt where it has not been possible to collect the amount due.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the writing-off of £1,222.90 of Housing Benefit debt where it had not been possible to collect the amount due.

126 ESTATE MATTERS – CLITHEROE JOB CENTRE

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking Committee to consider granting an extended Licence for the Clitheroe Job Centre. He reminded Committee that the Clitheroe Job Centre had successfully relocated into the Council Offices in October 2016 for an initial Licence period of 18 months.

The Department for Work and Pensions had now indicated their wish to extend the Licence period to 10 years with a 5 yearly break clause.

RESOLVED: That Committee agree to extend the Licence to the DWP Job Centre to 10 years.

127 ESTATE MATTERS – POTENTIAL LICENCE FOR THE USE OF THE FORMER PHYSIOTHERAPY CENTRE

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking Committee to consider a request from the Foundation for Ribble Valley Families to rent the former Clitheroe Physiotherapy Centre.

The building was currently unoccupied and was likely to be demolished if the market re-development scheme goes ahead. However in the meantime it was felt that the building could be let for an initial period of 6 months and thereafter on a week by week basis at the Council's discretion.

RESOLVED: That Committee confirm the offer to the Foundation for Ribble Valley Families to use the former physiotherapy centre on the terms set out in the report, but it be stressed that this is only for a temporary period.

128 RE-DEVELOPMENT OF CLITHEROE MARKET SITE – UPDATE

The Chief Executive submitted a report giving Members an update on the market area redevelopment project and asking them to agree actions to progress a development scheme.

In order to progress the scheme, Members were now asked to consider the submitted proposal in the context of the previously agreed requirements such that it can be moved to the next stage. The next stage would include the scheme being financially appraised and the Heads of Terms and Development

Agreement negotiated before being brought back to Committee to consider whether they wished to formally enter into a development agreement with Barnfield Construction.

Members discussed the scheme and felt it was time to move forward with the design concept outlined although not all Members were in agreement with this.

RESOLVED: That Committee

- Note 1:**
- 1. approve the scheme as now proposed in principle for it to move to the next stage;**
 - 2. agree that Heads of Terms, a Development Agreement and Financial Appraisal be prepared based upon the scheme as now presented and reported back to this Committee for consideration; and**
 - 3. delegate to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of this Committee, a strategy for publicising the scheme as it develops.**

129 ANTI-RANSOMWARE AND ANTI-VIRUS SOFTWARE

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information on the considerations that had taken place through Corporate Management Team with regard to Ransomware and the current anti-virus software.

The Council's previous contract for the provision of anti-virus software had expired and an alternative provider had been sourced rather than continuing with the current provider. As a result of the same discussions it had also been agreed to strengthen the resilience to Ransomware.

These changes would increase the annual costs by £2,500 and would be met from the ICT renewals earmarked reserve for the current financial year.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

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

- 1. This decision was subject to the Call-in Procedure – see minutes of the Emergency Committee.**