

MINUTES of a meeting of the CABINET held in the Board Room, Council Offices, Coalville on TUESDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2017

Present: Councillor R Blunt (Chairman)

Councillors R D Bayliss, T Gillard, T J Pendleton, N J Rushton and A V Smith MBE

In Attendance: Councillors R Adams, J Bridges, J Clarke, J G Coxon, D Everitt, T Eynon, J Geary, G Houlst, J Legrys, V Richichi, S Sheahan and M Specht

Officers: Mr S Bambrick, Ms C E Fisher, Mrs C Hammond, Mr A Hunkin, Mr G Jones, Mr P Padaniya and Miss E Warhurst

**88. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**89. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

During the presentation of the report for item 9 – Measham Conservation Area: Adoption of Character Appraisal and Boundary Review, Councillor N J Rushton declared a pecuniary interest as he owned a property that was within the conservation area. He left the meeting during the discussion and voting thereon.

**90. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

No questions were received.

**91. MINUTES**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2017.

It was moved by Councillor R Blunt, seconded by Councillor A V Smith and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2017 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**Reason for decision:** To comply with the Constitution.

**92. GENERAL FUND AND SPECIAL EXPENSES REVENUE BUDGETS 2017/18**

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. He reminded Cabinet that they had approved draft budget proposals on the 13 December 2016 for consultation and informed Members that additional work on the base budget had been completed and the Government had also announced the provisional grant funding for 2017/18.

He highlighted to Members that the New Homes Bonus Payments were set at £2.84m as part of the settlement. It was £340k higher than assumed in the MTFs and whilst this was more than expected for 2017/18, the Council would receive some £445K less over the next 3 years, mainly due to the introduction of the deadweight factor, where payments would only be made on growth above 0.4% (approximately 140 homes) and Appendix 1 on page 17 of the report summarised the Council' General Fund position and shows a surplus budget position of £902k.

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He stated that for 2017/18 he was pleased to announce that the authority was able to give Town and Parish Councils the same amount of Local Council Tax grant as last year. But as the report sets out, the level of support in future years would be reducing adding that Central Government initially gave the grant to District Councils, separate from the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) which it then incorporated within the RSG; and RSG is being phased out. The Council have discussed the issues with Town and Parish Councils and will be reducing grant at a slower level than the RSG decline.

He advised members that the report explained the volatility around locally retained business rates and the reduction of New Homes Bonus in future years which made it prudent to continue to hold a high level of reserves and for the eighth year running it was proposed that there would be a freeze of the District's Council Tax.

He drew Members attention to Section 3 of the report which detailed of the Projected Outturn for 2016/17 and explained why there was a forecast under spend of £1.3m compared to a budget of £1.1m and that some of this underspend had already been committed through reports to Cabinet and the recommendation was to transfer the surplus to reserves, and that both the end of year position and projected budget for 2017/18 relied heavily on the business rates income therefore recommending to wait until the business rates were finalised in May prior to making any commitments to how the under spends would be allocated. Adding that Cabinet would receive further reports in due course.

Councillor R Blunt stated that Government advised Local Authorities to make a balanced budget and that the Cabinet had ensured that it was the case for the past ten years. He commended Councillor N J Rushton and the officers for their hard work and was pleased that it was proposed to freeze the Council Tax again as there were some authorities that were proposing a 15% increase. He stated that it was excellent to see that the Council was not putting Council Tax up and continued to provide a good service.

Councillor T J Pendleton stated that times were bumpy and that the budget was prudent and this was the right approach.

Councillor A V Smith stated that she was pleased to see that provision was being made to continue with the opening of the Coalville Market Hall toilets on Sundays.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor R Blunt and

RESOLVED THAT:

Cabinet recommends to Council:

- A. That it notes the level of reserves and assurance statement by the Deputy Section 151 Officer in section 7 of the report.
- B. The budgeted surplus income over expenditure in 2017/18 is transferred to an earmarked reserve for further consideration after the completion of the 2016/17 accounts.
- C. The forecasted surplus income over expenditure in 2016/17 is transferred to the special projects reserve.
- D. Approval of the General Fund Revenue budget for 2017/18 summarised in appendix 1.
- E. Approval of the Special Expenses Budget for 2017/18 set out in appendix 2.
- F. That it freezes the District's Council Tax in 2017/18.

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**Reason for decision:** To enable the Council to set a balanced budget for 2017/18 as required by statute.

**93. CAPITAL PROGRAMMES - GENERAL FUND, COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (H.R.A). PROJECTED OUTTURN 2016/17 AND PROGRAMMES 2017/18 TO 2021/22**

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. He advised Members that the report set out and sought approval for the General Fund and Coalville Special Expenses Capital Programmes as set out at appendix A; and the H.R.A. Programme attached at Appendix B and that it also asked Cabinet to delegate authority to award the contracts and agreements as set out in section 7.

He informed Members that the report also showed the projected outturn for the current financial year and drew their attention to the following points:-

- The elements within the General Fund Capital Programme were set out in section 3 along with their funding arrangements, and a total of £3.07m for 2017/18 is budgeted and the 2018/19 Fleet Replacement programme at paragraph 3.2, for which approval was sought.
- The HRA capital programme set out at section 5 and Appendix B which totalled £10.15m, including over £2m for maintaining Decent Homes standards and £1.47m for other improvements to Council homes.
- Major projects included investing £4.25m in the building of up to 44 new council homes on 3 different sites.

Councillor R D Bayliss highlighted the Housing Capital Programme which not only included building new council homes, which was the jewel in the crown but also provision for continuing the Decency Programme, aids and adaptations, and replacing solid fuel heating systems.

Councillor R Blunt stated that authorities listened and took their steer from Government which was currently looking to build more new homes across all sectors and felt that the Council was lucky that Councillor R D Bayliss and the Director of Housing had put the authority in such a position that new houses could be built.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor R D Bayliss and

**RESOLVED THAT:**

- A. The estimated General Fund, Coalville Special Expenses and H.R.A. Capital Outturn for 2016/17 and Planned Financing be noted.
- B. Council be recommended to approve expenditure in 2017/18 as per:
  - Appendix "A" General Fund and Special Expenses Capital Schemes
  - Appendix "B" for HRA Capital Schemes

And in 2018/19 these schemes only:

- £935,000 for the vehicle replacement programme, as detailed in paragraphs 3.2 to 3.2.3

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- C. The proposed procurement routes be noted and authority be delegated to award the contracts, and any associated agreements in furtherance of the projects, as detailed in section 7 (procurement routes) of the report.

**Reason for decision:** To enable projects to be included in the Programmes and proceed.

#### **94. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2017/18**

The Housing Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. He advised Members that the budget was prepared in the context of the continued 1% annual reduction in rent in its second year, and that only 55% of properties were at their target rent, adding that there was possibly some scope for revising rents following a revaluation process. If the latter were to proceed, he advised the matter would be brought back to Cabinet. He informed Members that the average re-let times were improving which resulted in increasing income for the authority, and also meant that the housing service could fulfil its social responsibility by re-housing applicants in housing need from the Housing Register more quickly.

Councillor N J Rushton stated that the Housing department was exceedingly well run, - not only being able to maintain the stock that it had but being able to build new houses.

It was moved by Councillor R D Bayliss, seconded by Councillor N J Rushton and

RESOLVED THAT:

- A. The Assurance Statement by the Deputy S151 officer be noted,
- B. The Council be recommended to:
  1. Approve the decrease in council house rents for 2017/18 by 1% (average of 83 pence per week).
  2. Approve the increase of 2% (13 pence per week) in garage rents for 2017/18.
  3. Approve the reduction in central heating charges for 2017/18 by 10%
  4. Approve the average increase of 1.03% (7 pence per week) in service charge for 2017/18.
  5. Approve the ground rent increase at Appleby Magna caravan site of 2% (62 pence per week) on the anniversary of each individual rent agreement in 2017/18.
  6. Approve the lifeline charges increase of 8% (79 pence per week) for private customers and 2% for registered provider customers from April 2017.
  7. Approve the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2017/18 attached as appendix A.

**Reason for decision:** To enable the Council to set a balanced Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2017/18.

#### **95. THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2017/18 AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2017/18 TO 2019/20**

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. He advised Members that it was an annual report which Cabinet considers before making recommendations to

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Council. And that Statement as proposed complied with statutory, regulatory and professional requirements. He highlighted that specific roles and responsibilities are identified, that the Council utilises the services of an independent treasury adviser and that the Council regularly reports treasury management activity in year to the Audit and Governance Committee.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor T Gillard and

RESOLVED THAT

The Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2017/18, Prudential Indicators -revised 2016/17 and 2017/18 to 2019/20, and the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Statement, be recommended for approval by Full Council.

**Reason for decision:** These are statutory requirements.

**96. MEASHAM CONSERVATION AREA: ADOPTION OF CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND BOUNDARY REVIEW**

During the presentation of the report Councillor N J Rushton declared a pecuniary interest in the item as he owned a property in the conservation area. He left the meeting during the discussion and voting thereon.

The Regeneration and Planning Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. He advised Members that the work outlined in the report worked in conjunction with the submitted Local Plan and outlined proposal to review the boundaries in the north of the town. He drew Members attention to the consultation responses at appendix 3 that had been taken into consideration.

Councillor R Blunt stated that review of the area reminded people of the Character of the town especially the industrial roots. He informed Members that the formation of the conservation area for Coalville arose from the success of the Measham area and in having a conservation area helped owners of the properties acknowledge the respect that the properties should be treated with. He highlighted that the Authority was lucky to have a Conservation officer who was able to carry out such work.

Councillor A V Smith stated that it was an excellent report that made very interesting reading.

It was moved by Councillor T J Pendleton, seconded by Councillor R Blunt and

RESOLVED THAT:

The character appraisal and boundary review for the Measham conservation area be adopted.

**Reason for decision:** Adoption of the character appraisal and boundary review would:

- (a) Support the aims of the Council Delivery Plan relating to sustainable development and growth and people feeling proud of their homes and communities; and
- (b) Support the Council in fulfilling its duties under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 relating to the designation and review of conservation areas.

Councillor N J Rushton returned to the meeting.

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## 97. AUTHORITY TO AWARD FRAMEWORK CONTRACT FOR REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. He advised Members that the current framework contract came to an end on 31 March 2017 and in conjunction with Charnwood the authority was looking to put another framework contract in place.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor R Blunt and

RESOLVED THAT:

Authority to award the framework contract for repairs and maintenance of public buildings be delegated to the Director of Resources in consultation with the Corporate Portfolio Holder.

**Reason for decision:** The level of expenditure on this contract exceeds the authority threshold in the Scheme of Delegation and after 31/3/17, the Council will not have any effective and efficient provision in place for the repair and maintenance of its public buildings.

## 98. MINUTES OF THE COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES WORKING PARTY

The Community Services Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. She congratulated the Members of the Working Party and Officers for delivering another successful Christmas in Coalville event and remarked on how well organised, attended and received by residents it was. She advised that the Christmas lights were now aging and work had begun to look at options on how to move forward. She was pleased to hear that planning had begun on the Proms and Picnic in the Park events for the year and was happy to report that she had recently visited the new green gym at Melrose Road along with Councillors J Geary and D Everitt.

Councillor A V Smith informed Members that following a public consultation it had been proposed to rename the Urban Forest Park as Coalville Forest Adventure Park and following consultation with the British Legion it had been considered that the Forest park was not an ideal location for a Centenary memorial and options were now being considered for a mosaic to be incorporated into the Memorial Square improvements.

Councillor R Blunt commended the important work that the Working Party carried out and working together with the Coalville project hoped that the Council could make Coalville a success.

It was moved by Councillor A V Smith, seconded by Councillor R Blunt and

RESOLVED THAT:

The recommendations made by the Coalville Special Expenses Working Party as detailed within the minutes be noted and the recommendations as summarised at 3.0 be approved.

**Reason for decision:** To progress Coalville Special Expenses projects and programmes.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 5.25 pm

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