

MINUTES of a meeting of the CABINET held in the Board Room, Council Offices, Coalville on TUESDAY, 12 JUNE 2018

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 D Everitt, F Fenning and S Sheahan

Officers: Mr J Arnold, Mrs T Bingham, Mrs C Hammond, Mr G Jones, Mr L Sebastian and Mrs B Smith

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no interests declared.

3. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were no questions received.

4. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 1 May 2018.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 May 2018 be approved by the Chairman as a correct record.

Reason for decision: To comply with the Constitution

5. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STEWARDSHIP REPORT 2017/18

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He reminded Members that the report provided a summary update of the Treasury Management activity during 2017/18 and that regular, quarterly reports were received by the Audit and Governance Committee.

He advised Cabinet that there had been one breach of the Treasury Management Strategy in 2017/18 in relation to the counterparty limit for the Council's main banking provider. He advised that it was because an unexpected payment of £1.7m hit the bank account and took the authority over the limit that was agreed within the strategy, but added that there was no consequence and that the limits had been put in place by the authority to protect the Council against financial institution collapse.

He stated that the Council had not undertaken any new long-term or temporary borrowing in the year and no opportunities in respect of rescheduling existing debt had arisen. He highlighted that cash was invested in highly rated financial institutions, money market funds or the Government in line with the Councils investment priorities of security and liquidity, and optimum yield achievable within those.

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Councillor N J Rushton informed Cabinet that the Council had achieved an average rate of return of 0.49% for 2017/18 which compared favourably with benchmark returns and that the treasury position at the end of the 2017/18 year reflected a reduction in net debt of £5.6m due to £1.1m repayment of HRA loans and an increase of £4.5m of council funds that were held in investments.

Councillor T Gillard stated that he was pleased that the error was picked up and therefore showed that the systems were working.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

The Treasury Management Stewardship Report 2017/18 be approved.

Reason for decision: These are statutory requirements

6. PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2017/18

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He advised Members that the results were provisional as they were still subject to external audit and could change, and the final audited accounts would be considered and approved by the Audit & Governance Committee on 25 July 2018.

In relation to the General Fund he stated that the expected final position was £3.27m surplus against a budget of £0.934m and that a number of variances had contributed to the position as covered in Table 2 of the report. He informed Members that the most significant variance had been a favourable movement in business rates, with an additional £1.78m retained by the Council compared to the budgeted level.

He highlighted that it was proposed to safeguard the Council against future appeals by transferring £614k to an earmarked reserve and would be used to negate any unfavourable movements in business rates in 2018/19 which could be the result of new appeals. He stated that it was proposed that £1.86m of the surplus arising on the 2017/18 year was contributed to the self-sufficiency reserve which would take the balance of the reserve to £2.76m and of the remaining surplus it was proposed that £600k was set aside to support asset acquisition and redevelopment in Coalville as part of the Coalville Project, and £200k was set aside for the purposes of replacing the Council's finance system. Capital funding for the project was originally agreed as part of setting the capital programme for 2018/19. However, following soft market testing it has been identified that there is a need for predominantly revenue funding instead of capital.

In relation to the outturn on the HRA there was an expected surplus of £520k against a budget of £142k with the major variances being additional rental income, under spend on cyclical costs and a reduction in depreciation charge. He also drew Members attention to the reserves where approval was sought regarding to transfer £698k of existing reserves identified as no longer being required. It was proposed that £486k was to be allocated for strategic site acquisitions to support the acquisitions of sites within the District that were in the public interest in terms of regenerating the District's key towns and £200k towards the replacement of the Council's finance system, taking that total reserve to £400k.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

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The Financial Performance for 2017/18, including the impact on reserves and balances as at 31 March 2018 be approved.

Reason for decision: Requirement of Financial Procedure Rules

7. ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH - FOOD SAFETY SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2018/19

The Community Services Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

She advised Members that as a result of the work undertaken by the Service, the percentage of food establishments rated as 3 or higher had increased from 95.7% to 96.8% over the past 12 months, which was the highest percentage on record and the number of food establishments failing to reach a level of broad compliance with food hygiene law was down to 22, the lowest on record.

She informed Cabinet that the past year had seen an increase in the level of enforcement activity by the food safety team and as such 3 individuals had been successfully prosecuted relating to food hygiene offences at two food establishments, and 3 individuals were prohibited from operating a food business in the future due to the seriousness of the offences. The offences included a large quantity of out of date food being seized which was later condemned by a magistrate. She added that 14 hygiene improvement notices had been served requiring improvement at 6 food businesses.

She reminded Members that in 2017 she had reported that the Environmental health team formed a Primary Authority partnership with HMS Host UK Ltd and that the first twelve months had been spent building knowledge of the company processes and policies. She was pleased to inform Cabinet that the success of the partnership resulted in HMS Host signing a business support contract resulting in the appointment of a part time Primary Authority Officer in March 2018. She explained that the dedicated resource was expected to result in real benefits to the business and the focus of the officer over the next 12 months would be to devise and implement a food safety management system for the company and that the past 12 months had seen a significant increase in the number of food export health certificates issued, rising from 98 to 210.

She explained that the draft 2018/19 service plan would once again focus resources on the highest risk establishments and it proposed to provide an enhanced level of support to selected establishments chosen because of their potential to grow.

Councillor A V Smith stated the service would continue to increase the use of social media to communicate hygiene ratings to both consumers and the businesses and the content of the food safety webpages would also be reviewed and amended. She congratulated the team on their continued efforts to improve standards at the Food establishments within the District.

It was moved by Councillor A V Smith, seconded by Councillor T J Pendleton and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Environmental Health Food Safety Service Delivery Plan 2018/19 appended to the report be approved.
2. The performance and achievements in 2017/18 be noted.

Reason for decision: To approve the content of the Food Safety Service Delivery Plan 2018/19 as required by the Food Standards Agency.

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8. SAFEGUARDING UPDATE 2017-2018

The Regeneration and Planning Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He advised Members that a review of training for the Dedicated Safeguarding Officers had been carried out, there had been 129 cases referred to the team and at 5.3 of the report it detailed where the referrals were then made to.

Councillor R D Bayliss stated that the team was doing a fine job.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

The work of the North West Leicestershire Safeguarding Team during 2017/18 be noted.

Reason for decision: To comply with the Council's Constitution and statutory duty to safeguard children and vulnerable adults, as detailed in the Children Act 2004 and Working Together 2013.

9. RENEWAL OF MICROSOFT ENTERPRISE SOFTWARE LICENCE AGREEMENT

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He advised Members that the current Licence agreement was due to expire on 31 July 2018 and that a new agreement needed to be in place for a further 3 years so that the Council was legally licenced. He stated that the funding of £267,000 would come out of the existing ICT budgets which Cabinet was asked to approve and delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Housing and Customer Services to procure the contract.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by Councillor A V Smith and

RESOLVED THAT:

Authority be delegated to the Strategic Director of Housing and Customer Services in consultation with the Corporate Portfolio Holder to procure a 3 year Microsoft Enterprise Licensing agreement to fulfil its licensing obligations, at the end of the current term.

Reason for decision: To ensure Members are aware of the renewal cost of the Microsoft Enterprise Software Licence Agreement, the renewal costs takes the contract value above the £250,000 threshold which requires Cabinet approval and to authorise the renewal of Microsoft Software Licences Agreement, to ensure the authority stays appropriately licenced and meets its Microsoft software licencing obligations.

10. AUTHORITY TO AWARD THE CONTRACT FOR REPLACEMENT FINANCE ICT SYSTEMS

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He advised Members that the report asked Cabinet to agree to replace 3 of the 4 finance related systems, approve the funding and delegate authority of the procurement and contract award to the Strategic Director of Housing and Customer Services.

He highlighted that the current finance system had been identified as requiring replacement due to its age and issues with functionality and that the proposed procurement timetable followed the Council's contract procedure rules. He stated that the

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project would deliver a wide range of non-financial benefits to all users across the Council, support the journey of the self-sufficiency programme and that a future cashable saving of £20k per annum was anticipated, based on a review of the structure of the Finance team upon implementation of the new system.

He reminded Members that capital funding for the project was originally agreed as part of setting the capital programme for 2018/19. However, following soft market testing, it had been acknowledged that a hosted, cloud based system was more likely to deliver the required benefits and savings to the Council, but highlighted Cloud based systems were predominantly treated as an expense and therefore must be funded largely through revenue.

Councillor N J Rushton informed Cabinet that it was therefore proposed that the project was funded through £200k General Fund surplus arising on the 2017/18 financial year and £200k existing reserves with £100k of the original £450k capital provision retained for costs that would meet the definitions of capital expenditure.

It was moved by Councillor N J Rushton, seconded by A V Smith and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The replacement of three of the Council's four finance related systems be agreed.
2. Authority be delegated to procure and award a contract for replacement ICT systems for finance to the Strategic Director of Housing and Customer Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder; and
3. The funding for system replacement from £100k already set aside in the Capital Programme, £200k from the revenue underspend arising on the 2017/18 financial year and £200k from unallocated reserves be approved.

Reason for decision: The level of expenditure in this contract exceeds the authority threshold in the Scheme of Delegation and to ensure the continuity of provision of the finance service to the Council.

11. 2017/18 QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

The Leader presented the report to Members.

He went through the performance dashboards and indicators and invited the Portfolio Holders to address the performance of their areas.

Councillor A V Smith advised that the Leisure Centre Membership income was down. She stated that Hermitage was full to capacity in its classes and Hood Park had a lot of competition from other gyms.

Councillor R Blunt stated that the improvement of the percentage of calls answered against calls received in Customer Services would form part of an overall performance review once the new Head of Customer Services had started.

Councillor T J Pendleton advised that additional work was being carried out on the site options for gypsy and traveller sites.

Councillor R D Bayliss advised that the number of properties empty and unavailable was due to the ongoing assessments on Woulds Court and Queensway House which would

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further reduce the number of properties that were empty however it would not be achieved by the end of Quarter 4. He drew Members attention to the amended section as detailed in the update report highlighting that 6 new Council houses had been handed over and that in total 144 affordable homes had been delivered across the district exceeding the target of 130 homes.

Councillor T Gillard stated that he was pleased to report that the contract had been awarded for supplying free Wi-Fi in the Town Centres.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

The Quarter 4 Performance Report (Jan-Mar 2018) be received and noted.

Reason for decision: The report is provided for Members to effectively monitor the organisation's performance.

12. END OF YEAR REPORT

The Leader presented the report to Members.

He reminded Members that the Council had produced an End of Year report for the last 2 years and had been compiled using a cross organisational editorial team. He informed Members that the design and style of the report had been refined to reflect the most recent Council Delivery Plan.

He advised that the draft End of Year report was considered by PDG on 8 May and their comments and responses from officers were included at appendix 2. He thanked PDG for providing important scrutiny and challenge.

He stated that the End of Year Report was due to be considered by Council on 26 June, however it was the only item for the meeting and due to the detailed scrutiny by PDG it could be agreed by Cabinet and the Council meeting be cancelled following consultation with the opposition group leader.

Councillor R Bayliss highlighted that the housing repairs service had carried out more in-house work, that the real time customer satisfaction was at its highest, that new Council homes had been built for the first time in three decades and that the authority had supported the resettlement of two Syrian refugee families.

Councillor R Blunt stated that he was happy the repairs service was completing more work in-house.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

The End of Year Report for 2017/18 be approved.

Reason for decision: To provide an overview of the Council's highlights for 2017/18.

13. FORMER TENANT RENT ARREARS, CURRENT TENANT RENT ARREARS, COUNCIL TAX, NON DOMESTIC RATES AND SUNDRY DEBTOR WRITE OFFS

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

He asked Cabinet to note the delegated write offs but highlighted that there were no write offs over £10,000 to approve. He raised some queries around the frequency and contents of the reports and asked if officers could look into it.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

The Non Domestic Rates and Sundry Debt Write Offs that are over £10,000 be approved and the amounts written off under delegated powers be noted.

Reason for decision: To comply with proper accounting practices.

14. MINUTES OF THE COALVILLE SPECIAL EXPENSES WORKING PARTY

The Community Services Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members.

She thanked the Members of the working party for their continuous hard work. She informed Cabinet that preparations were ongoing for the Council's major events specifically Music and Picnic in the Park which was due to be held later in the month and that improvement works at Coalville Forest Adventure Park had commenced.

She was pleased to see that progress was being made on the commemorative artwork in Memorial Square and she urged Members to support the request for £8,000 to be allocated to the project from balances should the funding application to Bardon Hill Quarry Community Fund was unsuccessful. She also asked Members to support the request £3,000 to be allocated to improvement works in the Coalville Park in order to gain the Green Flag accreditation, adding that, again, it would only be required if the funding application to Bardon Hill Quarry Community Fund was unsuccessful.

Councillor A V Smith highlighted to Members that the working party had requested that the name of Coalville Park be changed to Coalville Centenary Park should the application to put the area into trust through Centenary Fields programme is successful, however it was understood that the working party believed that it would enhance the chances although officers had now identified that it would not actually be the case. Cabinet Members were asked to refer that request back to the working party for further consideration.

She was extremely pleased to note that the ongoing issues with Lillehammer Drive as the removal of the MUGA would possibly take place prior to the end of June and that £50,000 of S106 money would be added to the reserves of the Special Expenses.

It was moved by Councillor A V Smith, seconded by 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 5.36 pm

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