

EXTRACT of the MINUTES of a meeting of the POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Coalville on WEDNESDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 2018

Present: Councillor M Specht (Chairman)

Councillors R Ashman, N Clarke, T Eynon, P Purver, V Richichi, A C Saffell, S Sheahan and N Smith

In Attendance: Councillors J Geary, R Johnson and J Legrys.

Portfolio Holders: Councillors A V Smith MBE

Officers: Mr J Bright, Mr M Fiander, Mr G Jones, Mr M Murphy, Mr P Sanders, Mr T Shardlow, Ms K Smith (SLC Rail) and Mrs R Wallace.

16. DRAFT COMMERCIAL STRATEGY

The Director of Housing and Customer Services presented the report to Members, drawing attention to the fact that the deficit figures within the report were continuing to change for the better and would be up dated when presented to Cabinet on 9 October.

In response to a question regarding trade waste collections, the Head of Community Services explained this related to private businesses within the District, not council owned premises. He added that this was an area that was currently being reviewed as there were many more businesses that could be targeted.

Councillor N Clarke commented that the car parking charges were not included within the list of council income. The Director of Housing and Customer Services acknowledged this and it would be included in the report to Cabinet.

Councillor N Clarke was disappointed that the commercial values did not include the accountability to the tax payer as he felt this was an important part of a local authority. The Director of Housing and Customer Services explained that the values were in line with the current Council values but these were currently being reviewed, so there could be a change in the near future.

Councillor N Clarke asked if there was a 'plan b' in the event that the commercial approach did not provide the income required. Other Councils have had to cut services and make redundancies, and he was concerned this would be the case for North West Leicestershire. The Director of Housing and Customer Services responded that the Council was currently in a strong financial position and did not need to cut services in the near future. However, taking action to raise income now would help protect services going forward.

Councillor A C Saffell commented that other Councils had gained income by selling their grounds maintenance services to local businesses and selling the products and supplies they do not use to local people. He suggested this be looked at for another income stream.

Councillor R Ashman concurred with Councillor A C Saffell and believed that was a good suggestion. He believed that the reason other Councils have had to cut services was because they had buried their heads in the sand but as North West Leicestershire were very forward thinking financially, he was hopeful that cutting services would not prove necessary.

In response to a question from Councillor V Richichi, the Director of Housing and Customer Services reported that new businesses locating to the district in the near future

Chairman's signature

had been taken into account when forecasting the council's income and business rates was an area that was very successful.

Councillor S Sheahan felt that it was important to monitor the commercial income closely over the coming years as the levels being received may not be the same from year to year. He added that it was essential to keep the primary focus on providing services for the local people and not get carried away with the commercial aspect of the authority. The Director of Housing and Customer Services agreed that it was important to monitor income closely and he assured Members that the Council's ethos regarding serving the public would not change.

It was moved by Councillor M Specht, seconded by Councillor R Ashman and

RESOLVED THAT:

Comments made by the Committee be provided to Cabinet when considering the report on 9 October 2018.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.23 pm

Chairman's signature