

MINUTES of a meeting of THE LEICESTERSHIRE PARTNERSHIP REVENUES AND BENEFITS JOINT COMMITTEE held in The Atkins Building, Lower Bond Street, Hinckley on THURSDAY, 23 JANUARY 2020

Present: Councillor R D Bayliss (North West Leicestershire) (Chairman)

Councillors D Bill (Hinckley and Bosworth) and P Dann (Harborough)

Officers: Mrs C Hammond, Mrs J Kenny (HBBC), Mrs S O'Hanlon (Leicestershire Partnership - Revenues & Benefits), Mr T Shardlow (NWLDC), V Wenham (Harborough District Council) and Mr A Wilson (HBBC)

20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors R Ashman, J Hallam and K Lynch

21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no interests declared.

22. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2019.

It was moved by Councillor R D Bayliss, seconded by Councillor P Dann and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

23. SERVICE PLAN 2020/21

Mrs S O'Hanlon presented the report to Members.

She reminded Members that it was agreed at start of partnership that there would be one Business Plan for all three, with slightly different wording to reflect each LA's corporate priorities, the Partnership plan would then feed into the three authorities plans. She highlighted three matters that would require addressing during 2020 to meet key government legislation changes, however no detail was known at that time. She also outlined some of the key "Business as usual" projects for the partnership that would be carried out during the year.

Mrs S O'Hanlon advised that the targets for 20/21 would be brought to the Annual Meeting in June for consideration once the year-end figures were known.

In response to questions from Councillor D Bill, Mrs S O'Hanlon advised that in relation to Business Rates, each authority had discretions that could be applied to support business, however the partnership had a duty to collect the rates and that any not collected would have a significant impact on budgets

Mr A Wilson advised that any assistance given to a business had to be in exceptional cases as it was not just the district and borough councils it would effect, but also other precept authorities

It was noted by Members that the Partnership only dealt with fraud prosecutions under the LCTS as all over fraud cases were handled by the DWP.

Chairman's initials

By affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT

The content of the report be received and noted.

24. BUDGET SETTING REPORT

Mr A Wilson presented the report to Members. He drew their attention to the amended tables as set out in the additional papers due to late information that had been received.

He noted that a 2% vacancy had been factored in to the budget, but there would be an increase in the level of contributions that would be required. He highlighted that £120k had been used to reduce the previous years contributions, which looked like an increase for 2020/21. The total contribution would be £3m but there may be savings from the current year that could be used to reduce the levels once the year-end figures were known.

It was moved by Councillor R D Bayliss, seconded by Councillor D Bill MBE and

RESOLVED THAT

The 2020/21 budget proposals for the Partnership be approved.

25. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

Mr A Wilson presented the report to Members.

He highlighted that the current budget was showing an underspend of £159k that was due to some vacant posts and liability expenses. He advised that there was an expected year-end saving of £120k, which could be used to either reduce partnership cost or used to cover proposals that would be covered in the last item on the agenda.

It was moved by Councillor R D Bayliss, seconded by Councillor P Dann and

RESOLVED THAT:

The financial performance of the Partnership be noted.

26. PERFORMANCE REPORT

Mrs S O'Hanlon presented the report to Members.

She advised that the figures in the report were to the end of November. She informed Members that all three authorities were meeting their targets in relation to LA error and subsidy, and that all the Council Tax base rates had been agreed and staff were now preparing for the annual billing process.

She highlighted that in relation to processing targets, all three were meeting their targets. In relation to Council Tax collections NWL were meeting their target and HBBC & HDC would meet theirs by the end of the year. In relation to NNDR collection rates, Mrs S O'Hanlon advised that whilst it appeared that NWL was below target, due to the processing difference, when recalculated it would show that it was on target.

In response to question from Councillor P Dann, Mrs S O'Hanlon advised that management were working closely with staff to deal with long term sickness

Chairman's initials

By affirmation of the meeting it was

RESOLVED THAT:

The content of the report be noted.

27. FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED THAT:

The Forward Plan be noted.

28. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Members noted the dates and venues of future meetings.

29. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED THAT:

In pursuance of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the business to be transacted involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act and that the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Reason for decision: To enable the consideration of exempt information.

30. GROWTH OF THE PARTNERSHIP

Mrs S O'Hanlon presented the report to Members.

It was moved by Councillor D Bill, seconded by Councillor P Dann and

RESOLVED THAT:

The recommendations as detailed in the report be agreed and approved.

The meeting commenced at 4.30 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 5.15 pm