

MINUTES of a meeting of the CABINET held in the Board Room, Council Offices, Coalville on TUESDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2016

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 J Clarke, J Cotterill, J G Coxon, D Everitt, F Fenning, J Geary, G Houlton and M Specht

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

44. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

45. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

46. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were no questions received.

The Chairman announced that he had withdrawn item 10 – Easement for Access Through council's Land at Linden Way to Enterprise Park from the agenda to allow further information to be provided before a decision was made.

47. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2016.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2016 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Reason for decision: To comply with the Constitution.

48. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTFS) 2017 - 2020

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. He advised that the Medium Term Financial Strategy provided a high level assessment of the financial resources required to deliver the strategic priorities and essential services over the next four years. He stressed the importance of having reserves and being prudent, especially as local government funding was under close scrutiny and there had been a change in focus from central funding to local funding streams. He informed Members that the revenue support grant would disappear altogether by 2019/20 as well as there being a review of business rates. These changes along with the uncertainty of the Country's exit from the European Union made the need to plan carefully and to monitor regularly even more important than in the past. He referred Members to the potential shortfall of just over £0.46million indicated for 2019/20 but he was confident that the leadership team and Cabinet would be able to address it.

Chairman's initials

Councillor R Blunt commented that there had been uncertainty regarding government funding and the economy for many years, and the proposed prudent approach was important. He also reminded Members that the Strategy was also based on the continuation of a zero percent increase in council tax.

Councillor R D Bayliss referred to the council housing section of the strategy and explained that there were some constraints due to the requirement for all social landlords to reduce rents by one percent each year from 2016 to 2019, and the Right to Buy discount funding. He added that the budget summary was detailed within the report and referred to the new build programme. Councillor R Blunt commented that there had been a change in direction towards social housing with the Right to Buy scheme and the recently introduced rent controls. He acknowledged that council housing was a huge part of the Council's budget.

Councillor N J Rushton stated that from 2018/19 the plan was to reduce the Local Council Tax Reduction/Support Scheme grant to town and parish councils by approximately 25 percent per annum over a four year period. Other options that saw a quicker reduction in grant had been assessed, but he believed using the 25 percent phased approach was fair and this would need to be communicated to town and parish councils.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Medium Term Financial Strategy be approved.
2. The authority to make minor amendments to the Medium Term Financial Strategy be delegated to the Interim Director of Resources in consultation with the Corporate Portfolio Holder.

Reason for decision: Requirement of the budget setting process.

49. BUILDING CONFIDENCE IN COALVILLE PROGRAMME ("COALVILLE PROJECT") - UPDATE

The Leader presented the report to Members. He commented that the Coalville Project now had significant momentum and the feedback he had received during recent public meetings had been very positive. He reported that many of the items on stakeholders' wish lists were being delivered, the town guide had been well received and other towns had now made a request for the same. He highlighted the Choose Coalville branding which was now being used; it was very recognisable and had been universally welcomed. It was being used on posters, social media and the shop window decals on Hotel Street, partner organisations were also planning on using the logo in the near future. The Leader reported on the success of the Coalville Colour Run which provided multiple wins for Coalville. Not only did it bring over 1000 people into Coalville and provide a fun activity for local people but also raised over £10,000 for charity. He thanked Gina King from the charity 'Living Without Abuse' for taking the lead on the event and everyone that was involved in making it a great event which would definitely be repeated. He concluded that the report illustrated the range of achievements to date and more to come.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The progress made by the Coalville Project be endorsed.

2. The direction of travel for the Coalville Project be agreed.

Reason for decision: To provide Cabinet with an update on the Coalville Project.

50. ENTERPRISING NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE - PHASE TWO

The Business Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members. He highlighted that the programme has awarded over £400,000 of grant funding to 24 growing local businesses, levered in over £2.9million of private sector match funding and as a direct result of the investment, 66 new local jobs had been created. He explained that phase two of the programme would build on the success achieved already by providing specialist business advice and grants to support town centre businesses. The aim was to contribute to increasing the spending, footfall and occupancy within the District's town centres, local centres and Coalville market. He proposed an amendment to recommendation two so that it read as follows:

'Approve the allocation of £250,000 of 2015/16 under spend and delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader to spend the budget required to deliver phase two of the Enterprising North West Leicestershire Scheme.'

Members agreed to the amendment.

Councillor T J Pendleton agreed that the scheme was very important as there was a need to create jobs in the area. He was pleased the opportunity had not been missed.

It was moved by Councillor T Gillard, seconded by Councillor R Blunt and

RESOLVED THAT:

1. The proposal to launch phase two of the Enterprising North West Leicestershire Scheme be approved.
2. The allocation of £250,000 of 2015/16 under spend be approved and the authority to spend the budget required to deliver phase two of the Enterprising North West Leicestershire Scheme be approved.

Reason for decision: Approval needed for allocation of £250,000 of 2015/16 under spend to phase two of the Enterprising North West Leicestershire Scheme.

51. CHANGES TO DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS (DHPS)

The Corporate Portfolio Holder presented the report to Members and reminded them that in March a new scheme had been agreed for allocating discretionary housing payments for 2016/17. He advised that if the Council continued to pay the discretionary housing payment contribution in line with the current scheme the total amount would be in the region of £72,000, which meant that an unspent grant of approximately £43,000 would need to be returned to the Government. To avoid this, it was therefore proposed that the Council continue to pay discretionary housing payments at 100 percent for the next three months and then if there was adequate funding, to carry on paying 100 percent for the final three months of 2016/17. He added that if there was inadequate funding the support would be reduced to 50 percent for the final three months.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

1. Contrary to the 2016/17 Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) Scheme, 100% DHP is paid for months seven to nine of 2016/17.
2. If there is adequate funding at the end of month nine, DHP will continue to be paid at 100% for the final three months of the 2016/17 year. In the event of inadequate funding, the council will revert back to the scheme and reduce support to 50% for the final three months of the 2016/17 year.

Reason for decision: To allocate DHP to claimants of housing benefit who need further financial assistance.

52. 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.

53. LAND SALE - COALVILLE

The Leader presented the report to Members.

Councillor T J Pendleton felt that it was a good proposal and looked forward to seeing it come into fruition.

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

RESOLVED THAT:

The recommendations as detailed within the report be approved.

Reason for decision: Cabinet approval is required for classifying land as surplus and available for disposal; and for the allocation of funding for the preparation and determination of an outline planning application.

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 5.26 pm