

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough on Tuesday 27 October 2015 commencing at 6.30 pm.

Present: Councillor Ian Fleetwood (in the Chair)

Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor Matthew Boles
Councillor Alex Bridgwood
Councillor David Cotton
Councillor Michael Devine
Councillor John McNeill
Councillor Jeff Summers
Councillor Anne Welburn

In Attendance:

Mark Sturgess	Chief Operating Officer
Ian Knowles	Director of Resources
Penny Sharp	Commercial Director
Alan Robinson	Strategic Lead Democratic and Business Support
Kim Leith	Health and Safety Co-ordinator
Dinah Lilley	Governance and Civic Officer

Apologies: Councillor Tom Regis
Councillor Reg Shore

Membership: No substitutes had been submitted

34 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

35 MINUTES

- i) **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee held on 24 September 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.
- ii) **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee held on 5 October be noted.

36 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

37 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE SETTING OUT CURRENT POSITION OF PREVIOUSLY AGREED ACTIONS AS AT 19 OCTOBER 2015 (CPR.24 15/16).

Members gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule which set out the current position of all previously agreed actions as at 19 October 2015. The Governance and Civic Officer informed the Committee that the one outstanding green item (re the Driving Policy) was now in hand.

RESOLVED that progress on the Matters Arising Schedule as set out in report CPR.24 15/16 be noted.

38 ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT (CPR.25 15/16)

The Health and Safety Co-ordinator introduced the report stating that the Health and Safety Champions were active in their role and remained the first point of contact for any issues that arose.

The purpose of the report was summarised as to:

- Give members and leadership team reassurance and confidence that health, safety and welfare is being properly managed within the organisation by sharing of information on progress and delivery.
- Provide an auditable trail of engagement with members and senior leadership that would contribute to demonstrating compliance to external enforcement agencies.
- Maintain health, safety and welfare at the front and centre of the organisation as a corporate priority
- Demonstrate the transparent, proactive management and control of corporate risk, legal compliance and reputation.

The report summarised the work that had been carried out in the last 12 months and listed new policies devised and consulted on with Services and safety champions. Statistical information on incidents in the workplace was set out in charts contained within the report.

Members debated the report and raised a number of questions. It was noted that the number of incidents reported within the Operations Team was particularly high, however acknowledged that this would primarily be due to the physical nature of the work. There was also now a better reporting system and regular reviews of risk assessments.

The Committee wished for it to be recorded that they were grateful to the Health and Safety Co-ordinator, Kim Leith, for the excellent work done and the good

policies now in place. The report and the recommendation above were moved, seconded and voted upon.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the Corporate Health and Safety Report be noted and supported, and
- b) gratitude be recorded to the Health and Safety Co-ordinator.

39 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY - PROJECTS - PERIOD 2 (CPR.26 15/16)

The Chief Operating Officer reminded Members that the Progress and Delivery reports were by exception only, either above or below target, and only reported on those projects currently in delivery stage which were regularly monitored.

The report contained updates on the items contained in the previous report and introduced one new item.

- Selective Licensing was now on track to deliver within the revised timescale.
- Rural Public Transport was scheduled to be considered by the Prosperous Communities Committee.
- Flare in the Field and Comet – work was ongoing to resolve IT issues, and a report was due through the next governance cycle.
- The bungalows on Corringham Road has encountered unforeseen difficulties so were not being progressed.

RESOLVED that having given consideration to the matters listed in the report, assurance was received that the rectifications proposed would deal with identified issues.

40 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY - SERVICES - PERIOD 2 (CPR.27 15/16)

The Chief Operating Officer then introduced the Progress and Delivery Report on Services. As with the Projects report above this was reporting by exception.

It was explained that following previous comments by Members the format had slightly changed in order to make the report more legible, with tables including a red 'R' or green 'G' to indicate their status.

Services listed in the appendix were:

- Complaints Received
- Health Trainers
- Gainsborough Markets
- Local Land Charges
- Development Management
- Waste Collections

and further updates were given on each.

The figures for the number of complaints received were now available to the end of September and had risen. Members questioned how many of these were related to Development Management. The response was that only 18 of the 77 complaints reported were about Development Management, and a future report would list complaints received by Service Area.

Note Councillor Bridgwood joined the meeting at 6.48pm

The Development Management team had recently undergone a Peer Review which had focused on the performance of the team. Acknowledgement had been made of the importance of availability and responding to telephone calls – this had been addressed immediately. Work was also ongoing to address the handling of the applications caseload at both major level and householder applications. There was a need to benchmark with the top quartile and a visit had been arranged to Blaby District Council which had previously been in special measures but was now performing in the top quartile. Members acknowledged the usefulness of the Peer Review and the importance of a positive attitude to Best Practice. It was noted that the Government had set performance targets and would intervene if it was felt necessary, however the target threshold of 50% of major applications being determined within deadlines was not currently at risk as a good margin of 64% existed. It was acknowledged that the quality of applications could be a determining factor and that the taking up of pre-application advice would help to alleviate this.

Much work was being undertaken on NEETs ('Not in Employment, Education or Training') to address the unemployment statistics which were of concern. It was proposed that dialogue take place with a school in the district which was underperforming. It was also a concern that there could be a knock on effect following the redundancies at nearby Scunthorpe Steel Works.

The currently high cost shown for the provision of service to Members was explained as being due to profiling issues, in that some one-off costs had shown in the budget (e.g. webcasting equipment) and by the end of the year this would balance out.

Whilst the good performance being maintained by the Trinity Arts Centre was acknowledged it was noted that three streaming events had not taken place as scheduled. This would be of concern if it continued, as custom and credibility would be lost.

Members of the Committee commented on the improved report.

RESOLVED that having given consideration to the matters listed in the report assurance was received that the rectifications proposed would deal with identified issues.

41 BUDGET MONITORING PERIOD 2 AND MID YEAR TREASURY REPORT (CPR.28 15/16)

The Director of Resources summarised the content of the Budget Monitoring and Mid Year Treasury report.

The revenue forecast out-turn position for 2015/16 was estimated to be a surplus of £438k at 30 September 2015, work would continue throughout the year to monitor the situation and to identify ongoing impacts on the Medium Term Financial Plan as part of the Budget Process. The surplus was identified as mostly additional income as opposed to underspend.

The Capital forecast out-turn position for 2015/16 was estimated to be £4,144k and reflected a variance of £7,385k against the revised budget. Of this balance £6,965k had been requested as carry forwards into the next year. A review of further carry forwards would be undertaken throughout the year prior to financing the final out-turn position.

The Treasury Management activities during the reporting period were disclosed in the body of the report.

There had been no breaches of Treasury or Prudential Indicators to report and the benchmark in relation to investment yields was again out performed.

An increase to £5m was requested per counterparty, Enhance Money Market Fund investments.

An apparent discrepancy in figures quoted for elections costs was raised. The Director of Resources resolved to clarify this to Members in due course.

The report's recommendations were moved en bloc and on being seconded and voted upon it was:

RESOLVED that:

- a) the forecast out-turn position as at 30 September 2015 be accepted;
- b) the use of Earmarked Reserves be approved;
- c) the amendments to the Capital and Revenue budget, including creating budgets for projects funded by grants and not included in the original budget be approved and the property acquisitions to be added to the Asset Register be noted;
- d) the Capital budget carry forwards be approved;
- e) the Treasury Management Mid-Year Report and Treasury position for the six months to 30 September 2015 be accepted;
- f) the increase to £5m per counterparty, Enhance Money Market Fund investments be approved; and
- g) the changes to the credit methodology whereby viability, financial strength and support ratings will not be considered as key criteria in the choice of creditworthy investment counterparties be approved.

42 COMMERCIAL PLAN - PROGRESS UPDATE AND DELIVERY PROGRAMME (CPR.29 15/16)

The Commercial Director introduced the Plan which was intended to guide the Council's activity in generating income and contributing to overheads. To achieve the Council's ambition of financial self-sufficiency it would be necessary to find in excess of £2.5m additional net income/savings by 2020. The Commercial Plan was intended to make a contribution to closing this 'funding gap'. The target was for the Commercial Plan to generate a minimum additional £1m income/surplus.

The Council had established an 'Invest to Earn Fund' of £1m for 2015-2020. The Fund would help finance the development of commercial projects and proposals including research and development activity such as market analysis, sales opportunities and the development of project business cases.

Members commended the report stating that a commercial route was the right way to go in light of reduced Government funding and the aim to have less reliance of the tax payer. It was acknowledged that there would be occasional fluctuations in returns but it was the way forward.

RESOLVED that the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee recommend that Council approve the annual Commercial Delivery Plan for 2015/16.

43 COMMITTEE WORK PLAN (CPR.22 15/16)

The Committee noted the self explanatory work plan which set out items for future consideration by the Committee.

The Chairman of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee highlighted the Bring Your Own Device Policy which was due for consideration at the subsequent meeting of the Committee and noted that it was particularly relevant to Members and was very important. The Director of Resources would be having discussions with the Information Governance and Systems Development officer following it being considered at the Chair's briefing.

RESOLVED that the Committee Work Plan be noted.

The meeting concluded at 7.22 pm.

Chairman