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Corporate Policy and Resources Committee- 4 May 2017

Subject to Call-in. Call-in will expire at 4.30pm on Friday 2 June 2017

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA on 4 May 2017 commencing at 6.30 pm.

Present: Councillor Jeff Summers (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs Anne Welburn (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor David Cotton
Councillor Michael Devine
Councillor Adam Duguid
Councillor Steve England
Councillor John McNeill
Councillor Tom Regis

In Attendance:

Manjeet Gill	Chief Executive
Ian Knowles	Director of Resources and S151 Officer
Tracey Bircumshaw	Financial Services Manager
Dinah Lilley	Governance and Civic Officer
Manjeet Gill	Chief Executive
Grant White	Lead Officer Enterprising Communities

Apologies: Councillor Matthew Boles
Councillor Ian Fleetwood

Membership: There were no substitutions

125 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD

There was no public participation.

126 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING/S

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 13 April 2017 be approved as a correct record.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee meeting held on 30 March 2017 be noted.

127 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest at this point of the meeting.

128 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE

Regarding the Green Item entitled Planning Training, the Governance and Civic Officer gave a verbal update, that a further training session on CIL, to include Town and Parish Councils, would be offered later in the year. This was welcomed, however it was requested that this be in the format of a workshop, as opposed to a presentation.

RESOLVED that the Matters Arising Schedule be noted.

129 CHANGE TO ORDER OF THE AGENDA

The Chairman announced that he wished to change the order of the agenda in order to allow the Chief Executive to leave early enough to attend the election results.

The proposal was moved, seconded and voted upon.

RESOLVED that the order of the agenda be changed.

130 PROGRESS AND DELIVERY REPORT QUARTER 4

The Chief Executive gave a Powerpoint presentation on Consistent Quality Customer Services, Why it was a Priority, the Present Situation, and What was the Solution?

Quality Customer Service was seen as important due to:

- Growth
 - Open for Business
 - Housing in right places
- Consistent Quality Customer Experiences
- Smarter, Simpler Ways Of Working
- More responsive
- More efficient
 - Culture – what matters, tone, empathy, communication, put in customer shoes.

In the short term – 6-12 months – it was suggested to make the complaints process: the way we learn and improve; of value to the customer; there be a strategic analysis and the right improvement action based on starting from the customers shoes; and managing expectations.

Planning and Enforcement were seen as the most appropriate starting place. This was seen to be a 12-18 month management role.

All councillors, businesses and parishes were to be advised of the compliments and complaints procedure, and all service requests and complaints would receive a customer satisfaction and feedback request.

Each Team Manager would report to the Chief Operating Officer: all requests – customer feedback plus actions; all complaints plus actions; all compliments and thanks plus actions; an overall summary of SMART actions. A report would then be submitted to each Committee with a Chief Executive report. A report on the new procedure would be submitted to the June Corporate Policy and resources Committee, and a workshop would be organised with Parish Councils.

The Progress and Delivery report having been circulated to the Committee was the quarter four performance report and included reports in progress with delivering the Corporate Plan and the Commercial Plan.

The executive summary was structured to highlight those areas that were performing above expectations, those areas where there was a risk to either performance or delivery, and those areas where further work was required for next year's report.

Those areas listed as Performing Well included:

- Economic Development:
- Benefits service
- Land Charges
- Development management
- Contract management

Those services identified as Risk Areas included:-

- Enforcement
- Homelessness
- Corporate Governance

Following an audit of the progress and delivery process the number of service measures that were identified as measures to be reported to the policy committees would be reduced for 2017/18 municipal year. These measures had been the subject of consultation with the members' progress and delivery steering group and would be used from the first quarter of 2017/18.

Measures that would not now be reported would, where appropriate, be used by the Team Managers to assess their services performance and be included in their service plan.

Members discussed the issues set out in the presentation and the report and agreed that it was important to get it right first time and learn from mistakes. It was vital that information was rolled out to staff, particularly the definition of what constituted a complaint. A query was raised regarding the number of missed telephone calls as set out in the report. The Chief Executive resolved to look into this and gain a response.

RESOLVED that having reviewed the performance information contained in the Progress and Delivery Report and considered where specific action should be taken, the report be approved.

131 BUDGET AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING QUARTER 4

The Director of Resources introduced the draft Revenue Budget out-turn for the 2016/17 financial year declaring a surplus position of £1,059k after taking account of approved carry forwards of £524k (detailed at Appendix D of the report), the surplus was comparable to the Period 3 of £798k with significant movements since that period being:

- Increased Planning Fee Income – £84k
- Refund of Legal Shared Service surplus 2016/17 - £71k
- Year-end accounting adjustments of - £131k
- Additional Government Grant income - £106k
- Net of Employee costs - £96k

The overall gross surplus was currently £1,583k.

The Collection Fund was yet to be finalised accounting for Business Rates (NNDR), which would result in a change to the figures provided. Any budget variance at final out turn would be transferred to the Business Rates Volatility Reserve.

It was noted that it was too early to agree the £450k of the surplus to be carried forward to support the development of business cases for Invest to Save, Invest to Earn and Invest to Grow projects, as set out at Recommendation c), it was therefore proposed that an annual review of financial performance and proposals for how the surplus may be used to support current priorities be presented to the Corporate Policy and Resources meeting in July 2017.

All the other recommendations would remain as written as these agreed to support decisions taken in year and acceptance of the position presented for both revenue and capital budgets and Treasury Management.

The proposal was moved, seconded and voted upon and it was **RESOLVED** that an annual review of financial performance as described above be presented to the July meeting.

The Chief Executive requested that Members send though their priorities for investment over the next few weeks.

A Member raised a query on a figure set out within the Executive Summary – of ‘£96k net of employee costs’, there was some confusion around the details given therefore it was suggested that a full explanation be emailed to all Members of the Committee.

The remainder of the Recommendations were moved en bloc and on being seconded and voted upon it was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) the draft out-turn position of a £1,059k surplus as at 31 March 2017, be accepted;
- b) the Revenue budget carry forwards of £524k approved in year (as set out at Appendix D of the report), be noted;
- c) any further surplus variances be transferred to the Business Rates Volatility Reserve, be agreed;
- d) the use of Earmarked Reserves during the quarter approved by the Director of Resources using Delegated powers, be noted;
- e) the Capital budget carry forwards of £6,919k (12.3) and they accept the Capital out turn position of £2,579k, be approved;

- f) the Commercial Income position be accepted;
- g) the amendments to Licensing and Planning fees and charges detailed within Appendix C of the report, be approved;
- h) the Treasury position to 31 March 2017, be accepted; and
- i) an annual review of financial performance and proposals for how the surplus may be used to support current priorities be presented to the Corporate Policy and Resources meeting in July 2017.

132 REVISED COMMITTEE TIMETABLES

The Governance and Civic Officer reminded Members that the Committee Timetables for 2015/16 to 2018/19 had been approved by Policy and Resources Committee on 10 November 2015, according to the requirements set out in the Constitution.

The report in November 2015 stated that “Should it transpire that further changes become necessary the timetables will be brought back to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for further amendments”.

In order to facilitate the presentation of Quarter 4 Monitoring reports (Progress and Delivery and Treasury Management) prior to the end of the Municipal year, before Annual Council, it was suggested that further Corporate Policy and Resources meetings be scheduled towards the end of April/beginning of May.

In order, therefore to not have as many Corporate Policy and Resources meetings it was suggested that the October meeting be removed from the timetable.

The Challenge and Improvement Committee had requested that they not have a scheduled meeting during Christmas week, therefore this has been moved into January.

Following the calling of the General Election on 8 June 2017, it will also be necessary to move the date of the Licensing/Regulatory meeting, Monday 19 June 2017 was proposed.

RESOLVED that the revised committee timetables for the following two years be agreed.

133 RURAL TRANSPORT PROGRAMME

In 2014-2015 the Council had agreed to allocate £300,000 from reserve funds to go towards making improvements and/or tackling issues with rural transport in West Lindsey. As a large rural district, lack of, or gaps in transport and connectivity was often seen as a barrier to accessing services and ease of mobility. Following the use of funds in 2015-2016 on consultancy work £281,500 remained in the earmarked reserve.

Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) as the upper tier local authority had the responsibility for transport and provided a wide range of transport initiatives that, combined with services provided by the private sector transport companies, gave Lincolnshire a comprehensive

coverage. In effect all parts of West Lindsey were connected by public transport but to different levels.

Following research work and collaboration with external partners including Lincolnshire County Council and transport providers, there was now a selection of projects and actions for delivery. These projects and actions had been developed to respond to need and be achievable to deliver and sustain.

The Rural Transport Programme, including identified projects and initiatives, was approved by the Prosperous Communities Committee on 21 March 2017, a copy of which was attached to the report.

The report set out the various aspects of the Rural Transport project for which approval was sought. These were:

- Transport Publicity Programme
- Lincoln Area Dial-a-Ride Car Scheme – Volunteer Co-ordinator
- Call Connect – North of Lincoln expansion pilot
- Access to Transport Fund

Approval for the above and the funding therefrom was sought via an amendment to the Capital Programme for 2017-18

Members questioned whether funding should be provided to facilitate shoppers travelling to Lincoln, however it was clarified that Dial a Ride was specifically for disabled passengers and comprised 'club' membership, this service transported passengers to wherever they needed to go.

It was agreed that ideally there should be a good service to all towns in the District. Regular monitoring of service usage would take place, and clarity was sought that there would be flexibility to withdraw from services that were underperforming, however ceasing the provision of a service would cause public backlash. There was a role for Members to promote awareness of the variety of services available in the area. Work was also ongoing to liaise with patient transport and also shop mobility. The work of officers involved was commended.

The recommendations in the report were then moved, seconded and upon being voted upon it was:

RESOLVED that:

- a) the recommendations from Prosperous Communities Committee be noted;
- b) the spend on Rural Transport project 1.1 Transport Publicity Programme be approved;
- c) the spend on Rural Transport project 2.2 Lincoln Area Dial-a-Ride Car Scheme – Volunteer Co-ordinator be approved;
- d) the spend on Rural Transport project 3.1 Call Connect – North of Lincoln expansion pilot be approved;
- e) the spend on Rural Transport project 3.2 Access to Transport Fund be approved; and
- f) the amendments to the Capital Programme for 2017-2018 be approved.

134 COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

Members gave consideration to the Committee work plan, and the Chief Executive noted that there much work ongoing and she would be looking at the overall work plans for the policy committees to prioritise issues.

RESOLVED that the Committee work plan be noted.

135 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

136 DEVELOPMENT LOAN

The Director of Resources introduced the report stating that the Strategic Lead for Economic Development and Neighbourhoods had been working to support the development of the southern and urban extensions; specifically to secure a robust evidence base to demonstrate deliverability at the examination in public of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan and to quicken the pace of housing delivery in Gainsborough.

Discussions had focused on securing planning consent for the northern neighbourhood which was considered to have market appeal. A WLDC loan could provide an incentive to bring forward the planning application which would result in positive market sentiment and strengthen the evidence base on deliverability.

Further discussions had taken place with a developer and Heads of Terms had been drawn up – these were set out in the report.

Members sought assurance on the repayment details and the charge on the land. The report was considered detailed and thorough and the proposals were part of a larger strategy for growth.

It was questioned as to whether agreeing the report was implicit consent for any subsequent planning applications, and whether this amounted to a conflict of interest. Legal advice had been taken on this aspect and assurance was given that approval of the loan did not pre-judge any development proposals.

RESOLVED:

- a) That a capital budget of £400,000 for the purpose of a loan advance, to be funded from prudential borrowing, be approved;
- b) the release of funds for this purpose be agreed and the Director of Resources be delegated, following consultation with the Chairman of Corporate Policy and Resources Committee, to agree the finalisation of the loan agreement and appropriate charge in line with the agreement set out in the report and its appendix.

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The meeting concluded at 8.00 pm.

Chairman