

## **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 6 February 2018 commencing at 19:53.

**Present:** Councillor Jeff Summers (Chairman)  
Councillor Owen Bierley (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Mrs Sheila Bibb  
Councillor Matthew Boles  
Councillor David Cotton  
Councillor Michael Devine  
Councillor Steve England  
Councillor Ian Fleetwood  
Councillor Giles McNeill  
Councillor John McNeill  
Councillor Tom Regis  
Councillor Trevor Young

**In Attendance:**  
Eve Fawcett-Moralee Executive Director of Economic and Commercial Growth  
Ian Knowles Executive Director of Resources and S151 Officer  
Tracey Bircumshaw Finance & Business Support Manager  
Michelle Howard Wellbeing and Health Manager  
Grant White Enterprising Communities Manager  
James Welbourn Democratic and Civic Officer

**Apologies:** Councillor Stuart Kinch

**Membership:** Councillor Giles McNeill substituted for Councillor Stuart Kinch.

### **95 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD**

There was no public participation.

### **96 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING/S**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2018 were approved as a correct record.

### **97 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In response to a query from Councillor David Cotton on item 106, the Executive Director of Resources informed Members that the only approval being sought was for the joint venture,

and not any planning consent, so members of the Planning Committee should have no conflict by voting on that item.

## **98 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE**

The Matters Arising schedule was noted.

## **99 SUPPORTING VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES PLACE BASED STRATEGY 2017**

Members considered a report requesting the release of £220,000 from the 'Supporting Vulnerable Communities' Earmarked Reserve.

The Wellbeing and Health Manager introduced the item, informing the committee that the 'Supporting Vulnerable Communities – Place Based Strategy' was approved by Prosperous Communities committee on 30 January 2018.

A resource allocation of £300,000 was agreed by Council within the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) in 2013/14, however that allocation was not accompanied by a specific plan to allocate the resource to specific interventions.

The £220,000 was proposed to resource the following projects:

1. Continuation of Community Payback;
2. A Private Sector Landlord Support appointment;
3. A Vulnerable Communities Enforcement Officer;
4. CCTV expansion into Gainsborough South-West Ward;
5. Grant funding provision for an organisation called Lincolnshire Action Trust – this organisation deals with support for children and young people on the subject of parental substance abuse;

**Note:** Councillor David Cotton declared a personal interest as community payback had been mentioned, and he was an officer of the Court.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) In line with the recommendation from Prosperous Communities committee; to approve the release of £220,000 from the Supporting Vulnerable Communities Earmarked Reserve (EMR) to resource projects approved as part of the Supporting Vulnerable Communities – Place Based Strategy. Budget approval to spend is given for the following initiatives, of which £170,000 is revenue and £50,000 is capital:
  - a. SVC 01 Continuation of Community Payback (18/19 & 19/20 Revenue)
  - b. SVC 04 Private Sector Landlord Support (18/19 & 19/20 Revenue)
  - c. SVC 05 Vulnerable Communities Enforcement Officer (18/19 & 19/20 Revenue)
  - d. SVC 06 CCTV Expansion (One Off - Capital)
  - e. SVC 07 Lincolnshire Action Trust: Young Oasis (18/19 Revenue);
- (2) To agree to the issue of a grant of £40,000 to Lincolnshire Action Trust to

allow delivery of project reference SVC 07.

## **100 COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAMME**

Members considered a report on the financial resources for the continuation of the community grants programme.

The following points were highlighted:

- A new structure for Community grants was approved at Prosperous Communities committee on 30 January 2018 – set out to deliver over a 5 year period;
- Match funding grant decisions will now be made by a Members' Funding Panel. This has already been established and Members are appointed through Full Council;
- Two points discussed at Prosperous Communities were as follows:
  1. Match funding percentage was set at 30% for the Match Funding Grant. This could be revisited during the delivery of the programme;
  2. The small and large community grants would end – further options could be brought back to the policy committees if and when they were required.

Following comments and questions from members, further information was provided:

- The Councillor Initiative Fund was budgeted until March 2019. Currently, residual funds in Wards cannot be used elsewhere – they must be used within the Ward;
- Flexibility in the outgoing scheme was a huge strength;

### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) To note the figures from the past 3 years of the community grant programme;
- (2) That in line with the recommendation from the Prosperous Communities committee; to approve £500,000 to deliver the Community Grants programme, modified to meet current financial conditions over a 5 year period.

## **101 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT (PROGRESS AND DELIVERY) 2017/18 - THIRD PERIOD**

Members considered a report on performance management information (progress and delivery) for the third quarter of 2017/18.

The following points were highlighted:

- The following areas were above their target performance
  1. Local land charges was achieving a turnaround of 3.7 days, under the target of 8 days;
  2. Cost of waste collection per head of population;

3. Income from trade waste;
  4. Audience figures, cost per user and surplus generated at the Trinity Arts Centre;
  5. Management of assets: void rates;
- There was now a Customer Experience Officer looking at the complaints process, and ensuring that West Lindsey District Council (WLDC) was learning from complaints;
  - The following areas of concern were:
    1. Homelessness – the Homelessness Reduction Act continued to put pressure on the team;
    2. Enforcement continued to show below target performance. Resources available for that team have been increased;
    3. Benefits service – the costs per live claim had risen. There was some support from the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP);

Following comments from members, further information was provided:

- There was a dedicated individual marketing the trade waste service, offering a better quality service than some competitors. The market share was now reaching a point of concern for others – the business plan was being reviewed to make sure WLDC is confident about the future. Officers want to ensure that growth in years 3 and 4 was achievable;
- If a claimant were dissatisfied with a response to a complaint, the next step would be to involve the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman upholds the claim, there may be compensation. An example of two complaints in the Dunholme and Welton Ward was given – apart from officer time, there was no further cost to the Council;
- All projects listed as 'amber' in the report were on track to meet their targets.

**RESOLVED** to note the report.

## **102 DRAFT REVENUE BASE BUDGET 2018/19 AND ESTIMATES TO 2022/23**

Members considered a report setting out the details of the overall draft revenue budget 2018/19, including that of Corporate Policy and Resources, and those recommended by the Prosperous Communities committee for the period 2018/19 and estimates to 2022/23.

The following information was highlighted:

- There was an increase of £722,000 from the base budget for Corporate Policy and Resources for 2017/18. This related, in part to the reprofiling of commercial properties. The net benefit has been moved a year ahead, but it was anticipated that by 2021 WLDC will generate the additional £600,000 targeted in the report;
- A budget of £200,000 was proposed for commercial contingencies, such as trade and green waste for example;

- There will be an ongoing assumption of a 2% pay award which will go into the Medium Term Financial Plan;
- For Prosperous Communities, the base budget reflected a decrease of £1.647 million; this was related to the achievements of the implementation of green waste (expected net contribution of £502,000); the leisure contract (£213,000 contribution rather than £269,000 payment); and the statutory increase in planning fee income of 20% which gives an additional £188,000;
- The Wellbeing team were successful in securing a contract with Lincolnshire County Council, in partnership with East Lindsey and North Kesteven District Councils to deliver a county-wide Wellbeing service that will generate £78,000;
- The preparation for the Budget has been given a high assurance from WLDC's auditors;
- Elements of the Budget were consulted on with events in Caistor, Nettleham and Gainsborough. In addition, there was also an online tool that could be accessed by residents;

Following questions from members, further information was provided:

- All commercial activity carries risk in terms of acquiring businesses and the delivery of returns. If expected returns from investments were not achievable officers would come up with alternative proposals;
- One commercial property has been acquired without borrowing, delivering a £150,000 return. If WLDC had borrowed, the return would be down at £90,000.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) The Corporate Policy and Resources committee Budget 2018/19 be approved;
- (2) The Prosperous Communities committee Budget 2018/19 be accepted;
- (3) The 2018/19 – 2022/23 estimates be approved for inclusion in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Councillor David Cotton asked that his vote against the recommendations be recorded.

**103 BUDGET AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING - PERIOD 3 2017/18 INCLUDING TREASURY MID-YEAR REPORT**

Members considered a mid-year report setting out the revenue, capital and treasury management activity in period 3 (up to December 31 2017) of 2017/18.

The following points were highlighted:

- The revenue forecast was showing a small net contribution to reserves of £9,000,

after taking account of £388,000 that was approved as carried forward funds;

- There were proposals within the revenue element to increase the dormant inspection for building control by 3.5%;
- An administrative fee for the withdrawal of a planning application of £50 was proposed;
- Reserves that have been approved under delegated powers by the Executive Director of Resources total £204,000 for period 3;
- In terms of capital monitoring, overall expenditure was forecast at £10.8 million, with £10.5 million of that being those projects that have been approved in tranche and 'business as usual';
- The work at the former Lidl car park included a reconfiguration and an increase in the number of spaces;
- There was an £11,000 cost for the contract price for the Bridge Street car park; this was presented as part of the Car parking Strategy that went to Corporate Policy and Resources committee in July 2017;
- The former Lidl building in Gainsborough had been purchased and was now being marketed for rental at £70,000 per annum;
- Richmond House is owned by WLDC and it was proposed to provide a third of the cost of a new conservatory;
- The benchmark for treasury management was exceeded at 0.17%;
- Total investments as at 31 March 2017 were £19.1 million; however, on 23 January an investment of £1million was made in a certificate of deposit which exceeded the counterparty limit by £500,000, and this was being investigated. There was no risk to this investment.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) Accept the forecast out-turn position of a £9,000 net contribution to reserves as at 31 December 2017;
- (2) Note the use of Earmarked Reserves during the quarter approved by the Executive Director of Resources using delegated powers;
- (3) Approve capital expenditure of £35,000 for the resurfacing of the former Lidl Car Park, £11,300 for Bridge Street extension and a £20,000 contribution towards a new conservatory at Richmond House; funding will be from the Maintenance of Facilities reserve;
- (4) Approve the Revised Capital Budget of £12.730 million;

- (5) Accept the commercial income position;
- (6) Accept the Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators to 31 December 2017 and note the breach in counterparty investment limit made on 23 January 2018;
- (7) Approve the amendment to building control fees and charges;
- (8) Approve the introduction of an admin planning fee and accept the statutory increase of 20% on planning fees.

#### **104 EXECUTIVE BUSINESS PLAN, MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2018/19 - 2022/23**

Members considered a report on the Executive Business Plan, and the Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 – 2022/23 (which included financial strategy, financial analysis, and the Capital Programme 2018/19 – 2022/23).

The following points were highlighted:

- There was a balanced budget for the first two years of the report; however there was a significant impact of the 2% pay award, leading to a £1million gap in year 5;
- The working assumption in the report was a Council Tax rise of £4.95 on a Band D property, however the final settlement has increased the referendum threshold from 2% to 3% or £5 for shire districts;
- In the previous year, the Business Plan was presented in a 'cluster structure', which was the preferred method of the previous Corporate Leadership team. This year, it has been presented in a 'people, place' and policy' approach; the three areas are represented by each member of the Corporate Leadership team;
- It was proposed that at the end of the five year period WLDC would have reserves in excess of £10 million;
- Changes from 6 February's final settlement appear to give WLDC an additional £100,000 through the rural services delivery grant. It was proposed at that stage that that money would go into reserves;
- The potential gain from the business rates pilot would be at least £500,000;
- Officers have taken, and will take into account the changes being made to the prudential code by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), and the guidance being released by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on investments and minimum revenue provision (MRP) policies;
- There will be a consultation in summer 2018 on the subject of business rates and the

revenue support grant (RSG).

**RESOLVED to:**

- (1) Recommend to Council the approval of the Draft Executive Business Plan and Draft Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 to 2022/23 (which will be subject to change once the final settlement is announced and the Business Rates (NNDR) Pilot gain is known);
- (2) Recommend to Council the approval of the Revenue Budget 2018/19;
- (3) Recommend to Council the Capital Investment Programme 2018/19 to 2022/23;
- (4) Delegate any housekeeping changes (including any required by the final settlement) to the Draft Executive Business Plan and the Draft Medium Term Financial Plan to the Executive Director of Resources in consultation with the Chairman of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee prior to the final consideration by Council on 5 March 2017;

Accept the Statement of the Chief Finance Officer on the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves.

## **105 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT JAPAN ROAD GAINSBOROUGH**

Members considered a report on housing on brownfield land in the housing zone area of Gainsborough.

The remaining land was bought from the Thonock Estate, under market value at £156,000.

The target for the site would be 40% affordable housing.

Members were supportive of the development and added that WLDC need to be aware of the green spaces and sympathetic to the development.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) To agree to enter into a Joint venture Company (JVCo) with Acis Housing to deliver circa 140 new homes in line with the principles of heads of Terms set out in the report;
- (2) That Members agree that approval of the JVCo agreement and masterplan for the site development be delegated to the Executive Director of Resources to approve in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Corporate Policy and Resources;

That a further report be presented to April's Corporate Policy and Resources detailing the proposed Business Plan of the JVCo and the financial investment implications for West Lindsey District Council.



## **106 COMMITTEE WORK PLAN**

The committee workplan was noted.

## **107 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.

## **108 FOXBY LANE, GAINSBOROUGH - WORKSPACE PROPOSAL**

Members considered a report on workspace units on the Foxby Lane Business Park.

**RESOLVED** to:

- (1) Approve the proposal to work in partnership with Lincolnshire County Council to bring forward a first phase of workspace units on the Foxby Lane Business Park, according to the terms outlined in the report;
- (2) Approve a capital budget for the contribution of up to £200,000 towards the cost of the scheme, in exchange for an equity share in the net rental income derived from the scheme. The equity share will reflect the value of West Lindsey District Council's investment relative to the total development cost in percentage terms. This capital investment is to be funded from capital receipts;
- (3) Agree to delegate the signing of the final legal agreement and detailed project proposals to the Executive Director of Resources in consultation with the Chairman of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee, subject to alignment with the terms in this report.

The meeting concluded at 9.06 pm.

Chairman