

CABINET

MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 6 FEBRUARY 2018 AT THE KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE (Chairman), Cllr John Thomson (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Richard Clewer, Cllr Laura Mayes, Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cllr Bridget Wayman, Cllr Philip Whitehead and Cllr Jerry Wickham

Also Present:

Cllr Ian Thorn, Cllr Graham Wright, Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling, Cllr Clare Cape, Cllr Pauline Church, Cllr Richard Gamble, Cllr Alan Hill, Cllr Ruth Hopkinson, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr David Jenkins, Cllr Johnny Kidney, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Jerry Kunkler, Cllr Ashley O'Neill, Cllr Steve Oldrieve, Cllr Horace Prickett, Cllr Tom Rounds, Cllr John Smale and Cllr Hayley Spencer

189 Apologies

There were no apologies as all members of the Cabinet were present.

190 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2018 were presented. Councillor Bridget Wayman confirmed that the questions asked by the CPRE at the meeting, had been responded to in writing and that these responses were appended to the minutes.

Resolved

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2018

191 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

192 Leader's announcements

There were no announcements.

193 Public participation and Questions from Councillors

Colin Gale, from Pewsey Community Area Partnership, presented the following questions in response to answers given to the questions presented at the meeting on the 30 January 2018:

- a) *With regard to the response to question 4, why is Churchfields HRC, with an apparently similar drainage issue to Everleigh, seemingly not subject to the same levels of procedure and scrutiny as Everleigh, what is the cost of the remedial work at Churchfields, and why is that cost apparently not being considered by Cabinet?*
- b) *With regard to Wiltshire Council's previous responses to question 5, both at the Cabinet Meeting on 30 January and in the Responses sent last Friday, CPRE wishes to point out that their question has not been fully answered. We requested that Cabinet give an undertaking that the Everleigh HRC will not be closed down because of its present problems or because of any associated drop in usage. Specifically we request that any assessment will not be based on usage figures since and including October 2017 when there was a change in operator.*

In response, Councillor Bridget Wayman stated:

That the cost of the work at Churchfields would be considered by Cabinet and is also under development. While the issue was similar in that it relates to drainage, it had not resulted in the need to remove part of the site from operational use; and

That the council held records of number of visitors and tonnes of waste and recycling delivered to each household recycling centre prior to October 2017 so was able to report these figures for a period of time in advance of the problems at Everleigh being identified.

Additionally, Councillor Wayman stated that the Council is constantly assessing the cost and benefits of HRC sites to see if they are viable. It was also noted that some HRCs had had their extended opening hours reinstated to meet need, but that this was not the case for all sites.

194 Revenue and Capital Monitoring Period 9 2017- 2018

Councillor Philip Whitehead presented the report which advised members of the revenue and capital budget monitoring position as at the end of period 9 (end of December 2017) for the financial year 2017/2018 with suggested actions as appropriate; and informed Cabinet on the position of the 2017/2018 capital programme, as at Period 9 (31 December 2017), including highlighting budget changes.

Matters highlighted in the course of the presentation and discussion included: That the projected overspend had reduced from £4m and would be £2m, if no action were to be taken; but that with the actions to be undertaken, the projection was for a balanced budget by the end of the year; and how areas are identified that require action to be taken to address overspends.

In response to a question raised by Councillor Gordon King, Michael Hudson, the Director of Finance, stated that system would be improved by the 1st of April to improve the process reconciling information between the SAP and manual adjustments for invoices.

At the conclusion of the debate, the Cabinet;

Resolved

- 1. To note the outcome of the period 9 (end of December) budget monitoring and to approve all budget amendments outlined in the report.**
- 2. To note the budget movements undertaken to the capital programme shown in appendices E and F and to also note the reprogramming of the capital £13.909 million between 2017/2018 and 2018/2019.**

Reason for Decision:

To inform effective decision making and ensure a sound financial control environment.

To inform Cabinet of the position of the 2017/2018 capital programme as at Period 9 (31 December 2017), including highlighting any budget changes.

195 Commercial policy and approach

Councillor Philip Whitehead presented the report which presented the Commercial Policy and Approach 2018-27 that enables the Council to support its Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan (MTFS and MTFP) that drives long term financial sustainability and delivery of its Business Plan.

Matters highlighted in the course of the presentation and discussion included: that the policy had been through the Financial Planning Task Group and the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee; that the Cabinet Member had welcomed the collaborative approach, and had accepted the seven proposals made through the scrutiny process, incorporating their suggestions into the plan; the ability of the policy to support the business and financial plan; and subsequent how decisions on individual projects will be made.

Councillor Graham Wright, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, confirmed that there had been a full discussion of the document and commended the open approach taken to its development.

Councillor Ian Thorn, Chair of the Financial Planning Task Group, stated that the report of the task group outlining their recommendations had been circulated. In addition, Councillor Thorn stated that he believed for the policy to be effective it would require a cultural shift for members and officers, and that he would welcome an opportunity to discuss what steps would be required to make this happen.

In response to a question from Councillor Steve Oldrieve, Councillor Philip Whitehead stated that as the wider objectives of the council were already detailed in the business plan, he did not want to amend the Commercial Policy further. He also confirmed that the projects delivered under this policy would have an aim to be delivered for at least nil cost to the council.

In response to a question from Councillor Jon Hubbard, Councillor Philip Whitehead stated that, whilst there was a commercial value in the anonymised meta-data held by the council, the personal data of individuals would not sold.

In response to a question from Councillor Richard Clewer, Councillor Philip Whitehead stated that, whilst he was happy to pilot a short version of the business case for the initial assessment of project, he would ensure that all projects were assessed using a full business case to ensure that there was a consistency of the quality and the amount of information presented.

At the conclusion of the debate, the Cabinet;

Resolved

To endorse the Commercial Policy and Approach 2018-2027 attached at Appendix A.

Reason for Decision:

To enable Council to support its Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan that drives long term financial sustainability and delivery of its Business Plan.

196 Treasury Management Strategy 2018/2019

Councillor Philip Whitehead presented the report which asked the Cabinet to consider and recommend that the Council approve the Prudential and Treasury Indicators, together with the Treasury Management Strategy for 2018/2019. In presenting the report, Councillor Whitehead highlighted: the statutory indicators and decisions that need to be identified in the strategy; the amendments proposed in the strategy this year; the activities that are covered by the strategy; and outlined the council's developing approach to risk.

There being no further comments, the Cabinet;

Resolved

To recommend to Council to:

- a) **Adopt the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy as set out at paragraph 46;**
- b) **Adopt the Prudential and Treasury Indicators (Appendix A);**
- c) **Adopt the Annual Investment Strategy (Appendix B), including the ratification of the removal of the minimum requirement for high credit quality relating to viability ratings;**
- d) **Delegate to the Director of Finance the authority to vary the amount of borrowing and other long-term liabilities within the Treasury Indicators for the Authorised Limit and the Operational Boundary;**
- e) **Authorise the Director of Finance to agree the restructuring of existing long-term loans where savings are achievable or to enhance the long-term portfolio;**
- f) **Agree that short term cash surpluses and deficits continue to be managed through temporary loans and deposits; and**
- g) **Agree that any surplus cash balances not required to cover borrowing are placed in authorised money-market funds, particularly where this is more cost effective than short term deposits and delegate to the Director of Finance the authority to select such funds.**

Reason for Decision:

To enable the Council to agree a Treasury Management Strategy for 2018/2019 and set Prudential Indicators that comply with statutory guidance and reflect best practice.

197 **Wiltshire Council's Financial Plan**

The Leader introduced the Financial Plan, stating that she was pleased to see that the Councillors Briefing and Scrutiny meetings had been well attended, and that she did not want to add further the information presented at those meetings.

Councillor Philip Whitehead presented the report which provided an assessment to full Council to set a budget for 2018/19, that takes into account the impact on Council Tax, Social Care Levy, rents, fees and charges, the capital investment programme, schools overall budgets, as well as council reserves. The report also sets out an indicative Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to highlight expenditure and income from 2018-19 to 2021/22.

In presenting the report, Councillor Whitehead: thanked officers for their assistance in putting the proposals together; outlined the process already undertaken; and highlighted how the information was presented.

Councillor Graham Wright, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, thanked officers for producing the report of the previous days scrutiny meeting so promptly, and stated there had been good opportunities to ask questions.

The Leader noted that the Council had yet to receive confirmation of the final financial settlement from central government, but that it was hoped that this information would be available on the 7 February 2018.

There being no further comments, the Cabinet;

Resolved

To recommend to Council to:

- a. Endorses the update of the Financial Plan for 2018/19.**
- b. Approve the investment and savings proposals summarised at Sections 7 and 9 respectively of this report and at Appendix 1C, to provide a net revenue budget for 2018/19 of £327.746 million.**
- c. To vote separately:**
 - i. Set the Council's total net expenditure budget for 2018/19 at £327.746 million.**
 - ii. Set the Social Care Levy increases in line with Council's February 2017 decision, at 3%; and a Council Tax at 2.99%.**
 - iii. Approve the capital programme proposed at Appendix 1E of this report.**
 - iv. Set the changes in fees and charges set out in detail at Section 8 of and at Appendix 1G of this report.**
 - v. Set a 1% reduction for social dwelling rents.**
 - vi. Set the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget for 2018/19 as set out at Appendix 1F of this report.**
 - vii. That all other service charges related to the HRA be increased by 4% (CPI September 2017 plus 1%), including garage rents. Except for sheltered housing schemes, as these have been reviewed individually this year and will be increased by a reasonable amount each year to move to a full cost recovery position.**
- d. Endorse the Medium Term Financial Strategy and receive annual updates on delivery against the strategy in setting future annual budgets.**

Reason for Decision:

To enable Council to:

- *Set its revenue, capital, housing revenue accounts, fees and charges, levels of reserves and resultant Council Tax and Social Care Levy for 2018/19, as well as to issue Council Tax and rent bills.*
- *Provide the Council with a strong business and financial plan for sustainable delivery for 2018/19.*
- *Provide the Council with a Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan that drives long term financial sustainability and delivery of its Business Plan.*

199 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 9.30 - 10.09 am)

These decisions were published, earlier, on the 7 February 2018 and will come into force on 15 February 2018

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