



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 24th JANUARY 2019

PRESENT: Councillor D Cook (Chair), Councillors J Chesworth, S Doyle and M Cook

The following officers were present: Andrew Barratt (Chief Executive), Rob Barnes (Executive Director Communities), Stefan Garner (Executive Director Finance), Lynne Pugh (Assistant Director Finance) and Michael Buckland (Head of Revenues)

93 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Claymore and R Pritchard.

94 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th December 2018 were approved and signed as a correct record.

(Moved by Councillor J Chesworth and seconded by Councillor M Cook)

95 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

96 QUESTION TIME:

A question from a member of the public had been received but was withdrawn by that member of the public before the date of the meeting.

97 MATTERS REFERRED TO THE CABINET IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES

None.

98 DRAFT BUDGET & MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2019/20

Report of the Leader of the Council to request Cabinet to approve the draft package of budget proposals (**attached at Appendix A**) to consult with the Joint Scrutiny Committee (Budget) on 30th January 2019 and to receive their feedback on the:

- General Fund Revenue (GF) Budget and Council Tax for 2019/20;
- Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget for 2019/20;
- Capital Programme – General Fund & HRA;
- Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

This was a key decision as it affected two or more wards and involved expenditure over £100k.

RESOLVED that:

Cabinet approved the draft package of budget proposals including the proposed policy changes (as detailed at Appendix B); and

as required by the Constitution of the Council, the Joint Scrutiny Committee (Budget) on 30th January 2019, be requested to consider the budget proposals contained within this report.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor M Cook)

99 TEMPORARY RESERVES, RETAINED FUNDS AND PROVISIONS

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Assets and Finance to advise Cabinet on the levels of reserves and to seek approval to re-purpose unspent reserves, following the recent review by the Executive Director Finance.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

approved the transfer of the reserves, as detailed in Appendix A, of £231,977 to create a General Fund Transformation Reserve and £62,104 to create a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Transformation Reserve;

noted the reserves to be spent in 2018/19 and 2019/20 which would otherwise be returned to balances; and

noted the current levels of reserves which remained.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor J Chesworth)

100 BUSINESS RATES INCOME FORECAST 2019/20

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Assets and Finance to seek endorsement from Members on the Business Rates income forecast for 2019/20.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet

approved the Business Rates income forecast for 2019/20 and subsequent NNDR1 form for submission to MHCLG by 31 January 2019, in line with the scheme of delegation.

authorised the Executive Director Finance, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make such required amendments as necessary should material amendments be required to the forecast NNDR1; and

noted discretionary relief granted to qualifying bodies in line with the existing policy.

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor S Doyle)

101 ALLOCATIONS POLICY

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services and Neighbourhoods which:

- Detailed the proposed changes to the Councils Allocations Policy subject to the statutory consultation process;
- Set out the arrangements for statutory consultation on the proposed changes set to take place between 7th May and 30th August 2019;
- Confirmed the timescales and arrangements for transitioning to the new Policy;
- Set out the community based impact assessment which would remain under review and would be presented as part of the final policy document, highlighted within the report.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

approved, in principle, the draft allocations policy, shown at Annex 1-3, subject to the requisite consultation arrangements

approved the consultation plan detailed within the report commencing 7th May 2019 and running until Friday 30th August 2019

delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services and Neighbourhoods and Executive Director of Communities to approve the final policy for Full Council approval October 2019, save any material changes which

would be referred back to Cabinet and the timescales amended accordingly

supported comments arising from discussions with the Council's Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on the proposed matters relating to the management of the Council's Housing Register – presentation attached at Annex 4. Noting further detailed Scrutiny forms part of the consultation plan detailed in the report

noted the Independent Report, shown at Annex 6, provided by the Housing Quality Network (HQN) which highlighted the exemplary approach to the Council's review of its Allocations Policy

approved the draft community & equality based impact assessment noting the effect of the key changes on existing and potential service users.

(Moved by Councillor M Cook and seconded by Councillor J Chesworth)

102 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That members of the press and public be now excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the grounds that the business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

(Moved by Councillor D Cook and seconded by Councillor J Chesworth)

103 ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE COMMUNITY ALARM SERVICE MONITORING AT SHELTERED HOUSING SCHEMES

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services and Neighbourhoods which detailed:

- Ministry Housing Communities Local Government (MHCLG) & Department for Works (DWP) formal response to the October 2017 national consultations on future funding for supported and sheltered housing; and
- The arrangements for the Council's sheltered housing's 24hr community lifeline alarm service now that the Government had announced its future funding plans for sheltered housing.

RESOLVED that Cabinet:

agreed to procure the Council's community lifeline alarm

service in compliance with the Council's financial regulation & guidance policy, further to the Cabinet decision in July 2018 to re-procure the service from January 2019

agreed the action plan arising from the independent review of the Council's housing sheltered service and detailed within the report

noted the MHCLG position with regard to sheltered housing.

The report contained three further recommendations which remained confidential.

(Moved by Councillor M Cook and seconded by Councillor S Doyle)

104 RESOLUTION OF CONTRACT DISPUTE - DRY RECYCLING MATERIALS CONTRACT

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Operational Services which sought approval to agree a resolution to the contract dispute for the processing of Dry Recycling Materials contract.

RESOLVED That Cabinet:

approved the negotiated settlement that has been reached with Biffa Waste Services Ltd for incorporation into the existing contract which the authority had with the company for the processing of dry recyclate, and authorised the Chief Executive to agree a suitable form for the contract variation in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Operational Services

noted the financial implications and endorsed that the revised waste management costs were considered as part of the budget process given the need to realign all waste budgets after the confirmation of the reduction in recycling credits from Staffordshire County Council.

(Moved by Councillor J Chesworth and seconded by Councillor D Cook)

Leader