



POLICY, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

PARKSIDE, STATION APPROACH, BURTON STREET, MELTON MOWBRAY

01 July 2014

PRESENT:-

Councillors J.B Rhodes (Chairman), G. Bush, M. Gordon,
J. Simpson, D.R Wright, J. Wyatt

As Substitute

Councillor T. Moncrieff
Councillor J. Orson

Chief Executive, Strategic Director (KA), Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods,
Head of Central Services, Head of Regulatory Services, Head of Communications,
Communications and HR Manager, Committee Support Officers (JR and DS)

P1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hutchinson, O'Callaghan and Posnett.

P2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 April were confirmed and authorised to be signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendments:

Councillor Moncrieff to be included on the list of attendees as a substitute.

Minute P86 Minute:

Cllr Gordon subsequently declared that she does not have a personal and pecuniary interest in matters relating to the Green Waste Service.

Minute P87: Declarations of interest:

Councillor Rhodes declared a personal interest in any matters relating to Leicestershire County Council due to his role as a County Councillor.

Councillor Rhodes also declared a personal and pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 19 – Disposal of Land – Foyer project due to attending finance meetings in his role as a County Councillor.

P3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Rhodes and Councillor Orson declared a personal interest in any item which related to the County Council due to their positions as County Councillors.

Councillor Simpson declared a personal interest in items 7 and 8 because she has a son who is an employee of Melton Borough Council and in Item 11, Rec 2.1b due to her being a member of the Planning Committee.

Councillor Bush declared a personal interest in item 11, Rec 2.1b due to being a member of the Planning Committee.

Councillor Moncrieff declared a personal interest in Item 11, Rec 2.1b due to having formerly been a member of the Planning Committee when the item was first considered.

P4. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations from other committees.

P5. SERVICE PLANS 2014/2015

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted a report which provided Members with the opportunity to comment on, and agree with the Service Plans for 2014-15. Following the approval of the Council's budget 2014/15 the service plans had been updated to reflect the approved budget and to take account of the latest performance information, which included goals and metrics developed to support the Council's priorities as part of the Corporate Plan. This year achievements of innovation and/or creativity that have performed particularly well have been highlighted in blue in Section 2 of each Service Plan.

Councillor Moncrieff expressed an interest in working closely with officers to develop the implementation of the Local Area Co-ordination Pilot Service in the Borough from September 2015 due to his position as the Asfordby Ward Councillor. This is a new service that will be created to focus on a population of 15000 in total linking into health as an initial target area. Two Local Area Co-ordinators will be employed to focus on areas of most need which will be Neighbourhood Priority Areas and Asfordby Village. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods advised that regular updates will be advised to the Community and Social Affairs Committee.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Wright and Councillor Bush seconded. All members were unanimously in favour.

RESOLVED that

- a) The Services Plans attached at Appendix A (Central Services) and Appendix B (Communications), Appendix C (Communities and Neighbourhoods) and Appendix D (Regulatory Services) be approved.

P6. ASBESTOS POLICY

The Head of Regulatory Services submitted a report seeking Members' approval for the Asbestos Policy. The report highlighted the need to refocus how the Council deals with and makes clear the dangers of Asbestos. The policy looks at educating and training people to deal effectively and safely with Asbestos.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Moncrieff and Councillor Wright seconded. All Members were unanimously in favour.

RESOLVED that

- a) The policy is approved with immediate effect.
- b) The Strategic Director (CAM) be granted delegated authority to amend the policy in line with Health and Safety legislation and best practice guidance.

P7. REDEPLOYMENT AND REDUNDANCY POLICY

The Head of Communications submitted a report requesting Members to approve the updated Redundancy and Redeployment Policy.

This policy is reviewed on an annual basis and was deferred from the PFA Committee meeting held in February 2014 for the trade unions to consult further with their members. The proposed changes to the policy were not supported by the trade unions and the Joint Staff Working Group. After discussion of the proposed changes and in particular the "Protection of Pay" (at 6.7 Appendix 1) it was suggest that a compromise should be reached.

Councillor Rhodes moved to put Salary Protection at two full years at 100% with no protection thereafter, putting Melton Borough Council in line with neighbouring authorities regarding redeployment and redundancy. This was seconded by Councillor Wright.

A vote was taken with the majority of members in favour.

(Councillor Simpson took no part in the debate and did not vote due to her declaring a personal interest).

Councillors Bush and Moncrieff requested their votes be recorded as being against.

RESOLVED that

- a) The attached policy (Appendix 1) be approved **subject to salary protection at 100% for two full years with no further protection thereafter.**

P8. DISCRETIONARY PENSION POLICIES

The Head of Communications submitted a report that summarises the main changes to the LGPS from April 2014 and the pension policies to be reviewed. The

report made recommendations for the adoption of the new policy statements.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Wyatt and Councillor Bush seconded. All Members were unanimously in favour.

(Councillor Simpson took no part in the debate and did not vote due to having declared a personal interest).

RESOLVED that

- a) The amendments to the Discretionary Pension Policies as set out in Appendix A be approved.
- b) Delegated authority be granted to the Head of Communications in consultation with the Head of Central Services to agree application of the Discretionary Powers detailed in 5.2.

P9. REVENUE BUDGET 2013/2014 – PROVISIONAL YEAR END POSITION

The Head of Central Services submitted a report which provided Members with information on the provisional year end position subject to external audit approval for 2013/14 together with the implications for the Council's balances and reserves.

Members' attention was drawn to Appendix A which gave a breakdown of the various services with overspends or underspends in excess of £10,000 alongside corresponding commentary.

The Head of Central Services highlighted the provision of £103k for the estimated loss in relation to a fraudulent payment and the creation of a £254k reserve in relation to Business Rates to cover the collection fund deficit. Members were advised that in relation to the figures reported to Full Council in February 2014 the Corporate Priorities Reserve is estimated to be £130k high at the end of the 2014/2015 financial year and Special Expenses estimated to be £26k higher at the year end.

All figures are provisional until approved by external audit in August 2014.

Councillor Rhodes commented that prudent management was reflected in the provision of such surplus. The provisional year end position for the Council is healthy.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Rhodes and Councillor Wyatt seconded. All Members were unanimously in favour.

RESOLVED that

- a) The provisional year end position, variations to the 2013/14 estimated year end position and the resultant effect on the Council's balances and reserves as set out in the attached papers be noted.
- b) Supplementary estimates be approved for those services which are overspent against the approved budget as attached at Appendix A.
- c) The prudent provision of £103k for a realistic estimate of the Council's loss in

relation to a fraudulent payment and creation of an ear marked reserve of £254k in relation to Business Rate's for future charges on collection fund deficit be noted.

P10. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Head of Central Services submitted a report to provide the Statement of Accounts for 2013/14 for approval which had been prepared in accordance with the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 as amended by the Accounts and Audit (Amendments) Regulations 2004 and inform the Committee of the key issues within the accounts.

It was highlighted that the accounts were still subject to audit and therefore amendments could be required as a result of the auditors' findings. Any significant amendments will be taken to the Policy, Finance and Administration Committee Meeting scheduled for September 2014.

Members were advised that the balance sheet reflected a healthy position on borrowing and the working capital showed an improved position.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Rhodes and Councillor Wyatt seconded. All Members were unanimously in favour.

RESOLVED that

a) The Statement of Accounts for 2013/14 be noted.

P.11 ITEMS FOR APPROVAL UNDER FINANCIAL PROCEDURE RULES

The Head of Central Services submitted a report to provide requests for approval of this Committee under Financial Procedure Rules and to provide information on amounts approved under delegated powers and to report the impact of these on the Council's reserves and balances.

The recommendation was moved by Councillor Wyatt and Councillor Moncrieff seconded. All members were unanimously in favour.

RESOLVED that

a) the virements approved under delegated powers (para. 3.1.1 refers) be noted;

b) the business cases discussed in para 4.1 be approved, additional funding of £15,000 for Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas and £64,000 for Private Sector Housing Grants be approved from capital receipts as outlined in paragraph 4.2 and additional funding of £300,000 from various sources be approved for the Affordable Housing New Build scheme as outlined in paragraph 4.3;

c) supplementary estimate of £4,000 be approved from the Corporate Priorities Reserve for the World War One Centenary commemorative event as detailed in paragraph 5.1;

- d) a supplementary estimate of £20,000 be approved from the HRA Working Balance for the design, financial modelling and implementation of an Intensive Housing Management Service as detailed in paragraph 5.2.

P12. CORPORATE ISSUES

The Chief Executive submitted a report to bring Members up to date with Corporate activities and issues which have occurred in the intervening period since the last report.

The Council has put forward a series of bids/applications for monies through the Transformation Challenge Fund, the closing date for these being 1st July 2014. The Council has also been invited to submit evidence to the national body and hold an advisory visit for the Network. Each scheme has been submitted in partnership with another district in order to qualify for the eligibility criteria set out by the government. For example, Melton Borough Council has partnered with Blaby District for the Me and My Learning Project. One authority can lead on only one bid, but can be a partner in many. The Chief Executive gave a brief description of each bid/application and highlighted that the Council are leading on two of them which relate to Me & My Learning.

The extent of the support Melton Borough Council gives to assist people to live an independent lifestyle was highlighted by the Chief Executive by drawing Members' attention to the chart at Appendix 2.

Members were advised that the Council had been particularly requested to make submissions to the Public Services Transformation Network regarding the work in integrated services, transformation programme around digital services and people project activity, this evidence will be submitted by the 10th of July 2014.

The Chief Executive advised that the T3 team have requested that an annual report be presented to members on the work of the Agile Council instead of on a six monthly basis. Members indicated that they preferred the report being made on a six monthly basis as it is now.

The recommendations were moved by Councillor Moncrieff and Councillor Gordon seconded. All members were unanimously favour.

RESOLVED that

- a) The report be noted.
- b) The updated fast moving process for the Transformation Challenge Bids be noted.
- c) After discussion the recommendation at 2.3 was approved subject to the following amendment:
- d) Progress and developments with respect to the 'Agile' Council Programme be reported to the committee on a six monthly basis.

The Chairman in exercising his statutory powers agreed that the following item be considered as a matter of urgency due to the issue being raised following despatch of the agenda.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that the Public be excluded during the consideration of the following item(s) of business in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (Access to Information: Exempt Information) under Paragraphs 3 and 5.

P13. **URGENT BUSINESS**

PROPERTY SEARCHES LITIGATION – ‘APPS CLAIMANTS’ & PROPOSED SETTLEMENT

The Head of Regulatory Services presented a report which sought urgent approval from Members required by 4th July 2014, for confirmation to proceed with the proposed settlement.

Councillor Wright moved the recommendation and Councillor Simpson seconded. All Members were unanimously in favour.

RESOLVED that all recommendations in the report be approved.

The meeting which commenced at 6.30 p.m. closed at 7:35p.m.

Chairman