



RURAL, ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

PARKSIDE, STATION APPROACH, BURTON STREET, MELTON MOWBRAY

8 MARCH 2017

Present:

Councillors J. Orson (Chair),
E. Hutchinson (Vice Chair), T. Beaken.
G.E. Botterill, R. De Burle,
M. Sheldon, J. Simpson,

As Substitute:-

Councillor M. Glancy for L. Higgins.

Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods,
Central Services Manager, Business Manager,
Administrative Assistant for Communities and Neighbourhoods.

R50. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Baguley, Councillor Culley, Councillor Higgins and Councillor Posnett.

R51. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2017 and the amended exempt minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd November 2016 were authorised to be signed by the Chairman.

The Chair wanted it noting that Bill Forbes from Friends of the Country Park was still awaiting an email reply regarding queries he had from the previous meeting, The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods stated he would chase this up with the appropriate officer.

R52. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations at this time.

R53. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations from other committees.

R54. UPDATE ON DECISIONS

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods submitted an update on decisions report. There being no comments or questions forthcoming from Members, it was

RESOLVED that the Update on Decisions document be noted.

R55. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING APRIL 2016 to JAN 2017.

The Head of Central Services submitted a report to update the Committee on the progress of schemes within the Capital Programme to 31 January 2017.

The Central Services Manager presented an over view of the report bringing Members attention to:

- Appendix A table showing the Capital Programme 2016/17 progress report-January 2017.
- 5.2 Table showing the overall position for all capital schemes falling within this committee, noting the forecast year end variance underspend of £591k.
- 5.3 Noting the Cattle Market re-development project is the main reason for the expected variance. Also noting that if any delays or works are brought forward this will impact further profiling of the budget over the next two years, the position will continue to be monitored and any further changes will be reported as necessary.
- 5.4 Stating the Snow Hill Units Roofing Works project is now expected to commence until 2017/18 due to resource issues in 2016/17.
- 5.6 Noting the car park capital improvements budget is not anticipated to have any further works required and therefore there will be no spend against this budget.

The chair moved that Recommendation 2.1 be approved. All Councillors were in favour.

RESOLVED that the progress made on each capital scheme, attached as Appendix A, along with the year end forecast position be noted.

R56. BUDGET MONITORING APRIL-DECEMBER 2016

The Head of Central Services submitted a report to provide information on actual expenditure and income incurred on this committee's services compared to the latest approved budget for the period 1st April 2016- 31st December 2016.

The Central Services Manager gave an overview of the report bringing Members attention to the Appendix a table showing the Summary of Income and Expenditure April to December 2016.

The Central Services Manager also brought Members attention to:

- 3.3 Table showing a summary of the Income and Expenditures for this Committee's services compares to the approved budget at December 2016. Noting the forecast Year End Variance Underspend of £172,640.
- 3.4 Stating that whilst it is noted that the current variance is an underspend of £1,112k (£913k of which is controllable), it is estimated that there will be a potential year end underspend of £172,640 against the approved budget to-date for general expenses.

The Central Services Manager brought Members attention to 3.6 noting that as part of the budget monitoring process variances are being promptly and proactively managed. The Central Services Manager gave details of the more significant year end forecast variations:

3.6.1- Overspends:

- Waste Management £25,000 –Noting it is currently forecasted that a shortfall of income is to be expected of £30k. The shortfall is due to lower than expected recycling prices & lower tonnages being processed. This has been slightly offset by some additional income of bin tags & street sweeping. A saving of £5k on contractor costs is currently anticipated due to less material being processed.

3.6.2- Underspends:

- Environmental Health £12,770- Noting there is a forecasted underspend of £6.5k due to various staff vacancies throughout the year. There has also been additional income that is expected to achieve a surplus of £6k by the year end. The additional income is from water sampling and Environment Protection Act income.
- Development Control £130,000- Noting Income has exceeded budget expectations due to the number and nature of applications received.
- Building Control £11,000- Noting new income streams was introduced part way through the year. These include street naming and numbering, completion certificate copies and Clerk of Works service for council property.
- Licensing £18,580- Noting the current structure allows for 1.5 FTE's and now there is 1 FTE in post. The saving arises following a trial of 3 months of not recruiting a vacant post. Subsequently it has been decided that this part time vacancy would be filled as workloads were not manageable.

The Member's attention was then brought to 3.5 noting the Key Service Areas Report for the services within the remit of REEA committee which is attached as Appendix B.

A Brief discussion was had regarding whether the price residue of brown waste had risen since the pound has fallen. It was noted that it had gone up in recent months however was back to where it was predicted to be.

The chair moved that Recommendation 2.1 be approved. All Councillors were in favour.

RESOLVED that the financial position and year end forecast of each of the Committee's services to 31st December 2016 be noted.

At this point the Chair declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in the next item due to the current status of his planning application and his late entry to SHLAA.

The Chair left the room at this time and the Vice Chair took Chair position for the following item.

R57. PLANNING FEES

The Head of Regulatory Service submitted a report to invite members to consider proposals of increasing planning application fees as set out by Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in their recent correspondence to local authorities in February 2017

The Central Service Manager presented the report on behalf of the Head of Regulatory Services. An over view of the report was given bringing Members attention to Appendix A showing the letter received by the DCLG.

The Members attention was brought to:

- 3.1 noting the DCLG are proposing an increase of 20% on planning application fees as part of the 'fixing our broken housing market' policy.
- 5.1 noting the 20% increase could generate additional income of around £120k which would need to be re invested on planning/development management expenditure and has to be demonstrable as additional expenditure over and above existing budget provision.

The Central Services Manager brought Members attention back to recommendations 2.1 and 2.2.

A Member enquired as to how long it has been since the last increase, The Central Service Manager stated that he was not sure however he could look into this.

A Member noted that they felt this was another way of squeezing more money out of the market and felt this was an unreasonable increase.

Another member noted that as MBC is short on planning staff and the local plan has cost a lot of money that this will help make that money up. This member was in full support and proposed the recommendation were moved.

The Vice Chair moved that all recommendations be approved. All Councillors were in favour.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The offer from DCLG be noted and that Members provide authority to the Head of Central Services (section 151 officer) to accept the proposal to increase planning fees by 20%.
- 2) The Members agree to provide delegated authority to the Head of Regulatory Services in consultation with the Head of Central Services to establish how the additional income will be spent in order to meet the Councils planning and development management priorities.

The Chair entered the room at this point.

R59. **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Business to be discussed.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

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

R60. **WASTE MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

The Head of Regulatory Services submitted a report to inform Members of the progress made in respect of the procurement of a new waste contract.

RESOLVED that all recommendations in the report be approved.

The Chair noted that as this was the last REEA committee of the civic year that he wanted to give thanks to all the members, officers and the committee clerk and noted some of the Committee successes this year.

The meeting that started at 6:30pm finished at 7:15pm

Chairman