



CORPORATE SELECT COMMITTEE

Meeting: Monday, 26 September 2022 at 6.30 pm in a Virtual Meeting

Present: Councillor T Ashton (Chair)

Councillors J Collins, O Cross, L Grooby, P Hardy, D Lomax, R McKeown, E Siddall and E Thrane

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E Kelly, G Oakley and M Stone

Councillors Barrow, A McKeown, Sizeland, Todd and Young were also in attendance.

23/20 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chair announced that the meeting was being broadcast live to the internet via the Council's website and was capable of repeated viewing. The images and sound recording may be used for training purposes within the Council. All were asked to keep to the speaking guidelines which were outlined. Any views expressed by any speaker in the meeting are the speaker's own and do not necessarily reflect the views of High Peak Borough Council.

23/21 TO RECEIVE DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST ON ANY MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

(Agenda Item 2)

None

23/22 ANY MATTERS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE UNDER THE CALL-IN PROCEDURE

(Agenda Item 3)

None

23/23 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

(Agenda Item 4)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

23/24 SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

(Agenda Item 5)

As the co-ordinating Scrutiny Committee, it was requested that the programme for Economy & Growth Select Committee be urgently reviewed to include more substantial items around current issues including the delivery of the Future High Street Fund project in Buxton. Other subjects suggested included business support during the cost of living crisis, Granby Road and the DCC Growth Plan. In respect of Corporate Select Committee, it was anticipated that the Asset Management and HRA Working Groups would be convened shortly.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Select Committee Work Programmes be noted subject to the above comments;
2. That the work programme for Economy & Growth Select Committee be reviewed as set out above.

23/25 EAST MIDLANDS DEVOLUTION DEAL
(Agenda Item 6)

The Leader provided a summary of the East Midlands Devolution Deal offer that was announced on 30 August 2022. The deal document sets out the powers the Government will devolve to the East Midlands Mayoral County Combined Authority (MCCA) and how the combined authority will work, the headlines of which are set in paragraph 3.5 of the report. An indicative timetable for the process is set out at paragraph 3.7, and there is to be a period of public consultation between November and January once the proposal has been signed off by upper tier councils. It was noted that district and borough council are not formally engaged in the process but have received briefings from upper tier Councils which will continue throughout the process.

Concerns were expressed regarding the effect of the proposal on the distinctive nature of High Peak, and it was requested that reassurances around this be sought at the earliest opportunity. The effect on other organisations was also queried including the Police Authorities, Vision Derbyshire, D2N2 as well as transport networks within the area.

RESOLVED:

1. That the summary of the East Midlands Devolution Deal as set out in the report be noted;
2. That the Leader, in consultation with other Group Leaders, be requested to convey the concerns around the effect of the proposal on the High Peak in advance of the consultation period due to commence in November.

23/26 FIRST QUARTER FINANCIAL, PROCUREMENT AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2022/23
(Agenda Item 7)

The Committee considered the Council's overall performance and financial position for the period ended 30 June ("First Quarter 2022/23").

It was noted that the first quarter was starting to see the effect of the increase in inflation. It was also noted that the MTFP had budgeted for a pay award of 2.5%, but the offer was 6%, which had not yet been accepted. Recruitment and retention of staff is an issue, and work in on-going with the District Councils Network around cost pressures.

Regarding waste collections, staffing issues had been experienced over the summer with annual leave, sickness and recruitment issues, and staff had been asked to cancel leave and staff recruited from other services.

In response to a query around the consultation at Jodrell Road Play Area, this had not been done during the holiday period as users were likely on holiday, but would include an officer attending site and consultation with local residents.

A written response would be provided to queries around protected housing and Hartington Gardens Footbridge.

RESOLVED:

1. That the First Quarter 2022/23 financial, procurement and performance position as detailed in Appendices A, B and C and summarise at 3.3 of the covering report be noted; and
2. That the Executive be recommended to approve the write-offs in Appendix D.

23/27

REVISED LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME

(Agenda Item 8)

The Committee considered a report which sought permission to undertake a consultation with both the public and the Major Precepting Authorities in respect of proposed changes to the Council's Council Tax Reduction Scheme with effect from 1 April 2023. The existing means tested Council Tax Reduction scheme is not viable in the longer term now that Universal Credit has been rolled out fully and with the increase in UC claimants due to the COVID-19 crisis. The details of the proposed new scheme were set out in paragraph 7.15 of the report, and would include more targeted support to those households on the lowest of incomes and changes can only be made to the working age schemes.

Further information was requested around the impact of the new scheme of claimants, as well as a comparison with other authorities, which would be circulated.

RESOLVED:

That the Executive be recommended to approve that the Council consult with the public and Major Precepting Authorities on the introduction of a new income banded / grid scheme for working age applicants with effect from 1 April 2023, to reduce the significant administrative burden placed on the Council by the introduction of Universal Credit and to target the overall level of support for the lowest income families.

23/28 JOINT PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2022-25
(Agenda Item 9)

The Committee considered the Council's Joint Procurement Strategy 2022 – 2025, which had been renewed to set out clear objectives to meet future challenges and deliver services to our communities and to create a responsible framework in which to achieve the key objectives as outlined in the Corporate Plan 2019 – 2023. Five key themes had been identified which will link and underpin the strategic vision and aims of the strategy which were set out in paragraph 3.8 of the report.

RESOLVED:

That the Executive be recommended to approve and adopt the Joint Procurement Strategy 2022 – 2025.

23/29 ACCESS TO SERVICES, DIGITAL AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES - 2022/23 ACTION PLAN
(Agenda Item 10)

The Committee considered the 2022/23 Action for the implementation of the recently approved Access to Services, Digital and Organisational Strategies. Comments were made around digital exclusion and measures in place to ensure customers were not excluded from accessing council services.

RESOLVED:

That the combined action plan for delivery of the strategies as detailed at Appendix B be noted.

23/30 CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE
(Agenda Item 11)

The Committee considered the Corporate Peer Challenge Joint Action Plan produced in response to the recommendations arising from the Peer Challenge.

RESOLVED:

That the Joint Action Plan be noted.

23/31 ANY QUESTIONS REFERRED TO THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER (MEMBER SERVICES TO BE ADVISED OF ANY QUESTIONS AT LEAST 4 DAYS PRIOR TO THE MEETING)
(Agenda Item 12)

None

23/32 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC
(Agenda Item 13)

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as there may be disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

23/33 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

(Agenda Item 14)

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

23/34 WRITE OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE DEBTS

(Agenda Item 15)

The Committee considered recommending approval to write off balances which are deemed non-recoverable.

23/35 UPDATE ON FUTURE HIGH STREET FUND - PURCHASE OF THE SPRINGS SHOPPING CENTRE (ORAL UPDATE)

(Agenda Item 16)

The Committee received an oral update on progress with the Future High Street Fund and the purchase of the Springs Shopping Centre, which was noted.

23/36 STAFF PAY GRADE REVIEW

(Agenda Item 17)

The Committee considered a new Staff Pay Grade Structure and made recommendations to the Executive.

The meeting concluded at 8.17 pm

CHAIRMAN