

**STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET DECISIONS**

**TUESDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2017**

PRESENT: Councillor S E Ralphs MBE (Chair)

Councillors M Bowen, A Forrester, T Hall, D Ogden, S Scalise and E Wain

33 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2017 were approved.

34 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY**

There were no declarations made.

35 **JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES 31 OCTOBER 2017**

**DECISION:** That the Minutes of Meeting of the Local Joint Employees Consultative Committee held on 31 October 2017 be received and the recommendations contained therein approved.

36 **FORWARD PLAN**

**DECISION:** That the Forward Plan for the period December 2017 to February 2018 be approved for publication.

37 **SECOND QUARTER PERFORMANCE, FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT REVIEW**

The purpose of this report was to inform members of the Council's overall performance and financial position for the period ended 30 September 2017 ("Second Quarter 2017/18"). The report was considered by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 29 November 2017. The position was summarised as follows:

| Subject | Headline  |
|---------|---|
| Finance | <p><b>The Finance headlines for the Second Quarter were:</b></p> <p><i>Performance against Budget</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The General Fund budget for 2017/18 was forecast to be £309,420 underspent at the Quarter 2 stage.</li><li>• This underspend would need to be retained in order to meet a predicted deficit on the Business Rates Collection Fund due to the receipt of Section 31 grant to compensate for losses in businesses rates income due to additional reliefs granted by central government.</li></ul> |

## Cabinet - 5 December 2017

| Subject     | Headline  |
|-------------|---|
|             | <p><i>Efficiency Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The overall efficiency target of £661,000 for 2017/18 was projected to be achieved – with £335,490 achieved to date. However, this was dependent on the progression of key efficiency projects.</li> </ul> <p><i>Capital Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Capital Programme budget for 2017/18 was £3.37m. This included the carry forward of capital underspends from 2016/17. The projected outturn was £1.7m which represented an underspend of £1.67m relating to Disabled Facilities Grants, Asset Management Plan and the Growth Fund.</li> </ul> <p><i>Treasury Management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cash investments held at 30th September 2017 totalled £7.4m. The Ascent loan and debenture stood at £19m.</li> <li>Council borrowing at 30th September 2017 totalled £13.2m (£12 m of which relates to the Ascent loan)</li> <li>The Council's net interest receipts budget was projected to show a surplus of £16,000 at Quarter 2 stage.</li> </ul> <p><i>Revenue Collection</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>56.7% of Council Tax was collected by 30th September 2017, compared to 56.9% for the same period last year.</li> <li>57.0% of Business Rates was collected by 30th September 2017 compared with 57.4% for the same period last year.</li> <li>At the end of Quarter Two the value of sundry debt that was over 60 days old was £103,240 which compares with £284,780 at 30th September 2016</li> <li>There were a number of balances that were recommended for write off as they were deemed to be non-recoverable. These were detailed in the schedule attached at Appendix D to the report.</li> </ul> |
| Procurement | <p><b>The Procurement headlines for the Second Quarter were:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25 procurement activities were completed</li> <li>The procurement forward plan included 51 procurement activities for 2017/18 (either SMDC only or joint with HPBC)</li> <li>At the 30th September 2017, 71% of procurement activity undertaken was on the forward plan and the Council paid 95% of its invoices within 30 days during the year.</li> </ul>   |
| Performance | <p><b>The Performance headlines for the Second Quarter were:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance was on track for 78% of the key performance indicators</li> <li>Of the 24 Priority Actions within the Corporate Plan, three were still to commence, 2 were complete, the remainder being classified as 'Green'; and</li> <li>The Council received 55 complaints, 80 comments and</li> </ul>   |

## Cabinet - 5 December 2017

| Subject | Headline   |
|---------|--|
|         | 23 compliments in the First Quarter. Repeat complaints and response times were both on track |

Options considered:

Detailed Analysis is contained within the appendices

- DECISION:**
1. That the Second Quarter 2017/18 financial, procurement and performance position detailed in Appendices A, B and C and summarised at 3.3 of this covering report be noted.
  2. That the write-off of debts as set out in Appendix D of the report be approved.

### 38 UPDATED MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2018/19 TO 2021/22

The Cabinet considered the Council's updated Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The MTFP presented the Council's priorities in the context of the likely resources available and provided a financial context to future decision making. The report was considered by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 29 November 2017.

Options considered:

The report is a statement of fact. As such there are no options to consider.

- RECOMMENDED:** That the updated Medium-Term Financial Plan (Appendix A) be endorsed and that it should proceed to Council for approval.

### 39 BROUGH PARK MASTER PLANNING EXERCISE AND HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND BID

The report advised Members of the process and timescales to undertake both a master planning exercise and re-submission of a funding application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for improvements and restoration to Brough Park, Leek. The report was considered by the Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 8 November 2017.

Options considered:

1. With the HLF Parks For People funding programme still receiving applications, the opportunity existed to bid for funding from HLF to support the required improvements for Brough Park.
2. Not to resubmit. Not recommended, as this would limit the ability of the Council, due to financial constraints, to bear the full cost of all the emerging and required capital improvements for Brough Park.

- DECISION:**
1. That the process to be followed be noted.

## **Cabinet - 5 December 2017**

2. That the resubmission of the funding application to the Heritage Lottery Fund and other funding agencies be approved.
3. That the allocation of up to £200,000 in the 2018/19 Capital Programme as this Council's match funding contribution towards the bid be approved.

### 40 **EMPTY PROPERTY STRATEGY**

It was important to increase activity and strategic direction in relation to empty properties in order to maximise available housing stock; reduce the effects that empty properties may have; and realise the benefits of bringing empty properties back into use. The Alliance wide Empty Property Strategy set out the national and local context, and strategic objectives to realise the potential benefits of bringing properties back into use.

Options considered:

Option 1- Proceed with the recommendations and approve the proposed Empty Property Strategy.

Option 2- Reject the recommendations and propose an alternative approach. Without a strategic co-ordinated direction the potential benefits of bringing properties back into use may not be realised. (Not recommended).

**DECISION:** That the Alliance wide Empty Property Strategy and Implementation Plan be approved.

### 41 **FOXT CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION AND CHARACTER APPRAISAL - DRAFT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The report advised Members of the proposed conservation area boundary and accompanying draft character appraisal for Foxt, for the purposes of public consultation. The report was considered by the Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 8 November 2017.

Options considered:

Option 1 - Do Nothing

It is a statutory duty for Councils to periodically review and determine whether any of their areas warrant conservation area designation. Through the Churnet Valley Masterplan, Foxt has been identified as an area that potentially retains sufficient architectural and historic interest to warrant designation. Failure to progress this designation through the public consultation process would not meet the statutory requirements and a key action point arising from the adopted SPD (Churnet Valley Masterplan)

Not recommended

Option 2 – Recognise the special architectural and historic interest within Foxt and approve the proposed conservation area designation and accompanying character appraisal for wider public consultation. This would allow the local community to engage and comment on the proposed designation and the contents of the character

## **Cabinet - 5 December 2017**

appraisal and be involved in recognising the area's heritage value and significance. This option would allow the Council to meet its statutory requirements and fulfil a key action point arising from the adopted Churnet Valley Masterplan.

Recommended

- DECISION:**
1. That the proposed conservation area boundary for Foxt be approved for the purposes of public consultation.
  2. That the draft conservation area character appraisal for Foxt be approved for the purposes of public consultation.

### 42 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED - That, pursuant to Section 100A(2) and (4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings whereby it is likely that confidential information as defined in Section 100A (3) of the Act would be disclosed to the public in breach of the obligation of confidence or exempt information as defined in Section 100 I (1) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act would be disclosed to the public by virtue of the Paragraphs indicated.

### 43 **COMMERCIAL PROPERTY**

The Cabinet approved a report that provided an update on progress in relation to the development of commercial units at the Churnet works site in Leek and the next steps to be taken.

### 44 **SECOND QUARTER PERFORMANCE, FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT REVIEW - APPENDIX D**

The Cabinet approved the write-off of debts as set out in Appendix D of the report.

The meeting closed at 2.33 pm

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairman

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