

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET DECISIONS

TUESDAY, 1 AUGUST 2017

PRESENT: Councillor S E Ralphs MBE (Chair)

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

12 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2017 were approved.

13 **CABINET SUPPORT MEMBER**

The Leader of the Council announced that Councillor Dani Ogden had been appointed as a Cabinet Support Member.

14 **FORWARD PLAN**

DECISION: That the Forward Plan for the period July to September 2017 be approved for publication.

15 **FOURTH QUARTER 2016/17 FINANCE, PROCUREMENT & PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

The purpose of the report was to inform members of the Council's overall financial, procurement and performance position for the period ended 31st March 2017 ("Fourth Quarter 2016/17"). The report was considered by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 7 June 2017. The position can be summarised as follows:

Subject	Headline
Finance	<p>The Finance headlines for the Fourth Quarter were:</p> <p><i>Performance against Budget</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">At the Quarter Four stage the General Fund provisional outturn for 2016/17 was an underspend of £412,752. <p><i>Efficiency Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The in-year savings requirement for 2016/17 amounted to £1,320,510 made up of the efficiency target of £613,760 for 2016/17, together with the £706,750 of unachieved savings rolled forward from 2015/16. There was a shortfall against this target of £431,590. The shortfall was covered by the in-year underspend. <p><i>Capital Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The revised Capital Programme budget for 2016/17 was set at £1.27million as part of the MTFP presented in February 2017.

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Subject	Headline
	<p>The provisional outturn was £1.08 million which represented an underspend of £0.19 million relating to the slippage in disabled facilities grant works and small variances on other projects</p> <p><i>Treasury Management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash investments held at 31st March 2017 totalled £4.9 million. The Ascent loan and debenture stood at £19 million. • Council borrowing at 31st March 2017 totalled £13.2 million (£12 million of which related to the Ascent loan) • The Council's net interest receipts budget had achieved a small surplus of £5,777 <p><i>Revenue Collection</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 98.7% of Council Tax was collected by 31st March 2017, compared to 98.7% for the same period last year. • 98.8% of Business Rates was collected by 31st March 2017 compared with 98.5% for the same period last year. • At the end of Quarter Four the value of sundry debt that was over 60 days old was £127,221 which compared with £294,384 at 31st March 2016
Procurement	<p>The Procurement headlines for the Fourth Quarter were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 procurement activities were completed during Quarter Four • 26 procurement activities planned for 2016/17 (either SMDC only or joint) would be rolled into 2017/18 • At the 31st March 2017, 55% of procurement activity undertaken was on the forward plan and the Council paid 95% of its invoices within 30 days during the year
Performance	<p>The Performance headlines for the Fourth Quarter were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 66% of the key performance indicators were achieved, with 34% off track. • Of the 20 Priority Actions within the Corporate Plan, none were rated red, 6 had been completed/closed, 1 was rated 'Amber', 2 were pending projects and the remainder were classified as 'Green'; and • The Council received 50 complaints, 63 comments and 42 compliments in the Fourth Quarter.

Options considered:

Detailed Analysis was contained within the appendices

- DECISION:**
1. That the Fourth Quarter 2016/17 financial, procurement and performance position detailed in Appendices A, B and C and summarised at 3.3 of the covering report.
 2. That allocation of the surplus on the General Fund Revenue Account to reserves as explained in Appendix A (paragraph 2.7) be approved.
 3. That the amendment to remove the fee set for the first set of bins for new build properties be approved and request

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that the Head of Operational Services identifies other budget savings to cover for the loss in projected income (paragraph 2.8)

4. That the proposal to carry forward capital budgets as detailed in Appendix A, paragraph 4.6 (£93,371) be approved.

16 PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK 2017/2018 (INCORPORATING THE ANNUAL REPORT 2016/2017 AND REVISED CORPORATE PLAN 2017 - 2019)

The purpose of the report was to:

- Provide members with an opportunity to scrutinise the draft performance framework and associated targets for 2017/18
- Highlight the main findings within the Annual Report and how these have influenced the framework and Corporate Plan refresh
- Outline the suggested approach and timescale for approval of the 2017/18 Performance Framework.

The report was considered by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 7 June 2017.

Options considered:

Members were asked to consider the proposed targets and to make amendments if they considered that they were necessary.

RECOMMENDED: That the Performance Framework 2017/18 (incorporating the Annual Report 2016/17 and revised Corporate Plan 2017-2019) be recommended to Council for approval.

17 FIRST QUARTER 2017/18 FINANCE, PROCUREMENT & PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The purpose of the report was to inform members of the Council's overall performance and financial position for the period ended 30th June 2017 ("First Quarter 2017/18") The report was considered by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 26 July 2017. The position can be summarised as follows:

Subject	Headline
Finance	<p>The finance headlines for the first quarter were:</p> <p><i>Performance against Budget</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The General Fund budget for 2017/18 was forecast to be £315,110 underspent at the Quarter 1 stage <p><i>Efficiency Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The overall efficiency target of £661,000 for 2017/18, was projected to be achieved at the first quarter stage. However, this was dependent on the progression of key efficiency programmes. Any shortfall could be funded using the earmarked reserve

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Subject	Headline
	<p>established to meet some of the one-off/short-term costs incurred in implementing the programme.</p> <p><i>Capital Programme</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Capital Programme budget for 2017/18 was £3.37 million including the carry forward of capital underspends from 2016/17. The projected outturn was £2.86 million which represented an underspend of £508,000 relating to Disabled Facilities Grants <p><i>Treasury Management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash investments held at 30th June 2017 totalled £6.2 million. The Ascent loan and debenture stood at £19 million. Council borrowing at 30th June 2017 totalled £13.2 million (£12 million of which related to the Ascent loan) The Council's net interest receipts budget was projected to be on target at quarter 1 stage. <p><i>Revenue Collection</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 29.7% of Council Tax was collected by 30th June 2017, compared to 29.8% for the same period last year. 28.9% of Business Rates was collected by 30 June 2017 compared with 28.8% for the same period last year. At the end of quarter one the value of sundry debt that was over 60 days old was £151,780 which compared with £272,230 at 30th June 2016
Procurement	<p>The procurement headlines for the First Quarter were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22 procurement activities were completed The procurement forward plan included 47 procurement activities for 2017/18 (either SMDC only or joint) At the 30th June 2017, 70% of procurement activity undertaken was on the forward plan and the Council paid 94% of its invoices within 30 days during the year
Performance	<p>The performance headlines for the First Quarter were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of the key performance indicators were on track Of the 23 Priority Actions within the Corporate Plan, two were still to commence, 2 were complete, the remainder being classified as 'Green'; and The Council received 51 complaints, 98 comments and 31 compliments in the First Quarter. Repeat complaints and response times both on track

Options considered:

Detailed Analysis is contained within the appendices

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- DECISION:**
1. That the First Quarter 2017/18 financial, procurement and performance position detailed in Appendices A, B and C and summarised at 3.3 of the covering report be noted.
 2. That the in advance pension contribution payment of £1.9m covering a period of 3 years (2017/18 – 2019/20) be approved in order to receive a discount of £100,000.
 3. In order to fund the payment, an additional drawdown of £1.34m from general fund contingency reserves in 2017/18 be approved.

18 REINSTATEMENT OF HERITAGE RAILWAY FROM LEEKBROOK TO LEEK

The purpose of the report was to provide an update on the progress on reinstatement of heritage rail link from Leekbrook to Leek (Cornhill) and sought approval for next steps to bring forward the delivery of the project.

Options considered:

Option 1: Do not transfer the land to CVR and allocate money for station projects
Under this option, the Council would not seek to agree land transfer to CVR. This would mean SMDC will need to raise funding if the project needed to be delivered in line with the corporate priorities. The Council had no experience in commissioning or delivering railway engineering works and could not mobilise railway volunteers to undertake works. Not recommended.

Option 2: Work in partnership with CVR and NSRC to deliver this project
Under this option, the Council would lead on securing planning approval and, subject to legal terms being agreed, all physical construction of rail track including fundraising for works and consultations with utilities would be the responsibility of the CVR/NSRC. CVR had proven expertise to deliver scheme and providing additional grant funding for restoration of Cheddleton and reinstatement of Leekbrook stations, would allow CVR/NSRC to focus on fundraising for rail track and commissioning of physical works. CVR/NSRC could also draw upon railway volunteers to undertake a proportion of works, which would reduce overall cost compared to any other delivery option. Recommended

- DECISION:**
1. That the progress on reinstatement of the heritage rail link from Leekbrook to Leek (Cornhill) as described in para 3.1-3.5 of the report be noted.
 2. To authorise the negotiation of an agreement to lease the track-bed owned by the Council to Churnet Valley Trust (CVR) to enable the construction, operation and management of a rail line be approved.
 3. That a further report be prepared for the Cabinet setting out the terms of the legal documentation for consideration.
 4. That the agreed contribution of £22,000 from the Moorlands Partnership Board on 21st June 2017 towards preparation of a full planning application for the re-instatement of rail line and associated costs be noted, and delegated approval be

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granted to the Executive Director (Place) to commission reports required for a planning application.

5. That the submission of a planning application to re-instate the rail line from Leekbrook to Cornhill be authorised.
6. That the approved grant of £7,500 from the Moorlands Partnership towards the cost of reinstating Leekbrook station (estimated to be in region of £25,000) and approved grant of £4,000 towards cost of repairs to Cheddleton Station building (estimated to be in region of £25,000) be noted

19 CONSULTATION ON A PROPOSAL TO INTRODUCE A PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER IN THE AREA AROUND THE MILLENNIUM GARDENS, BIDDULPH

The report presented the responses from consultation on a proposal to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order around the Millennium Gardens/Sainsbury's in Biddulph. The report was considered by the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 3 July 2017.

Options considered:

The Millennium Gardens and surrounding area met the two conditions required for the Council to introduce a Public Spaces Protection Order. The activities that have taken place have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the area. Secondly, the activities had been of a persistent, on-going nature. Cabinet may choose to approve the proposed Order attached at Appendix A (recommended). Alternatively, Cabinet may choose not to make a Public Spaces Protection Order (not recommended).

DECISION: That a Public Spaces Protection Order be introduced to prevent on-going anti-social behaviour in and around the Millennium Gardens in Biddulph.

20 STRATEGY FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT

The report provided Members with the Council's finalised Strategy for Physical Activity and Sport. This had been considered by the Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 5 July 2017.

Options considered:

1. Update the Council's Strategy as recommended in line with national strategies.
2. Do nothing, not recommended as this would limit the ability of the Council, sports clubs and individuals to take advantage of future funding streams and fail to deliver the wider benefits of increased participation in physical activity to our residents.

DECISION: That the strategy be adopted.

21 **PROPOSAL FOR THE FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF MOORLANDS COUNTRYSIDE SITES**

The report advised the Cabinet of the proposals to secure the future management arrangements of the Moorlands countryside sites. The report was considered by the Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 5 July 2017.

Options considered:

Four options were initially considered in regards to the future management at our countryside sites, these being:

1. Service to remain under Council management but with £40k savings target achieved.
2. Transfer management of all sites to one specialist provider i.e. SWT.
3. Transfer management of sites on a site by site basis to multiple providers.
4. Establish a private sector partnership

DECISION: That the future management of the countryside sites via an arrangement with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust (SWT), based upon the heads of terms as detailed within this report be approved, subject to discussions to take place with interested parties relating to Biddulph Grange Country Park.

22 **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.

23 **LONDON MILL**

The Cabinet received an update on recent actions and approved the next steps for the project.

24 **COMMERCIAL UNITS: INDUSTRIAL LAND CHURNET WORKS, LEEK**

The report provided an update for the Cabinet on recent discussions with the developers of the Churnet Works site and granted approval for next steps.

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The meeting closed at 3.00 pm