

Minutes of Policy & Finance Committee

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 5 April 2016, starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor S Hirst (Chairman)

Councillors:

J Alcock	A Knox
S Bibby	G Mirfin
R Elms	M Robinson
T Hill	J Rogerson
K Hind	I Sayers
S Hore	R J Thompson

In attendance: Chief Executive, Director of Resources, Director of Community Services and Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

Also in attendance: Councillor N Walsh.

Not in attendance: Councillor R Hargreaves.

679 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor D T Smith.

680 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 26 January 2016 and 9 February 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

681 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

Councillors S Hore, G Mirfin, M Robinson, J Rogerson and I Sayers all declared an interest in item 5 – Voluntary Grants 2016/17.

682 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Kath Lord-Green from the organisation Ribble FM, addressed the Committee regarding the application for a grant under the Voluntary Grant Scheme.

(Councillors Hore, Mirfin, Robinson, Rogerson and Sayers declared an interest in the next item of business and left the meeting. Councillor Ged Mirfin spoke on the item before leaving the meeting.)

683 VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION GRANTS 2016/17

Committee considered the allocation of voluntary organisation grants for 2016/17 as proposed by a working group of this Committee. The Council had received 21 applications requesting support totalling £149,956. The applications as submitted exceeded the funding available which was £105,410. After careful

consideration of all the grant applications received the working group had recommended grant allocations as shown in Annex 2 to the report.

Members asked specific questions with regard to several of the applications made.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the allocation of grants as proposed by the Voluntary Grants Working Group as set below out totalling £95,300.

Organisation Name	Recommended Grant for 2016/17 £
Bowland Pennine Mountain Rescue Team	0
Carers Link Lancashire	£2,000
Chipping Show	£500
Crossroads Care - Ribble Valley	£15,000
Gisburn Festival Hall	Refer to recreation grant scheme
Goosnargh & Longridge Agricultural Show	£500
Hodder Valley Agricultural & Horticultural Society	£500
Home Start - Pendle and Ribble Valley	£3,000
Lancashire Wildlife Trust	0
Lancashire's Best Kept Village Competition	£500
Little Green Bus	£6,000
Longridge Field Day Events	£500
Revitalise Respite Holidays	0
Ribble FM	0
Ribble Valley Breast Friends	0
Ribble Valley Citizens Advice Bureau	£60,000
Ribble Valley Shopmobility and Information Centre	£5,300
Rotary Club of Clitheroe - Clitheroe Community Bonfire and Fireworks Display	£750
The Foundation for Ribble Valley Families	0
Whalley Pickwick Festival	£750
Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust	0
Total	£95,300

(Councillors Hore, Mirfin, Robinson, Rogerson and Sayers returned to the meeting.)

684 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Director of Resources submitted a report seeking Committee's approval of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2016/17 financial year.

She reminded Members that local authorities were required to report on specific elements of their treasury management activities; these were included treasury management strategy or in the treasury management policies and practices. The Treasury Management Strategy covered the following areas:

- The current treasury position;
- A review of the proposals for interest rates.
- The Council's Borrowing and Debt Strategy.
- The Council's Investment Strategy.
- Capital Programme Financing Strategy.
- Limits on treasury management activities and Prudential indicators.
- Current debt portfolio position.
- Annual Investment Strategy.

*** RESOLVED: That Committee recommend to Council the Treasury Management Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report. ***

685 TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND PRACTICES 2016/17

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking Committee to review, approve and adopt the Treasury Management Policy Statement and Practices for 2016/17.

The Treasury Management Policies and Practices document governs the way we manage our investments; it is reviewed on an annual basis to comply with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code. The Code identifies 12 areas where statements of treasury management practices should be developed to implement the full requirements of the Code.

The Council's treasury management practices (TMP's) set out the manner in which the Council will seek to achieve its treasury management policies and objectives and how it will manage and control those activities.

RESOLVED: That

1. Committee formally adopt the Treasury Management Policies and Practices document as attached to the report, incorporating:

- Treasury management key principles;
- Treasury Management Policy Statement;
- Treasury Management Clauses;
- Treasury Management Practices and Schedules; and

*** 2. recommend to Council the Treasury Management Policies and Practices 2016/17. ***

686 LOCAL TAXATION WRITE-OFFS

The Director of Resources sought Committee's approval to write-off certain Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates debts.

RESOLVED: That Committee agree to the writing-off of £76.66 Council Tax, £3,669.09 of NNDR debts and £180 costs, where it has not been possible to collect the amounts due.

687 DRAFT CYCLE OF MEETINGS 2016/17

The Chief Executive submitted a report requesting Committee's consideration of the proposed meeting cycle for Committees for the municipal year 2016/17. Members were informed that consideration had been given to various issues that had resulted in the summer cycle being condensed as far as possible; the meeting dates being arranged around the Easter holidays as well as round the Referendum date.

RESOLVED: That the draft meeting cycle as submitted be approved for ratification at the annual meeting on 10 May 2016 (Appendix A to these minutes.)

688 AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Members to consider proposed changes to the Council's Constitution. The Council's Constitution was very much a living document which had been divided into parts that were accessible on the Council's website. The proposed amendments included the deletion of all reference to service plans in the individual Committee's Terms of Reference; an amendment to the Delegation Scheme to include Heads of Service in the decision-making process for disciplinary hearings. It was also noted that it would be necessary to amend the constitution should the Council proceed to join the proposed Lancashire Combined Authority.

Supporting documents would be amended to reflect the proposed amendments.

*** RESOLVED: That Committee recommend the suggested changes to Council for approval. ***

689 UPDATE ON FINANCIAL IMPACT OF DECEMBER FLOODS

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information with an update on the financial impact for the Council of the December floods. The different elements of expenditure relating to the floods were detailed for Committee's information. She explained that under the Bellwin scheme the Council had now submitted its claim for emergency recovery expenditure which totalled £62,967 of which £50,803 could be claimed back from the Government after taking into consideration our Bellwin threshold. A total of £119,000 had been paid to 238 households in the borough under the Flood Grant of £500 to each household scheme; this expenditure had been funded by the Government through a Section 31 Grant in full via Lancashire County Council.

The Director of Resources also highlighted the Council Tax and Business Rate Relief schemes which would continue for some time but which was also

refundable from the Government under the Section 31 Grant Scheme. Property Resilience Grants of up to £5,000 per flooded property for households and businesses were also available and were being administered by the Council and were currently being processed. This expenditure would be funded by the Government through Section 31 Grant via Lancashire County Council as the lead flood authority.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

690 REVENUES AND BENEFITS GENERAL REPORT

Committee considered a report which covered the following:

- National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR);
- Council Tax;
- Sundry Debtors;
- Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support Performance;
- Housing Benefit Overpayments.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

691 BUDGET WORKING GROUP MINUTES

Committee received the minutes of the Budget Working Group meeting held on 21 January 2016.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

692 PERCEPTION SURVEY 2015

The Director of Resources submitted a report informing Committee of the results of the Perception Survey 2015. Corporately there were some very encouraging results and an opportunity now to make the most of the data available and a chance to link the findings to our decision-making processes and strategy planning.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

693 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2016/17

The Director of Resources submitted a report informing Members of the schemes which had been approved for inclusion in the Capital Programme for this Committee for the 2016/17 financial year. For this Committee there was one scheme approved for the 2016/17 Capital Programme; the ICT infrastructure refresh (storage area network and also network and server replacement) totalling £100,000.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

694 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There no reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies.

695 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

That by virtue of the next items of business being exempt information under Category 1 of the Local Government Act of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

696 LOCAL TAXATION WRITE-OFFS

Committee considered a report asking them to approve the writing off of Council Tax debts of £3,309.57 and £220 costs where it had not been possible to collect the amount due.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the writing off of this sum.

697 REFERENCE FROM COMMITTEE – ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES IN THE REGENERATION AND HOUSING SECTION

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking Committee to consider request from Personnel Committee to agree to the approval of net additional revenue budget of £9,870 to allow the changes to the establishment in respect of:

- the regrading of the part-time Housing Officer post from Scale 5 to Scale 4;
- the deletion of the part-time Community Development Officer post at Scale SO2;
- the creation of a full-time Partnership Officer post at Scale SO1.

These changes result in the need for a net increase to the Council's revenue budget of £9,870 based on salary costs at the top of the relevant pay scales. It was intended to use an earmarked reserve balance of performance reward grant to assist in funding the new full-time Partnership Officer post once the fixed term part-time post had come to an end.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve the request for the additional revenue budget of £9,870 based on appointments at the top of the relevant pay scales; and
2. approve the use of the uncommitted performance reward grant earmarked reserve to initially assist in funding the new full-time Partnership Officer post in the short term.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm.

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact Jane Pearson (425111).

APPENDIX A

Ribble Valley Borough Council Meeting Cycle 2016/17 (10 May 2016 – 9 May 2017)

MEETINGS	Day	TIME	1ST CYCLE 2016	2ND CYCLE 2016	3RD CYCLE 2016	4TH CYCLE 2017	5TH CYCLE 2017
Community Services	Tues	6.30pm	17 May	23 Aug	11 Oct	10 Jan	14 March
Planning and Development	Thurs	6.30pm	19 May	21 July & 18 Aug	13 Oct	12 Jan	16 March
Personnel	Wed	6.30pm	25 May	31 Aug	19 Oct	18 Jan	22 March
Health & Housing	Thurs	6.30pm	26 May	1 Sept	20 Oct	19 Jan	23 March
Policy & Finance	Tues	6.30pm	7 June	6 Sept	25 Oct	24 Jan & 7 Feb	28 March
Parish Liaison	Thurs	6.30pm	9 June	8 Sept	27 Oct	26 Jan	30 March
Licensing	Tues	6.30pm	14 June	13 Sept	1 Nov	31 Jan	4 April
Planning & Development	Thurs	6.30pm	30 June	15 Sept	10 Nov & 15 Dec	16 Feb	13 April
Accounts & Audit	Wed	6.30pm	29 June	17 Aug	16 Nov		29 March
Full Council	Tues	6.30pm	12 July	27 Sept	13 Dec	28 Feb	25 April

2016

Offices Closed

Spring Bank : 30 May 2016
 August Bank : 29 August 2016
 Christmas : 25 - 31 December 2016

Annual Council : 10 May 2016
 PCC Elections : 5 May 2016
 EU Referendum : 23 June 2016

2017

Offices Closed

New Year : 2 January 2017
 Good Friday : 14 April 2017
 Easter Monday : 17 April 2017
 May Day : 1 May 2017

County Council Elections : 4 May 2017
 Annual Council : 9 May 2017