

Minutes of Community Services Committee

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 10 January 2017, starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor R J Thompson (Chairman)

Councillors:

J E Alcock	G Mirfin
R Bennett	R Newmark
A Brown	G Scott
S Carefoot	R Swarbrick
P Dobson	N Walsh
S Hind	J White
S Knox	

In attendance: Director of Community Services, Head of Engineering Services, Director of Resources, Head of Cultural and Leisure Services, Senior Accountant, Waste Management Officer.

Also in attendance: Councillor I Sayers.

431 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor M Robinson.

432 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

433 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest.

434 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

435 PLATFORM GALLERY URGENT WORKS

The Director of Community Services submitted a report informing Members of the works that had been undertaken at the Platform Gallery and the overspend as a result.

After a condition survey earlier last year, it had become apparent that if works were not undertaken before the winter period, the structural integrity of the roof would have been compromised and resulted in the closure of the building.

An unsuccessful application had been made for a capital scheme in 2018/19 but it was decided that the works needed to be done as a matter of urgency. All the rotten timber had been removed from the end of the roof purlins and splice repairs had been carried out. The timber fascia's had also been sanded and repainted.

The works had been completed in-house at an overall cost of £12,011.66. The total budget for repairs for the Platform Gallery was £3,950; this meant that there had been an overspend of the budget by £10,917.78. It was proposed therefore that the repairs revised estimate be increased by £10,920.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve the action taken to carry out urgent repairs; and
2. approve the inclusion of the increased expenditure as part of the revised estimates for this Committee.

436 WHALLEY DOG WASTE TRIAL

The Director of Community Services submitted a report regarding the success of the trial of dog waste collection from litter bins by refuse staff. In September 2015 a trial was initiated of the public using litter bins to deposit their bagged dog waste and then be collected by the Refuse Section as part of their normal rounds. This was not intended to replace the existing system but to complement it. 24 little bins around the Whalley and Barrow area were used for the trial.

Although concerns had originally been expressed about difficulties in cleaning the refuse collection vehicles or the smell from the bins, particularly during summer temperatures, there had been none received. However it was felt that as the trial did not take place over a particularly warm summer it did not give a true representation of the situation and it should be extended for a further period.

RESOLVED: That Committee extend the trial to cover another summer in an attempt to obtain the true implications of the proposal.

437 DISABLED PARKING FREE PARKING ALLOWANCE

The Director of Community Services submitted a report asking Committee to consider changing the amount of free parking provided to disabled drivers on Council car parks.

At the present time all the Council car parks allow free parking without restriction to disabled badge holders whether they are in an allocated disabled space or not. A comparison had been made with other districts which only allow 3 hours free parking which corresponds to the on-street allowance. This had been discussed by the Car Park Working Group and in order to maximise the spaces available to car park users, the proposal was to reduce the allowance to 3 hours with the option to extend with a pay and display ticket.

RESOLVED: That Committee agree to the proposal to change the disabled parking free allowance to 3 hours.

438 ARTS DEVELOPMENT FUNDING SUPPORT AND GRANTS

A report was submitted by the Director of Community Services presenting the recommendations of the Working Group in relation to the allocation of a revised art development support grant.

The purpose of these grants is for Ribble Valley Borough Council to invest in the development of organisations and their projects enhancing the art provision within the Ribble Valley to then support and promote the future culture, health and wellbeing of its community. The process had been developed in a way that encourages organisations to develop their projects to be sustainable and efficient for the future, supporting both new and existing arts providers to develop to their full potential.

Applications had been considered in August 2016 and scored on their merits, however there were a few that required development but were supported by the Arts Development Officer; one of these applications has now been developed and resubmitted for Committee's consideration. The application was from Spring into Phab which would provide opportunities for people who would not normally have the chance to participate in an inclusive art project to experience different art forms.

RESOLVED: That Committee endorse the recommendation of the Working Group for a grant of £1,000 to Spring into Phab.

439 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2016/2017

The Director of Resources submitted a report seeking Committee's approval of the Revised Capital Programme for the current financial year for this Committee. The original Capital Programme for 2016/17 had been approved by Policy and Finance Committee in February 2016 and since then regular reports had been presented to this Committee on progress with the Capital Programme. The Capital Programme comprises 6 schemes with a total approved budget of £374,500.

She reminded Members that the budget for the refurbishment of Ribblesdale Pool Scheme has been increased by £68,425 including a contingency element following the meeting of the Emergency Committee on 16 November 2016 as a result of changes to the scheme outline. This meant that the total approved budget was £442,625

Each scheme in the Capital Programme had now been discussed with budget holders and revised to reflect their progress and estimated full year expenditure. Following this review there was a revised estimate of £440,955; a reduction of £1,970.

The Director of Resources reported that the expenditure to the end of November 2016 was 87.7% of the revised estimate.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the Revised Capital Programme for 2016/17 as set out in the report.

440 CAPITAL PROGRAMME REVIEW AND NEW BIDS

The Director of Resources submitted a report recommending the proposed future five year Capital Programme 2017/18 to 2021/22 for this Committee. The report reviews the schemes that were approved in to the Capital Programme in 2016 for the financial years 2017/18 and 2018/19 and also the new bids received from Heads of Service for the period 2019/20 to 2021/22.

With regard to the Capital Programme for 2017/18 to 2018/19 there had been originally 21 schemes approved. One of these schemes included the upgrading of the payment systems for all car park payment machines to be able to accept the new £1 coin and accept chip and pin payments. However the introduction of the new £1 had been brought forward by the Royal Mint to March 2017 so likewise that element of the capital scheme had also been brought forward into 2016/17 financial year at a cost of £6,000. The approved Capital Programme had been amended to reflect this.

With regard to new capital bids for the period 2019/20 to 2021/22 the Heads of Service had been asked to put forward new bids. 18 bids had been submitted and there may be potential external funding towards 2 of them, namely Castle Keep lime repointing works and repairs and new drainage and goals to football pitches.

Committee were asked to consider the new scheme bids and make any amendments they wished to see. The Director of Resources reminded Members that other Committees would also be receiving similar reports for the new scheme bids and that all the bids from Committees would finally be considered alongside each other by the Budget Working Group and Policy and Finance Committee.

Members considered the bids put forward and asked various questions regarding them.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve the future five year programme for 2017/18 to 2021/22 as outlined in the report; and
2. recommend to Policy and Finance Committee the future five year capital programme for this Committee's services as outlined in the report.

441

REVISED REVENUE BUDGET 2016/2017

The Director of Resources submitted a reporting outlining a Revised Revenue Budget for 2016/17 for this Committee. She reminded Members that at this time of year the estimates are revised for the current financial year in order to predict the likely outturn. This also assists in preparing the original estimates for the coming financial year.

The 2016/17 budget had included provision for pay and price increases of 1.5% which had then been settled at 1%. As well as using data on past performance there had been detailed discussions with budget holders and heads of service on past service provision on future plans which played an integral part in the budget setting process.

She informed Committee that the revised budget for 2016/17 was £120,990 lower than the original estimate which is reduced to £79,450 after movements on earmarked reserves. This equated to 1.3% of this Committee's gross expenditure of £9m. A comparison between the original and revised budgets for each cost centre was included for Committee's information and the significant variances were highlighted.

RESOLVED: That Committee agree the Revised Revenue Estimate for 2016/17.

442

ORIGINAL REVENUE BUDGET 2017/2018

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking Committee to agree to the draft Revenue Budget for 2017/18 for this Committee for consideration at Special Policy and Finance Committee.

With regard to the Council's overall financial position, she reminded Members that in September the updated Council's 4 year budget forecast had predicted budget gaps of £265k in 2017/18 and £719k in 2018/19 and £921k in 2019/20. She also informed Members that in October the Council submitted an Efficiency Plan to the Government in order to secure a multi-year finance settlement and this had been successful.

The Government had also announced that there would be significant changes to the New Homes Bonus Scheme which would impact on our allocation; the 2017/18 allocations paid will reduce from 6 years to 5 years; further cut in year allocation for 2017/18 will reduce from £510k to £384k as a result of the new 0.4% growth baseline. The total allocation for next year would now be £1.570k instead of £1.815k and further reductions would be phased in future years.

The Government had also set out the referendum criteria for 2017/18 which allowed a maximum increase in Band D Council Tax for Ribble Valley of £5. From 1 April 2016 we have been a member of the Lancashire Business Rate Pool which means that we will benefit from not having to pay a 50% levy on growth above our business rate baseline. The current estimate of our retained levy will be around £400k.

The Budget Working Group would continue to meet over the coming weeks and would ultimately make recommendations to Special Policy and Finance Committee on 7 February 2017 in order to achieve a balanced budget.

The proposed fees and charges for 2017/18 that had been considered by Committee in October had been incorporated into the service budgets and following a great deal of in-depth service analysis and meetings by the Council's accountants, budget holders, Heads of Service and Management Team, the proposed draft budget was now presented to Members. Estimates had been prepared on current levels of service allowing for pay increases at 1.1% and increases at 1.5% for all other items. The budget for each cost centre within the report was presented individually showing the original estimate, savings, inflation, variations to standard budgeted inflation, unavoidable changes to service costs, support services and capital charges which then culminated in the draft original estimate for 2017/18.

48 cost centres were presented for this Committee and comments given on any large variances.

RESOLVED: That Committee agree the revenue original estimate for 2017/18 and submit this to Policy and Finance Committee subject to any further considerations made by the Budget Working Group.

443 **PREPARATION FOR REFUSE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION SERVICES FROM 2018 (REPORT 3)**

The Director of Community Services submitted a report for Committee's information on the implications for the current refuse and recycling collection services following the withdrawal by Lancashire County Council of costs sharing payments from April 2018 when over £430,000 would be lost. This was the third report of a proposed series of preliminary reports that would be presented to this Committee; each one focussing on a range of options available to this authority that may in part mitigate this loss of income culminating in options to be considered by Members next August.

This particular report outlined options available for changes to refuse collection frequency and/or changes to recycling collection frequencies.

He also informed Members that officers have submitted a joint expression of interest with other Lancashire districts for funded consultancy support through the WRAP (Waste Resources Action Programme) framework for greater consistency in household recycling in England; if the application is successful technical support would be provided during 2017/18. In a verbal update Members were advised that a positive response had been received from WRAP and that discussions are expected to commence soon on the Lancashire District proposals.

He reminded Committee that to date the Council had prided themselves in providing residents with a weekly collection of general waste which would have considerable implications if changed within the review. The report did not

examine in detail the model of each change in frequency option that could be applied to refuse and recycling to the refuse and recycling collection service but gave an overview of the most likely operational implications such changes would present. It was also highlighted that adopting many of the models for change in frequency of collection may require significant capital investment to replace the collection vehicle fleet and/or to provide householders with larger wheeled bins and/or additional containers.

The implications of changing the frequency of collection are complex and as many would require significant capital investment, overall financial benefits would not be immediately evident; however the report does seek to demonstrate that a contribution to the savings required might be found from this area.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

444 GENERAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Director of Community Services submitted a report updating Committee on developments within Engineering, Leisure and Tourism Sections. This included CCTV monitoring, religious and state processions in Ribble Valley, Ribblesdale Pool, Platform Gallery and the various tourism and events.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

445 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies.

446 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

That by virtue of the following report being exempt information under Category 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

447 DECISION OF EMERGENCY COMMITTEE – 16 NOVEMBER 2016

The Director of Community Services submitted a report informing Committee on a recent decision of the Emergency Committee with regard to the capital scheme for Ribblesdale Pool refurbishment to allow more extensive works to be carried out. The Emergency Committee had resolved to approve a revised overall budget for the scheme of £277,425 which included a contingency of £20,000. Details were included for Committee's information.

RESOLVED: That the decision of the Emergency Committee be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm.

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact John Heap (414461).