

Minutes of Community Services Committee

Meeting Date: Tuesday, 9 January 2018, starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor S Hore (Chairman)

Councillors:

J E Alcock	S Knox
A Brown	R Newmark
R Hargreaves	M Robinson
T Hill	G Scott
S Hind	N Walsh
J Holgate	J White

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

Also in attendance: Councillors K Hind, M Fenton, G Mirfin and I Sayers.

474 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors S Carefoot and S Hirst.

475 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Progress was sought with regard to Minute 320 and 322.

476 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

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

477 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

478 REVISED REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18

The Director of Resources submitted a report outlining the revised Revenue Budget for 2017/18 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 2017/18 original budget had included provision for pay increases at 1.1% and price increases at 1.5%. 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 2017/18 showed an increase in net expenditure of £114,990 more than the original estimate after allowing for transfers to and from earmarked reserves. A comparison between the original and revised budgets for each cost centre was included for Committee's information and the significant variances were highlighted.

Members asked questions with regard to various costs centre budgets.

RESOLVED: That Committee agree the revised revenue estimate for 2017/18.

479 REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/18

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 2017/18 had been approved by Policy and Finance Committee in February 2017 and since then regular reports have been presented to this Committee on progress with the Capital Programme.

The Capital Programme comprises 11 schemes with a total approved budget of £474,450.

Following discussions on each of the schemes in the Capital Programme with budget holders the revised estimate is £457,630, a reduction of £16,820 from the total approved budget which related to a reduction in the Ribblesdale Pool improvement work contract and a reduction in actual spend on vehicle and plant completed schemes.

The Director of Resources reported that the expenditure and commitments to the end of November 2017 represented 75.5% of the revised estimate. The report outlined the full Capital Programme by scheme including the budget and expenditure to date for Committee's information.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the revised Capital Programme of £457,630 for this Committee as set out in the report.

480 ORIGINAL REVENUE BUDGET 2018/19

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking Committee to agree the draft Revenue Budget for 2018/19 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 four year budget forecast had predicted budget gaps of £774k in 2018/19, £956k in 2019/20 and £1,139k in 2020/21.

She also informed Members that in October 2016 the Council had submitted an efficiency plan to the Government in order to secure a multi-finance settlement and that this had again been successful.

The Government had announced that there would be no changes to the New Homes Bonus Scheme at this time and had also agreed to a new Lancashire Business Rate Pool that would include Burnley Borough Council.

The Budget Working Group would continue to meet over the coming weeks and would ultimately make recommendations to Special Policy and Finance Committee on 6 February 2018 in order to achieve a balanced budget.

The proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 had been considered by Committee in October and had been incorporated into the service budgets. Following in-depth service analysis and meetings between 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 2%. The budget for each cost centre within the report was presented individually showing the original estimate, savings, inflation, variations to the standard budgeted inflation, unavoidable changes to service costs, support services and capital charges, which then culminated in the draft original estimate for 2018/19.

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

The draft budget was also summarised in two ways; one over the cost of the service provided by the Committee (objective) and the other over the type of expenditure and income (subjective).

The net expenditure for this Committee is estimated to increase by £383,830 after allowing for associated movements on earmarked reserves. The main reasons for this net increase were the ending of the cost sharing agreement with LCC from 1 April 2018 with regard to refuse/paper collection and income received from the sale of paper which is no longer to be paid to LCC but retained by the Council.

RESOLVED: That Committee agree the revenue original estimate for 2018/19 and submit this to Special Policy and Finance Committee.

481 TOWNELEY GARDENS, LONGRIDGE

The Director of Community Services submitted a report providing Committee with an update on the progress on the work to improve Towneley Gardens initiated by the Longridge Community Partnership. Back in January 2016 approval had been granted for the development of Towneley Gardens and Bowling Green in accordance with the proposals submitted by the Longridge Community Partnership and works had been scheduled to be in three stages subject to suitable funding being obtained.

Some of the works had now been carried out and it was found that the scheme needed amending slightly to make the finished work more aesthetically pleasing.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the revised work carried out and give permission for the proposed work outlined in the report.

482 HENTHORN ROAD, CLITHEROE YOUTH SHELTER

The Director of Community Services submitted a report providing Committee with information about an ongoing issue with regard to anti-social behaviour at the youth shelter on Henthorn Road. He informed Committee that the youth shelter had been installed some years ago as part of the youth work programme which the County Council provided at the time when outreach youth workers would engage with young people who gathered at the shelter.

In the absence of youth workers working directly in the community the shelter had now become a source of consideration anti-social behaviour and was not popular with local residents who had raised numerous concerns about the behaviour of users of the shelter, both during the day and in the evenings, together with the mess which is left each day in and around the shelter.

The Council currently visit the shelter area three times per week to help ensure the Henthorn Road area is kept as clean and tidy as possible, removing litter, bottles, cans and drug related paraphernalia. Committee's views were sought on the future of the shelter.

Members discussed the continuing usefulness of the shelter along with the concerns of residents with regard to user behaviour. It was apparent that the cuts made to the youth services had had a detrimental effect on the use of this particular shelter but that it was also important that young people had somewhere to gather.

RESOLVED: That Committee agree to the retention of the youth shelter for a further 6 months to allow engagement with youth services in the area to see if the behaviour of users can be improved. Officers to report back to Committee with any evidence of improvement in that timescale.

483 GENERAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Director of Community Services submitted a report informing Committee on recent developments on waste management and to update on the provision of swimming instruction for schools and the public.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

484 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Ian Sayers, the Council's representative on the Lancashire Waste Partnership attended the meeting to update Members on recent meetings held. This also included a meeting of the Lancashire Waste Partnership Strategy Sub-Group of which Councillor Sayers is a member. He would keep Committee updated on future meetings due to take place.

485 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That by virtue of the following item of business being exempt information under categories 1 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

CLITHEROE FOOD FESTIVAL 2018

The Director of Community Services submitted a report updating Committee on this year's event and seeking a view regarding the Council's support for the 2018 event. He reminded Members that the Council had worked with Clitheroe Food Festival Ltd in the staging of the last 6 events and that the company had been set up to essentially attract sponsorship and provide input into how the event was staged.

The company had now indicated that the Directors wished to dissolve it and cease their involvement with the Food Festival. This Council's delivery of Clitheroe Food Festival with the company has been regarded as an invaluable contribution to the promotion of the area as a tourist destination and also in our role in economic development. It was therefore proposed that the Council take on the running of the 2018 Food Festival as a whole with the expected deficit being taken from reserves built up over the past few years.

The officer responsible for organising the stallholders and layout had recently left the authority but had indicated her agreement in engaging with the Council on a casual basis to do this work for the 2018 event.

An examination of the costs had been undertaken as to where savings could be made in order to help reduce the cost of staging the event.

Members discussed the event and supported the Council being wholly responsible for it, with a reduction in expenditure and the budget proposed in the report.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve the 2018 event being staged in light of the new information provided, as a Council run event;
2. approve the budgets as outlined for inclusion in the 2018/19 budget, subject to the approval of Special Policy and Finance Committee;
3. intend to evaluate the 2018 event after it has been staged to determine if the Council will continue to support in 2019;
4. set up a Working Group consisting of the Chief Executive, Leader and Chairman of Community Services Committee in order to help obtain sponsorship for the event; and
5. write a letter of thanks to the Food Festival Company and in particular former Councillor Michael Ranson thanking them for their services over the past 6 festivals.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

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