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Date Not Specified

Chairman: Councillor R Blaney
Vice-Chairman: Councillor D Lloyd

Members of the Committee:

Councillor R Jackson
Councillor B Laughton
Councillor T Roberts
Councillor P Peacock
Councillor D Staples

Substitute Members:

MEETING: Policy & Finance Committee

DATE: Thursday, 5 April 2018 at 6.00 pm

**VENUE: Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road,
Newark, Notts NG24 1BY**

You are hereby requested to attend the above Meeting to be held at the time/place
and on the date mentioned above for the purpose of transacting the
business on the Agenda as overleaf.

If you have any queries please contact Nigel Hill on nigel.hill@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk.

AGENDA

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Agenda Item 4

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Policy & Finance Committee** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, Notts NG24 1BY on Thursday, 22 February 2018 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor R Blaney (Chairman)
Councillor D Lloyd (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor R Jackson, Councillor B Laughton, Councillor T Roberts and
Councillor D Staples

ALSO IN
ATTENDANCE:

APOLOGIES FOR Councillor P Peacock
ABSENCE:

72 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS AND AS TO THE PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest.

73 DECLARATIONS OF INTENTION TO RECORD THE MEETING

The Chairman advised that the proceedings were being audio recorded by the Council.

74 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes from the meeting held on xx xxx 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

75 FORWARD PLAN OF POLICY & FINANCE ITEMS

The Committee noted the Forward Plan items to be considered by the Committee over the next 12 months.

76 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2018

The Acting Chief Executive presented a report which sought to review the content of the Pay Policy Statement for 2018 and subject to any necessary revisions to recommend the Statement to the Council for approval.

In accordance with Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 the Council was required to produce a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year. The Pay Policy Statement must set out the authority's policies for the financial year relating to:

- the remuneration of the authority's lowest-paid employees (together with a definition of "lowest-paid employees") and the reasons for adopting that definition;
- the relationship between remuneration of Chief Officers and that of other officers (pay multiples); and

- the remuneration of Chief Officers.

A copy of the Pay Policy Statement for 2018 was attached as an appendix to the report. It was noted that the statement had been updated to reflect:

- the recent pay offer tabled by the National Employers to the Trades Unions (TU) for officers engaged on NJC terms. Note: The employers side have not yet received requests from the Trades Union (TU) representing Chief Officers engaged on JNC terms, although a request has been received from the TU in respect of Chief Executives engaged on JNC terms; and
- revisions to the Living Wage recommended by the Living Wage Foundation during November 2017 (increase from £8.45 to £8.75 per hour);

The statement had also been updated to include a summary of the transitional arrangements that had been put in place pending the appointment of a new Chief Executive and replacement of the Director - Communities post.

In considering the Pay Policy Statement the Committee considered that the Council should continue to pay the Living Wage supplement and that the detailed wording in the Statement in respect of the Remuneration of the Chief Executive, relating to incremental increases in salary should reflect the decision of the Chief Officers Appointments Panel meeting held on 3 January 2018.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Pay Policy Statement for 2018 be recommended to Council for approval with two amendments namely to confirm that the Council continue to pay the Living Wage supplement; and that the detailed wording in the Statement in respect of the Remuneration of the Chief Executive, reflect the decision of the Chief Officers Appointments Panel meeting held on 3 January 2018.

Reason for Decision

To comply with Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011.

77 REVIEW OF LEISURE CENTRE PROVISION IN THE WEST

This item was withdrawn from the agenda given the report was deferred by the Leisure & Environment Committee.

78 REVENUE BUDGET - PROPOSED BUDGET 2018/19

The Assistant Business Manager – Financial Strategy & Performance presented a report which enabled Members to consider spending proposals and recommendations to the Council for the budget in 2018/2019.

The report set out the details of the proposed budget for the Council in 2018/2019. The budget proposals had been formulated in accordance with the framework set out in the Council's Constitution with the initial report having been presented to the Policy Committee on 21 September 2017. It was noted that the level of discretionary fees and charges for services provided by the Council were considered as part of the budget process rather than being implemented piecemeal throughout the year. The

proposed fees and charges for 2018 were detailed in the report and would be included in the budget book which forms part of the agenda for the full Council Meeting.

The Local Government Finance Settlement provided key figures for Government Grant that formed part of the Council's budget. The draft settlement was announced on 19 December 2017 and was confirmed on 6 February 2018.

It was reported that a projection of resources under Business Rates Retention had been completed. A sum of £1.1m NDR growth had been projected for 2018/19 which was broadly in line with projections for 2017/18. Additional income of £660k from renewable energy sources had been retained 100% by the District Council. It was anticipated that a £1.14m levy would be payable into the Nottinghamshire pool. The level of appeals provision brought forward on 1/4/2017 was £9m. It was estimated that by 31 March 2018, £2.6m would have been charged to this provision due to reductions in rateable values as a result of businesses that had appealed the 2010 list rateable value. Of the remaining provision (£6.4m) it was forecast that £4m was required for the remaining 2010 list appeals and £2.4m was required for appeals to the first year of the 2017 list.

In presenting the report the Assistant Business Manager – Financial Strategy and Performance advised that an additional post in Development Control for conservation enforcement of £40,000 had been added to the proposed Economic Development Committee budget for 2018/19. This proposal was supported by the Committee.

The report had been prepared by the Resources Directorate in conjunction with the appropriate Committees and relevant budget holders. In accordance with the Constitution, all Members, Directors and Business Unit Managers had been involved with the preparation of the budget.

AGREED (unanimously) that it be recommended to Council on 8 March 2018 that:

- (a) the Employee Plan shown in Appendix C to the report be noted;
- (b) the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2018/2019 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011:
 - (i) £78,804,460 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for items set out in Section 31A(2)(a) to (f) of the Act (the gross District Council expenditure for 2018/19);
 - (ii) £67,422,250 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3)(a) to (d) of the Act (the gross District Council income for 2018/19); and
 - (iii) £11,382,210 being the amount by which the aggregate at (a)(i) above exceeds the aggregate at (a)(ii) above,

calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax Requirement for the year;

- (c) the figures shown as (b)(i) and (b)(iii) above to be increased only by the amount of Parish Precepts for 2018/2019;
- (d) the budget figures included in the report be the Council's budget for 2018/2019 and Medium Term Financial Plan for 2018/2019 to 2022/2023; and
- (e) the fees and charges shown in Appendices D to U be implemented with effect from 1st April 2018.

Reason for Decision

To enable Policy & Finance Committee to make recommendations to full Council of the amounts to be calculated in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 for the purposes of setting Council Tax levels for the year 2018/2019.

79 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING TO 31 DECEMBER 2017

The Capital Programme Accountant presented a report which monitored the progress of the overall Capital Programme since the last progress report to the Committee on 30 November 2017. Appendices A and B to the report provided details of the capital projects to illustrate total budget, expenditure, progress and explanations for any amendments. Variations to the Capital Programme since it was last reported to the Committee on 30 November 2017 were detailed in Appendix C. It was advised that if the proposed variations were approved the revised capital programme budget for 2017/18 would decrease by £1,429,000 to £32,163,000.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the variations detailed in Appendix C to the report be approved; and
- (b) the proposed resourcing of the Capital Programme be noted.

Reason for Decision

To enable the Capital Programme to be amended to reflect changes to resources available and better clarity of the cost and phasing of projects.

80 ALLOCATION OF SECTION 106 FUNDS TO CLIPSTONE WELFARE

The Community Projects Manager presented a report which sought approval for the transfer of Section 106 funds to Clipstone Welfare. In 2010 the Council received S106 funds to the value of £85,790 from the Gladedale Homes development on Mansfield Road, Clipstone, for the purposes of providing off-site children's playing space. Despite a number of projected schemes being brought forward over the past 7 years

there had been only limited use of the funds and £78,047 remained unspent.

It was reported that Clipstone Welfare, in partnership with Clipstone Parish Council, was planning to provide sports and play facilities for older children on land it owned adjacent to Clipstone Youth Centre and had requested that the District Council release £49,180 of these S106 open space funds to allow it to progress this project. The Welfare had already received grants from Nottinghamshire County Council (£40,000), the National Lottery (£10,000) and the Garfield Weston Foundation (£20,000) towards the project. The total cost of the project was £109,180. However, Clipstone Welfare wished to retain £10,000 of the Garfield Weston grant to enable it to carry out repairs to the youth club building. It was noted that Clipstone Parish Council were supportive of the project and had agreed to assist with the inspection and maintenance of the facilities once they were in place. Prior to the funds being transferred Clipstone Welfare would be required to enter into a legal agreement which bound it to spending the funds in a manner which was consistent with the S106 Agreement.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the transfer of open space Section 106 funds totalling £49,180 arising from AG842A to Clipstone Welfare be approved, subject to an appropriate legal agreement being entered into by Clipstone Welfare; and
- (b) the sum of £49,180 be added to the Council's Capital Programme in order that its expenditure can be appropriately recorded and monitored.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that S106 funds are spent in an appropriate fashion, for the benefit of the community in which they were generated and that their use is properly monitored.

81 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2018/19 TO 2021/22

The Capital Programme Accountant presented a report which detailed the available capital resources, the Council's existing committed Programme and the priority schemes identified. In accordance with Financial Regulations the Policy & Finance Committee was required to consider the Capital Programme and recommend to Council the final Programme.

In respect of the general fund capital expenditure the Council intended to spend £15m from 2018/19 to 2021/22 on the schemes as set out in Appendix A to the report. In respect of the Housing Revenue Account expenditure the Council intended to spend £54.9m from 2018/19 to 2021/22. This was made up of £21m on existing property investment and £33.9m on affordable housing. The HRA property investment and development programme were set out in Appendix B to the report.

AGREED (unanimously) that it be recommended to Council on 8 March 2018 that the General Fund schemes shown in Appendix A to the report, and the housing services programme in Appendix B to the report, be approved as committed expenditure in

the Capital Programme.

Reason for Decision

To enable the Capital Programme to be considered by the Policy & Finance Committee in accordance with Financial Regulation 6.2.3 prior to its submission to Council.

82 WORLD WAR I ROLL OF HONOUR MEMORIAL

In accordance with Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman agreed to take this item as a late item of business in order to agree the financial support to the World War I Memorial project.

The Deputy Chief Executive and Director - Resources presented a report which sought approval for a contribution of £10,000 towards a World War I Memorial. All Nottinghamshire District/Borough Councils had been approached by Nottingham City Council to make a financial contribution towards the cost of the WWI Roll of Honour Memorial which would bring the names of all Nottinghamshire war dead to a single point at Victoria Embankment.

The memorial had an estimated cost of £300,000. Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Council had pledged £100,000 each along with officer time to procure and manage the project's delivery. This proposed contribution would give Newark & Sherwood District Council a seat on the Project Board.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) a contribution of £10,000 be approved, subject to Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Council each contributing £100,000 and the other 6 Nottinghamshire Districts/Boroughs contributing £10,000 each; and
- (b) the contribution of £10,000 be funded from reserves.

Reason for Decision

The financial contribution of £10,000 will assist in meeting the funding gap and enable the establishment of the war memorial.

83 GENERAL FUND PROJECTED OUTTURN REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2018 AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2017

The Business Manager – Financial Services presented a report which compared the General Fund Revised Budget for the period ending 31 March 2018 with the Projected Outturn forecast for the period based on three quarters performance information.

The appendices to the report detailed anticipated performance against budget for the period to 31 March 2018 for all general Fund service provision. The total for service net expenditure showed a projected additional income, and underspend on expenditure, totalling £360,221 against the revised budget for the period to 31 March

2018. The main variations from the revised budget were detailed in the report.

AGREED (unanimously) that the current projection of the Council's net expenditure compared to budget at 31 March 2018 be noted.

Reason for Decision

To advise Members of the projected outturn monitored against service budgets for the period ending 31 March 2018, as at 31 December 2017.

Meeting closed at 6.50 pm.

Chairman

Forward Plan of Policy & Finance Committee Decisions from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019

This document records some of the items that will be submitted to the Policy & Finance Committee over the course of the next twelve months.

These committee meetings are open to the press and public.

Agenda papers for Policy & Finance Committee meetings are published on the Council's website 5 days before the meeting <http://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/agendas/>. Any items marked confidential or exempt will not be available for public inspection.

Meeting Date	Subject for Decision and Brief Description	Contact Officer Details
28 June 2018	Child Poverty	natalie.cook@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk
28 June 2018	Annual Standards Report for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018	catharine.saxton@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk
28 June 2018	General Fund, HRA and Capital Financial Outturn Report 2017/18	nick.wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk
28 June 2018	Medium Term Financial Plan 2019/20-2022/23	nick.wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk
20 September 2018	Annual Budget Overall Strategy 2019/20	nick.wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk
20 September 2018	Capital Programme Monitoring Q1 2018/19	nick.wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk
20 September 2018	General Fund and HRA Revenue Monitoring Q1 2018/19	nick.wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk
29 November 2018	Capital Programme Monitoring Q2 2018/19	nick.wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk
29 November 2018	General Fund and HRA Revenue Monitoring Q2 2018/19	nick.wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk
14 January 2019	HRA Budget and Rent Setting 2019/20	nick.wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk
14 January 2019	Policy & Finance Committee Revenue Budget 2019/20	nick.wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk
11 February 2019	Capital Programme Monitoring Q3 2018/19	nick.wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk
11 February 2019	General Fund and HRA Revenue Monitoring Q3 2018/19	nick.wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk
11 February 2019	Council Revenue Budget 2019/20	nick.wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk
11 February 2019	Capital Programme Budget 2019/20-2022/23	nick.wilson@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS: STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To advise Members of Policy & Finance Committee of a consultation being undertaken by the Committee on Standards in Public Life to inform its review of local government standards.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 The Committee on Standards in Public Life is currently undertaking a review of local government ethical standards.

2.2 The terms of reference for the review are to:

- Examine the structures, processes and practices in local government for:
 - (i) maintaining codes of conduct for local councillors
 - (ii) investigating alleged breaches fairly and with due process
 - (iii) enforcing codes and imposing sanctions for misconduct
 - (iv) declaring interests and managing conflicts of interest
 - (v) whistleblowing
- Assess whether the existing structures, processes and practices are conducive to high standards of conduct in local government.
- Make any recommendations for how they can be improved.
- Note any evidence of intimidation of Councillors and make recommendations for any measures which could be put in place to prevent and address such intimidation.

2.3 The review will consider all levels of local government in England including town and parish councils, principal authorities, combined authorities (including Metro Mayors) and the Greater London Authority (including the Mayor of London).

3.0 Introduction

3.1 Anyone with an interest may respond to the consultation questions.

3.2 However, the consultation is aimed particularly at local authorities, Standards Committees, local authority members, local authority officials, independent persons appointed under Section 28(7) of the Localism Act 2011, think tanks with an interest or expertise in local government, academics with interest or expertise in local government and representative bodies or groups related to local government.

4.0 Consultation Questions

4.1 The Committee has invited responses to the following consultation questions:-

- (a) Are the existing structures, processes and practices in place working to ensure high standards of conduct by local councillors? If not please say why.

- (b) What, if any, are the most significant gaps in the current ethical standards regime for local government?
- (c) Are local authorities adopted codes of conduct for councillors clear and easily understood? Do the codes cover an appropriate range of behaviours? What examples of good practice, including induction processes, exist?
- (d) A local authority has a statutory duty to ensure that its adopted code of conduct for councillors is consistent with the seven principles of public life and that it includes appropriate provision (as decided by the local authority) for registering and declaring councillors interests. Are these requirements appropriate as they stand? If not, please say why.
- (e) Are allegations of councillor misconduct investigated and decided fairly and with due process?
 - (i) What processes do local authorities have in place for investigating and deciding upon allegations? Do these processes meet requirements for due process? Should any additional safeguards be put in place to ensure due process?
 - (ii) Are the current requirements that the views of the Independent Person are sought and taken into account before deciding on an allegation sufficient to ensure the objectivity and fairness of the decision process? Should this requirement be strengthened? If so, how?
 - (iii) Monitoring Officers are often involved in the process of investigating and deciding upon code breaches. Could Monitoring Officers be subject to conflicts of interest or undue pressure when doing so? How could Monitoring Officers be protected from this risk?
- (f) Are existing sanctions for councillors' misconduct sufficient?
 - (i) What sanctions do local authorities use when councillors have been found to have breached the code of conduct? Are these sanctions sufficient to deter breaches and where relevant, to enforce compliance?
 - (ii) Should local authorities be given the ability to use additional sanctions? If so what should these be?
- (g) Are existing arrangements to declare councillors interests and manage conflicts of interest satisfactory? If not please say why.
 - (i) A local councillor is under a legal duty to register any pecuniary interest (or those of their spouse or partner) and cannot participate in discussions and votes which engage a disclosable pecuniary interest, nor taking any further steps in relation to that matter, although local authorities can grant dispensations under certain circumstances. Are these statutory duties appropriate as they stand?
 - (ii) What arrangements do local authorities have in place to declare councillors interests and manage conflicts of interest which go beyond the statutory requirements? Are these satisfactory? If not please say why.
- (h) What arrangements are in place for whistleblowing by the public, councillors and officials? Are these satisfactory?
- (i) What steps could local authorities take to improve local government ethical standards?
- (j) What steps could central government take to improve local government ethical standards?

- (k) What is the nature, scale and extent of intimidation towards local councillors?
 - (i) What measures could be put in place to prevent and address this intimidation?

4.2 The deadline for responses to the consultation is Friday 18 May 2018.

5.0 Comments

- 5.1 Since Newark & Sherwood District Council adopted a more “light touch” regime following the introduction of the Localism Act 2011 the new arrangements have worked relatively satisfactorily in respect of district council members although there have been some issues in respect of parish councillors particularly where parish councils have not accepted the recommendations of the District Council as to appropriate sanctions. This is not something which is addressed in the consultation questions but it is considered that it is one which should be considered in the course of the review with a legislative change to provide that parish councils be required to implement the recommendations of the District Council in respect of appropriate sanctions where a code of conduct breach is found.
- 5.2 Regarding the content of codes of conduct it would be virtually impossible to specify all potential code breaches and our approach in dealing with broader principles rather than trying to detail specific examples has operated well and appears to be generally well understood.
- 5.3 Our procedures for determining complaints have also worked well and the requirement to consult with the Independent Person both on the initial filtering of complaints and prior to a hearing panel reaching a decision on a code of conduct breach have proved helpful and constructive.
- 5.4 We have not experienced any issues with conflict of interest by splitting the respective roles in the investigation and hearing processes between the Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer.
- 5.5 Regarding sanctions we have been fortunate not to have experienced any instances of serious code of conduct breaches although criminal sanctions do of course exist in certain instances.
- 5.6 Whilst the definition of a disclosable pecuniary interest is relatively narrow we have not experienced major difficulties in respect of conflicts of interest as members have also been mindful of the general administrative law requirements to declare interest in the case of bias or pre-determination.
- 5.7 Regarding whistleblowing, the Council has a whistleblowing policy which is included within the Council’s Constitution.
- 5.8 Regarding the potential to improve ethical standards, it is considered that adopting cultures and values within the organisation that promote ethical behaviours are more effective than a written code and written processes and procedures.

5.9 Regarding intimidation of councillors I am not aware of any current instances of this although we have experienced some instances of adverse comments being made against councillors by members of the public on social media. There is currently no effective remedy to prevent this.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

That Members consider whether they wish to submit a response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life in connection with their review of local government ethical standards in the light of the comments set out above.

Reason for Recommendation

To enable a response to be made to inform the Committee on Standards in Public Life review of local government standards.

Background Papers

None

For further information please contact Kirsty Cole on Extn. 5210.

Kirsty Cole
Acting Chief Executive

In accordance with Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman has agreed to take this item as a late item of business in order to progress the request for additional budget to undertake the refurbishment of the Sherwood Forest Art and Craft Centre.

REFURBISHMENT OF SHERWOOD FOREST ART & CRAFT CENTRE AND ASSOCIATED BUILDING

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This paper seeks to provide Members with a proposal, as outlined and discussed in the March 2018 Economic Development Committee meeting relating to the refurbishment of the Sherwood Forest Art and Craft Centre. The total capital expenditure proposed is £250,000.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 Sherwood Forest Art & Craft Centre was opened in 1998 and is now in need of refurbishment.

2.2 The relocation of Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre to a site immediately adjacent to SFACC provides a unique opportunity to undertake this refurbishment. The SFACC is ideally located to benefit in terms of increased footfall opportunities which will result in approximately 455,000 passing the entrance of SFACC every year.

2.3 The financial calculations in the following Business Case are based on the latest market rents achieved at SFACC and indicate that the Council would receive an approximate 7% return on its investment. There may also be the opportunity to increase the rents of the existing studios by between 5% and 7% - whilst this is speculative nonetheless given the dramatic increase in footfall it may prove to be a feasible option..

3.0 Proposals

3.1 Details of the proposal are set out in the report to the Economic Development Committee meeting held on 28 March 2018 which is attached as an **appendix** to the report.

4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 There are only positive implications for taking forward the refurbishment of the Sherwood Forest Art and Craft Centre.

5.0 Impact on Budget/Policy Framework

5.1 A capital budget of £250,000 will need to be included in the Capital Programme for 2018/19 which will be funded from the capital reserve or a revenue contribution to capital from the change management reserve.

6.0 Comments of Director – Resources and S151 Officer

6.1 The decision on how to finance this scheme will be taken in conjunction with the rest of the Council's capital programme. The revenue cost of borrowing is approximately £60,000 per annum per £1million of borrowing based on current PWLB rates. The revenue cost of the capital spend of £200,000 is therefore £15,000 which, if borrowed, will be funded in 2018/19 from general fund balance and included in the base budget for future years.

7.0 RECOMMENDATION

That additional capital expenditure for £250,000 for the refurbishment of the Sherwood Forest Art & Craft Centre, be approved for inclusion in the Council's Capital Programme.

Reason for Recommendation

The Centre is in need of refurbishment and as the Centre opened in 1998, the refurbishment allows for the upgrade of the Centre in order to enhance the visitor experience.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Julie Reader-Sullivan on Ext 5258

Sanjiv Kohli
Deputy Chief Executive
Director - Resources and s151 Officer

REFURBISHMENT OF SHERWOOD FOREST ART & CRAFT CENTRE AND ASSOCIATED BUILDING

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report provides an opportunity to invest capital for the refurbishment of the Sherwood Forest Art & Craft Centre (SFACC).

2.0 Background Information

2.1 Sherwood Forest Art & Craft Centre was opened in 1998 and is now in need of refurbishment.

2.2 The relocation of Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre to a site immediately adjacent to SFACC provides a unique opportunity to undertake this refurbishment. The SFACC is ideally located to benefit in terms of increased footfall opportunities which will result in approximately 455,000 passing the entrance of SFACC every year.

2.3 The financial calculations in the following Business Case are based on the latest market rents achieved at SFACC and indicate that the Council would receive an approximate 7% return on its investment. There may also be the opportunity to increase the rents of the existing studios by between 5% & 7% - whilst this is speculative nonetheless given the dramatic increase in footfall it may prove to be a feasible option.

3.0 Proposals

3.1 If the Capital spend is approved in principle other match funding opportunities will be looked at, however based on research to date, there are no other sources of funding that would be appropriate. The total capital expenditure proposed is £250,000 and details on the revenue and benefits are found in the business case at **Appendix 1** of this document. The alterations and improvements will lead to an enhanced visitor experience and will serve to increase the Council's revenue income.

4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 There are no negative equalities implications

5.0 Impact on Budget/Policy Framework

5.1 A capital budget of £250,000 will need to be included in the Capital Programme for 2018/19 which will be funded from the capital reserve or a revenue contribution to capital from the change management reserve.

5.2 The Council currently receives income of approximately £65,600 per annum from the Centre. The estimated rent from the conversion of the storage building, at the gateway, will be around £8,320 per annum.

5.3 The Council's Asset Management service believe that, with the new refurbished centre and the significant increase in footfall, the income could be increased by £17,700, a ROI of 7%:

Additional Studio Adjacent to New Rear Entrance	5,645
Additional Lettable Space Studios 8 (café) & Studio 13	1,845
Atrium Centre Kiosk	990
Storage Lockers	900
Forest Corner Annex Conversion	<u>8,320</u>
Total Potential Additional Income	<u>£17,700</u>

In addition, it is estimated that due to the increased footfall resulting from the relocation of the visitor centre of the Park, the rents for the existing Studios could feasibly be increased by 3% to 7%.

6.0 Comments of Director

6.1 In 2017 around 455,000 people visited Sherwood Forest Country Park which immediately adjoins the Centre and a consortium led by the RSPB are developing a new Visitor Centre for the Country Park which will be very close to the Art & Craft Centre. There is therefore a unique opportunity for the District Council to increase visitor numbers to the Art & Craft Centre by providing an up-to-date good quality environment which will improve our visitor's experience, however there has to be an urgency in carrying out the refurbishment in order to take full advantage of the opening of the new visitor centre at the country park. This will provide economic benefits through more repeat visits and positive referrals which will allow the Council to benefit by maximising its rental income and increasing the Capital Value of its asset.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- (a) the proposal to invest £250,000 for the refurbishment of the Sherwood Forest Art & Craft Centre and associated building be approved; and**
- (b) the Policy & Finance Committee be recommended to approve the capital expenditure.**

Reason for Recommendations

The Centre is in need of refurbishment and as the Centre opened in 1998, the refurbishment allows for the upgrade of the Centre in order to enhance the visitor experience.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Julie Reader-Sullivan on Ext 5258

Sanjiv Kohli
Deputy Chief Executive
Director – Resources/s151 Officer

**NEWARK & SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL
CAPITAL PROJECT APPRAISAL FORM**

PORTFOLIO	Asset Management
DIRECTORATE	Resources
BUSINESS MANAGER	Julie Reader-Sullivan
PROJECT OFFICER	David G Best
PROJECT TITLE	Refurbishment Sherwood Forest Art & Craft Centre & associated building

1. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The proposed project involves the improvement & refurbishment of the Councils highly successful and well regarded Art & Craft Centre (SFACC) and an associated building which is currently underused. There is some urgency to this project in that the new Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre (managed by the RSPB) opens in summer 2018 and this will attract a substantial volume of visitors to the new location which is adjacent to the SFACC.

Previously the car park for the old Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre was located approx. 1.0 mile from SFACC whereas the route from the new car park to the new Visitor Centre directly passes the entrance doors of SFACC. In 2014, the number of visitors to Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre was 371,315 as this rises by around 7% per year this would give an estimated foot fall directly pasting SFACC in 2018 of some 455,000 visitors. It is inevitable many of these people will take the opportunity to browse round SFACC & make use of its facilities.

The new Visitor Centre has small restaurant and information centre but no retail opportunities and in the height of the Tourist Season, the café, with 100 covers, is unlikely to service demand and therefore the opportunity increases for the café within the SFACC. These factors mean that higher footfall will pass the doors of SFACC and the centre will become far more visible. This creates a major opportunity to promote the SFACC and the businesses within it. Therefore enhancing the service and facilities the council provides and in turn maximising income opportunities for the council. At present the work is ongoing for the new Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre which is by the nature of the work, creating some disruption. It is therefore pragmatic to undertake the works for SFACC before August 2018 to minimise disruption to the area over the longer term and to ensure the opportunity is optimised for the next Tourism season 2018.

2. DEMONSTRATION OF NEED (include supporting information with this appraisal)

The Council developed Sherwood Forest Art & Craft Centre in partnership with a number of funding bodies and it was officially opened in April 1998 by Paddy Tipping M.P. From the 2014 STEAM Data (Tourism) the economic impact of tourism for Newark and Sherwood was £237.69 million with visitors to Newark and Sherwood being 4.04 million and as already stated, visitors to Sherwood Forest Country Park being 371,315 at that date. MP Mark Spencer has taken a personal interest in the centre.

This is a unique opportunity to enhance this asset and raise the Tourism profile for the district. The links with Tourism are already identified and clearly this also links with Inward Investment

opportunities as the Economic Growth team often work with businesses looking to relocate/expand and always want to understand the wider issues around the district offer to employees.

The Centre is one of the largest in the country comprising a total of sixteen Studios and a Café. There are eleven Studios set round a glazed atrium with a further external courtyard of five Studios. The café has 64 covers with a further 12 covers outdoors.

Based on empirical evidence it has been calculated that the Centre attracts in excess of 65,000 visitors a year. Regular events are held which attract considerable numbers of additional visitors. The Centre is also the venue for several craft groups and the annual Mansfield^{Plus} Open Wood Carving Competition has been staged at the Centre on a number of occasions. In addition special activities are provided for School Groups which often stay at the adjacent Youth Hostel which is also owned by the District Council. The refurbishment of the SFACC will also enhance the Council's Youth Hostel, through the provision of a revitalised café and craft centre within very easy walking distance.

The Centre is the base for some highly talented professional craft workers who have provided work for some prestigious national bodies such as Lambeth Palace. Asset Management has always viewed art & crafts in their widest sense so there is a mix of traditional and modern crafts which include a silversmith, sculptor, artist, coppersmith, pen maker, and a chocolate maker with a distillery.

The Council has regularly maintained the Centre carrying out any necessary repairs and redecorating at regular intervals nonetheless after nineteen years the Centre is now in need of a major face lift and upgrade which if the bid is successful could be ready for the Centres 20th Anniversary in 2018.

Near the Centre is a building which has been used for storage and the Council's architect has developed an outstanding design to provide a gateway building for Sherwood Forest as it sits directly on the route from the new car parks to the new Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre and Planning Consent has been approved. It is proposed that this building will act as an annex to the Art & Craft Centre and is expected to generate an additional income of c£8,000 per annum. Already much interest has been expressed in this building.

In 2017 around 455,000 people visited Sherwood Forest Country Park which immediately adjoins the Centre and a consortium led by the RSPB are developing a new Visitor Centre for the Country Park which will be very close to the Art & Craft Centre. There is therefore a unique opportunity for the District Council to increase visitor numbers to the Art & Craft Centre by providing an up-to-date good quality environment which will improve our visitor's experience. This will provide economic benefits through more repeat visits and positive referrals which will allow the Council to benefit by maximising its rental income and increasing the Capital Value of its asset.

If the bid is approved the main work will involve the following:

1. Creation of an annex to the centre from the former storage building
2. Partly enclose and cover the outer courtyard with a Victorian style canopy and walkways

3. Creation of a central ice cream/soda/drinks hub in the Atrium to alleviate queuing in the café and form a central focus for the Centre
4. Realign the entrance to the Centre from the rear car park so visitors no longer enter the attraction past the public toilets this will also allow the creation of an additional craft studio
5. Creation of new Victorian style conveniences designed to be easily cleanable and including additional lettable storage space to the rear
6. Alterations to the kitchen (studio 8) & studio 13 to increase the lettable floor space
7. Additional parking spaces will be created
8. Improved lighting will be provided inside and out and other fittings will be provided or replaced such as display cases, seating, flooring, bins etc.
9. Redecoration internally and externally
10. Replacement of the three remaining Crittall metal windows with high performance double glazed wooden windows to match those already replaced
11. Enhance security with the provision of CCTV to the public areas
12. Additional/Replacement heat exchanger to provide better and more energy efficient heating/cooling to the main Atrium

3a. DETAIL HOW THE PROJECT MEETS COUNCIL AND NATIONAL STRATEGIES (include details of any statutory obligations)

Sherwood Forest Art & Craft Centre was initially created to build on the success of the former Church Farm Craft Workshops by providing additional Studio space. It is one of the largest Centres of its type in the Country and is adjacent to arguably the most important and internationally renowned Tourist Attraction in the District if not Nottinghamshire.

The Studios currently provide employment for some thirty-six people and the alterations will create opportunities for two new full-time craft businesses and in addition employment opportunities for at least two further staff (4 jobs in total).

There will be approximately £17,700 per annum of additional rental income to the Council which represents a 7% return on investment.

The Council currently receives an income of approximately £65,600 p.a.x. from the Centre and it is anticipated that due to the increased footfall that the rents for the existing Studios could also be increased. Whilst this is speculative it would not be an unreasonable assumption that the overall rental figure rental income figure could be increased by between 5% & 7% potentially increasing the overall income from the Centre following the facelift to around £87,900 per annum.

3b. DETAIL HOW THE PROJECT MEETS LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S KEY PRIORITIES AND 'EXCELLENCE' AGENDA

The proposed alterations and improvements will enhance the quality of the attraction and ensure that it continues to provide good quality all weather facilities to our customers and their visitors thereby extending the visitor season.

While ensuring that the studios provide value for money for our customers the improvements will help maintain and increase income for the Council to support other revenue expenditure. In terms of Council priorities, this fits with the Economic Growth and Tourism priorities.

3d. DESCRIBE THE IMPACT OF THIS PROJECT ON OTHER COUNCIL SERVICES

None, except a positive impact for Economic Growth and Tourism

3e. DESCRIBE ANY OUTPUTS (QUALITY) AND OUTCOMES (EFFECTS) THE PROJECT WILL DELIVER IN THE SHORT/LONG TERM

The alterations and improvements will lead to an enhanced visitor experience and will serve to increase the Council's revenue income. The improvements will enhance the reputation of the Centre and by association that of the Council

3f. DETAIL ANY ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES FOR MEETING THIS NEED

The alternative is to do nothing which could lead to a spiral of decline resulting in a loss of income and reputation for the District Council.

Some provision in the Repair & Renewal budget for the centre has been made which was primarily for the refurbishment of the toilets in 2017. This would not be required if this bid is approved.

4. OTHER INFORMATION

4a. HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES

By providing a canopy to the outer courtyard the potential for injuries resulting from adverse weather particularly during the winter months will be significantly reduced

4b. CRIME & DISORDER ISSUES

The partial enclosure of the outer courtyard and the provision of CCTV to public areas will deter vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

4c. PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

The property is in the Conservation Area and Planning Consent will be required for some of the work. Planning Consent has already been obtained for the conversion of the former storage building.

4d. LISTED BUILDING IMPLICATIONS

None

4e. RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH PLANNING/LEGAL ISSUES & FINANCIAL/PARTNERSHIP UNCERTAINTIES

As the Art & Craft Centre is in a Conservation Area the Victorian canopy and new toilets will require consent however as these will be in period style it is hoped there will be no objections
The proposed internal alterations will only require Building Regulations approval

The existing tenants will be consulted on the development

4f. HAVE ALTERNATIVE PROCUREMENT STRATEGIES SUCH AS JOINT PROCUREMENTS BEEN EXPLORED?

It was considered whether the scheme to convert the storage building could be entrusted to a commercial tenant in return for the grant of a rent free period equivalent to the cost of the works.

However it makes commercial sense for the Council to undertake the work and benefit from an enhanced rent as payback for this part of the scheme would be a maximum of 5 years.

5. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

5a. LAND/BUILDINGS CURRENTLY IN COUNCIL OWNERSHIP

None - existing Council owned premises

5b. ESTIMATED CAPITAL COSTS (best estimates should be given which can be firmed up when details scoping has been completed)

Total cost is estimated at £250,000 and it is considered that the scheme can be delivered within that figure. The estimated cost is based on professional knowledge of the costs required for similar works and was provided by the Council's Asset Surveyor.

5c. REVENUE IMPLICATIONS (this should include costs associated with implementation, ongoing revenue costs and ongoing savings)

Potential saving to Repairs & Renewals budget of c£30,000 by 2019.

There would also be an additional income from the annex, the additional studio & alterations to the Kitchen, & Studio 13 this would total c£17,700 p.a.x. which represents a 7% return on investment.

Void periods would be reduced as there is expected to be a higher demand for studios consequently there would be the potential to increase Studio rentals by 5% & 7%

6. FUNDING

6a. EXTERNAL FINANCE

Opportunities for external funding will be explored should the Capital Bid be approved in principle

6b. EXISTING INTERNAL FINANCE

No existing budget provision is available

6c. FINANCE REQUIRED FROM UNALLOCATED CAPITAL PROGRAMME RESOURCES

This project is not in the current budget allocation and therefore requires approval

7. ANTICIPATED START AND END DATES FOR PROJECT ONCE APPROVED

If the works commence in April 2018, the works could still be largely completed by July 2018 prior to commencement of main tourism season and this would tie in with the new Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre opening in Summer 2018.

FORM COMPLETED BY: David G Best & Julie Reader-Sullivan

DATE: 15 February 2018

SIGNATURE OF SPONSORING DIRECTOR:

REVIEW OF PROGRESS ON CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE ACTION PLAN

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To advise Members of progress on the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan.

2.0 Background

2.1 At its meeting on 1 December 2016 the Policy & Finance Committee considered a report on the findings of the Corporate Peer challenge held on 19 to 21 July 2016 and approved an action plan. Updates on the action plan were considered by the Policy & Finance Committee in November 2017 and it was further agreed that an interim report be considered in approximately 6 months.

3.0 Introduction

3.1 Attached as an **Appendix** to this report is the approved action plan which details the agreed actions together with a note of progress made and revised target dates for completion of relevant actions.

3.2 As Members will be aware, the Councillors' Commission have completed a review of the Councils' existing governance arrangements and Full Council noted the outcome in February 2018.

3.3 Work is ongoing on developing and improving the Members' extranet, with a new committee management software solution scheduled to go live in June 2018.

3.4 Regarding officer training and development, the Council is progressing the third cohort of the MPA programme through a mixed delivery model of face to face and online learning. The appraisal process, HR Strategy and Workforce Development Plan are currently being reviewed and will link to succession planning.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

That progress on the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan be noted.

Reason for Recommendation

To inform Members of progress against the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan.

Background Papers - Nil

For further information please contact Kirsty Cole on Ext 5210.

Kirsty Cole
Acting Chief Executive

CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE – ACTION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION 1

Undertake a review of the impact of your governance arrangements and consider how effective the Council’s political decision-making machinery is.

AGREED ACTIONS	ACTION BY	DATE	NOTES
1. Consider C21 century public servant, C21 Councillor and future issues facing Council and determine what governance system presents the ‘best fit’ – report to be considered by Councillors Commission.	Councillors Commission (Kirsty Cole/ Nigel Hill).	Ongoing	Members were surveyed and the results were presented to the Councillors Commission on 25 January 2018. From the limited number of survey returns the consensus from Members’ was that the current governance system was the best fit. It was felt by those Members that completed returns that the committee system was more democratic and gave Members a stronger voice.
2. Look at areas of duplication in current committee structure. Can existing system be streamlined? Can overview and scrutiny be strengthened?	Councillors Commission (Kirsty Cole/ Nigel Hill).	Ongoing	From the limited number of survey returns the view was that there should be no change to the current committee structure and there was no expression to create a dedicated overview and scrutiny committee.
3. Consider the Council’s experience of the Committee system since its reintroduction and assess options for retaining or adapting the current arrangements or changing to a Cabinet and Scrutiny system – to be considered by Councillors Commission and Council.	Councillors Commission (Kirsty Cole/ Nigel Hill).	Ongoing	From the limited number of survey returns there was no evidence of any appetite to change the existing governance arrangements. Given the lack of support for a move to a Cabinet system any further consideration would be deferred at the current time.

CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE – ACTION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION 2

Improve communications with and involvement of back bench Councillors.

AGREED ACTIONS	ACTION BY	DATE	NOTES
1. Can overview and scrutiny role be strengthened?	Councillors Commission (Kirsty Cole/ Nigel Hill).	Complete	Members were surveyed and the results were presented to the Councillors Commission on 25 January 2018. Members' view was that the current Overview and Scrutiny role was sufficient.
2. Further develop Member extranet to i) Develop the range of information available ii) Improve the interface for users iii) Support councillors in their ward/community leadership roles	Nigel Hill/ Sharon Parkinson.	June 2018	A new committee management system has been procured and will go live in June 2018, which will improve the way Councillors access Committee papers. A continual review of the extranet is ongoing.
3. Continuing consultation with and involve all Councillors so that their views on future communications and the extranet are taken into account.	Nigel Hill/Sharon Parkinson/ Communications Team.	Ongoing	Members will be kept informed the through Councillors Commission.

CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE – ACTION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION 3

Take steps towards achieving greater influence over other decision-makers and service providers in the area.

AGREED ACTIONS	ACTION BY	DATE	NOTES
1. Set out the Council's partnership/collaboration agenda and how we intend to develop it in the future.	CMT.	30/04/18	Organisational Development are undertaking a comprehensive review of the Council's significant partnerships and are now producing an up to date partnership map for CMT consideration.
2. Engage actively outside bodies/partnerships where they are relevant to the Council's objectives and cease involvement where the Council does not actively engage at present.	CMT/Nigel Hill/ Organisational Development	30/06/18	Following the partnership map review, consideration will be given to which outside bodies/partnerships the Council are involved in which support the Council's corporate priorities.
3. Review membership of / attendance by officers on outside bodies to determine relevance and review member representation on outside bodies.	CMT/Nigel Hill.	Complete	Current Outside Bodies representatives approved at Full Council in May 2017, following a detailed review by the Councillors Commission.

CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE – ACTION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION 4

Embed the changes to operational culture to make the move to the new office a success. Maximise the benefits of the ‘my themes’ groups, which staff value, to help establish a collaborative and inclusive working culture across business units.

AGREED ACTIONS	ACTION BY	DATE	NOTES
<p>1. Draw on the experience of the Moving Ahead project and consider whether a ‘Transformation Team’ is required for future changes following the move to the new offices.</p>	<p>CMT/Moving Ahead Team Matthew Finch/ Deborah Johnson</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<p>A 100 day review was undertaken in January 2018 which included a full staff and partner survey comparing pre and post move results. Overall, 88% of staff responded to say that their move experience could not have been improved, 93% of staff and partners reported positively that working in a neighbourhood had a positive impact on their ability to work with their team and other business units and 97% of Staff now feel they are fully equipped for agile working. CMT received the feedback in February 2018 and the results will be published to staff shortly.</p> <p>Where transformation culture is required, the Council have developed a blueprint for future projects which has agreed by the Moving Ahead Programme Board as a guide for future corporate programmes and projects.</p> <p>The ‘Transformation Team’ has been superseded by the Council’s Commercials Team. Following the publication of the Council’s Commercial Strategy and Investment Plan, the Commercials Team has been developed to consider delivery of Council’s services with a view to improve efficiency and generate income.</p>

CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE – ACTION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION 5

Consider how to future-proof the organisation with succession planning, building on the investment in staff development.

AGREED ACTIONS	ACTION BY	DATE	NOTES
1. Continue to encourage and support development through the MPA programme and use of development programmes such as the NGDP.	HR	Ongoing.	<p>Cohort 1 have now successfully completed their MPA. Cohort 2 will complete their final year in the Summer of 2018 and Cohort 3 continue to complete the MPA through a mixed delivery model of online and face to face learning.</p> <p><u>NGDP</u> Both of the National Management Trainees (NMT) have now completed their fixed term contracts. One of the NMTs secured a full time role at Rushcliffe whilst the other returned to full time education.</p> <p>HR are considering use of the Apprenticeship Levy to fund future education at a Masters level.</p>
2. Identify and nurture 'future stars' and talent throughout the organisation through the GNSR Talent Development Framework.	CMT/HR	Ongoing	NSDC continue to provide development opportunities for those employees identified as having potential. Examples include allocation to/involvement in corporate based projects and following the recent departure of the Chief Executive and Director Communities, work activities have been allocated amongst existing staff as a means of providing development opportunities.
Update competency framework for NSDC (and wider GNSR if possible) to reflect skills/attributes of the 21 Century Public Servant	CMT/HR	30/04/18	To be completed.
Ensure that any skills/knowledge gaps are addressed through personal appraisals/training and development plans.	CMT/HR	30/04/18	Ongoing

CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE – ACTION PLAN

5. Facilitate formal mentoring/shadowing /secondments involvement in projects where appropriate in line with the Talent Development Framework.	CMT/HR.	Ongoing	Ongoing
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CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE – ACTION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION 6

Refine your strategy for joint working and shared services to make it more focused. Develop a more coherent approach with nearby districts and other agencies to improve resilience and reduce costs.

AGREED ACTIONS	ACTION BY	DATE	NOTES
<p>1. Continue to actively explore opportunities for joint working with local partners including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) seeking to develop agreement to clear goals around shared service development with partners ii) actively promoting and resourcing change programmes to accelerate shared services where agreement can be reached iii) clearly communicating goals around shared services so they are understood throughout the Council 	CMT.	Ongoing	<p>The Council has well established shared services arrangements with neighbouring authorities such as East Midlands Building Consultancy partnership. However, the focus on collaborative partnerships has now moved to an emphasis on ‘Place’ and offering a number of public sector services from one location. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castle House, (the Council’s new headquarters), now has 7 partners (including DWP, Probation, Citizens Advice, YMCA), co-located in the building providing a single point of access for residents and customers. • The Public Sector Hub in Ollerton is currently being developed and will co-locate a range of public sector services from one location including the CCG, District Council and a GP surgery. • Ollerton Outreach Club offers a range of public sector services such as DWP, Council’s Customer Services Team and operates out of Ollerton and Boughton Town Council building 2 days a week.

CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE – ACTION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION 7

Develop a co-ordinated engagement strategy – with staff, residents, external stakeholders and Members, enabling all parties to influence service changes into the future.

AGREED ACTIONS	ACTION BY	DATE	NOTES
1. Development of an engagement strategy which pulls together the communication, consultation and engagement priorities of the Council into a single approach.	CMT/Organisational Development	Complete	Strategy approved by CMT in June 2017.
2. Review/update of communications strategy to ensure that it remains fit for purpose in accordance with above.	HR/Communications	Complete	Strategy approved by CMT in January 2018.

CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE – ACTION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION 8

The Council has achieved a lot and is looking to do a lot more for the benefit of its community so those successes should be celebrated.

AGREED ACTIONS	ACTION BY	DATE	NOTES
1. Continue to take a pro-active approach to engaging with media and the community in demonstrating the Council's successes.	CMT/ Communications Team.	Ongoing	<p>The Communications team utilise a full media mix to engage with the media including press releases, local news channels (TV and Radio), publications such as the Voice and via an number of social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, Flickr) to publicise the Council's successes.</p> <p>The Council host an Annual Volunteer Celebration celebrating the Districts Volunteers and promote significant Council decisions and events through our website.</p>
2. Pursue recognition through national awards where appropriate.	CMT/Business Managers	Ongoing	<p>The Council continues to pursue recognition through national awards. Notable successes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has been shortlisted as a finalist in the Local Government Chronicle Council of the Year Awards 2018. The winner will be announced on 21 March. • The Council has been named one of eight finalists by Inside Housing in the Strategic Local Authority of the Year Award category at the UK Housing Awards. • Castle House, the Council's new headquarters which opened in September 2017 has been shortlisted in the Commercial Category for the Royal Institution for Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Awards for the East Midlands. Award winners are announced on 3 May 2018. Successful winners will be invited to compete against other regional winners at the national Awards Grand Final in November 2018. • Gladstone House, a much-needed and innovative 60-unit extra care scheme funded by a partnership including the district council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Homes England and Communities

CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE – ACTION PLAN

			<p>Agency and Newark and Sherwood Homes, will be open to residents in the spring has been shortlisted in the Community Benefit category for the RICS Awards for the East Midlands. Award winners are announced on 3 May 2018. Successful winners will be invited to compete against other regional winners at the national Awards Grand Final in November 2018.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has committed to National Practitioner Support Service Gold Standard Challenge for ensuring continuous improvement in front line housing /homeless services; receiving an excellent score in a recent diagnostic peer review which was celebrated at Annual NPSS Conference in July 2017.
3. Build the Council's reputation through promotion of our achievements		Ongoing	<p>The Council has built a reputation for excellence and is proud of the services that are offered to our customers and communities and of the work that the Council does to serve all of the residents in the district. The Council proactively seeks to accentuate the achievements of all of the business units to help maintain and protect the Organisation's record on public service.</p>

ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EXEMPT REPORTS CONSIDERED BY THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide the Policy & Finance Committee with a list of the exempt business considered by the Committee for the period 16 May 2017 to date.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 The Councillors' Commission at their meeting held on 25 September 2014 proposed a number of changes in respect of exempt information, one of which being that 'the Committees undertake an annual review of their exempt items at their last meeting prior to the Annual Meeting in May'. This was ratified by the Council on 14 October 2014.

2.2 Members will also be aware that the Council agreed a review mechanism for exempt items which was incorporated into the Access to Information Procedure Rules. Rule 18 provides Members with a mechanism to request a review of exempt information with a view to this being released into the public domain should there be substantive reasons to do so.

3.0 Proposals

3.1 The following table provides the exempt business considered by the Policy & Finance Committee for the period 16 May 2017 to date:

Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Exempt Paragraph	Opinion of Report Author as to current status of the report
29.06.17	Urgency Item – Lowfield Lane, Balderton	Paragraph 3	Information remains confidential
30.11.17	Elm Avenue, Newark	Paragraph 3	Information remains confidential
	Former Municipal Buildings	Paragraph 3	Information remains confidential
	Hope House School, Newark	Paragraph 3	Information remains confidential
	Keepers Cottage, Newark	Paragraph 3	Information remains confidential
25.01.18	Community & Activity Village – Funding	Paragraph 3	Information remains confidential
	Establishment of a Development Company	Paragraph 3	Information remains confidential
	The Atrium, Lombard Street, Newark – Restrictive Covenant	Paragraph 3	Information remains confidential

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the report be noted with those items which are no longer considered as exempt being released into the public domain.

Reason for Recommendation

To advise Members of the exempt business considered by the Policy & Finance Committee for the period 16 May 2017 to date and those items which can now be released into the public domain.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Nigel Hill, Business Manager - Democratic Services on Ext: 5243.

Kirsty Cole
Acting Chief Executive

URGENCY ITEMS - MINUTE OF DECISION

Delegation arrangements for dealing with matters of urgency

Paragraph 7.2.1 of the Council's Constitution provides that Chief Officers may take urgent decisions if they are of the opinion that circumstances exist which make it necessary for action to be taken by the Council prior to the time when such action could be approved through normal Council Procedures. They shall, where practicable, first consult with the Leader and Chairman (or in their absence the Vice-Chairman) and the Opposition Spokesperson of the appropriate committee.

Subject: Southwell Flood Alleviation Grant Scheme

In 2013, following severe floods in the District, the Council administered a Repair and Renewal flood alleviation grant scheme from DEFRA. It involved administering individual grant applications from affected properties (£5k per property) and doing detailed returns to DEFRA on the applications approved and checking the work was carried out. In the end the Council accessed over £800k in grant monies for flood affected properties across the District.

In addition to this figure, some of the applicants in Southwell (88 properties) decided to donate all or part of their £5k grants into a community pot to be used towards larger flood alleviation schemes for the town that Nottinghamshire County Council (as the lead flood authority) have commissioned. This community pot totals £233,420.84 and now that NCC are in a position to begin the flood alleviation schemes, DEFRA have confirmed that we can draw down the funding. We will need to enter into an MOU with DEFRA as the Authority drawing down the funds – and we will then pay it over to the NCC upon being satisfied that it is to be expended against the cost of the flood schemes. Initially we had suggested that DEFRA simply pay the monies direct to NCC however, because the District administered the initial claims for grant by the 88 properties involved it was considered to be more appropriate that the District draw down the grant funds.

Appropriate Committee:

Policy & Finance Committee

Details of Item (including reason(s) for use of urgency procedure):

To create a Capital scheme and add this to the Capital Programme, for 2017/18, for the £233,421 to be received from DEFRA and passed to Nottinghamshire County Council for the flood alleviation scheme at Southwell.

The reason for the proposed urgency is that the grant monies are to be received by the Council before the end of the current financial year.

Decision Taken:

To increase the Capital Programme by £233,421 in respect of the Southwell Flood Alleviation Grant Scheme.

Members Consulted:

Councillor Roger Blaney - Chairman of Policy & Finance Committee
Councillor Bruce Laughton - Chairman of Homes & Communities Committee
Councillor David Staples - Leader of the Opposition

Signed

Karen White

Date: 26/02/2018

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted