

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the **POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, on Thursday, 5 April 2018 at 6.00pm.

PRESENT: Councillor R.V. Blaney (Chairman)

Councillors: R.J. Jackson, R.B. Laughton, D.J. Lloyd, A.C. Roberts and D.B. Staples.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors: K. Girling and D.R. Payne.

85. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P. Peacock.

86. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS AND AS TO THE PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest.

87. DECLARATIONS OF INTENTIONS TO RECORD THE MEETING

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

88. MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 22 FEBRUARY 2018

The minutes from the meeting held on 22 February 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

89. FORWARD PLAN OF POLICY & FINANCE ITEMS

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

90. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS: STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

The Acting Chief Executive presented a report which advised of a consultation being undertaken by the Committee on Standards in Public Life into local government ethical standards. The report set out the specific questions asked and offered some comments which could form the Councils response.

In considering their response to the consultation the Committee welcomed the proposed wording as set out in the report, but also requested the response include reference to concerns about the lack of effective sanctions available to district councils in respect of those parish councils which choose to ignore recommended actions in the event of a breach of the code of conduct and to the lack of effective sanctions generally within the current standards framework.

AGREED (unanimously) that delegated authority be given to the Acting Chief Executive to submit an appropriate response to the Committee on Standards in Public Life in connection with their review of local government ethical standards, following consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Opposition Spokesperson of the Policy & Finance Committee.

Reason for Decision

To enable a response to be made to inform the Committee on Standards in Public Life review of local government standards by the 18 May 2018 deadline.

91. SOCIAL MOBILITY PROPOSAL

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 progress the request for additional budget to support work relating to the Social Mobility Index.

The Committee considered a report which sought approval to provide an additional budget of up to £60,000 to support a programme of activities in relation to the Youth Indicator of the Social Mobility Index. This proposal had been recommended by the Economic Development Committee from their meeting held on 28 March 2018. The £60,000 was to be funded from the closing general fund balance at 31 March 2018.

Full details of the programme of action were set out in the report submitted to the Economic Development Committee which was attached as an appendix to the report.

AGREED (unanimously) that an additional budget of a maximum of £60,000 to support the programme of work as outlined in the Economic Development Committee report, be approved.

Reason for Decision

The budget will support those residents in the district on their journey to employment and provide school age children with opportunities to explore career opportunities available to them.

92. REFURBISHMENT OF SHERWOOD FOREST ART & CRAFT CENTRE AND ASSOCIATED BUILDING

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 progress the request for additional budget to undertake the refurbishment of the Sherwood Forest Art and Craft Centre.

The Committee considered a report which sought approval for additional capital expenditure of £250,000 for the refurbishment of the Sherwood Forest Art & Craft Centre as recommended by the Economic Development Committee at their meeting held on 28 March 2018. The Sherwood Forest Art & Craft Centre was opened in 1998

and was in need of refurbishment and it was considered that the relocation of the Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre immediately adjacent to the Art & Craft Centre provided a unique opportunity to undertake this refurbishment.

Full details of the proposal were set out in the report submitted to the Economic Development Committee which was attached as an appendix to the report.

AGREED (unanimously) 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 Decision

The refurbishment allows for the upgrade of the Centre in order to enhance the visitor experience.

93. REVIEW OF PROGRESS ON CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE ACTION PLAN

The Acting Chief Executive presented a report which advised Members of progress made against the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan. The appendix to the report set out the approved action plan which detailed the agreed actions together with a note of progress made and revised target dates for completion of relevant actions.

It was suggested that it would be appropriate to revisit the Council's governance arrangements once the new Chief Executive had taken up the post.

AGREED (unanimously) that progress on the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan be noted.

Reason for Decision

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

94. ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EXEMPT REPORTS CONSIDERED BY THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Committee considered a report which detailed the exempt business considered by the Committee between 16 May 2017 and 31 March 2018. The report identified which reports, in the opinion of report authors, could now be released into the public domain.

AGREED (unanimously) that the report be noted with those items which are no longer considered as exempt being released into the public domain.

Reason for Decision

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.

95. URGENCY ITEM - SOUTHWELL FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME

The Committee noted the decision to increase the Capital Programme by £233,421 in respect of the Southwell Flood Alleviation Grant Scheme.

AGREED (unanimously) that the urgency item be noted.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that grant monies are received by the Council before the end of the financial year.

96. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

AGREED (unanimously) that under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

97. LAND ACQUISITION - LINCOLN ROAD, NEWARK

The Committee considered the exempt report presented by the Acting Chief Executive in relation to the acquisition of land at Lincoln Road, Newark.

(Summary provided in accordance with 100C(2) of the Local Government Act 1972).

Meeting closed at 6.35pm.

Chairman