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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, 31 March 2022 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor D Lloyd (Chairman)
Councillor K Girling (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Mrs R Holloway, Councillor R Jackson, Councillor T Wendels
and Councillor R White

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Mrs P Rainbow

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor P Peacock (Committee Member)

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

There were no declarations of interest.

333 DECLARATIONS OF INTENTION TO RECORD THE MEETING

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

334 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 MARCH 2022

The minutes from the meeting held on 17 March 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

335 ANNUAL REVIEW OF EXEMPT ITEMS

The Committee considered a report which provided a list of the exempt items of business considered by the Committee for the period May 2020 to date. The views of report authors as to whether the information contained within the report remained confidential was provided in the report.

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 May 2020 to date, and those items which can now be released into the public domain.

336 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Director - Customer Services & Organisational Development presented a report which sought approval for the Workforce Development Strategy. The Strategy, attached as Appendix A to the report, outlined how the Council would develop its workforce to ensure it would be able to meet the changing demands anticipated over the next five years.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Workforce Development Strategy be approved.

Reason for Decision

To ensure a robust and strategic approach is taken to workforce development.

337 RESPONSIVE REPAIRS POLICY

The Business Manager - Housing Maintenance & Asset Management presented a report which sought approval of the new Responsive Repairs Policy, attached as an appendix to the report. The Homes & Communities Committee considered the report at their meeting held on 14 March 2022 and had recommended approval.

The policy would apply to all Council rented homes and all communal areas of stock managed by Newark and Sherwood District Council, including leasehold properties. Briefing sessions on the new policy would take place with tenants following approval of the policy.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Responsive Repairs Policy be approved.

Reason for Decision

To provide clear guidance for all on repairing responsibilities for Council owned stock.

338 APPLICATION TO THE ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND TO BECOME A NATIONAL PORTFOLIO ORGANISATION

The Business Manager - Heritage & Culture presented a report which explored the potential of the Arts Council England's 2023-26 Investment Programme and sought approval to submit an application to become a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO).

The report set out the proposals to focus on two of the Arts Council England outcomes – Creative People and Cultural Communities. The submission date for any application was 18 May 2022, as such, the report had been presented to the Committee before full plans had been developed. Detailed financial plans were still being costed, and the figure which the Council would apply for was still to be determined, but it was anticipated that a figure in the region of £300,000 was reasonable.

The proposed funding would deliver activity, events and community engagement, upskilling and development of staff, governance, volunteers and participants and

sector specialist roles for both front line delivery and strategic development and partnership building.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the proposals to submit an application, based around the activity and development plans explored in paragraphs 3.2 - 3.3 of the report, and subject to final approval as detailed in paragraph 3.5 of the report, be approved;
- (b) subject to the successful application, the formation of a Board to be established post-October, be approved; and
- (c) delegated authority be given to the Director - Communities & Environment, following consultation with appropriate Members, to approve the financial plan once fully developed.

Reason for Decision

To capitalise on the opportunity through the Arts Council England to apply to become a National Portfolio Organisation in 2023, maximising our impact through sustained, targeted funding.

339 CYCLE RACES

The Director - Planning & Growth presented a report which sought financial support, alongside partners, to host a Newark Town Centre cycle race and part of the Nottinghamshire leg of the Tour of Britain in 2022.

The report detailed the proposal for a pilot Newark 'Town Centre Race' on 29 July 2022 which had been ring-fenced in British Cycling's calendar, and the returning Tour of Britain in September with a stage being held within Nottinghamshire. For both events it was noted that the Council would play an active role in the delivery, promotion and encouragement of sponsorship.

The Committee considered the potential impact of closing the centre of Newark to traffic for the planned race on 29 July 2022 which would require review and appropriate notice.

AGREED (unanimously) that a budget of £40,000 for 2022/23, funded from the Change Management Reserve, be approved to deliver a pilot 'Newark Town Centre Race' in July 2022 in partnership with British Cycling and local traders, and to contribute towards the Tour of Britain in 2022.

Reason for Decision

To support the Town Centre strategy and activities delivered to enhance economic growth within the District.

340 DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCE IN 2022/23 - HERITAGE AND CULTURE

The Business Manager - Heritage & Culture presented a report which sought approval for additional resources in the Heritage & Culture Business Unit, to deliver aspirations within the Community Plan and exploit opportunities that would exist in 2022/23 and beyond. The report was considered by the Economic Development Committee at their meeting held on 23 March 2022 at which they recommended approval.

The report set out the need to recover, re-think, re-purpose and re-develop the heritage and culture offer given the pandemic and the forthcoming opportunities to be exploited. The subsequent operational changes required were detailed.

AGREED (unanimously) that the allocation of £56,100 in support of the development opportunities arising in 2022/23, funded from the Change Management Reserve, be approved.

Reason for Decision

To facilitate delivery of a number of key strategic priorities for the Heritage & Culture Business unit.

341 BUDGET REQUESTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

The Chief Executive presented a report which informed Members about the extra labour/resource and capital expenditure required to carry out additional work that had recently been secured by the Street Scene Team. The report sought approval for the additional staffing and resources required.

It was reported that following successful contract negotiations by Officers, there was a mixture of internal and external works that would increase revenue income to the Council, as well as redirecting monies currently being spent with private contractors back to the authority. The report also informed Members about the additional expenditure needed to establish a network of Green Champions in line with the commitments established in the Community Plan.

The report was considered by the Leisure & Environment Committee at their meeting held on 22 March 2022, at which they recommended approval.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the significant increase in income and work conducted by the Environmental Services Street Scene Team be noted;
- (b) Members note the capacity for expansion and approve the request for the additional funding outlined in paragraph 7.1 of the report to enable the Street Scene team to continue with improved service delivery standards and put in place the resources to continue with its commercial development;
- (c) the proposal for an additional £870 budget to the Grounds Maintenance

budget for 2022/23 funded from the Change Management Reserve in 2022/23 and in future years added into the Base budget (subject to any additional income generated during 2022/23) be approved;

- (d) the proposal to allocate £43,000 into the capital programme for 2022/23, funded by capital receipts be approved; and
- (e) the utilisation of £15,000 from the Cleaner, Safer & Greener reserve during 2022/23 in relation to the Green Champion scheme be approved.

Reason for Decision

To further develop the service through the provision of further resource.

342 MARKET SUPPLEMENT EXTENSION - TRADES TEAM

The Business Manager - Housing Maintenance & Asset Management presented a report which sought approval for the current 10% market supplement for the trades team to be continued for twelve months, to enable a service review to be completed for skilled trade operatives within the Housing Maintenance & Asset Management Business Unit.

The report stated how skilled trade operatives were critical to the delivery of the Repairs and Maintenance function in relation to the council's housing stock where operatives work on 400 void properties and up to 14,000 repairs per year. However, the Business Unit were experiencing significant and ongoing recruitment and retention issues. It was noted that the current market supplement had been in place since 2019.

AGREED (unanimously) that the continuation of the market supplement for twelve months be approved.

Reason for Decision

To enable uninterrupted provision of the Council's repairs service.

343 SHERWOOD LEVELLING UP

The Director - Planning & Growth presented a report which provided an update on the Sherwood Levelling Up opportunities and sought flexibility to use positive variances in salaries due to vacancies to support delivery of the Sherwood agenda.

In presenting the report, the Director – Planning & Growth updated the Committee on the Levelling Up White Paper content and the Round 2 prospectus and guidance. He advised that there was a 6 July deadline for the submission of any Sherwood bids, however only three projects were able to be submitted. It was noted that the selection of which projects would be submitted would be subject to a future decision under the new governance arrangements.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the update be noted;
- (b) the underspend associated with the Senior Regeneration Officer vacancies held within the Housing, Health & Regeneration and Economic Growth & Visitor Economy Business Units be made available to secure additional resources to allow the development, production, and submission to Government of a Sherwood Prospectus.

Reason for Decision

To continue the development of the Sherwood Levelling Up agenda.

344 POSSIBLE PURCHASE OF LAND - BOWBRIDGE ROAD, NEWARK

The Business Manager - Corporate Property presented a report which updated Members on the opportunity to purchase land adjacent to Newark Hospital, on land off Bowbridge Road for the purposes of car parking. Further to the reports to previous meetings, it was noted that the maximum offer previously agreed and re-presented following the January meeting of the Committee, had been declined by the owners. Further negotiations had led to a revised offer that would be acceptable to both parties, allowing for completion of the sales. Details of the revised offer and the capital costs were contained in the exempt appendix.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Director – Planning & Growth, in consultation with the Business Manager – Corporate Property be given delegated authority to:

- (a) confirm to the land agent representing both landowners that the Revised Offer was the full and final offer from this Council to purchase unconditionally (and without restriction) the two freehold interests detailed at Appendix A to the report;
- (b) subject to the Revised Offer being accepted as detailed at (a) above, to enter into a Lease Agreement with the Sherwood Forest Hospital Trust on the terms set out in the exempt appendix; and
- (c) amend the Council's Capital Programme to reflect a purchase in accordance with the Revised Offer and capital costs of implementing a car park for the Trust, as detailed in the exempt appendix.

Reason for Decision

To secure additional car parking in order to support the function and reputation of Newark Hospital.

345 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PROGRESS UPDATE

The Director - Planning and Growth presented a report which updated Members on progress towards delivery of the Plan Review in relation to the Allocations and Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD). This included the necessary budget release in order to progress actions supported by the Economic Development Committee.

The report set out a summary of the responses to the Allocations & Development Options Report which had been presented to the Economic Development Committee, set out next steps and the revised Local Development Framework timetable.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the progress set out in the report towards producing the Allocations & Development Management Options Report be noted; and
- (b) the funding of £85,000 budget in 2022/23 from the Change Management Reserve to support the conclusion of feasibility studies with respect to potential site purchase(s) and flood mitigation be approved.

Reason for Decision

To comply with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and amending regulations.

346 COMMUNITY PLAN PERFORMANCE FOR QUARTER 3 2021/22

The Transformation Manager presented a report which provided the Committee with the Quarter 3 Community Plan performance report for the period October-December 2021. The report analysed data and progress against key activities as well as building a picture of the context of performance using district statistics, customer feedback and workforce information. The Committee welcomed the report and advocated wider publication to the public.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Community Plan Performance report be noted.

Reason for Decision

To enable Members to proactively monitor the Council's performance and assess the Council's progress against achievement of the objectives laid out in the Community Plan.

347 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

AGREED (unanimously) that, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

348 POSSIBLE PURCHASE OF LAND - BOWBRIDGE ROAD, NEWARK

The Committee considered the exempt appendix in relation to the Possible Purchase of Land - Bowbridge Road, Newark.

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

Meeting closed at 6.52 pm.

Chairman