

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

17th March 2016

PRESENT:-

Conservative Group

Councillor Harrison (Chairman), Councillor Mrs Plenderleith (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Billings, Mrs Coe, Mrs Coyle, MacPherson, Smith, Watson and Wheeler.

Labour Group

Councillors Rhind, Richards, Southerd and Wilkins.

FM/115 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received on behalf of Councillor Hewlett (Conservative Group).

FM/116 **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meetings held on 14th January 2016 and 18th February 2016 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

FM/117 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Richards declared a pecuniary interest in relation to Item 12 on the Agenda by way of his association with the Welfare Rights Service.

Councillor MacPherson declared a personal interest in relation to Item 13 on the Agenda by virtue of being an acquaintance of the farmer.

FM/118 **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 10**

The Committee was informed that no questions from members of the public had been received.

FM/119 **QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO 11**

The Committee was informed that no questions from Members of the Council had been received.

FM/120 **REPORTS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

There were no reports of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to consider.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE

FM/121 **AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Minutes of the Audit Sub-Committee Meeting held on 17th February 2016 were submitted.

RESOLVED:-

That the Minutes of the above Audit Sub-Committee Meeting be received and any recommendations contained therein approved.

FM/122 **CORPORATE PLAN 2016 - 2021**

The Chief Executive presented the report to Committee, referencing highlights from the Corporate Plan and commending Members for their active participation in its completion alongside council officers.

The Chairman, in praising the report, queried how it would be communicated to residents. The Head of Communications responded, detailing the various methods they plan to utilise.

Councillor Southerd also noted the full content of the report, but requested an update on the items identified in the Infrastructure section. The Chief Executive stated that whilst these developments would progress, its timing would be determined by the availability of external funding. Councillor Southerd also queried the difference in housing needs figures between South Derbyshire and Amber Valley in the Communities section. The Chief Executive, in response, referred to the transport links, the infrastructure and the Council's active pursuit of development opportunities all adding to a greater housing needs requirement to meet the growing population in the area.

Councillor Mrs Coyle commended the Corporate Plan exercise on behalf of Members and praised the Communications Team in particular for their part in its completion.

RESOLVED:-

That Members considered and approved the Corporate Plan 2016 – 2021 (Appendix 1), as well as the associated Action Plan (Appendix 2) and Evidence Base (Appendix 3).

FM/123 **BUDGET AND FINANCIAL MONITORING 2015/16**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented the report to Committee, drawing particular attention to the net budget, additional income, staffing costs, contingent funds and the increased costs relating to recycling, leisure centres, planning appeals and IT/service developments. Reference was also made to the New Homes Bonus consultation; recent developments relating to ATM Business Rates liability and the NHS Trust's pursuit of charity

status in Business Rates terms; cash on deposit; the Waste Less, Save More project and capital funding issues.

Councillor Southerd queried the variances quoted against the leisure centre costs and Member costs. With regard to the former, the Director of Finance and Corporate Services referred to the low baseline established in 2010 which has led to increased fuel costs in the period since in accordance with the contract terms. Other costs relate to ongoing maintenance costs for the facilities. Councillor MacPherson referred to the outdoor lighting that had been installed at the Etwall leisure centre since 2010 and its impact on costs. The Director stated that these costs should have been factored into the calculations, but undertook to investigate and report back to Committee. The Chairman responded to the Member costs matter, stating that the budget had been purposely increased to cater for new Members after the May 2015 elections and the resultant training needs.

Councillor Richards, in referring to the potential impact on Business Rates income if the NHS Trust is successful in gaining charity status, speculated that it would likely remove any gain the Council might receive from the Derbyshire Business Rates Pool. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services stated that based on information received, it was very difficult to predict which way the decision may go. Comment was also made relating to the Hilton Village Hall development, to which the Director responded that there had been a staged development at the location, some of it since the original budget was set, some via external funding.

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services also referred to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), in particular the additional staffing costs, opposed to lower interest and repairs costs. New Build delays will impact on rental income projections, the Director continued and he stressed that the Capital Programme overspend in 2015/16 will need to be pulled back during 2016/17 to ensure that the HRA Reserve Balance did not fall below the minimum level.

Councillor Mrs Coyle then queried the overspend on the housing capital programme. The Director of Housing and Community Services stated that the Housing staff were working to a five year plan, currently in its fourth year. They had taken the opportunity to deliver part of the 2016/17 programme in 2015/16 at this year's prices as opposed to next years. It is envisaged that there will be an underspend by the end of the five year plan.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 That the latest budget and financial monitoring figures for 2015/16 were considered and approved.***
- 1.2 That an amount of £63,000 be transferred to the Planning Appeals Provision.***
- 1.3 That requests to set-aside £50,000 from additional planning income in 2015/16 to meet IT development, together with support for future planning agreements, was approved, subject to a separate report.***

1.4 That the projected over spend on the Council Houses, Capital Works Budget was considered and noted.

1.5 That the Capital Budget for 2016/17 for Council Houses is reviewed and a detailed report is provided to the Committee on future capital allocations, together with implications for the HRA and its housing stock.

FM/124 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)**

RESOLVED:-

That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets after each item.

MINUTES

The Exempt Minutes of the Meetings held on 14th January 2016 and 18th February 2016 were received.

TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 11

The Committee was informed that no questions had been received.

DEBTS SUBMITTED FOR WRITE-OFF (Paragraph 1)

The Committee approved the recommendations made in the Report.

LAND AT FINDERN (Paragraph 3)

The Committee approved the recommendations made in the Report.

The meeting terminated at 6.55pm.

COUNCILLOR J HARRISON

CHAIRMAN