

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

15th February 2018

PRESENT:-

Conservative Group

Councillor Harrison (Chairman), Councillor Mrs Plenderleith (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Mrs Coe, Coe (substituting for Councillor Hewlett), Mrs Coyle, Watson and Wheeler

Labour Group

Councillors Rhind, Richards, Southerd and Wilkins

In attendance

Councillors Billings (Conservative Group) and Taylor (Labour Group)

FM/119 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Ford, Hewlett and Smith (Conservative Group)

FM/120 **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 30th November 2017 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

FM/121 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Committee was informed that no declarations of interest had been received.

FM/122 **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/123 **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.

MATTERS DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE

FM/124 **AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE**

The Open Minutes of the Audit Sub-Committee Meeting held on 13th December 2017 were submitted.

RESOLVED:-

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

FM/125 **DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS RATES REVALUATION RELIEF SCHEME**

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) presented the report to Committee.

RESOLVED:

1.1 Members approved the updated Discretionary Business Rate Revaluation Relief Scheme for 2017/18 to support local businesses in South Derbyshire adversely affected by the 2017 Rating Revaluation List.

1.2 That relief is awarded to a business based on the following scheme criteria:

- ***Its RV is less than £200,000.***
- ***Its Business Rates payable in 2017/18 has increased by 5% or greater when compared to 2016/17.***
- ***The business does not qualify for any other relief, excluding the "Support for Pubs Scheme" in 2017/18.***
- ***The business is not part of a national chain or group of companies, i.e. it is a local business in the District.***
- ***Relief is limited to 90% of the total increase in rates payable between 2016/17 and 2017/18.***

1.3 That the updated scheme for 2017/18 is rolled forward to 2018/19 based on the same criteria except that Relief is limited to 45% of the total increase in rates payable between 2016/17 (the base year) and 2018/19.

FM/126 **COUNCIL TAX PREMIUM ON LONG-TERM EMPTY PROPERTIES**

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) presented the report to Committee.

Councillor Southerd sought clarification regarding the exclusion of properties that have been repossessed, expressing a view that the bank or building society, as owners, should be liable to a charge. The Strategic Director stated that this was a statutory exemption and undertook to provide further details for later circulation.

Councillor Richards queried what action was taken to ensure the values applied to properties, as proof of being actively marketed, were reasonable.

The Strategic Director stated that, where required, a referral could be made to the District Valuer.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 Members granted approval to increase the Council Tax Premium from 50% to 100% on properties that remain empty for longer than two years.***
- 1.2 That the increased Premium of 100% be effective from the financial year 2018/19.***
- 1.3 That properties which have been actively marketed for sale or let are considered exempt from the Premium under the Council's Discretionary Policy.***
- 1.4 That the Council Tax exemption from the premium for properties undergoing significant structural repairs is increased from 12 months to two years.***

FM/127 **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION SERVICE: SERVICE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 Members approved a grant offer from Veolia UK of £55,890 towards the cost of £69,862 for a project to install dipping platforms and science related play facilities at Rosliston Forestry Centre.***
- 1.2 That the applications to finance the funding shortfall are supported.***

FM/128 **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2018/19**

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 Members approved the Treasury Management Strategy for 2018/19.***
- 1.2 Members approved the Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2018/19 to 2022/23.***
- 1.3 Members approved the Investment Policy for 2018/19 including the associated counterparty (lending) list.***

Councillor Billings joined the Meeting at 6.20pm.

FM/129 **REPORTS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Councillor Billings, in his capacity as Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, delivered a verbal update, confirming that the Committee had scrutinised this year's budgets, finding them to be satisfactory. The Councillor further added that the Committee had reviewed a partial report on waste and

cleansing services, looking to make recommendations after the March 2018 meeting, at which further information will be considered. Reference was made to the implementation of Universal Credit, a matter that will be monitored as the year progresses, along with attendance at a tenancy workshop to evaluate the information being relayed to tenants.

Councillor Richards queried what preparations the Council was taking in relation to the Universal Credit roll-out. Councillor Billings referred to the actions being undertaken, including briefings, the direct debit campaign and the provision of additional computers to assist for the on-line only application process.

FM/130 **FINAL BUDGET PROPOSALS 2018/2019 and FINANCIAL PLAN to 2023**

The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) presented the report to Committee.

Councillor Richards referenced the Community Partnership Scheme, querying the £75,925 sum shown as outstanding. The Strategic Director confirmed that this figure related to previous awards, committed funds yet to be allocated, often the result of delays in match-funding arrangements. It was further emphasised that allocations from the recently announced figure of £250,000 were subject to the prior approval of the criteria and procedures at committee meetings in March 2018.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1 That a Council Tax increase for 2018/19 of 1.95% is recommended to Full Council on 26th February 2018.***
- 1.2 That estimated net General Fund Revenue Expenditure totalling £11,949,397 for 2018/19 is recommended to Full Council on 26th February 2018.***
- 1.3 Members approved the Medium-term Financial Plan to 2023 on the Council's General Fund Revenue Account, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.***
- 1.4 That a strategy and action plan is drawn up to generate budget savings on the General Fund ahead of 2019/20.***
- 1.5 Members approved the Financial Plan for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to 2028, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.***
- 1.6 Members approved the 5-year capital investment and financing plan to 2023, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report.***
- 1.7 Members noted the Council's National Non-Domestic Rate Return (NNDR 1) for 2018/19, showing retained business rates of £13,123,996 for 2018/19 and £9,727,674 for 2017/18.***

1.8 Members noted the report of the Council's Section 151 (Chief Finance) Officer under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003.

FM/131 **COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

RESOLVED:

The Committee considered and approved the updated work programme.

FM/132 **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 Meeting held on 30th November 2017 and of the Audit Sub-Committee meeting held on 13th December 2017 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.

SERVICE ASSISTANT (EVENTS) (Paragraph 1)

Members approved the recommendation in the report.

PLANNING SERVICE REVIEW (Paragraph 1)

Members approved the recommendations in the report.

LAND IN SWADLINCOTE (Paragraph 3)

Members approved the recommendation in the report.

ACCOUNTS SUBMITTED FOR WRITE-OFF AND APPLICATION FOR HARSHIP RELIEF (Paragraph 1)

Members approved the recommendations in the report.

The meeting terminated at 6.50pm.

COUNCILLOR J HARRISON

CHAIRMAN