

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEETING

held in the Council Chamber, The Symington Building, Adam and Eve Street,
Market Harborough

held on 9 October 2017

commencing at 5.00 p.m.

Present:

Cllr King (Chair),
Councillors: Bannister, Brodrick, Hallam and Rickman

Officers: D. Atkinson, S. Hamilton, N. Proudfoot, S. Riley and V. Wenham

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Pain.

MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on the 4th September 2017 be approved as a correct record.

THE SYMINGTON BUILDING; GREEN TRAVEL PLAN

The Executive considered a revised Green Travel Plan for The Symington Building. The Executive noted that the planning permission granted for the redevelopment of The Symington Building included a requirement to produce a Green Travel Plan which was initially prepared for Harborough District Council only. As the building has now been re-opened for over three years, the existing Green Travel Plan requires updating and a wider remit to cover other partner organisations.

RESOLVED that:

- i) the Green Travel Plan and associated actions be approved.
- ii) authority be delegated to the Corporate Director (BJ), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Finance and Assets, to take any necessary actions to implement (i) above.

Summary of Reasons

To satisfy the Corporate Delivery Plan 2017/18 Objective CO8 "The Council makes effective use of its assets and resources" and to further good asset/property management of HDC's assets.

To satisfy the Corporate Delivery Plan 2017/18 Key Activity KA.02.03 Promote carbon savings in Council buildings and activities.

GREAT GLEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Executive considered the recommendations of the Examiner on the Great Glen Neighbourhood Plan (the 'Plan'). The Plan has been produced by the Great Glen Neighbourhood Plan Group, led by the Parish Council as the Qualifying Body, in conjunction with the local community.

The Plan does not seek to allocate houses, but relies on windfall housing to deliver housing that is considered by the community to be proportionate to the scale and character of Great Glen.

The examination took place between 27th April and 12th April 2017. The final Examiner's Report into the Plan was received by the Council on the 12th July 2017 and was made available to the public on the Council's website shortly after. The report recommended to the Council that subject to the modifications proposed, the Plan should proceed to a Referendum.

The Examiner recommended some policy deletions from the submitted version of the Neighbourhood Plan due to policies either being repeated, conflicting with National Policy or not being land based policies.

Great Glen Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan Group have given the Report due consideration and resolved via email that it is in agreement with the recommended modifications of the Examiner to the Neighbourhood Plan. Officers are also in agreement with the recommendations of the Examiner.

A neighbourhood group submitted a letter of objection to the deletion of Neighbourhood Plan policies GG2 (Housing Provision) and GG13 (Other Important Open Spaces). The correspondence alleged that the Examiner had erred in law in making the recommendations to delete the two policies, and that she had not undertaken proper and transparent dialogue with the Qualifying Body and the Local Planning Authority (LPA).

The LPA did not consider that the allegations were founded, and have responded as such to the community group.

The date for the referendum is set for the 23rd November 2017 and this will follow a similar format to an election. All those registered to vote within the Neighbourhood Area will be given the opportunity to be involved in the Referendum. Local residents will receive a ballot paper with the question; "Do you want Harborough District Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Great Glen to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"

Residents will be given the opportunity to vote 'yes' or 'no'. If more than 50% of those voting in the referendum vote 'yes' then the Local Planning Authority is required to 'make' the plan (adopt the Plan, with the Plan becoming the Development Plan for Great Glen alongside the Core Strategy). Under the approved Neighbourhood Planning Scheme of Delegation 'making' the Plan will be done by Officers of Harborough District Council as soon as possible after a favourable Referendum result. If the result of the Referendum is "no", then nothing further happens. The Parish Council will then have to decide how it wishes to proceed.

RESOLVED that:

- i) the Independent Examiner's recommended changes to the Great Glen Neighbourhood Plan are accepted in full as set out in the schedule at Appendix A to the report, and the recommendation that the amended Great Glen Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to a referendum of voters within the Parish of Great Glen to establish whether the Plan should form part of the Development Plan for the Harborough District be noted.

- ii) the holding of a referendum relating to the Great Glen Neighbourhood Plan on 23rd November 2017 that will include all of the registered electors in the Great Glen Parish be approved.

Summary of Reasons

The final Examiner's report into the Great Glen Neighbourhood Plan was received on 12th July 2017. The Examiner considered the Plan along with the representations received when the Plan was published by the Council. The report recommends to the Council that, subject to the modifications proposed (as set out in Appendix A to the report), the Plan should proceed to a referendum.

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, (Regulation 18) sets out the matters that the District Council should consider at this stage in the Neighbourhood Plan making process. The District Council must consider each of the recommendations made by the Examiner in their report, including the reasons for them, and decide what action to take in response to each recommendation (as set out in Appendix A to the report).

It is considered that the recommended modifications should be incorporated into the plan and noted by the Executive in order to ensure that the plan is robust, sound, meets the Basic Conditions and comprises a user-friendly and efficient document. Liaison with Great Glen Parish Council confirms that they are happy to accept these recommendations. On this basis, the Plan should then proceed to a referendum in Great Glen Parish to determine if local people support the Plan. If the Plan receives a simple majority of those that vote, the District Council must 'make' the Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Great Glen Neighbourhood Plan Group and Great Glen Parish Council (The Qualifying Body).

The evidence provided to the Examiner within the Consultation Statement gave assurance to her that the consultation process was robust. The Examiner was therefore satisfied that the Plan met the Basic Conditions with regard to consultation.

In proceeding to a referendum with a plan that meets the prescribed Basic Conditions, the whole community will be afforded the opportunity to vote on the future development of the village and wider parish of Great Glen.

BAD DEBT WRITE OFF (REVENUES AND BENEFITS)

The Executive was advised on the debts which have been written off this financial year under delegation for the revenue and benefits area, as outlined in Appendix A to the report.

SECTION 100A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED that the public and press be excluded from the following items on the grounds that the matters yet to be discussed involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 of Part I and Part 2 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

The meeting continued in public session.

RESOLVED that the Non Domestic rates totalling £41,955.17 as listed in Appendix A to the report be written off and the Non Domestic rates of £39,463.05 relating to a sole trader be deferred, pending legal advice.

Summary of Reasons

The Council's Constitution and supporting Financial Regulations delegates the responsibility for writing off individual debts up to and including £10k to the Senior Partnership Manager (Revenues and Benefits) under the scheme of delegation. Above this threshold debts (greater than £10k) are written off by the Executive.

The Council only writes off debt where it is irrecoverable for example where a customer has died and there are no assets, or a business is bankrupt and has no assets. The only exception to this is where a debt is not cost effective to recover.

The Council is prudent in managing debt and makes provision for them in its annual statement of accounts. This ensures that the writing off of bad debt has no detrimental affect on in year service provision or the council taxpayer. In the case of National Non Domestic Rates the Government meets 50% of the cost of writing off bad debt and the remainder is met by the major precepting bodies through pooling arrangements.

The table below is for information on the amounts that have been written off for the period 1st April 2017 through to 24th August 2017.

Fund	Debts Written Off greater than £10k (Previously authorised)	Debts Written Off under £10k (Reported previously)	*Debts Written Off this period under £10k	Totals
Council Tax	£0.00	£19,065.79	£23,791.39	£42,857.18
Non Domestic Rates	£0.00	-£302.55	£32,741.38	£32,438.83
Housing Benefit Overpayments	£0.00	£5,035.26	£0.00	£5,035.26

Members are requested to note the write-offs written off under £10K since the last report (shown in the above table with an *).

The below table illustrates in percentage terms the amount that has been written off when compared with total collectable against each heading as shown. (Total collectable is the sum total of net charge raised to include gross arrears outstanding as at 24th August 2017).

Position as at 24th August 2017	Net Charge raised in 2017/18	Arrears Position	Total Collectable	Amount written Off	Percentage shown below is derived from the amount written off when compared with Total Collectable
Council Tax (Net of Council Tax Support)	£58,715,138	£1,793,919	£60,509,057	£42,857.18	0.07%
Non Domestic Rates (Net of reliefs)	£42,353,741	£222,144	£42,575,885	£32,438.83	0.08%
		Due inclusive of arrears			
Housing Benefit Overpayments	£199,784	£1,196,349		£5,035.26	0.42%

The table below is an analysis of what has been written off in previous years. This also shows the position for what has been written off this financial year.

<u>Fund</u>		Year 2014/15	Year 2015/16	Year 2016/17	Year 2017/18
Council Tax		£181,958.43	£43,649.64	£154,392.00	£42,857.18
Non Domestic Rates		£138,412.42	£99,585.36	£64,903.00	£32,438.83
Housing Benefit Overpayments		£16,001.15	£5,425.59	£2,369.00	£5,035.26

SECTION 100A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED that the public and press be excluded from the following items on the grounds that the matters yet to be discussed involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

HARBOROUGH MARKET; MANAGEMENT REVIEW AND FUTURE OPTIONS

The Executive considered the future management of the Harborough Market.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the in sourcing of the Market Arrangement be approved, this agreeing that the existing contract with Market Place Management Ltd. Will end as per the contract on 31 January 2018.
- (ii) authority be delegated to the Corporate Director (BJ), in consultation with the Portfolio Holder - Finance and Assets to take any necessary actions to implement (i) above.

Summary of Reasons

To satisfy the Corporate Delivery Plan 2017/18 Objective CO8 "The Council makes effective use of its assets and resources" and to further good asset/property management of HDC's assets.

To realise the maximum benefits from the asset and to ensure the most effective management arrangements are in place, delivering value for money.

The meeting closed at 5.30pm