

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEETING

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

held on 13 July 2015,

commencing at 5.00p.m.

Present:

Cllr Pain,
Councillors: Bannister, Mrs Page

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Hallam, King and Liquorish

Officers: Ann Marie Hawkins, Beverley Jolly, Beth Murgatroyd, Norman Proudfoot,
Simon Riley and Verina Wenham.

PORTFOLIO HOLDER ACTIVITY

Leader

The Leader announced that he attended the following :

- 18 June 2015 District Leader workshop at the Council offices
- 19 June 2015 Group leaders meeting for the LGA Board
- 22 June 2015 Culture Tourism and Sport Board
- 30 June 2015-2 July LGA Conference
- 9 July 2015 SPARK event
- 11 July 2015 Library reading challenge

Portfolio Holder for Communities

Cllr Page announced that she had attended:

- 25 June 2015 Police and Crime Panel
- 25 June Volunteer Partnership event and judging the HDC Photo Competition
- 1 July 2015 Schools Sports awards South Leicestershire
- 6 July 2015 Adult Social Care Partnership

MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 15 June 2015 be approved as a correct record.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllrs Hallam, Liquorish and King

DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

None

NEW HOMES BONUS COMMUNITY FUNDING 2015/2016

It was reported that for a third year the Council had identified £250,000 from New Homes Bonus Reserve to support the delivery of corporate priorities. It was proposed that this funding be split into two funding streams

- i) **A Community Grant Fund of £95,000** (also known as the New Homes Bonus District Wide Fund). This would continue to be an inclusive fund, open to all parishes and voluntary and community groups, and be closely linked to Council priorities. To encourage communities from across the district to access this fund and to ensure value for money the scoring system will be refined. This will include;
 - a) Higher weighting to projects in geographic areas that have not previously received funding,
 - b) Funding only new or successful projects looking to expand in a different service or geographical area,
 - c) Higher weighting to projects that have match funding from other sources,
 - d) Higher weighting to projects that can demonstrate sustainability,
 - e) Allowing only 1 application per organisation per year,
 - f) Higher weighting to projects where no alternative local funding streams exist which could support the work.
 - g) A limit to core organisational costs and staffing costs.
- ii) **A Locality Fund.** This would be worth £100 per house completed in 2014/15 and be given directly to parishes. The total amount would be governed by how many new dwellings have been occupied and identified on the Government return CTB1 between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2015 – provisionally 480 dwellings.
- iii) **Funding for capacity building.** A capacity building fund of £5,000 would be set up to support parishes and voluntary and community groups to ensure maximum benefit from New Homes Bonus Funding. For example to improve the quality of applications, identify match funding opportunities and increase the success rate of applications coming forward.

RESOLVED that:

- i) £95,000 be allocated for Community Grants in 2015/16 and authority be delegated to the Corporate Director – Community Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities to finalise the details of the scheme.
- ii) a Locality Fund be created whereby Parishes will receive £100 for every new dwelling delivered between 1st April 2014 and 31st March 2015. Provisionally this is 480 dwellings equating to £48,000.
- iii) a capacity building fund of £5,000 be created to ensure maximum community benefit from New Homes Bonus community funding and to delegate authority to the Corporate Director – Community Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities to deploy this resource.
- iv) the remaining funds be held in reserves pending a further report to Executive later in the year on how these funds can best support the delivery of community objectives.

Summary of Reasons

To continue to fund a district wide community grant scheme to support voluntary and community groups.

To ensure a proportion of New Homes Bonus funding goes directly to the parishes that have accepted development for them to spend on local priorities.

To ensure maximum value for money through ensuring appropriate support and advice is available to the Voluntary and Community Sector looking to apply for a community grant.

BURIAL SPACE STRATEGY

The Executive was informed of a request which had been received from the Scrutiny Commission that funding be provided for external specialist advice to be provided to the Council to review burial space provision across the Harborough District and prepare a cemetery and burial space strategy.

To develop a strategy concerning future cemetery and burial ground provision it will be necessary to undertake a review of cemetery services.

This will involve gathering data on the following areas of burial service delivery:

1. The burial process
2. What do the public expect from a burial service?
3. Health and Safety – memorials
4. Operational Issues – cemetery and burial ground contract
5. Provision through partnership
6. Strategic Issues – land use and planning ahead
7. Infrastructure and capital investment

Much of the background work will need to be undertaken by Council officers (burial services, contracted services, asset management and strategic planning) to provide up to date and relevant information to the consultant.

A procurement process will need to be undertaken to appoint a suitably qualified consultant. An estimated cost by officers to appoint a consultant for this work is between £12,000 and £17,000 based on previous studies of open space development. This will be confirmed through a procurement exercise.

RESOLVED that the scope detailed in Appendix A should be the basis for the review

Summary of Reasons

Officers do not have the appropriate skills or capacity to help project the future requirement for burial provision and consider how best additional burial space will in future be funded and how sites will be managed, during the next year.

The meeting of Scrutiny Commission on 1st June supported a proposal that specialist external advice be commissioned from a consultant with experience of open space forecasting and management to project the requirements for cemetery provision over the long term (potentially to 2036 which matches understanding of housing growth), thus allowing the District Council to plan for burial ground provision in the future, allocate land for future cemetery use and consider the financing and management of additional burial grounds.

OPEN SPACES STRATEGY 2016-2021

The Executive considered the representations received during the Open Spaces Strategy First Issues Consultation, and the draft Open Spaces Strategy document prior to consultation. It was noted that the cost of delivering the Open Spaces Strategy had been considered during its preparation. While the District Council should be committed to provision of high quality, accessible open space it is recognised that budgetary constraints may mean that potentially difficult decisions need to be made about how open spaces owned by Harborough District Council are delivered in the future. The Open Spaces Strategy has given scope for these considerations.

The Executive commented on how clear the report was and that it was helpful as a number of parishes were not clear on the definition of 'open space'

The timescale for adoption of the Open Spaces Strategy by the end of 2015 has been developed on the basis that only one consultation exercise will be necessary. Should a second consultation exercise be required it is likely that the time period would need to be extended to January 2016.

RESOLVED that

- i) the responses to the consultation on issues be noted.
- ii) the draft Open Spaces Strategy be approved for further consultation.

Summary of Reasons

Consultation responses have informed the preparation of the draft Open Spaces Strategy 2016 - 2021.

Executive have an opportunity to comment on the first draft of the Open Spaces Strategy prior to further public consultation. By approving the draft strategy and associated appendices for consultation, the Executive is endorsing the approach that will be used for delivering open space in the future, and the aims, objectives and actions arising from the Strategy. It should be noted, however, that the Open Spaces Strategy 2016 – 2021 and provision for Open Spaces Sport and Recreation 2015 are currently in draft format, and will be subject to change in the light of Executive comments and further feedback from consultees.

PROCUREMENT OF LIFELINE EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE SERVICE

The Executive was notified of procurement which had been undertaken without competition. The procurement had been undertaken under an exemption from the Council's Statement of Required Practice for Procurement (the Procurement SORP) The SORP required the contract and the exemption to be reported to the Executive

RESOLVED that the procurement of the Lifeline equipment maintenance service from Jontek Ltd be noted.

Summary of Reasons

The Harborough Lifeline service provides a social alarm system for vulnerable customers and also supports Harborough's CCTV provision, the Council's out-of-hours service and monitoring of lone working.

The ICT system that delivers the service was procured in 2013; the Council entered into a contract with Jontek Ltd. which included supply of equipment, installation, and maintenance and support. The contract for support services expired in March 2015.

To secure continued provision of the service on a safe and reliable basis, a new contract for support is essential.

The procurement of the new contract with Jontek Ltd. was undertaken without competition as allowed by the Council's Procurement SORP. The Procurement SORP requires that when contracts of more than £10,000 in value are procured without competition, the exemption from normal procurement rules must be reported to the Executive for information.

The value of the contract signed with Jontek Ltd. is £12,269 with options to extend for a further two years (until March 2018); this report is therefore to inform the Executive of the decision and action taken.

SECTION 100A LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED that, except for those Members present not being Members of this Executive, 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 Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES CONTRACT

The Executive considered the delivery options for the Council's Environmental services contract

RESOLVED that:

- i) approval be given to the development of options of a single contract for Harborough District Council to be operable no later than April 2017 as detailed in paragraph 4.10 of the report
- ii) authority be delegated to the Corporate Director, Resources in consultation with the S151 Officer, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Commercialisation for the identification of potential depot sites and any necessary site investigation surveys

Summary of Reasons

The extension of the current Environmental Services contract approved in October 2014 provided a single opportunity to break the contract in April 2016.

A decision to undertake external procurement or agree a contract variation with the current provider would have to be taken in September 2015 to ensure that the Council can put in place revised arrangements to discharge its statutory Environmental obligations by April 2017 if the break clause was exercised

There is a requirement to reduce the net cost of the Environmental Services contract to mitigate against the loss of external income streams and potentially to deliver cost savings

HOWARD WATSON SYMINGTON MEMORIAL CHARITY

The Executive was updated on the current position regarding the Howard Watson Symington Memorial Charity in its capacity as Trustee. The Executive requested that it be provided with a report identifying the costs accrued to date as trustees.

RESOLVED that

- i) The Executive exercising its function of administration of the Trust approve the timeline for the recruitment of alternative trustees as set out in Appendix D subject to the date that the final report is submitted to the Executive being changed from 19 October to 30 November 2015.
- ii) the Executive approve the draft job description and person specification for the position of trustee set out in Appendix B to the report.
- iii) the Executive agree to advertise the positions as set out in paragraph 4.15 to the report and that the advert set out in appendix E be approved
- iv) the Executive note the financial position of the Charity and the draft accounts set out in Appendix C.

Summary of Reasons

The Council needs to ensure that it complies with its obligations as a trustee under the Charities Act 2006 and also its legal powers under the Local Government Act 1972.

The meeting closed at ~~5.15~~ 5 pm

