

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEETING

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

held on 4th June 2018

commencing at 6.00 p.m.

Present:

Councillor Bannister (Chair),
Councillors: Mrs Ackerley, Bateman, Hallam, King and Rickman

Officers: D. Atkinson, S. Hamilton, B. Jolly, S. Riley and V. Wenham (except item 5)

INFORMATION EXCHANGE FROM PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Finance and Assets

Councillor Hallam reported that he had attended a useful meeting looking at the commercial elements of his portfolio which were all performing better than had been budgeted for. He thanked all officers involved in these areas for these positive results.

Wellbeing and Localities

Councillor Ackerley reported that consideration was being given to hosting an apprentice in the Sports Team. The Wellbeing at Work package was being looked at to improve wellbeing within the workforce, also the aim is to support two local businesses through the same process. The Council had received thanks at a recent Park Run for its involvement in running these extremely successful events over the past three years.

Councillor Ackerley also reported that she had attended a session with the Lutterworth Share and Care Dementia Group, which was working towards making Lutterworth dementia-friendly and training sessions would be made available. She had also attended the Safe, Well, Happy event at Harborough Leisure Centre.

Environment and Regulatory Services

Councillor Bateman reported that the trend in Garden Waste subscriptions continued upwards, with 20,286 bins so far this year - a 3.79% increase on the same time last year.

Planning, Housing and Regeneration

Councillor King reported that:

- (i) The hearings for the Local Plan have been confirmed for the first two weeks in October. Information has been sent out to Members and a press release has been issued.
- (ii) Several more Neighbourhood Plans have moved forward to Examination. An up-to-date briefing note has been sent out to Councillors.
- (iii) Councillors Bannister and King will be attending the MAG meeting on 5th June at Oadby & Wigston Borough Council offices.

- (iv) The Council has been successful in an appeal regarding an application for Retrospective Planning Permission for works that had been undertaken without permission at grade 2* listed Skeffington Hall - the application had been refused. Enforcement action is now likely to ensue.
- (v) Councillors King and Bateman had attended a public meeting at Broughton Astley in relation to Public Open Space and historic planning issues. The event had been well attended and was a positive meeting that made a start in providing information to local residents on some of their concerns. Councillor Bannister thanked Councillor King for chairing this meeting.

Community Safety and Licensing

Councillor Rickman reported on an incident where glue had been poured over the front of parking meters. CCTV evidence is currently being sought.

Strategy/Communications/Economic Development/Tourism

Councillor Bannister reported on his attendance at a number of events and meetings namely:

- (i) The District Council Network Conference on 17th May in London to hear updates on collaborative working between Local Authorities
- (ii) The Bruntingthorpe Proving Ground facility on 18th May
- (iii) Together with the Chairman, at the Mayor Making Ceremony in Lutterworth. Councillor Bannister congratulated Councillor Brian Poulter for becoming the new Town Mayor of Lutterworth.

Councillor Bannister had also participated in an interview by Radio Leicester on the Council's steps to name streets after those who fought in the 1914-1918 war and women who fought for the right to vote.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology was received from Councillor Hadkiss.

MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on the 14th May 2018 be approved as a correct record, subject to the correction of the Portfolio title on page two to read: "Planning, Housing and Regeneration".

DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were none.

ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE

The Executive was presented with a report seeking approval for amendments to the Assets of Community Value policy concerning compensation to asset owners to reflect current national policy. The Assets of Community Value Policy had been approved by Executive on 25th March 2013 and a further decision in November 2014 gave delegated powers to Corporate Directors to determine nominations of Asset of Community Value, and any subsequent request for review and appeals that might arise as the consequence of listing the asset.

Approval was sought for changes in the Council's Assets of Community Value policy to reflect updates in national policy and for changes in the agreed delegation of decisions for considering compensation claims and requests for review of compensation claim decisions by asset owners

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the removal of the text as set out in section 4.5 to the report and insertion of new text to reflect current national policy, as contained in Appendix A and in section 4.6 to the report, be approved;
- (ii) authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration to make amendments to the District Council Assets of Community Value Policy and guidance to reflect future national policy changes and best practice;
- (iii) authority be delegated to the Corporate Director (NP) to determine compensation claims received as a consequence of listing Assets of Community Value (set out in the suggested policy and process at section 4.6 and Appendix A of the report);
- (iv) authority be delegated to the Corporate Director (BJ) to consider any appeals received for compensation claims (set out in the suggested policy and process at section 4.6 and Appendix A of the report); and
- (v) any further future amendments made to the Policy, under resolution (ii) above, be reported to the appropriate Portfolio Holder.

Summary of Reasons

By making the proposed changes to current policy the Council is ensuring it has a legally compliant and transparent policy for the consideration and review of compensation claims from asset owners.

By delegating responsibility for future amendments to District Council Assets of Community Value policy to the Head of Planning and Regeneration, the Authority is ensuring it can respond efficiently to policy changes nationally and ensures that communities have the most up to date guidance available to them.

By delegating responsibility for decisions on compensation claims to Corporate Directors ensures that the Council is adhering to current national policy and is providing efficient and transparent decisions to asset owners.

SUNDRY DEBT WRITE-OFFS AND PERFORMANCE

The Executive was advised on the amounts written off under delegation in respect of Sundry Debts, together with being provided with information on Sundry Debts where write off above delegation limits were required. Information was also provided concerning Sundry Debt performance.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the write off of Sundry Debts, as listed in Appendix A to the report, be approved; and
- (ii) the performance on the collection of Sundry Debts, as listed in Appendix B to the report, be noted.

Summary of Reasons

The Authority's Constitution and supporting Financial Regulations delegates the responsibility for writing off individual debts up to and including £1k to the Chief Finance Officer or nominated deputy under the scheme of delegation. Above this threshold debts (greater than £1k) are written off by the Executive. There were two invoices with an individual value above £1k in respect of Sundry Debt currently requiring write off, these were outlined in Appendix A to the report.

At Constitution Review Committee on 27 January 2015, Members considered a recommendation to make changes to Financial Procedure Rule 11. This was agreed to recommend to Council. Unfortunately, this was not incorporated into the recent refresh of the constitution and will need to be considered in the next update. The recommendation is subject to approval by Council to increase the

delegation for writing off individual debts up to and including £10k to the Chief Finance Officer or nominated deputy, instead of the current £1k. The Authority 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 Authority is prudent in managing debt and makes provision for bad debt in its annual statement of accounts. This ensures that the writing off of bad debt has no detrimental affect on service provision or the council taxpayer. The provision in respect of overdue invoices for at the 31 March 2018 was £317K (2016/17, £413k). The overall debt as at the 31st March 2018 is £1,058K (2016/17 £1,603K). During the year the Council has been successful in recovering some long term S106 sundry debtors thereby reducing the long term debt.

PERFORMANCE QUARTER 4, 2017/18 YEAR

The Executive was presented with a report detailing the performance of the Council against the Corporate Delivery Plan at the end of Quarter 4 of the 2017/18 year, which Members were asked to note and consider.

The report highlighted the status of key activities as well as a performance summary of each of the Key Activities identified in the Corporate Delivery Plan for the 2017/18 period, including a status, progress comment and next steps.

The report outlined that out of the 62 key activities to be monitored, 33 have been completed, and 20 had a status of 'green' i.e. forecast to be delivered on target. The remaining 8 activities were 'amber' status and 1 activity was classed as Red status.

RESOLVED that the performance of the Council against the Corporate Deliver Plan for Quarter 4 of the 2017/18 year be noted.

Summary of Reasons

Performance is monitored and reported on to Officers and Members on a quarterly basis as part of the Council's Performance Management Framework.

CORPORATE RISK AND OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT: QUARTER 4, 2017/18

The Executive considered the Corporate Risk and Opportunity Register at the end of Quarter 4 of the period 2017/18, which was set out in Appendix A to the report. Corporate Risk and Opportunities are defined as issues that may have a significant impact on the delivery of the Council's vision and priorities. They are identified, monitored and managed via the Council's Risk and Opportunity Strategy Board which meets on a quarterly basis.

At the end of the fourth quarter of the 2017/18 year, there were 12 Risks and 4 Opportunities on the Corporate Risk and Opportunity Register. Full details of the risks and opportunities, including scores and mitigating actions, were attached at Appendix A to the report.

RESOLVED that the items contained within the Council's Corporate Risk and Opportunity Register, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be noted.

Summary of Reasons

Monitoring of the Council's Corporate Risks and Opportunities is prescribed by the Council's Risk and Opportunity Management Framework.

MATTERS OF SPECIAL URGENCY

Councillor Bannister drew the meeting's attention to one item of urgent business relating to Shared Legal Services between Harborough District Council and Melton Borough Council that needed to be considered in Exempt Session.

Verina Wenham, the Council's Head of Legal and Democratic Services, left the meeting for this item.

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 1, 2 & 4 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

SHARED LEGAL SERVICES BETWEEN HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL AND MELTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Executive considered the Shared Legal Services as set out in the exempt report and

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The decision to terminate the existing Administrative Agreement with Melton Borough Council for the provision of legal services with effect from 30 June 2018 be ratified; and
- (ii) Authority be delegated to the Corporate Director (BJ) to enter into such agreements and take such steps that are necessary to implement resolution (i) above.

Summary of Reasons

Following notification from Melton Borough Council (MBC) that it wished to terminate the existing arrangements for Harborough District Council (HDC) to provide its legal services and the subsequent discussions between the Corporate Director of HDC (BJ) and the Chief Executive of MBC, it is in the best interests of both authorities to agree an earlier termination date than that provided for in the Agreement.

The meeting closed at 6.48 p.m.