
CABINET

Wednesday, 17th July, 2019

Present: Councillor Miles Parkinson OBE (in the Chair), Councillors Paul Cox, Munsif Dad BEM JP, Joyce Plummer, Loraine Cox and Jenny Molineux

In Attendance: Councillors Tony Dobson, Glen Harrison, Marlene Haworth and Eamonn Higgins

62 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies submitted.

63 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no reported declarations of interest or dispensations.

64 Minutes of Cabinet

The minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 5th June 2019 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

Resolved - **That the Minutes be received and approved as a correct record.**

65 Minutes of Boards, Panels and Working Groups

The minutes of the following meeting were submitted:

- Cabinet Committee – Street Naming – 20 March 2019

Resolved - **That the Minutes be received and noted.**

66 Reports of Cabinet Members

There were no reports provided by Cabinet Members present at the meeting.

67 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes

The Leader of the Council reported that the Cabinet was requested to give consideration to and comment on the draft work programmes for Overview and Scrutiny for 2019/20.

Approval of the Report was not deemed a key decision.

Reason for Decision

At the beginning of each municipal year, the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees each agree a work programme for the year. The process for agreeing the work programme is set out in Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule C6(a).

A draft work programme for each of the Committees was provided for comment. Following consideration by the Cabinet, the draft will be returned to both Scrutiny Committees along with any comments made. The Scrutiny Committees will then approve a full programme which will be submitted to the next meeting of Cabinet. Due to the timings of meetings this year it is proposed that the Overview and Scrutiny Officer will circulate any comments from Cabinet to Committee members, with a final programme being approved at the next meeting.

The work programmes have been developed following consultation including:

- Multiple emails to all Councillors;
- Suggestions sought from all service managers;
- Informal meeting with the Cabinet.

Thirteen items were suggested by Councillors (including one item which was suggested separately by multiple Councillors). Seven of these items have been added to the work programme. Of the remaining six, one has been marked as a possibility pending further information while the others have been rejected. No items were submitted by Service Managers.

A full list of items submitted by Councillors and reasons why they have been included / not included is provided in the main report. However, a summary is shown below:

Fly Tipping/Littering	Included - Resources OSC
Graffiti	Included - Resources OSC
Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)	Not included
Council support for Voluntary Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) organisations	Not included
GPs lack of funding, recruiting new GPs, reduced working arrangements	Not included
Town Centre Events	Included – Resources or Communities and Wellbeing OSC
Homelessness referral scheme	Not included
Kingdom	Included - Resources OSC
New waste collection system	Included - Resources OSC
Hyndburn's Recovery Process for Council Tax Arrears	Included - Communities and Wellbeing OSC
Universal Credit	Included - Communities and Wellbeing OSC
Taxi Licensing	Not included
Management of green space associated with new housing development	Subject to further discussions with Chief Planning Officer

Meetings with the chairs and vice chairs also took place, and items for the work programme were discussed and selected in accordance with the Criteria for Selecting Work Programme Items. In addition, Cabinet members were invited to a work programme meeting with the chairs and vice chairs of both committees to put forward potential items.

Items had been provisionally allocated to specific meetings. However, these may be subject to change during the year, particularly where they involve the attendance of external and partner organisations.

As in previous years, additional items can be added to the work programmes as the year progresses.

There were no alternative options for consideration or reasons

Resolved - **That Cabinet notes the work programmes for the Overview and Scrutiny Committees contained in the Appendix to the report.**

68 Housing Renewal Policy

Councillor Loraine Cox, Portfolio Holder Housing and Regeneration, reported on a proposed new Housing Renewal Policy. In her introduction to the report Councillor Cox indicated that a cross-party working group would be established, reporting to the Regeneration and Housing Panel, to consider access to and the availability of Disabled Facilities Grants. The Leader of the Council and Councillors Tony Dobson and Munsif Dad also spoke in favour of the proposals.

Approval of the report was deemed a key decision.

Reasons for Decision

The Regulatory Reform (England and Wales) (Housing Assistance) Order 2002 (the RRO) grants a general power on local authorities to provide “assistance” “in any form” “to any person”, to improve, repair, adapt or rebuild residential premises.

The RRO reflects the view that it is primarily the responsibility of private sector owners to maintain their own property but it recognises that some owners, particularly the elderly and most vulnerable, do not have the necessary resources to repair or improve their homes. Local authorities therefore, subject to resources, have an important role to play in providing assistance in these cases.

Hyndburn has such a RRO Policy, or probably better described, a Housing Renewal Policy in place which was last reviewed in 2006.

Following a review, a new Housing Renewal Policy is proposed, a copy of which was provided at Appendix 1 of the report. The Policy identifies the forms of assistance, including financial assistance that will be available from the Council to assist vulnerable occupiers in all tenures including disabled people to improve or

adapt their homes, the eligibility criteria for assistance and the terms upon which this assistance will be provided.

Historically, the Council has utilised the Capital Programme to fund housing renewal activity. Due to austerity measures including public sector funding cuts there is very little money now available to support housing renewal activity. However, one area where funding is increasing is for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's). In 2019/20 the Council is due to receive nearly £1m. DFG funding forms part of, and is allocated through the Better Care Fund (BCF). This fund is allocated to upper tier authorities (i.e. Lancashire County Council) then passed onto the Districts under ring fencing arrangements and it is expected that health priorities will become more important in the way DFG funding is spent.

RRO policies include the use of DFG funding, now allocated via the BCF as described above. This now enables local authorities to use specific DFG funding for wider purposes. Therefore, subject to an approved RRO, DFG funding can be used beyond mandatory DFG's to support vulnerable households remaining in their existing homes. There is, therefore, an opportunity to use the additional DFG funding to support wider measures, subject to a new RRO (Housing Renewal Policy).

A summary of the key policy areas in the new Housing Renewal Policy is as follows:

- Education and Encouragement;
- Direct Financial Assistance, including:
 - Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) up to £30,000;
 - Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's);
 - Additional Assistance for Vulnerable Households, (subject to funding and liquid assets/savings not exceeding £25,000);
 - Facelift grants forming part of a housing renewal scheme to improve the appearance and exterior of a block of dwellings (subject to funding);
 - Relocation Assistance usually where demolition is proposed under a Council led regeneration scheme (subject to funding);
 - Empty Homes - to bring long term empty homes back into use (subject to funding);
- Indirect Financial Assistance; and
- Enforcement

Alternative Options Considered and Reasons for Rejection

The Council is required to have a RRO Policy in place in order to provide various forms of housing assistance and, therefore, not having a Policy is not an option. The overall approach proposed is to provide housing assistance to the most vulnerable households across the Borough and those in greatest need.

Resolved - **That Hyndburn's new Housing Renewal Policy attached at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.**

69 Workplace Cycle Pool Scheme

Councillor Jenny Molineux, Portfolio Holder Health and Communities, reported on a proposal to implement a workplace cycle pool scheme. The Leader of the Council also spoke in favour of the proposed scheme.

Approval of the report was not deemed a key decision.

Reasons for Decision

The Access Fund Team at Lancashire County Council offers grants to businesses of up to a maximum of £5,000 which can fund schemes such as cycle parking/storage and/or promotion, walking or cycling promotion and awareness campaigns.

An application was submitted for the grant during 2018 for 4 cycles, 2 standard cycles and 2 electric cycles. The grant was approved and the Council received £2,745 in order to purchase the cycles and equipment from a local retailer.

The aim of the cycle pool is to encourage employees to use cycles for business use as an alternative to using their vehicles and also potentially to exercise at lunchtimes to improve health and wellbeing. The benefits of this scheme would be that some journeys can be made more quickly with no need to locate parking, there are health benefits from the physical activity of cycling including reducing the risk of strokes, diabetes and stress which ultimately improves the health of the workforce and leads to fewer absences. There would also be financial savings due to a reduction in car mileage expenses. Cycling is more environmentally friendly, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to improvements in air quality and reducing congestion. It also leads by example to our residents and businesses showing that the Council is committed to reducing harmful emissions and making greener travel choices.

The report includes further information about:

- Consultation;
- Cycle Storage;
- Cycle Pool Scheme Guidelines;
- Cycle Maintenance;
- Insurance; and
- Training.

There were no alternative options considered or reasons proposed for rejection

Resolved (1) **That the implementation of a workplace cycle pool scheme as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report be approved.**

(2) That the cycle storage located at the Markets be relocated to Scaitcliffe House to provide secure cycle storage.

70 Financial Position March 2019 - Report for the Year Ending 31st March 2019

Councillor Joyce Plummer, Portfolio Holder Resources, reported on the financial spending of the Council up to the end of March 2019 and the financial outturn position for the Accounting Year 2018/19. Members considered a table within the report, which set out the core financial details. Councillor Marlene Haworth enquired about the future plans for the Market Hall and a response was provided by the Leader of the Council, in which he referred to the both Market Hall and the wider retail offer in Accrington town centre, as well as national trends. Members considered the desirability of a cross-party approach to planning the future of Accrington town centre.

Approval of the report was not deemed a key decision.

Reason for Decision

The spend for the financial year to the end of March 2019 is £10,593,544 compared to a Budget of £11,074,538 giving a positive variance of £481,000 over the year.

Positive variances were achieved in most of the Council's significant budget areas with only the Town Centre & Markets Budget and Regeneration & Property Services recording adverse variances of any notable size. Service level details are summarised as follows:

Environmental Services

Food Safety reports that net expenditure will be £80,000 less than Budget by the year end. This is due to salary savings of £30,000, £27,000 of miscellaneous cost savings and additional extra income of £23,000.

Waste Services reports a positive variance for the financial year of £270,000. This is due to salary savings of £50,000, income up compared to Budget by £33,000 and miscellaneous savings of £84,000 plus other savings against budget of £103,000.

The Parks & Cemeteries Service reports an adverse variance of £10,000. This is due to a predicted shortfall on the Parks Budget of £49,000, stemming from £6,000 of increased staff costs, as well as £22,000 of lost income on football pitch hire over the year, £4,000 of reduced income from Lancashire County Council as well as £10,000 less income from tree work, along with £7,000 of additional miscellaneous costs. The Cemetery Service is predicting a net increase of income this year of £25,000 and £24,000 of savings on miscellaneous costs, less £10,000 of increased salary costs.

The Town Centre & Market Budget shows an overall adverse variance of £130,000. This is attributable to the continuing economic pressures limiting the generation of funds from the Market Hall in Accrington by £182,000 compared to Budget and

other income down £10,000, offset by £13,000 of salary savings and £49,000 of miscellaneous additional savings.

Culture & Leisure Services

Culture and Leisure Services are indicating a positive variance of £47,000, stemming from savings across operational budgets.

Planning & Transportation

Planning & Transportation are predicting an adverse variance for the year of £3,000. This is due to a predicted shortfall in income compared to budget on Building Control of £65,000, additional staff cost in this area of £16,000 and £7,000 of additional miscellaneous cost. Elsewhere on the Budget there are £39,000 of staff savings and £41,000 of additional income and £5,000 of miscellaneous additional savings.

Regeneration & Property Services

Regeneration & Property Services reports a negative variance position for the year of £137,000, with income up by £93,000, offset by an extra £40,000 of salary costs and £95,000 of miscellaneous costs, plus £95,000 of additional emergency repairs and maintenance expenditure.

Policy & Corporate Governance

Policy & Corporate Governance reports a positive variance of £217,000. This is due to £303,000 of salary savings predicted for the year, less £107,000 of corporate savings, increased income above budget of £279,000, savings on pension expenditure of £79,000, less £155,000 of additional Housing Benefit spend and £182,000 of increased miscellaneous expenditure.

Non Service Items

The current estimate for the year is a positive variance of £148,000.

There were no alternative options considered or reasons proposed for rejection

Resolved – **That Cabinet notes the report on the financial outturn position for the year ending 31st March 2019.**

71 Capital Report - Outturn 2018/19

Councillor Joyce Plummer, Portfolio Holder Resources, reported on the financial spend on Capital Projects during 2018/19. The full details of expenditure were provided in Appendix 1 of the report and a proposed list of changes to the 2019/20 Capital Programme was shown at Appendix 2. These will be funded from the amounts not spent but authorised in 2018/19.

Councillor Tony Dobson enquired about waste recycling rates and the Leader of the Council and Councillor Paul Cox responded that these were due to be discussed by the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2019/20. Councillor Marlene Haworth enquired about the Harvey Street Garden Area project and the Executive Director (Environment) agreed to provide a written response. Councillor Glen Harrison thanked the officers for their work in ensuring that nine of the Borough's parks had achieved green Flag Status.

Approval of the report was not deemed a key decision.

Reasons for Decision

The outturn position for 2018/19 on Capital Expenditure shows a fifteenth year of major capital investment by the Council. The overall investment by the Council in the year was just over £5.6m against an authorised maximum budget of £10.9m. The overall programme was underspent by £765,000 this year.

The Council has received applications for net slippage of £1.41m comprising £4.52m of expenditure schemes moving from 2018/19 to 2019/20 and £3.11m of income. These will be submitted for approval to the Audit Committee in July 2019.

The Council has maintained its prudent approach to Treasury Management during the year. The Prudential Indicators demonstrate small positive movements between last year's position and the outturn for this year.

Figures reported are the latest available and may be subject to change in finalising the accounts or after the conclusion of the final accounts audit. If the figures change significantly from those contained in this report an update on the overall position will be made to Cabinet at a later date.

The Capital Programme for 2018/19 was approved by the Council on the 22nd February 2018. The programme for 2018/19 outlined continuing major investment in the local community and in the Council's key priorities.

The report includes further details in respect of the following:

- Record levels of investment;
- Positive achievements in managing the programme within overall resources;
- Two individual projects with significant underspends (purchase of wheeled bins and Rishton regeneration project);
- One area of significant adverse variance (improvements to Rhyddings Park, Oswaldtwistle);
- Monitoring and reporting processes;
- Avoiding additional borrowing;
- Funding sources;
- Receipts; and
- Treasury Management.

Major high spots within the Capital Programme 2018/19 are as follows:

- Work was completed on £2m Accrington Town Square redevelopment, extensively renovating and improving this area for community, retail and recreational use and highlighting the significant heritage of the buildings surrounding the main public realm within Hyndburn.
- The Council completed its major £2m investment into Rhyddings Park extensively upgrading the facilities within the Park and restoring the Coach House and Kitchen Garden for community use.
- The Council also invested almost £250,000 into Rishton as part of a major housing regeneration project.
- The Council implemented a new recycling programme for paper, glass and plastics spending £1.2m on providing new recycling bins to residents to allow the easier disposal and collection of recycling materials and improve the tidiness of our streets. It also replaced 4 of its key kerbside collection vehicles at a cost of £331,000.
- New cremators were installed at Accrington Cemetery to replace the existing ones which were almost 25 years old and ensure this facility can operate success fully into the future.
- The Council contributed £250,000 towards the major highway improvement to the M65's Junction 7 and approach roads into Accrington to ease congestion into the Town Centre and improve traffic flow to Church and Oswaldtwistle.
- The Council made Disabled Facility Grants awards of almost £675,000 to ensure that those who have an illness or disability can continue to live independent lives in their own homes, if they wish to do so.

There were no alternative options considered or reasons proposed for rejection

Resolved - **That Cabinet notes the report and asks the Audit Committee to approve the Slippage items at Appendix 2 of the report.**

72 Financial Position May 2019 - Report for the Year Ending 31st March 2020

Councillor Joyce Plummer, Portfolio Holder Resources, reported on financial spending of the Council up to the end of May 2019 and the financial forecast outturn position for the Accounting Year 2019/20. Members considered a table within the report, which set out the core financial details. Councillors also thanked the Corporate Management Team and the Deputy Chief Executive's team for their work in maintaining the Council's positive financial position.

Approval of the report was not deemed a key decision.

Reason for Decision

The spend for the first 2 months of the financial year to the end of May 2019 is £1,790,959 compared to a Budget of £1,889,915 giving a positive variance of £99,000 over the first 2 months of the year.

The current forecast spend to the end of the financial year in March 2020 is £10,850,000 compared to a Budget of £10,994,000. This forecast produces a positive variance of £143,000. There are small adverse variances for Planning & Transportation and Policy & Corporate Governance with a more significant adverse variance on Town Centre & Markets of £155,000. These adverse variances are offset by predicted savings elsewhere on the Budget during the year. Service level details are summarised as follows:

Environmental Services

Food Safety is predicting that net expenditure will be £4,000 less than Budget by the year end. This is due to salary savings of £4,000.

Waste Services are predicting a positive variance for the financial year of £87,000. This is due to Savings on the Recycling Budget of £103,000 and £16,000 of additional income compared to Budget less £31,000 of extra salary costs and £1,000 of additional miscellaneous expenditure.

The Parks & Cemeteries Service is forecasting a break even outturn at this point in the year.

The Town Centre & Market Budget shows an overall adverse variance of almost £155,000. This is attributable to the continuing economic pressures limiting the generation of funds from the Market Hall in Accrington by £144,000 compared to Budget and other income down £9,000 and £4,000 of miscellaneous additional costs, offset by £2,000 of salary savings.

Culture & Leisure Services

Culture and Leisure Services are indicating a break even outturn position by the end of the year.

Planning & Transportation

Planning & Transportation are predicting an adverse variance for the year of £33,000. This is due to a predicted shortfall in income compared to budget on Building Control of £65,000. Elsewhere on the Budget there are £3,000 of staff saving and £48,000 of additional income less £19,000 of miscellaneous additional expenditure.

Regeneration & Property Services

Regeneration & Property Services are predicting a break even position by the year end with additional income of £157,000 offset by £144,000 of additional staff costs and £13,000 of additional miscellaneous spending.

Policy & Corporate Governance

Policy & Corporate Governance are predicting an adverse variance of £31,000. This is due to increased income above budget of £100,000 and £19,000 of savings on miscellaneous spending less a predicted £150,000 Housing Benefit spend.

Non Service Items

The current estimate for the year is a positive variance of £270,000.

There were no alternative options considered or reasons proposed for rejection

Resolved - **That Cabinet notes the report and asks the Corporate Management Team to continue to identify savings and increase income over the coming year to boost the overall surplus of the Council.**

73 Exclusion of the Public

There were no reports submitted under this heading.

Signed:.....

Date:

Chair of the meeting
At which the minutes were confirmed