



# Rutland County Council

Catmose Oakham Rutland LE15 6HP.

Telephone 01572 722577 Email [governance@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:governance@rutland.gov.uk)

## **RECORD OF DECISIONS AT A MEETING OF THE CABINET**

**Tuesday, 19th February, 2019 at 10.00 am**

**Decisions Published on Thursday 21 February 2019**

**Decisions will be implemented on Wednesday 27 February 2019 unless the Call-in Procedure as outlined in Procedure Rule 206 is invoked.**

**PRESENT:** Mr O Hemsley  
Mr G Brown  
Mr R Foster  
Mr A Walters  
Mr D Wilby

<b>OFFICERS</b>	Mrs H Briggs	Chief Executive
<b>PRESENT:</b>	Mr S Della Rocca	Strategic Director for Resources
	Mr P Horsfield	Deputy Director Corporate Governance
	Mr R Harbour	Deputy Director for Places
	Mr J Morley	Deputy Director for People
	Mrs H Bremner	Head of Communications
	Mrs J Morley	Governance Officer

### **619 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mrs Stephenson.

### **620 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND/OR HEAD OF THE PAID SERVICE**

Mrs Briggs, Chief Executive, gave a short verbal progress update on St George's Barracks, informing Members that work was continuing on the HIF business case and that the Government had not yet announced whether RCC's submission to join the Garden Communities Programme had been successful.

### **621 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

## 622 RECORD OF DECISIONS

The record of decisions made by Cabinet on 15 January 2019, copies of which had been previously circulated, were confirmed by Cabinet.

## 623 ITEMS RAISED BY SCRUTINY

The Chairman had not been formally notified of any items raised by Scrutiny.

## 624 QUARTER 3 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT

Report No.10/2019 was received from the Strategic Director for Resources.

Mr Brown, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Environment, Property and Finance introduced the report, the purpose of which was to inform Cabinet of the full year forecast position as at Quarter 3 for 2018/19 and to highlight issues that may impact on the Medium Term Financial Plan to enable them to maintain sound financial management of the Council's operations.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- Members were encouraged to see that the Council was forecasting a deficit of £8k compared to a budgeted deficit of £89k for Quarter 3. The Council was in overall terms £81k under budget, a reduction of £275k since Q2, and the Strategic Director for Resources and his finance team were commended for their management of this.
- The overspend in waste management had been largely due to the cost of disposal of paint and other chemicals which had been costing £2k per tonne.
- Recycling revenues had been adversely affected as the price for mixed paper and cardboard had fallen from £25 per tonne to £0.
- Rutland was one of the best performing Councils in terms of the amount of waste going to landfill and was ahead of newly announced Government targets.
- The Recruitment Applicant Tracking System, which included the cost of using an enhanced listing facility on Jobs Go Public, was being introduced to attract better quality candidates and to ensure applications were received more quickly

### DECISION:

Cabinet;

1. **NOTED** the 2018/19 revenue and capital outturn position as at Quarter 3
2. **APPROVED** the use of £6k from the Training earmarked reserve for use on the implementation of the Recruitment Applicant Tracking System as detailed in Appendix A
3. **NOTED** the proposed transfers from earmarked reserves as shown in the table in Appendix A, para 2.2.1 ( to be finalise and agreed in the 2018/19 outturn)

### Reasons for the decision

1. *As the Council is required to make savings over the medium term, the Q3 position is positive, despite a number of significant variances.*

## **625 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET 2019/20 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN**

Report No.44/2019 was received from the Strategic Director for Resources.

Mr G Brown, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Environment, Property and Finance introduced the report the purpose of which was to recommend the final budget to Council for approval.

During discussion the following points were raised:

- The report had been scrutinised in detail at the previous Cabinet meeting in January and at two Scrutiny Panel meetings where concern was voiced about the level of Government funding for the future.
- A number of deputations had been made to Government to request information on funding after 2021, preferably by September of this year, as without it it would be difficult to set the next budget.
- The MP for Rutland would be lobbying the Treasury on the Council's behalf.
- The community had been consulted on the budget through the use of social media, articles in the press and parish briefings.
- Key responses from residents, out of the 32 replies received were:
  - Care services should be prioritised
  - Happy to increase Council Tax to provide care services
  - Appreciated that because of funding cuts and increased demand the Council were stuck 'between a rock and a hard place'.
  - 9 thought RCC was a high spending authority (whereas in fact it had one of the lowest per capita spends of all unitary authorities)
  - One person felt that the 25% single person discount for Council Tax was not enough and also that those without children should pay less.
  - Some felt there was not enough being done for cyclists
- Parish Councils recognised the constraints that the Council was operating under but were unaware of any deputations being made to Government to increase funding for Rutland. The Portfolio Holder and Officers stressed that plenty of work to lobby Government was being done and this would be promoted and communicated much more widely.
- It was difficult to get a sense regarding future funding as any outcome was likely to be the subject of 'damping' a process adopted by Government whereby some authorities were given additional funding at the expense of others.
- The Council operated a local council tax support scheme which offered up to 75% discount for those on low incomes. Further funds of £20k to offer support to those who could demonstrate financial hardship were also available. Work was being done with Citizens Advice to ensure that residents knew about these Council Tax schemes and any discounts that they could be entitled to.
- The Council's priority would always be to maintain frontline services wherever possible and it would achieve this by doing things differently and working 'smarter' to deliver savings.

## **DECISION:**

1. Cabinet **RECOMMENDED** to Council that it
  - a) Approves the Revenue Budget for 2019/20 detailed in Appendix 1, section3.
  - b) Approves that the minimum level of general reserves remains at £2m.
  - c) Approves a Council Tax increase of 4.99% (of which 2% is for expenditure on adult social care)
  - d) Notes the capital programme as detailed in Section 4 of Appendix 1
  - e) Notes that additional revenue may be incurred in 2019/20 funded through 2018/19 underspends to be carried forward via earmarked reserves.
  - f) Approves a surplus of £75k on the Collection Fund as at 31 march 2019 of which £65k is the Rutland share.

### Reasons for the decision

1. *The Council is required to set a balanced budget and agree the level of Council tax for 2019/20.*
2. *The draft budget for consultation is affordable within the context of the MTFP and will allow the Council to meet service aims and objectives for the coming year.*

## **626 PRINTER PROCUREMENT**

Report No.16/2019 was received from the Strategic Director for Resources.

Mr Hemsley, Leader of the Council, introduced the report the purpose of which was to seek delegated authority to award a Printing contract as the Council seeks to reduce printing costs and achieve environmental benefits.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- Officers would consider how to present RAG ratings in reports so that they were easily discernible but without the use of colour.
- Some meetings were trying a paperless approach which meant that by only using screens, information was still available in colour.
- Paperless should be the preferred position for new Members but ultimately a choice would be given.

## **DECISION:**

1. Cabinet **DELEGATED** to the Strategic Director for Resources, the decision to award a printing contract for the new printers from an existing framework.

### Reason for the decision

1. *Through the use of the Direct Award process for the procurement of the printer supplier, we will ensure that we can obtain a value for money solution in the short time we have available before the current contract is terminated.*

## 627 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT POLICY UPDATE

Report No.11/2019 was received from the Strategic Director for Resources.

Mr Hemsley, Leader of the Council, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to present an updated Regulation of Investigation Power Act 2000 (RIPA) Policy for approval.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- The Policy updates brought the Council into line with regulations.
- External lawyers or senior police officers were the usual providers of training for the RCC officers who had oversight for RIPA.
- The public should be made aware of any overt surveillance.
- By its very nature any covert surveillance did not need to be advertised but authorisation should be obtained using RIPA guidelines.

### **DECISION:**

1. Cabinet **APPROVED** the Regulation of Investigation Power Act 2000 (RIPA) Policy shown in Appendix A.

### *Reasons for the decision*

1. *Regulation of Investigatory Powers Policy ensures that the Authority acts in a way that is consistent with the requirements and provides a clear framework for the Council to work to.*

## 628 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

### **RESOLVED:**

Cabinet **AGREED** to remain in public session unless detailed discussion was held on the exempt information at which point the meeting would move into exempt session.

## 629 WRITE OFF OF IRRECOVERABLE DEBTS

Report No.12/2019 was received from the Strategic Director for Resources.

Mr Brown, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Environment, Property and Finance introduced the report, the purpose of which was to seek approval to write off debts over the value of £2,500 where officers believed that there was little or no prospect of recovering them.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- The Council had above average collection rates for Council Tax at 98.8% compared with a national average of 97.1%.
- Two thirds of businesses did not pay full business rates.
- In the last 12 months there had been a change in approach to collecting commercial rents. Rent bonds for the first three months were sought and any new

tenants paid by direct debit as part of their lease terms. By working more closely with property services, debts were flagged up much earlier and work was done together to recover any outstanding payments.

**DECISION:**

Cabinet,

1. **NOTED** the action taken to recover outstanding debts
2. **APPROVED** the write off of the debts shown in exempt Appendix A

*Reasons for the decision*

1. *As there is no prospect of collecting the debts detailed in Appendix A, it is therefore prudent to write off the debts.*

**630 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:**

Cabinet **AGREED** to remain in public session unless detailed discussion was held on the exempt information at which point the meeting would move into exempt session.

**631 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE**

Report No.35/2019 was received from the Deputy Director of Places.

Mr Brown, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Environment, Property and Finance introduced the report, the purpose of which was to consider the future provision of the Council's grounds maintenance service.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- The Council did not want to renew the current contract as the service had been variable and the Council had received many complaints about it from Parish Councils.
- Working with Harborough District Council, who would provide the grounds maintenance service as a shared service, would result in cost savings and offer a significantly improved service.
- There was an option to insert financial penalties in to the new contract; something that the Council did not have with the current contract.
- Parish Councils would be informed about the new service and reassured by officers that road safety would not be affected by fewer cuts to rural highway verges.
- Currently, grass on rural highway verges was cut right back to the hedges which was expensive and damaged the ecological habitat.
- A pilot scheme would be introduced which would assess whether removal of the cuttings from the area that was cut would result in less regrowth and would therefore mean less cutting going forward.

- The number of cuts for churchyards was being reduced from 10 cuts per annum to 7 cuts per annum. This would provide a good service but would mean that Parish Councils would have to do extra cuts themselves if they wanted a manicured appearance.
- Parishes would be encouraged to take on more responsibility for their own grounds maintenance activities.
- The Council would not be adopting any more maintenance responsibility for open grounds and would be actively looking to pass back the ownership of land where appropriate.

## **DECISION:**

Cabinet;

1. **APPROVED** the delegated arrangement for the delivery of the grounds maintenance service provision between March 2019 and March 2022 with the addition of optional extension periods.
2. **DELEGATED** the finalisation of the associated contract documents to the Deputy Director of Places, subject to consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

### Reasons for the decisions

1. *Having Harborough District Council deliver our grounds maintenance service between March 2019 and March 2022 is believed to be the best approach to enable the integration of this service into an integrated environmental services contract from April 2022. This in turn is believed to be the best long-term service delivery option. There would be the addition of optional extension periods to give maximum flexibility.*
2. *Giving the Deputy Director of Places delegated authority to finalise the associated contract documents, subject to consultation with the Portfolio Holder is appropriate to finalise these details.*

## **632 ANY ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

No items of urgent business were received.

---o0o---

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10.52am

---o0o---