



Rutland County Council

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RECORD OF DECISIONS AT A MEETING OF THE CABINET

Tuesday, 15th October, 2019 at 10.00 am

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Decisions published on Thursday 17 October 2019

Decisions will be implemented on Wednesday 23 October 2019 unless the Call-in Procedure as outlined in Procedure Rule 206 is invoked.

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PRESENT: Mr O Hemsley
Mr G Brown
Mrs L Stephenson
Mr D Wilby

OFFICERS	Mrs H Briggs	Chief Executive
PRESENT:	Mr M Andrews	Strategic Director for People(DAS/DCS)
	Mrs C Traill	Strategic Director for Places
	Mrs J Morley	Governance Officer

IN		
ATTENDANCE:	Miss G Waller	Councillor
	Mrs R Powell	Councillor

318 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

319 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND/OR THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

There were no announcements from the Chairman or the Chief Executive.

320 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

321 RECORD OF DECISIONS

The Record of Decisions made at the meeting of the Cabinet held on 17 September 2019, copies of which had been previously circulated, were confirmed as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

322 ITEMS RAISED BY SCRUTINY

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

323 PROGRESS UPDATE ON ST GEORGE'S BARRACKS

Report No.158/2019 was received from the Chief Executive.

Mrs Briggs, Chief Executive, introduced the report the purpose of which was to provide Cabinet with a progress report on the St George's Barracks project further to the report of March 2018.

During discussions the following points were noted:

- There would be two additional sub groups for health and dementia, and lifelong learning working on the Evolving Masterplan.
- Comments from the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) had been received following the Council's submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI) to the Growth Fund. These would be taken into consideration when resubmitting the application.
- Parish Councils had decided not to engage with the work of the subgroups and provide nominations, however vacancies on the sub groups would remain open if they wished to get involved at a future date

DECISION

Cabinet:

1. **NOTED** the progress update in respect of the St George's Barracks project.

Reason for the decision:

Progress on the project is in line with the programme.

324 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

Report No.161/2019 was received from the Chief Executive.

Mr Hemsley, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Rutland One Public Estate & Growth, Tourism & Economic Development, Communications and Resources (other than Finance) introduced the report the purpose of which was to provide Cabinet with strategic oversight of the Council's performance for 2019/20 in delivering the Corporate Plan's aims and objectives. Members were accountable for the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and the monitoring information reported on progress and highlighted any key challenges.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- Mrs Stephenson, Portfolio Holder for Culture and Leisure, Highways, Transportation & Road Safety queried whether the number of missed bin collections as reported on page 4 of appendix A of the report was due to parking issues. Mr Brown, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Environment, Property and Resources clarified that although this was partly due to parking issues, particularly in Langham and Barleythorpe, it was also due to breakdown by Biffa vehicles and also as a consequence of storm damage which had resulted in trees coming down and blocking access
- Mr Wilby, Portfolio Holder for Childrens' Services and Education acknowledged the four red indicators within children's services but commended the extremely dedicated and passionate staff who worked very hard to get the job done in very difficult circumstances and with limited resource.
- There had been a changes in key posts to Children's Services this year with a new Deputy Director, and a new Head of Service starting shortly, who had already put in place new procedures to address some of the issues.
- Children's Services would be under the spotlight in November with a 2 day SEND inspection happening and then a Peer Review.
- The Strategic Director for Resources reported that the figure for CLA cases reviewed within timescales was now at its 100% target for September and highlighted to Members that because of the small number of cases that Rutland dealt with, one large family could disproportionately skew the percentage figures.
- Within Customer Services, answering calls within 60 seconds was a standard response time and performance target. The Council was implementing some changes to achieve this target and manage the call volume and as a first measure, additional staff had already been recruited.
- Mr Walters, Portfolio Holder for Safeguarding – Adults, Public Health, Health Commissioning & Community Safety received reassurance from the Strategic Director for People that each Child Protection Plan was reviewed regularly to make sure it was suitable. Children would be released from plans after careful review but if, for example, a parent relapsed with a drug or alcohol issue then a child would be subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second time. Thus one family with several children, who all needed new plans after a relapse, greatly affected performance targets.
- Although Rutland was still slightly below target for recycling, it was in fact in the top 20 of Councils nationally. Work on reducing residual waste would be ongoing.
- Cameras had been put in place in known areas to address concerns about fly tipping and there had already been one successful prosecution.

DECISION:

Cabinet **NOTED** the overall position in relation to performance so far during 2019/20 and the actions being taken to address areas of underperformance.

Reasons for the decision:

88% of indicators (58) measured were on or above target with 12% of indicators (8) currently below target. The main areas of concern had been highlighted in the report and the remedial action being undertaken to improve performance had been identified. Overall performance based on activity so far in 2019/20 was good.

325 CORPORATE PLAN

Report No.159/2019 was received from the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive introduced the report the purpose of which was to seek endorsement by Cabinet of the RCC Corporate Plan 2019 - 2024 and agreement to recommend approval of the Plan to Council.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- The Corporate Plan was the first for the new Council.
- Councillor Hemsley, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Rutland One Public Estate & Growth, Tourism & Economic Development, Communications, and Resources had committed to preparing a 50 year vision for the Council and the Corporate Plan would be viewed within this context.
- Cabinet Members felt that it was a robust document to put forward to Scrutiny and Council.
- The Plan was intended for residents as well as Members and was in a user friendly format that would encourage people to pick it up.
- Members particularly liked the diagram titled 'Using Our Resources Wisely' as it showed, in an easy format, all the services that the Council provided.
- Once the document had been signed off by Cabinet it was important that it was made widely available in a variety of ways.
- Deliberately, the Corporate Plan had been produced in a very different format than previous versions which had been bland and lacking in targets and performance measures.
- The Council would be held accountable for delivery against the strategic aims and objectives of the Corporate Plan.

DECISION:

Cabinet **RECOMMENDED** to Council adoption of the Rutland County Council Corporate Plan 2019 - 2024

Reasons for the decision:

This Corporate Plan set out a very clear and revised Vision for the Council. It was supported by priorities, aims and objectives for the next four years.

326 COUNCIL TAX - EMPTY HOMES PREMIUM

Report No.152/2019 was received from the Strategic Director for Resources.

Mr G Brown, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Environment, Property and Finance introduced the report, the purpose of which was to seek approval to change the premium levied on long term empty homes that have been empty and unoccupied for over two years with effect from 1st April 2020.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- There had been 125 responses to the consultation which although seemingly a low number compared favourably to the budget consultation which had received only 32 responses and was considered a reasonable rate of response.
- The consultation had been widely publicised and promoted including coverage on social media and in the local press.
- Most people felt that the Council should do what they could to increase income before they looked at cutting services.
- There had been comments received about the perceived high level of staff salaries and that these should be cut to reduce costs. The Deputy Leader refuted these statements and highlighted the fact that staff pay rises were decided at a national level and agreed with the Unions. Over recent years there had either been no pay rises at all or increases had been kept to a minimum.
- It was clear that in the majority there was support for the proposals that came forward.
- Armed forces personnel, residents who were renovating homes so that they could be occupied and those who were in genuine financial difficulty would be exempt from paying the premium
- Members were pleased to note that there was an element of common sense around recommendations 2 and 3 and felt that this reflected the 'Rutland Way'.

DECISIONS:

Cabinet:

1. **RECOMMENDED** to Council that the premium for long term empty homes be set as follows with effect from 1st April 2020:
 - 100% for properties that have been empty for more than two years:
 - 200% for properties that have been empty for more than five years; and
 - from 2021/22 onwards, 300% for properties that have been empty for at least ten years.
2. **RECOMMENDED** to Council that the Strategic Director for Resources be given authority to waive the premium if the empty home was actively and genuinely being marketed for sale or rent or being renovated for occupation in accordance with the procedure set out in Appendix B.
3. **NOTED** that the Local Council Tax Support Discretionary Fund Policy provided support to owners of empty homes who were facing genuine financial hardship.

Reasons for the decisions:

The premium was set at 50% from 1st April 2018. Given the financial pressures that the Council was facing and the desire to reduce the number of empty homes in the area, it was recommended that the premium be increased to the maximum permitted by central government. It was also being recommended that we waive the premium for those who were actively and genuinely trying to sell or rent their empty home or who were undertaking renovation works. The Council had undertaken a consultation and generally people were supportive of this.

327 ANY ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

No items of urgent business were received.

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The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10.31am.

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