

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 3RD FEBRUARY 2016 AT 6.02 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors M. A. Sherrey (Leader), C. B. Taylor (Deputy Leader),
G. N. Denaro, R. L. Dent and R. J. Laight

Invitees: Councillors L. C. R. Mallett and K. J. May

Observers: Councillors B. T. Cooper, C. A. Hotham and P. L. Thomas

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Ms. J. Pickering, Mrs. C. Felton, Ms J. Willis,
Mr. D. Allen, Ms. R. McAndrews and Mrs P. Ross

The Chairman announced that she had been advised by the Executive Director Finance and Resources that Members would be asked to consider a revised Recommendation with regard to the Medium Term Financial Plan. In light of the revised Recommendation the consideration of the allocation of funding towards the Member Capital Locality Bids would be deferred.

76/15 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P.J. Whittaker.

77/15 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

Councillor G. N. Denaro commented that, he would have declared an interest on Agenda Item No. 5, but as this item was to be deferred to a later meeting it would no longer be necessary for him to make a declaration.

78/15 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6th January 2016 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6th January 2016 be approved as a correct record.

79/15 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 23rd January 2016 were submitted.

At the invitation of the Chairman Councillor L. C. R. Mallett, Overview and Scrutiny Board Chairman presented the minutes and highlighted the Recommendations as detailed within the minutes to the Chairman.

The Chairman thanked Councillor L. C. R. Mallett and clarified that the Recommendations, as detailed within the minutes and highlighted by Councillor L. C. R. Mallett, would be considered during the course of the meeting under the relevant agenda items; Medium Term Financial Plan and Burcot Lane Homelessness Hostel – Future Options.

With the agreement of the Chairman, Councillor C. B. Taylor asked when the Short, Sharp Review of homelessness in Bromsgrove District would commence. He was keen to be kept informed as Portfolio Holder for Planning Services and Housing.

In response Councillor L. C. R. Mallett informed Members that he was unsure as to the progress of the Short Sharp Review of homelessness in Bromsgrove District. He would however liaise with Councillor C. J. Bloore and the Democratic Services Officer and would endeavour to keep Councillor C. B. Taylor informed as the Portfolio Holder for Planning Services and Housing.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 23rd January 2016 be noted and that the Recommendations, as detailed within the minutes, be considered during the course of the meeting under the relevant agenda items as detailed in the preamble above.

80/15

BURCOT LANE HOMELESSNESS HOSTEL - FUTURE OPTIONS

Members considered a report which detailed the replacement of Burcot Lodge Homeless Hostel, Bromsgrove.

Councillor C. B. Taylor, Portfolio Holder for Planning Services and Housing introduced the report and in doing so informed Members that he had had several discussions with officers on the replacement of Burcot Lodge Homeless Hostel and it had been brought to the attention of the Overview and Scrutiny Board. Councillor C. B. Taylor referred the Members to the two proposed options from Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) to replace the hostel, as detailed at paragraph 3.8 in the report. He also referred to the Recommendation in the Overview and Scrutiny Board Minutes, which he felt would be the most suitable way forward of addressing the need for hostel provision as it would allow for the position to be kept under review.

Accordingly, Councillor C. B. Taylor proposed that Recommendation 2.3 be amended to reflect the Recommendation as detailed in the Overview and Scrutiny Board minutes, as highlighted earlier in the meeting by Councillor L. C. R. Mallett.

Having been put to the vote it was

RESOLVED:-

- a) that, it be noted, that the sale of the former Council House and surrounding land would eventually lead to the closure of Burcot Lodge Homeless Hostel,
- b) that the Head of Community Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing be granted delegated authority to organise the replacement of the hostel with alternative temporary accommodation, as set out in Proposal one, to be provided by BDHT, and
- c) that the Council would remain open to reconsidering Proposal 2, as detailed in the report, at a later date should demand for temporary accommodation from residents at risk of homelessness be increased.

RECOMMENDED that the cost of the alternative option for the provision of temporary accommodation, as set out in Proposal one, be released from balances.

81/15

CCTV CODE OF PRACTICE

Members considered a report detailing the adoption of the CCTV Code of Practice.

At the invitation of the Chairman, the CCTV and Lifeline Manager presented the report.

The CCTV and Lifeline Manager informed Members that the new Code of Practice was very similar in principle to the previous CCTV Code of Practice. The original objectives of the scheme had not been altered. The changes made were primarily to meet the requirements of new legislation, the Protection of Freedom Act and to adopt the Surveillance Camera Commissioner's Code of Practice. The CCTV Code of Practice, as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report, had been issued by the Secretary of State under Section 30 of the 2012 Act.

The CCTV Code of Practice was written to ensure that the scheme was operated legally, fit for purpose and followed the 12 guiding principles as detailed in the report.

The Chairman thanked the CCTV and Lifeline Manager.

RESOLVED:-

- a) that the CCTV Code of Practice, as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved; and
- b) that authority be delegated to the CCTV and Lifeline Manager to make minor changes to the CCTV Code of Practice to comply with legal requirements and advice from the Surveillance Commissioner.

82/15

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

The Cabinet considered the report on the Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 – 2018/19.

The Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources reminded Members, that as stated by the Chairman at the commencement of the meeting, Recommendation 2.1.7 in the report had been revised. The revised Recommendation was provided for Members consideration.

In light of the revised Recommendation 2.1.7; the Overview and Scrutiny Board Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd June 2016, with regard to the Member Capital Locality Bids from elected Members was acknowledged and noted as requested.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance expressed his sincere thanks to the directors and officers for their assistance with the preparation of the Medium Term Financial Plan. Directors and officers had been challenged with working towards achieving the delivery of a balanced budget, whilst taking into account the unexpected announcement from Central Government on the proposed changes and cuts to be implemented.

The Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources acknowledged the Recommendation as detailed in the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 23rd January 2016 with regard to the Fees and Charges for 2016/17; and informed Members that, as detailed in her report, it was proposed that the Fees and Charges for 2016/17 be increased by 3%, with charges outside of the 3% including a proposed 5% increase in 2017/18 for the garden waste collection service, presented in detail in the main report.

The Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources referred to the background to the Medium Term Financial Plan and the Government proposed changes to the allocation of central government funding to the Council going forward.

A new calculation called 'Core Funding' would be used as the basis for reducing the funding given to the Council from Central Government. The Core Funding now included the Council Tax Requirement (Council Tax Revenue) from 2015/16 together with the Settlement Funding Assessment, as detailed in paragraph 3.4. The Core Funding for Bromsgrove was worth £9.879m in 2015/16, including Council Tax Requirement of £6.990m.

It was proposed that between 2015/16 and 2019/20, uniform annual cuts would be applied to each tier of local authorities' Core Funding. Over this four year period, the cumulative cut to lower tier services (District) would be 19.2%. This would result in the new Core Funding Assessment to be £7.981m, as detailed in section 3.6 in the report.

The Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources drew Members' attention to paragraphs 3.7 and 3.8 in the report, highlighting the table at paragraph 3.10 which reflected the reductions to the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) funding for Bromsgrove based on the Grant received in 2015/16 and the table at paragraph 3.11 which illustrated the impact of the settlement on the Council, the loss of RSG over the next four years up to and including 2019/20 compared to previous forecasts.

The other element of significant income to the Council was New Homes Bonus. This fund would continue on the current basis for 2016/17. The position beyond 2016/2017 had not been confirmed. The financial plan assumed that the Community New Homes Bonus Scheme continued with 25% of the new funding from the grant allocated to schemes in communities affected by growth.

As part of the budget projections the grant attributed to Parish Councils had been reduced by the same percentage (54%) as the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and therefore £13,800 was recommended to be paid to the Parishes with the remaining £7,000 to be utilised for projects in non-parished areas.

The table at paragraph 3.31 in the report detailed the three year financial summary and included the reductions in grant and the proposed pressures and savings.

Due to the current surplus of £154k in the overall budget for 2016/17, the Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources drew Members' attention to the figure shown for the 'Release of reserves to fund shortfall' for 2016/17 (£-551k). The current surplus would be used to reduce the amount required from reserves and the 'Release of reserves to fund shortfall' for 2016/17 would reduce to £397k.

RESOLVED:-

- a) that the Member Capital Locality Bids as detailed at Appendix 6 (i – v) to the report, be deferred as Cabinet recognised that currently there was not a robust mechanism in place for processing and evaluating proposed projects; and
- b) that officers bring a comprehensive process and evaluation scheme to Members in due course for consideration.

RECOMMENDED:-

- a) that the Fees and Charges for 2016/17 (and garden waste for 2017/18) as detailed in Appendix 1 be approved;
- b) that the savings and additional income for 2016/17 of £401k as detailed in Appendix 3 be approved;
- c) that the unavoidable pressures for 2016/17 of £507k as detailed in Appendix 4 be approved;
- d) that the Capital bids for 2016/17 of £280k as detailed in Appendix 5 be approved;
- e) that the payment of Parish Council Grant for 2016/17 of £13,800 be approved;
- f) that the increase in Council Tax for 2016/17 of 1.9% be approved, and
- g) that, as detailed in the preamble above, the surplus shortfall figure for 2016/17 be used to reduce the 'Release of reserves to fund shortfall' figure for 2016/17 be approved.

83/15 **NEW HOMES BONUS 2016/17**

Members considered a report on the revised New Homes Bonus (NHB) Community Grants Scheme which enabled community groups to apply for funding from the New Homes Bonus Grant received by the Council.

Councillor G. N. Denaro, Portfolio Holder for Finance presented the report and in doing so informed Members that a scheme was introduced and funds made available for 2015/2016. A fund of £87,000 was allocated based on 25% of new grant received during the year and a number of groups had secured £63,000 of that funding, as detailed in the report.

For 2016/2017 the Council had agreed to make part of the New Homes Bonus available for a New Homes Bonus Community Grants Scheme. The template on page 163 of the report detailed the total number of new houses completed in 2014/2015 in each ward, totalling 228, giving a figure of £547.54 per house. The unallocated amount of £23,840 from the 2015/2016 scheme would be added to the 2016/2017 allocation, giving a total of £124,840.

RECOMMENDED:-

- a) that the revised New Homes Bonus Community Grants Scheme 2016/2017, as attached at Appendix 1 be approved;
- b) that 25% of the additional New Homes Bonus grant received in 2016/2017 to be used to calculate the amount of £101k to be allocated to the scheme be approved; and
- c) that an additional amount of £23,840 to be added to the total allocation in respect of funds carried forward from the previous year's scheme be approved.

The meeting closed at 6.44 p.m.

Chairman