

CABINET**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 13 JANUARY 2016****I N D E X**

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CABINET

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 13 JANUARY 2016

Present:

Councillor G Baxter MBE Leader (in the Chair)

Councillor J Austen

" N Barker

" M Gordon

Councillor Mrs E A Hill

" P R Kerry

" Mrs L Robinson

535 Apologies for Absence

All members of Cabinet were present at the meeting.

536 Declarations of Interests

Members were requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or other interests, not already on their register of interests, in any item on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

There were no interests declared at this meeting.

537 Minutes of Last Meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 16 December 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

538 Customer Service Provision

Cabinet considered Report No GBXR/20/15-16/PH of Councillor G Baxter MBE which detailed options for ensuring cost effective service provision for all customers and considered the implications arising from the sale of the former Council offices at Saltergate, Chesterfield.

The Council's emphasis with regard to customer service had been to invest in technology to move customers to more efficient and cost effective service channels. The strategy had focused on moving customers from high cost channels of service such as face-to-face to the telephone and through self service on the website.

The sale of the Saltergate premises had previously been agreed and was completed on 8 January 2016. A lease had been agreed in respect of the Contact Centre until early April 2016, however, it was not feasible for the Contact Centre to continue to operate from that location on a long term basis as the future of the building under new owners was uncertain.

It was recognised that the estimated costs, outlined in the report, of continuing to operate a Contact Centre at alternative premises in Chesterfield Town Centre could not be justified and did not give value for money. There had been a dramatic reduction in the number of customers using the Saltergate facility since the relocation to Mill Lane, with only 10 visits per day. Details of usage trends, including the number of visitors and payments made at both Saltergate and Mill Lane Contact Centre were attached to the report.

The report outlined the range of channels through which customers could access the Council and Rykneld Homes services and make payments, in addition to the Mill Lane Contact Centre. Many customers had given positive feedback in using the Mill Lane Contact Centre due to the availability of free parking.

The Disabled Peoples' Joint Consultative Group had received a presentation from the Customer Services Manager on the statistical data on the usage trends of the Saltergate and Mill Lane Contact Centres and had noted the large decline in customer numbers at the Saltergate site. An equality impact assessment had been completed and was attached to the report.

A survey had been undertaken of the customers who had been visiting Saltergate Contact Centre and it was acknowledged that the facility was underutilised and was expected to be closed. The small number of these users would be supported in accessing services and making payments via alternative methods.

A communications plan would be put in place to publicise the range of the Council's customer service channels and the availability of payment options, including Pay Points, Post Offices, online and via telephone.

RESOLVED – That the Council continues to operate the existing Contact Centre at Saltergate until Easter 2016 (24 March) at which time the facility be closed, with current users supported to move to alternative facilities during that period.

Reason for Decision

Due to the limited impact on service delivery and the high costs and poor value for money of maintaining a Contact Centre either at Saltergate or an alternative premises in Chesterfield Town Centre.

Other Options Considered and Rejected

Maintaining a Contact Centre in Chesterfield Town Centre was rejected for the reasons outlined above.

(Executive Director - Transformation)

539 Neighbourhood Planning Protocol - Update

Cabinet considered Report No MG/10/15-16/HF of Councillor M Gordon which sought approval for an updated Neighbourhood Planning Protocol which implemented changes from the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.

The Neighbourhood Planning Protocol had been agreed in February 2015. Subsequently the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 had brought in amendments to the timetable for the determination of applications for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area. The Neighbourhood Planning Protocol had been revised to reflect these changes.

The Regulations had also clarified the requirement for the submission of a sustainability appraisal report where a Neighbourhood Plan would be likely to have significant environmental effect, although this did not impact upon the Neighbourhood Planning Protocol.

RESOLVED – That Cabinet:-

- (1) Notes the detail in the report.
- (2) Approves the updated Neighbourhood Planning Protocol Service Level Agreement as attached to the report.

Reason for Decision

To implement the changes from the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.

Other Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

(Planning Policy Manager)

540 Draft Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy (including Money Laundering Policy)

Cabinet considered Report No PRK/21/15-16/MK of Councillor P R Kerry which sought approval for the proposed Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy (including a Money Laundering Policy).

The proposed Strategy built on the Council's existing Anti-Fraud Policy and re-affirmed a previously established principle that there was a zero tolerance of all forms of fraud, corruption and malpractice.

The Strategy was proposed as a Joint Strategy for North East Derbyshire and Bolsover District Councils.

The purpose of the Strategy was to provide a clear policy statement setting out the Council's value on zero tolerance and to ensure that measures would be in place to deter all those connected with the Council, including employees, elected members, suppliers and partner organisations, from committing or allowing fraud and related activities.

RESOLVED – That Cabinet approves the Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Strategy as attached to the report.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that the Council meets its obligations in relation to preventing fraud, bribery and corruption.

Other Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

(Executive Director - Operations)

541 Risk Management Strategy (including Partnership Working Strategy)

Cabinet considered Report No PRK/22/15-16/BM of Councillor P R Kerry which sought approval for the Risk Management Strategy, including the Partnership Working Strategy.

The Strategy was proposed as a Joint Strategy for North East Derbyshire and Bolsover District Councils.

The Risk Management Strategy set out the Council's principles for good risk management, together with processes necessary for identifying, assessing, mitigating and monitoring key risks across the Council. The document also contained details of a Partnership Working Strategy which identified how the risks associated in partnership working would be managed.

The proposed Joint Strategy set out the principles and processes for risk management that would be used by both Councils. The Strategic Risk Registers would remain as separate documents, one for each Council, with the Service Risk Registers specifically for the services operated in each authority.

RESOLVED – That Cabinet approves the Joint Risk Management Strategy, including the Partnership Working Strategy as attached to the report.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that the Council has in place proper mechanisms for managing risk and partnership working.

Other Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

(Executive Director - Operations)

542 Urgent Business (Public Session)

There was no urgent business to be considered in the public session at this meeting of Cabinet.

CAB MINS (0113) 2016/AJD