

CABINET

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9 MAY 2018

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CABINET

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9 MAY 2018

Present:

Councillor G Baxter MBE Leader (in the Chair)

Councillor N Barker
“ M Gordon

Councillor P R Kerry
“ J Lilley

Also Present:

Councillors T Reader, D Skinner and R Smith

D Swaine - Joint Chief Executive Officer
L Hickin - Joint Strategic Director – People
K Hanson - Joint Strategic Director – Place
D Clarke - Joint Head of Finance & Resources and Section 151 Officer
N Clark - Director of Property Services & Development (Rykneld Homes Ltd)
V Dawson - Team Manager (Legal)
D Parker - Housing Policy and Intelligence Officer
D Cairns - Senior Governance Officer

711 Change of Order of the Agenda

The Chair proposed to change the order of the agenda items.

RESOLVED – That the agenda be amended to the order as set out within these Minutes.

712 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor E A Hill.

713 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.

Councillor N Barker declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Agenda item 11 - Affordable & Social Housing Asset Management Strategy and Acquisitions & Disposals Policy - arising from his membership of the Rykneld Homes Ltd Board.

Councillor N Barker left the room for consideration of this item and did not take part in the discussion or vote.

714 Minutes of Last Meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 11 April 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

Matters referred from Scrutiny**715 Domestic Abuse Scrutiny Review**

Cabinet considered a report of Councillor T Reader, Chair of the Communities Scrutiny Committee which sought approval to the recommendations of the Communities Scrutiny Committee's Review of Domestic Abuse.

The topic for review was inspired by the Chair's Appeal which included The Elm Foundation, formerly known as the Derbyshire Domestic Violence and Sex Abuse Service.

The recommendations of the Communities Scrutiny Committee were:-

That the Council:-

- (1) Consider the appointment of a dedicated domestic abuse officer and explore opportunities to fund the post to create an effective approach to deal with domestic abuse within the District.
- (2) Increase awareness both for the public, managers and employees of domestic abuse and the services available to address this issue, including:
 - Effective use of the Councils website
 - Publicity through the Councils newspaper
 - Use of literature within the Councils establishments
- (3) Provide an effective and appropriate domestic abuse training programme for North East Derbyshire Officers and Members.
- (4) Consider the results of the Staff Survey on domestic abuse.
- (5) Prepare and publish a clear Domestic Abuse Policy.
- (6) Identifies how the portfolio holder can be supported in championing the issue of domestic abuse.
- (7) Review and strengthen the North Derbyshire Homelessness Forum.
- (8) Consider how the revenues team can be supported to spot flags of financial abuse.
- (9) Ensure that the target hardening and sanctuary scheme is adequately funded.

- (10) Review the provision of housing, homelessness units and refuges in its area to help support people experiencing domestic abuse.
- (11) Consider the requests from The Elm Foundation to reappoint a trustee to their board and write to Parish Councils regarding availability of rooms the organisation could use.
- (12) Explore ways to work collaboratively with other agencies and share best practice.

The Chair of the Communities Scrutiny Committee recognised that some actions were already underway, such as posters regarding domestic abuse being put up within the Council offices to raise awareness.

Cabinet noted that domestic abuse was a priority for the Community Safety Partnership and were advised that these recommendations would be passed on to the Partnership and other partners, such as the County Council and Rykneld Homes Ltd, to progress the issue.

Cabinet welcomed the report and the constructive recommendations in relation to Domestic Abuse and thanked Scrutiny for their work undertaken during the review.

RESOLVED – That Cabinet approves the recommendations of the Communities Scrutiny Committee in relation to Domestic Abuse as set out in the report, and asks officers to provide a response in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

REASON FOR DECISION - To support the Council in ensuring the communities in the District are safe and healthy.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED - No alternative options were considered.

(Overview & Scrutiny Manager)

716 Tourism and Growth Scrutiny Review

Cabinet considered a report of Councillor J Windle, Chair of the Growth Scrutiny Committee, which sought approval to the recommendations of the Growth Scrutiny Committee's Review of Tourism and Growth.

Councillor R Smith, Vice-Chair of the Growth Scrutiny Committee, presented the report.

The Scrutiny Review had built on the previous review on Tourism that had been carried out in 2014.

It was recognised as part of this review that a lot of good work in respect of promoting tourism within the District was being undertaken, such as development of the website, however some areas for improvement were identified, leading to the recommendations below.

The recommendations of the Growth Scrutiny Committee in relation to Tourism and Growth were as follows:-

- (1) The Council fully recognise the significant potential Economic Impact that Tourism can bring to the area.
- (2) The Council considers the reinstatement of a dedicated Tourism Officer.
- (3) The Council identifies a specific Cabinet portfolio for Tourism.
- (4) The Council develops a clear brand and identifies what its offer is and what are its key Tourism assets.
- (5) The Council considers holding an event with key partners to discuss the development of the Authority's Tourism Strategy including the items identified in recommendation (4).
- (6) The Councils website be developed further to ensure it has clear links to the attractions and facilities available within North East Derbyshire including the co-ordination of events taking place in parishes of the District.
- (7) The Council examines the value for money being obtained from the Service Level Agreement.
- (8) A benchmarking exercise with a comparative authority be undertaken on their Tourism service.
- (9) Further work be undertaken to engage people mentoring new businesses within the Tourism sector.

Cabinet welcomed the report and the constructive recommendations in relation to Tourism and Growth and thanked Scrutiny for their work undertaken during the review.

It was recognised that a number of attractions were on offer within the District and nearby that could be better promoted to attract more visitors. There were many opportunities that could be explored, such as offering advice or information to Bed and Breakfast owners.

Cabinet were advised that the Tourism Strategies of the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership and the Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership would need to be considered in implementing these recommendations.

RESOLVED - That Cabinet approves the recommendations of the Growth Scrutiny Committee in relation to Tourism and Growth as set out in the report, and asks officers to provide a response in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

REASON FOR DECISION - To support the delivery of the Council's priorities for growth.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED - No alternative options were considered.

(Overview & Scrutiny Manager)

717 Exclusion of Public

RESOLVED - That the public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the following items of business to avoid the disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation) Order 2006). [The category of exempt information is stated after each Minute].

Matters referred from Scrutiny**718 Job Evaluation & Associated Benefits Scrutiny Review**

Cabinet considered a report of Councillor D Skinner, Chair of the Organisation Scrutiny Committee, which sought approval to the recommendations of the Organisation Scrutiny Committee's Review of Job Evaluation and Associated Benefits.

The Chair of the Organisation Scrutiny Committee informed Cabinet that the review had considered the Job Evaluation Scheme and Associated Benefits in the context of supporting staff retention. The Chair thanked the Overview and Scrutiny Manager and all officers who had contributed to the review.

The review had identified a number of strengths within the benefits highlighted by staff that the Council provided, however a number of areas for improvement were also raised.

The recommendations of the Organisation Scrutiny Committee in relation to Job Evaluation and Associated Benefits were as follows:-

- (1) Consideration be given to the comments made on the measures that could improve the impact of the location of the District Council offices at Mill Lane, Wingerworth.
- (2) Consideration be given to the issues raised around the provision of seating (benches) for staff in the inner courtyard and outside of the building.
- (3) Consideration be given to how the general maintenance of the District Council offices at Mill Lane could be improved.
- (4) Further consideration be given to initiatives to address stress and support health and wellbeing.
- (5) Ways in which job opportunities for staff can be maximised to support retention be further considered.
- (6) The Authority undertake an evaluation exercise to assess whether the use of agency staff is effective and value for money.
- (7) Effective communication be undertaken for any changes being undertaken within the Council.

Cabinet welcomed the report and the constructive recommendations in relation to Job Evaluation and Associated Benefits and thanked Scrutiny for their work undertaken during the review.

Members commented that the Council is a good employer and felt that the Scrutiny Review endorsed this view, although there are still areas for improvement.

RESOLVED - That Cabinet approves the recommendations of the Organisation Scrutiny Committee in relation to Job Evaluation and Associated Benefits as set out in the report, and asks officers to provide a response in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

REASON FOR DECISION - To support the Council in its objectives to provide our customers with excellent service and in transforming our organisation.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED - No alternative options were considered.

(Overview & Scrutiny Manager)
(Paragraph 1)

719 Re-admission of the Public

That the public be re-admitted to the public session at this meeting of Cabinet.

Non Key Decisions

720 Tenancy Strategy

Cabinet considered a report of Councillor E A Hill, Portfolio Holder with Responsibility for Housing Strategy & Social Inclusion, which sought approval for the draft Tenancy Strategy and the proposed amendments. It was also proposed that the Tenancy Strategy be valid for three years, unless any major legislative or operational changes needed to be made.

The Localism Act 2011 placed a duty on the Council to prepare and publish a Tenancy Strategy, which must set out the matters to which registered providers or social housing are required to have regard in formulating their tenancy policies.

The Tenancy Strategy provided a framework for how social rented housing is provided within the District and it links to the Housing Allocations Policy and Homelessness Code of Guidance.

Minor amendments had been identified as part of this review to keep in line with current legislation and policy including wording to incorporate the provisions of the Homelessness Reduction Act and amending wording to succession rights.

RESOLVED – That Cabinet:-

- (1) Approve the draft Tenancy Strategy and the proposed amendments as attached to the report.

- (2) Agree the Tenancy Strategy be reviewed in three years unless any major operational or legislative changes needed to be incorporated which necessitate a review taking place prior to this date.

REASONS FOR DECISION – To comply with the requirement of the Localism Act 2011 to adopt a Tenancy Strategy.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED - The option not to review the Tenancy Strategy was rejected as the Council would not be fulfilling its legal duty should the Strategy become out of date.

(Head of Economic Development)

721 Urgent Business (Public Session)

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

722 Exclusion of Public

RESOLVED - That the public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the following items of business to avoid the disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation) Order 2006). [The category of exempt information is stated after each Minute].

Non Key Decisions

723 Restructure of the Projects and Development Team

Cabinet considered a report of Councillor P R Kerry, Portfolio Holder with Responsibility for Economy, Finance & Regeneration and ICT, which recommended a minor change to the establishment for the Projects and Development Team within the Joint ICT Service to replace one full time role with two part time positions and to recommend a small revenue budget increase to accommodate the changes.

RESOLVED – That Cabinet:-

- (1) Request the Joint Chief Executive to exercise his delegated powers to make the necessary changes to the establishment in line with the proposal as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.
- (2) Approve the use of the Transformation/Invest to Save Reserve to fund the additional costs associated with the proposed changes for 2018/19 and that an additional budget be included for future years.

REASON FOR DECISION - To increase capacity within the team to allow for further development of online services.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED - Reducing the number of hours operated across the team was rejected as this would not have addressed the capacity constraints and would have hampered the delivery of efficiencies and service improvements.

(ICT Manager)
(Paragraphs, 1, 3 & 4)

Councillor N Barker left the meeting at this point.

Key Decisions

724 Affordable & Social Housing Asset Management Strategy and Acquisitions & Disposals Policy

Cabinet considered a report of Councillor M Gordon, Portfolio Holder with Responsibility for Environment and Asset Manager, which recommended for approval an Asset Management Strategy and an Acquisition and Disposal Policy for the Council's Affordable and Social Housing Stock.

The Strategy and Policy were to provide a framework for the proactive management of the housing stock, ensuring that all assets would be used effectively, maximising the benefit to the Council, Rykneld Homes Ltd, and tenancies and residents in the local communities.

The Strategy set out how the future for existing Council homes would be secured, as well as how new homes could be provided to meet identified housing need.

The report also contained recommendations for proposed property purchases, sales and demolitions which would produce a net surplus for the Acquisition and Disposal Fund. This was to be ring-fenced to fund property and estate improvements, within the Housing Revenue Account.

Cabinet discussed that local Members are consulted during the development of specific proposals.

RESOLVED - That Cabinet:-

- (1) Approve the Social and Affordable Asset Management Strategy 2018 – 2021 and Acquisition and Disposal Policy 2018 - 2021.
- (2) Agree to determine an optimum level of housing stock that must be maintained to ensure that the HRA is sustainable and financially viable into the next 30 years as part of progressing the HRA Business Plan.
- (3) Agree a self-financing Acquisition and Disposal Fund financed by the Capital receipts generated by the sale of structurally defective void properties. The fund would be capped at £500k and monitored as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

- (4) Agree that decisions for property transactions in line with the Acquisition and Disposal Policy are delegated to the Joint Strategic Director Place in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Member.
- (5) Agree the housing stock transactions included at paragraph 5.1 of the report.
- (6) Agree that all proceeds from the transactions in (5) above and future transactions within the Acquisition and Disposal Fund are included within the Capital programme as a capital receipt as well as corresponding expenditure.
- (7) Agree that the final terms and conditions and value of the purchase and sale of the properties set out in this report be delegated to the Joint Strategic Director - Place, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Member.

REASON FOR DECISION - To provide a self-financing solution to allow for investment in and maintaining an agreed housing stock level, as well as providing resource for estate improvements and structural repairs.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED - The option to do nothing was rejected as this would not have addressed the issues with some of the non-traditional housing stock nor would it have dealt with the other issues arising in the delivery of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

(Managing Director, Rykneld Homes Ltd)
(Paragraph 3)

725 Urgent Business (Private Session)

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