

**MINUTES OF THE CABINET
HELD ON**

26 January 2017

7.30 - 8.17 pm

PRESENT

Cabinet Members

Councillor Jon Clempner, Leader of the Council

Councillor Emma Toal, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Youth and Community

Councillor Mike Danvers, Portfolio Holder for Resources

Councillor Tony Durcan, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Enterprise

Councillor Danny Purton, Portfolio Holder for Environment

Councillor Mark Wilkinson, Portfolio Holder for Housing

Additional Attendees

Councillor Mark Ingall

Councillor Lanie Shears

Councillor John Strachan

Other Councillors

Councillor David Carter

Councillor Simon Carter

Councillor Joel Charles

Councillor Eddie Johnson

Councillor Russell Perrin

Councillor Clive Souter

Officers

Graham Branchett, Chief Operating Officer

Graeme Bloomer, Head of Place

Simon Freeman, Head of Finance

Jane Greer, Head of Community and Wellbeing

Brian Keane, Head of Governance

Andrew Murray, Head of Housing

Adam Rees, Corporate and Governance Support Officer

92. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Forman.

93. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

94. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2016 are agreed as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

95. **MATTERS ARISING**

None.

96. **WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

The questions, together with the answers, are appended to the minutes.

97. **WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

None.

98. **PETITIONS**

a) **Parking Facilities Located Below Sherwood House**

The petition organiser, Mr Svoboda, did not attend and as per the constitution the petition was not formally considered.

Councillor Jon Clempner said the Council would contact Mr Svoboda and the residents of Sherwood House about any action which could be taken regarding the petition.

RESOLVED that the petition was noted.

99. **FORWARD PLAN**

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan is noted.

100. **RECENT DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE LEADER, DEPUTY OR PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S)**

None.

101. **CORPORATE PLAN 2017/18**

Cabinet received a report proposing a Corporate Plan for 2017/18 to 2019/20.

Proposed by Councillor Jon Clempner (seconded by Councillor Mike Danvers) it was:

RESOLVED that it was recommended to Full Council that

A The updates to the Corporate Plan 2017/18 – 2019/20, which was appended to the report, be adopted.

B Authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make minor and inconsequential amendments to the Corporate Plan.

102. **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2017/18 – 2020/21**

Cabinet considered a report proposing a Medium Term Financial Strategy for the Council for 2017/18 to 2020/21.

Proposed by Councillor Jon Clempner (seconded by Councillor Mike Danvers) it was:

RESOLVED that it was recommended to Full Council that

- A** The Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2017/18 to 2020/21 be adopted.
- B** The proposals in relation to reserves as set out in this report at paragraphs 24 to 25 and contained within Section 8 of the Medium Term Financial Strategy be approved.
- C** The planned increases in Council Tax as set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan be approved.

103. **GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18**

Cabinet received a report proposing an annual revenue budget for the Council. The report included proposed changes to the Council Tax charge.

Proposed by Councillor Jon Clempner (seconded by Councillor Mike Danvers) it was:

RESOLVED that it was recommended to Full Council that:

- A** The General Fund estimates for 2017/18, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved.
- B** The proposed transfers between the General Fund and Earmarked Reserves, referred to in paragraphs 20 and 24 of the report and set out in Appendix C to the report, be approved.
- C** The proposed Fees and Charges, as set out in Appendix E to the report, be approved.
- D** The Pay Policy Statement, as set out in Appendix G to the report, be approved.
- E** The Council's Band D Council Tax for 2017/18 is set at £272.28, which represents a 1.99 percent increase compared to the Band D Council Tax for 2016/17.

104. **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN 2016-2046**

Cabinet received a report proposing a formal update of the Council's HRA Business Plan.

Proposed by Councillor Jon Clempner (seconded by Councillor Mike Danvers) it was:

RESOLVED that it was recommended to Full Council that:

- A** The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved.
- B** Authority be delegated to the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, to make minor amendments to the Plan.

105. **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2017/18**

Cabinet received a report which provided a forecast of the outturn budget for the Council's Housing Revenue Account for the current financial year, as well as a proposed budget for 2017/18.

Proposed by Councillor Jon Clempner (seconded by Councillor Mike Danvers) it was:

RESOLVED that it was recommended to Full Council that:

- A** The rent reductions for individual dwellings as set out in paragraph 13 of the report be effective from 3 April 2017. This equates to an average weekly rent of £91.73, a statutory reduction of one percent.
- B** Service charges for individual dwellings, as set out in paragraphs 15 to 20 of the report, effective from 3 April 2017 for tenants and 1 April 2017 for leaseholders. This equates to an average weekly service charge to tenants of £1.97.
- C** Heating charges as set out in paragraphs 29 to 36 of the report, effective from 3 April 2017 for tenants and 1 April 2017 for leaseholders. Average weekly general needs charges are £7.20 per week (leaseholders £14.83 per week, equivalent) and, for sheltered accommodation, £6.63 per week.
- D** Garage rents are increased by five percent, to £9.22 per week (for a standard garage) and proportionate increases for other garages, car ports and car spaces, from 3 April 2017, as set out in paragraphs 37 and 38 of the report.

- E Housing related support charges as set out in paragraphs 21 to 27 and Table 2 of the report. For service users effective from 1 April 2017.
- F Other charges are increased, as set out in paragraphs 28 and 39 of the report, with effect from 1 April 2017.
- G The growth and savings outlined in paragraphs 40 and 41 of the report in respect of 2017/18 be approved.
- H The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget as set out at Appendix A of the report be approved.
- I A minimum HRA working balance of £4,327,000 at 31 March 2017, rising to £4,436,000 at 1 April 2017, as set out in paragraph 42 and Appendix C to the report, be agreed.

106. **CAPITAL PROGRAMMES 2016/17 - 2021/22**

The Cabinet received a report on the revised outturn for 2016/17 proposed programmes for 2017/18 and a forecast to 2021/22, for both housing and non-housing capital spend.

Proposed by Councillor Jon Clempner (seconded by Councillor Mike Danvers) it was:

RESOLVED that it was recommended to Full Council that:

Housing Capital Programme

- A The Housing Capital programme 2017/18 is approved, as set out in Appendices A and B to the report.
- B The forecast programme for the period 2018/19 to 2021/22 is noted, as set out in Appendices A and B to the report.
- C The Housing Capital Programme 2016/17 revised outturn is approved.

Non Housing Capital Programme

- D The revised Non Housing Capital Programme 2016/17 is approved, as set out in paragraphs 19 to 30 of the report.
- E The Non Housing Capital Programme for 2017/18 is approved, as set out in Appendices C and D to the report.
- F Aggregate borrowing of £7.42 million up to 31 March 2017, and a further £1.602 million, in 2017/18 be approved to support the Non Housing Capital Programme.

G The Non Housing Capital Programme forecast for 2018/19 to 2021/22 be noted, as set out in Appendices C and D to the report.

107. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT 2017/18**

Cabinet received a report proposing a Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2017/18.

Proposed by Councillor Jon Clempner (seconded by Councillor Mike Danvers) it was:

RESOLVED that the Cabinet recommended to Full Council that proposed revised Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2017/18 (attached as Appendix A to the report) be approved for implementation with immediate effect, including specifically:

- i. The Prudential Indicators (set out in Annex C of the Statement).
- ii. The Treasury Management Indicators (set out in paragraphs 61 to 64 of the Statement).
- iii. The approved counterparty methodology (set out in paragraphs 42 to 60 of the Statement).
- iv. The Minimum Revenue Provision Statement (set out in Annex D of the Statement).
- v. The reporting arrangements (set out in Annex E of the Statement).

108. **COMMUNICATIONS FROM COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS/PARTIES AND PANELS**

None.

109. **MINUTES OF PANELS/WORKING GROUPS**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following meetings are noted.

- a) Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 8 November 2016 of Housing Standards Board
- b) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 24 November 2016 of Shareholders Sub Committee
- c) Minutes of meeting Thursday, 1 December 2016 of Cabinet Overview Working Group

110. **MATTERS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

**CABINET – 26 JANUARY 2017
QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Agenda item 5 refers

1. **Mr Gary Roberts to Councillor Tony Durcan, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Enterprise**

Please could the council update me on the progress of the refurbishment/redevelopment of Prentice Place, Potter Street?

Reply from Councillor Tony Durcan, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Enterprise

In March 2016 the Council's Cabinet agreed that the regeneration of Prentice Place could proceed on the basis that an affordable option had been identified, this being a complete remodelling of the buildings and improvements to the public realm.

Following this decision, the Council was able to work up a design for the retail and residential properties and planning permission was granted in late 2016. The proposed scheme has 11 shops and 15 residential units.

There has been a great deal of consultation with the retailers and Harlow Health Centres Trust over the buildings elements of the proposal and with Essex County Council regarding the public realm improvements that are planned.

The Council anticipates tendering for the works in Spring 2017 and subject to the responses received to start work on site in August 2017.

2. **Mr Gary Roberts to Councillor Jon Clempner, Leader of the Council**

Council services are being brought back in house, to HTS (Property and Environment) Limited, in February which is excellent but as suggested at the Tenants and Leaseholders Conference has the Council considered putting a tenant, leaseholder and resident on the board of this in-house company?

Reply from Councillor Jon Clempner, Leader of the Council

I would like to be clear that the services currently being provided by Kier Harlow Ltd are not being brought back in house but are to be undertaken by a private limited company which is wholly owned by the Council. The options appraisal undertaken in 2015 recognised the significant progress in the modernisation of work processes, investment in training and culture change since 2007 resulting in significant efficiencies, innovations and productivity gains, and that in transferring the services to a local authority trading company would build upon the successful commercial approach to service provision.

Agenda item 5 refers

Therefore, it remains important that HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd continues to operate its management in the same commercial way and as such it would be inappropriate to consider the representation suggested. The representation and involvement of tenants, leaseholders and residents is important which is why the long established Standards Board/Panels and the Environmental Service Improvement Team will continue to consider the performance and delivery of services provided by HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd.