

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 26 APRIL 2018

Present: Councillor P D Simpson, Chair

Councillors: S A Bagshaw
T P Brindley
E Cubley
S Easom
R I Jackson
P Lally
G Marshall
P J Owen
M Radulovic MBE
A W G A Stockwell

76 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor R I Jackson declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 7, minute number 81 refers, as he had made a small contribution towards Chilwell Memorial Institute Tennis Club from his Nottinghamshire County Councillor fund.

77 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2018 were confirmed and signed.

78 REFERENCES

79.1 POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Policy and Performance Committee
17 April 2018
Grant Aid Request

Members had previously discussed at Full Council that a local boy, Owen Jenkins drowned in 2017 in the River Trent, whilst saving some friends who had got into trouble having entered the water. This event has resulted in not just local water safety measures but initiatives throughout Nottinghamshire to improve water safety. Owen's family had set up a charity, called the OWEN network, which is now promoting open water safety amongst schools in Nottinghamshire.

The Committee considered recommending to the Finance and Resources Committee that the Council make a financial contribution towards a memorial to Owen Jenkins.

RESOLVED that £1,500 be approved from the grants budget in 2018/19 as a contribution towards a memorial for Owen Jenkins.

79.2 POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Policy and Performance Committee
17 April 2018
World War 1 Memorial Contribution

In order to honour and commemorate all those who gave their lives for King and Country a project had been devised to create a new memorial to be located in the Memorial Gardens on Victoria Embankment, for the entire County and City with a definitive roll of honour listing the names of all those from the County and City who lost their lives fighting throughout the First World War. The names listed on the Memorial would include those who died in the Chilwell shell filling factory disaster.

Funds had been committed by the City and County Councils while district councils were invited to commit £10,000 each. The remaining £30,000 would be raised through public subscription, from local businesses and military organisations.

RESOLVED that £10,000 be approved to the Great War Memorial project funded from a carry-over of underspend from the 2017/18 grants budget.

80 REVIEW OF COUNCIL FINANCES

The report set out the findings of a review of the Council's financial position, including areas identified for further potential examination as a response to the reduction in government grants.

The overall position since the reduction in Government Funding had managed to retain good levels of service, limit redundancy and maintain good levels of reserves. Should a decision be made to freeze council tax for another financial year it was noted that further savings would have to be made. The report made seven suggestions for consideration that would guide the Council in its decision making to create a sustainable financial future.

It was noted that of the 201 District and Borough Councils, Broxtowe was one of only 13 which did not raise council tax in this financial year. A discussion about the possibility of a council tax rise for the financial year 2019/20 took place.

Debate progressed on to the practicalities of the investigation that led to the report. It was established that the author of the report had been a desktop exercise and that although the writer was an expert in the field of local government finances he had not spent significant amounts of time on site. It was noted that this was a service offered by the Local Government Association to give a snapshot of the Council's finances and to inform local decision making.

RESOLVED that the report be accepted and that the recommendations be acted upon with a review on progress to be brought to Committee in July 2018.

81 GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS, CHARITABLE BODIES AND INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN SPORTS, THE ARTS AND DISABILITY MATTERS 2018/19

The Committee considered requests for grant aid in accordance with the provisions of the Council's Grant Aid Policy and noted the grants awarded under delegated authority.

It was noted that the grants regarding rents for 2nd Kimberley Scout Group and New Stapleford Community Association were notional, as they gave an estimate of rents that could be charged should buildings owned by Broxtowe Borough Council be hired out commercially.

In respect of the Helpful Bureau, Stapleford there was concern that granting the full £10,000 that had been requested would lead to an unsustainable reliance on the Council. There was a suggestion that it would be more useful for the Council to help the Helpful Bureau to find more sustainable funding streams whilst granting them a lesser amount. The importance of the service provided by the Helpful Bureau was noted.

It was proposed by Councillor P D Simpson and seconded by Councillor R I Jackson that a grant of £2,000 be made to the Helpful Bureau Stapleford. An amendment to this motion was proposed by Councillor S A Bagshaw and seconded by Councillor G Marshall that a grant of £3,000 be made. On being put to the meeting the amendment fell and the original motion was then carried.

RESOLVED that the applications be dealt with as follows:

	(£)
2nd Kimberley Scout Group	6,500
Helpful Bureau, Stapleford	2,000
New Stapleford Community Association	4,000
Beeston and District Local History Society	1,000
Greasley Gathering	1,000
	14,5000

82 CAPITAL GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS 2018/19

The Committee considered requests for capital grants in accordance with the provisions of the Council's Grant Aid Policy.

The Committee considered a grant request from 2nd Kimberley Scout Group for a replacement boiler at Kettlebrook Lodge, a premises owned by the Council.

A request from the Chilwell Memorial Institute Tennis Club had also been received for a financial contribution towards schemes to renovate the veranda and the construct a rebowall. The Committee debated the merits of the application with reference to the small number of members and the wider community benefits of the organisation.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. A grant be made to 2nd Kimberley Scouts of up to £5,000 for a boiler with help and expertise from Broxtowe Borough Council.**
- 2. A grant be made to Chilwell Memorial Institute Tennis Club of £1,000 towards schemes to renovate the veranda and the construct a rebowall.**

83 GRANT AID REQUESTS FROM NUTHALL PARISH COUNCIL

The Committee considered the requests for grant aid that had been made by Nuthall Parish Council for the maintenance of roadway and pathways at the New Farm Lane cemetery and the provision of a summer youth club on Basil Russell Playing Field.

It was noted that if the parish council were to pass on responsibility for their cemetery it would pass a significant financial burden on to the Council.

There followed a discussion about the provision of play days across the borough. It was noted that the areas which benefitted from play days were rotated each year to ensure that distribution of participation was as fair as possible.

RESOLVED that the following be granted to Nuthall Parish Council:

- 1. A capital grant of £12,000 for Cemetery Maintenance.**
- 2. A revenue grant of £2,000 for play day to be allocated from the leisure budget.**

84 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - REVIEW OF BUSINESS PLAN PROGRESS - SUPPORT SERVICE AREAS

The Committee noted the progress made in achieving the respective Business Plans for Resources Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services; and ICT and Business transformation in addition to the current Key Performance Indicators for 2017/18.

There was particular concern regarding the number of working days lost to sickness, which was up by a third from 2016/17. It was noted that there had been specific issues in the Housing department that had led to an increase in sickness absence, which were being addressed. It was also stated that the Environment Department was experiencing the impact of having an ageing workforce, with the number of manual workers off with long term sicknesses increasing.

The Committee was informed that a significant sum of money had been received in respect of tram compensation, with the claim continuing through the lands tribunal.

Debate progressed on to the sundry debtors backlog and it was requested that figures for the current number of debtors and the amount of debt owed to the Council be circulated to the Committee.

There was concern about the level of rent arrears. It was noted that arrears were down from around £310,000 for the same time last year to £230,000. In addition to the continued efforts of the Rents Team, an Interim Rents Recovery manager had been appointed, the Capita system was being implemented and rents was being taken back in to the Housing Department. A discussion followed regarding the use of

discretionary housing payments in tackling rent arrears. It was noted that the Council had a duty to allocate discretionary housing payments to any resident who qualified.

It was noted that virus protection was at 96.7% and it was requested that further information be provided to the Committee regarding this figure.

85 PROPERTY MATTERS - CAVENDISH LODGE, BEESTON AND EASTWOOD CEMETERY CHAPEL

The Committee was asked to consider the disposal of Cavendish Lodge and the letting of Eastwood Cemetery Chapel. In order to get the best possible price for Cavendish Lodge the Committee requested that a number of options be considered, with the assistance of a Chartered Surveyor, including the inclusion of further land and making renovations to the interior.

It was further noted that the Cemetery Chapel would not be left untenanted and that housing staff would continue to be based there whilst a commercial tenant was sought.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. In principle, Cavendish Lodge be sold, but consideration be given to whether renovation work should be carried out to the building before sale.**
- 2. The rental of Eastwood Cemetery Chapel be approved, with use by Housing to continue until a tenant is found.**
- 3. The appointment of an external agent to market the properties be approved.**

86 TOUR OF BRITAIN UPDATE - NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LEG SEPTEMBER 2018

The Committee received a revision to the route proposed by the organisers of the Tour of Britain to which the Council had agreed to make a financial contribution. Having allocated £5,000 with a view to the race coming through the centre of Eastwood and Brinsley, there had to be a change to the route which would take it instead through the Engine Lane Business Park.

The Committee noted its disappointment at the revised route. The none monetised benefits such as increased participation in cycling were discussed, but there was also concern that it was difficult to justify making a financial contribution to the event, which was barely coming to the Borough.

RESOLVED that officers advise the organisers that the proposed arrangements were not supported.

87 INTELLIGENT SCANNING - FINANCIAL EXEMPTION

The Committee was asked to approve an exemption from Section 5.3 of the Council's Financial Regulations (contracts) to allow the purchase of the intelligent scanning module from Civica without the requirement to obtain at least three quotes.

There were concerns that the system did not represent value for money and that market testing should take place before the financial regulations be dispensed with.

RESOLVED that quotations be sought for the purchase of the software as necessary and an update provided to the July meeting.

88 CAPITAL BUDGET VARIATIONS

The Committee considered the approved capital programme for 2018/19 with variations pertaining to a programme of replacements for vehicles and plant, the Bennerley Viaduct renovation scheme, additional bus shelters in Nuthall and a pedestrian crossing on Hickings Lane, Stapleford.

The debate focussed on the Committees disappointment that Sustrans were not expected to proceed with the renovation of the Bennerley Viaduct. It was noted that although this funding was being removed from the budget, the Committee would, in principle, be supportive of future schemes to renovate this important landmark.

RESOLVED that the capital budget variations for 2018/19 as set out above and in appendices 1 and 2 be approved.

89 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Work Programme. It was agreed that that a report on Intelligent scanning, an Update on Council Finances and an update on Universal Credit update be added to the work programme for the July meeting. It was also requested that further options for Cavendish Lodge also come back to the Committee for consideration.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme, as amended, be approved.