

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2020

Present: Councillor G Marshall, Chair.

Councillors: B C Carr
S J Carr
E Cubley
S Easom
E Kerry
P Lally
P J Owen
M Radulovic MBE
P Roberts-Thomson
P D Simpson
H E Skinner (substitute)
E Williamson

An apology for absence was received from Councillor D A Elliott.

53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor E Kerry declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6 due to his involvement during the inauguration on the organisation, minute number 57 refers. Councillor E Williamson declared a non-disclosable pecuniary interest in item 8 as a member of Brinsley Parish Council, minute number 59 refers.

54 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2020 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

55 REFERENCES

55.1 JOBS AND ECONOMY COMMITTEE 21 November 2020 Broxtowe Business Start-Up Grant Scheme

The Committee considered a reference from the Jobs and Economy Committee which requested that a budget of £15,000 be established from 1 April 2020 to meet the cost of the new Broxtowe Business Start-Up Grant scheme.

RESOLVED that the inclusion of £15,000 in the 2020/21 budget for the new Broxtowe Business Start-Up Grant Scheme be approved.

The Committee considered the budget proposals and associated strategies with particular reference to notional capital charges and the amounts being drawn from reserves. The following comments were amongst those made:

- There should be less volatility around business rates.
- Changes to the staffing budget would be a result of the evaluation of a number of posts.
- Should there be any movement on tram compensation this should be reported to members.
- There was no budget provision for legal costs in the 2020/21 budget.
- It was noted that in line with the Rent Setting Policy approved by Housing Committee on 18 September 2019 the Formula rent would be used to set rents for all new tenancies. Where there was a large difference between the previous rent charged and the new rent level the increase would be limited to 10%.

RESOLVED that the business plans for the Council's corporate priorities and support functions, subject to amendment as a result of any budget decisions still to be taken by Council recommended by the relevant policy committees.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:

1. **The Housing Revenue Account budget as submitted be approved (appendix 2).**
2. **The General Fund revenue budgets as submitted be approved (appendix 3).**
3. **The capital submissions and priorities within them be approved (appendix 4).**
4. **The Deputy Chief Executive be authorised to arrange the financing of the capital programme as necessary (appendix 4).**
5. **An amount of £25,000 be provided for a General Contingency in 2020/21 (appendix 3).**
6. **The council tax requirement for 2020/21 including special expenses (but excluding local precepting requirements) be £5,704,431 (appendix 3).**
7. **An amount of £1,167,316 be withdrawn from the General Fund reserve in 2020/21 (appendix 3).**
8. **An amount of £30,000 be added to the General Fund earmarked reserves in 2020/21 (appendix 3).**
9. **The Capital Strategy 2020/21 to 2022/23 be approved (appendix 5)**
10. **The Minimum Revenue Provision policy as set out be approved (appendix 6).**
11. **The treasury management strategy statement 2020/21 to 2022/23 be approved (appendix 6).**
12. **The investments strategy 2020/21 to 2022/23 be approved (appendix 7).**
13. **The General Fund Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 to 2023/24 be approved (appendix 8).**

The Committee considered a grant aid request from the Canalside Heritage Centre and it was queried whether the organisation had applied to other bodies for grants. It

was further queried as to the Centre's use of volunteers and whether these had been used judiciously. It was suggested that any grant would be accompanied by a service level agreement which would also consider historical issues such as staffing numbers and the size of the organisation's volunteer base.

A recorded vote was requested by Councillor M Radulovic MBE and seconded by Councillor S J Carr. The voting was as follows:

<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstention</u>
B C Carr	E Cubley	E Kerry
S J Carr	S Easom	P M Roberts-Thomson
P Lally	P J Owen	
G Marshall	P D Simpson	
M Radulovic MBE		
E Williamson		
H E Skinner		

RESOLVED that a capital grant of £10,000 be awarded to funded from 2020/21 Capital Contingencies. Plus, a further £5,000 Revenue Grant in 2019/20 with a commitment to award a further £5,000 Revenue Grant in 2020/21 conditional on progress following the first tranche of funding.

58 GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS, CHARITABLE BODIES AND INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN SPORTS, THE ARTS AND DISABILITY MATTERS 2019/20

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.

RESOLVED that the applications be dealt with as follows:

	£
Age Concern Eastwood	9,000
Stapleford Community Association	3,000
Broxtwe Women's Project	6,000
Beeston Shopmobility	8,500
Bramcote Cricket Club	1,000
Broxtowe Play Forum	5,500

59 GRANT AID REQUESTS FROM PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

Members considered two requests for grant aid from Brinsley Parish Council, firstly one for £1,000 towards the cost of a festive lighting display, and secondly for £1,225 towards its VE Day celebrations.

RESOLVED that Brinsley Parish Council be awarded £1,000 towards the cost of a festive lighting display and £1,225 towards its VE Day celebrations.

60 COUNCIL TAX EMPTY PROPERTY LEVY

Section 12 of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 provided local authorities the power to levy extra council tax of 50% on domestic properties which have been vacant for more than two years, The Council has used this power since April 2013. Members considered a request to approve the alterations of council tax levied on properties in the Borough of Broxtowe which had been vacant for a period of two years or more.

RESOLVED that the increase in the Council Tax Empty Property Levy be as follows:

- 1. Adopt an empty property levy at 100% for dwellings that have been vacant for more than two years from 1 April 2020.**
- 2. Adopt an empty property levy at 200% for dwellings that have been vacant for a period of five or more years from 1 April 2020.**
- 3. Adopt an empty property levy of 300% for dwellings that have been vacant for ten or more years from 1 April 2021.**

61 BUSINESS PLANS 2020/21 - 2022/23

The Committee considered the proposals for business plans, detailed revenue budget estimates for 2020/21 capital programme for 2020/21 to 2022/23 and proposed fees and charges for 2020/21 in respect of the Council's priority areas.

RESOLVED that the attached Business Plans be approved.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the following be approved:

- a) The detailed revenue budget estimates for 2020/21 (base) including any revenue development submissions.**
- b) The capital programme for 2020/21 to 2022/23**
- c) The fees and charges for 2020/21.**

62 GDPR TELEPHONE MESSAGE

The Committee noted a report which provided information on the legal requirement to include a statement regarding how the Council would handle personal data under the General Data Protection Regulation which is included when calling the Council's main switchboard.

63 CAR PARK CHARGES

The committee was informed that car park charges were re-introduced to the majority of Broxtowe's town centre car parks in 2010. Members considered the options and it was stated that the use of electric charging points would be incentivised, however, it was also suggested that further options should have been suggested for consideration.

It was proposed by Councillor M Radulovic MBE and seconded by Councillor S J Carr that option 3 be the Council's preferred option and that this be reviewed after a year.

RECOMMENDED to Council that option 3 as included in the appendix to the report be approved the decision be reviewed one year after its implementation.

64 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Work Programme and agreed that a review of performance management information be added to a future meeting.

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

65 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that, under Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

66 REVENUES AND BENEFITS SOFTWARE

RESOLVED that:

- 1. The re-appointment of Civica (OpenRevenues) as the Council's software supplier of Revenues and Benefits via a direct award through the DAS Framework for a period of five years from 1 April 2020 at £56,948.50 per year be approved.**
- 2. The purchase of the Civica OpenPortal Self-Service module at a one off cost of £21,500 to be funded from 2020/21 capital contingencies be approved.**

67 IRRECOVERABLE ARREARS

RESOLVED that the arrears in excess of £1,200 on national non-domestic rates, council tax, rents, housing/council tax benefit overpayment and sundry debtors as set out in the report be written off and to note the exercise of the Deputy Chief Executive's delegated authority under financial regulation 5.9.