

CABINET

THURSDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2022

Present: Councillor M Radulovic MBE, Chair

Councillors: S J Carr)
B C Carr
T Hallam
R D MacRae
G Marshall
J W McGrath
H E Skinner
E Williamson

An apology for absence was received from Councillor S A Bagshaw.

70 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor H E Skinner declared a non-registerable interest in item 6.2 as she was a Member of the Steering Group, minute number 74.2 refers.

71 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2022 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

72 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Cabinet noted the Scrutiny Work programme provided by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

73 RESOURCES AND PERSONNEL POLICY

73.1 GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS, CHARITABLE BODIES AND INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN SPORTS, THE ARTS AND DISABILITY MATTERS 2022/23

Members considered the requests for grant assistance in accordance with the provisions of the Grant Aid Policy. The Speech, Sign and Song Club had requested £1,000 as a contribution towards the cost of providing weekly and monthly sessions during spring term 2023. The group was formed in 2009 and had recently become a registered charity. The main activity of the group was to deliver regular specialised music group sessions to children who needed support with social and communication skills. Toton Coronation Hall Community Association was responsible for the management and operation of the Coronation Hall on Portland Road in Toton. The aim was to provide a social meeting place for Toton and the surrounding area. A

variety of groups utilise the facilities for educational, recreational, leisure and sporting activities. For 2022/23 Toton Coronation Community Association had requested a grant of £7,000 to cover the market rental of the Coronation Hall. The request of £7,000 from Toton Coronation Hall Community Association was covered within the provision for rent awards.

RESOLVED that the grant aid requests be approved accordingly.

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| 1. Speech, Sign and Song Club | £1,000 |
| 2. Toton Coronation Hall Community Association | £7,000 |

Reason

Consideration for not awarding the grant may have a negative impact for the users and individuals relying on the service. The Council is empowered to make grants to voluntary organisations by virtue of Section 48 Local Government Act 1985 (as well as other Legislation). Having an approved process in accordance with legislation and the Council's Grant Aid Policy would ensure the Council's compliance with its legal duties

73.2 CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY 2023 - 2026

Members welcomed the new Customer Services Strategy 2023-2026 detailing the actions that would be taken to continue the development of Customer Services throughout the Council. The Strategy outlined the developments the Council would consider over the next three years. It was noted that there would be a requirement for whole of the Council to embrace the Strategy and the developments it proposed. The Customer Services Strategy had been developed in line with the current Corporate Plan, Communications Strategy and the Digital Strategy. The new Strategy had been developed to include the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which was resolved at the Cabinet meeting on 1 November 2022. Members commented that the reception area needed to be safe and a query was raised if the Council would have telephony compatibility across the Council. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be provided with an update on progress.

RESOLVED that the Customer Services Strategy 2023-2026 be approved.

Reason

The Strategy was in line with the GREAT values. Having the values determined how people in the organisation behaved towards residents, customers, businesses and towards each other. Going the extra mile to focus on all needs of its communities, innovation and ready to change, continuous improvement and delivering value for money.

73.3 WELLBEING STRATEGY

Members were updated on the Wellbeing Strategy and recognised that the health and wellbeing of its employees was integral to its success. The Strategy outlined the Council's aims and how wellbeing at work would be promoted to staff. Concern had been raised about staff workload, burnout, demands of work relating to mental ill health. Confirmation was provided that the Council had Mental Health First Aiders and

training was being provided to all Managers in Mental Health First Aid from the Health and Safety Manager. The Mental Health First Aid provided the tools and resources to provide support to the employee and to also recognise when signposting to a professional was required. Members suggested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee looked at the topic of Mental Health Challenges.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to suggest the topic of Mental Health Challenges be reviewed.

Reason

The Strategy was closely aligned with the existing Corporate Plan and People Strategy, along with emphasis on the 'GREAT' values. Good health was a combination of physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. The Strategy ensured that the Council was creating conditions for people to flourish in within the organisation, in order for them to do their best work, enjoy what they do and find the work fulfilling. The Strategy aimed to ensure colleagues supported one and other in good and bad times.

73.4 SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES FACING FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

Cabinet considered the report on support for employees facing hardship. Members acknowledged the current climate with inflation running into double figures, interest rate rises, increases in food, and energy costs. Three measures had been proposed: waiving of car parking charges where employees on grade 7 and below came into the office to work, an employee hardship grant budget of up to £5,000 per annum be added to the Human Resources' budget and an employee loan scheme. Discussions ensued surrounding discretion and support to employees including signposting to food banks.

RESOLVED that:

1. **The waiving of car parking fees where employees on Grade 7 and below working at the Council Offices in Beeston be approved.**
2. **Proposals for an Employee Hardship Grant and Employee Hardship Loan scheme be approved.**
3. **A budget of £5,000 for the Employee Hardship Grant Scheme be funded from the general Fund revenue balances be approved.**

Reason

Having a set of values determined how people in the organisation behaved towards our residents, customers, businesses and towards each other. Employees was at the heart of the Council living out GREAT values and doing fantastic work every day to help achieve the visions. By valuing employees and enabling the active involvement of everyone and going the extra mile by proving a strong caring focus on needs of all communities were two of the values the report recognised.

(Councillor E Williamson left the room prior to this item being voted upon.)

74 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

74.1 ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022 - 2025

Members were updated with the plans for a refreshed Asset Management Strategy for 2022-2025. Ark Consultancy provided a Strategy focussing on the housing stock and a number of the Council's main operating premises. Some of the actions identified in the Strategy had already taken place, including updating the Council's portfolio of housing stock where the energy performance certificate was out of date and bids for Home Upgrade Grant and Social Decarbonisation Fund had taken place. Members were provided with short, medium and long term objectives as part of the Strategy. Discussions ensued with the need to accelerate the Council's housing programme to meet the current shortfall, while demand on rising rent costs in private renting had caused pressures on the Council. Current rent figures for Broxtowe were amongst the lowest in the Country. A valuation of the housing stock assets would be beneficial and would assist with addressing the inequalities within the Borough. An update on damp and mould was provided at the meeting by the Head of Housing. Concern was raised by Members, with damp and mould in private sector housing. Environmental Health was collecting records on damp and mould which had been reported.

RESOLVED that the Asset Management Strategy and next steps be approved.

Reason

The purpose of an Asset Management Strategy was to ensure that the Council uses and manages its housing stock to meet its needs and objectives. It was good practice for the Council to have an Asset Management Strategy. The Council had a statutory duty under Section 8 of the Housing Act 1985 to consider housing conditions in its district and meet the needs of the district with respect to the provision of housing accommodation. One of the objectives of the regulator of social housing was to undertake economic regulation of providers of social housing, focusing on governance, financial viability, and value for money.

74.2 TOTON AND CHETWYND BARRACKS STRATEGIC MASTERPLAN

Members considered the report and suggested that the document may be pushed back to a later date. It was considered that waiting for the outcome of the publication of the Inspector comments from the Neighbourhood Planning Meeting would support the best option to go forward. Members requested that a further report be submitted to the Cabinet meeting on 7 February 2023.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. The Supplementary Planning Document will be deferred until the publication of the Inspectors comments from the Neighbourhood Planning meeting of 10 November 2022 are received.**
- 2. The initial Inspectors comments from the Neighbourhood Plan Examination stated that the Toton and Chetwynd Neighbourhood Plan requires modifications and that we resolve to establish a Neighbourhood Officers and Member group to bring into alignment the Supplementary Planning Document and Neighbourhood Plan.**

Reason

The deferment would allow for consultation between the relevant stakeholders.

74.3 GREATER NOTTINGHAM STRATEGIC PLAN PREFERRED APPROACH

Cabinet noted the consultation planned for the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan preferred approach that was prepared by Broxtowe Borough, Gedling Borough, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe Borough Councils. It was a statutory requirement to have a development plan in place that identified the strategic priorities of the area.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan Preferred Approach, in so far as it relates to Broxtowe Borough, for public consultation be approved.**
- 2. authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Economic Development to approve any minor changes (e.g. presentational, typographical and grammatical) required to the Preferred Approach document and the evidence base prior to consultation.**

Reason

It was a statutory requirement, as set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, for the Council to have a Local Plan. Under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, Local Plans must also be reviewed at least once every five years from their adoption date to ensure that policies remained relevant and effectively address the needs of the local community.

75 HOUSING

75.1 HOUSING FURNITURE SCHEME

Members considered a proposal to implement furnished tenancies for Council tenants. The Housing Department was aware that a number of tenants were living without essential furniture items. It was stated that the demand for items through partnerships with Charity organisations had helped but the demand for furniture items may not always be able to be met. The research conducted by End Furniture Poverty found that living without essential items including an oven, fridge, freezer, and washing machine impacts financially on the tenant along with mental health impacts and physical needs.

RESOLVED that the proposal and a one-off budget of £5,000 for external legal advice be approved in 2022/23, to be funded from Housing Revenue Account (HRA) working balances

Reason

The aim of the Corporate Plan was to provide a good quality home for everyone. By providing support with furniture to reduce the burden financially to tenants would meet the priorities and objectives highlighted in the Corporate Plan.

76 COMMUNITY SAFETY

76.1 FEELING SAFE IN BROXTOWE

Members requested that further information to be submitted at the next meeting on 20 December 2022.

77 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

77.1 GARDEN WASTE SUBSCRIPTION FEES 2023/24

Members were updated with the proposals to increase the subscription for the collection service of garden waste for 2023/24. The number of subscribers in 2022/23 had decreased from 2021/22. This was likely to be as a result of the dry weather, resulting in vegetation not growing. The current cost of living crisis may have also impacted the service. The challenge going forward for the season 2023/24 was to maintain the customer base.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. The price for the first bin for 2023/24 be increased by £1**
- 2. The price for additional bins for 2023/24 be increased by £1.**

Reason

The Council was the waste collection authority for the Borough with a duty to collect specified forms of waste. Section 45(3) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 stated “no charge shall be made for the collection of household waste except in cases prescribed in regulations made by the Secretary of State”. Section 4 of Schedule 1 of the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 stated that charges may be made for the collection of household garden waste. Additionally, Section 45(3) (b) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 required that collection authorities made a reasonable charge for the collection of household garden waste.

77.2 LOCAL AREA ENERGY PLAN

Cabinet was provided with details of the proposed work to deliver a local area energy plan for the Borough of Broxtowe. Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP) had been identified as an important step to supporting climate ambitions across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire and had the potential to further support increased devolution through a comprehensive plan that identified the most effective pathway to decarbonising each district across D2N2 / East Midlands Mayoral Combined Authority (EMMCA). A Local Area Energy Plan would set out the change required to transition an area’s energy system to net zero in a given timeframe. This was achieved by exploring potential pathways and consider a range of technologies and scenarios which, when combined with stakeholder engagement, would lead to the identification of the most cost-effective preferred pathway and sequenced plan of proposed actions to achieve an areas net zero goal.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. the allocation of £75,000 as the Council's contribution towards the commissioning of work to deliver a Local Area Energy Plan be approved, with the cost being funded from General Fund Reserves.**
- 2. the allocation of £7,000 for the 2 years' technical adviser role be approved, with the cost being funded from General Fund Reserves.**

Reason

A Local Area Energy Plan would support the Council's corporate objectives regarding climate change and was also be consistent with socio-economic and equality duties. The implementation of the individual actions and objectives would be set out as the Plan develops.

78 WORK PROGRAMME

Cabinet resolved that the work programme, with the added items of the Feeling Safe in Broxtowe, Toton and Chetwynd Barracks Strategic Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document, and Alterations to the Council Offices Ground Floor Reception including potential key decisions, be approved.

RESOLVED that the work programme, as amended, including key decisions be approved.

79 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Cabinet 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.

80 RESOURCES AND PERSONNEL POLICY

80.1 IRRECOVERABLE ARREARS

RESOLVED that the arrears in excess of £1,200 on national non-domestic rates, council tax, rents, housing and 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.

80.2 LEGAL SERVICES ESTABLISHMENT REVIEW AND PROPOSED RESTRUCTURE

RESOLVED that the restructure be approved and that:

- 1. The new Legal Paralegal post be created.**
- 2. The new Solicitor post be created.**
- 3. The Legal Officer post be made permanent within the establishment.**
- 4. The re- profiling, regrading and increasing hours of the Principal Solicitor post.**
- 5. The re-profiling and increasing hours of the Senior Solicitor post No L76.**

6. The re-profiling of the Senior Solicitor post No L71.
7. The re-profiling of the Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officers post.
8. The Senior Solicitor posts L8 and L69 be deleted.

80.3 HOUSING REPAIRS RESTRUCTURE - PHASE 1

RESOLVED that Phase 1 of the Housing Restructure be approved at a cost of £146,150 funded by the Housing Revenue Account.