

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY, FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, WIGSTON  
ON TUESDAY, 24 MARCH 2015**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chair: Councillor Mrs S B Morris  
Vice Chair: Councillor D A Gamble

Councillors: L A Bentley, G A Boulter, J W Boyce, Mrs J M Gore, B Dave,  
J Kaufman and Mrs L Kaufman

Officers in attendance: J Dickson, K Garcha, A Pathak-Mould, A Thorpe,  
Miss G Ghuman, P Loveday and A Ward

Also in Attendance: Yola Geen (KPMG) and Tim Ridout (CW Audit)

Min Ref	Narrative	Officer Resp
<b>99.</b>	<b><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></b>  Councillors L Broadley, K J Loydall, R E R Morris, and Mrs R C Kanabar.	
<b>100.</b>	<b><u>APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES</u></b>  None.	
<b>101.</b>	<b><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u></b>  None.	
<b>102.</b>	<b><u>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u></b>  <b>RESOLVED:</b> That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 4 February 2014, be taken as read, confirmed and signed, subject to an amendment at minute ref 88 stating "a 0% increase in council tax".	
<b>103.</b>	<b><u>ACTION LIST</u></b>  A Member raised a query in relation to the Customer Services Transformation (item no. 32), and it was confirmed by the Chief Financial Officer that a report with an update would be presented to the meeting in July 2015.  When a Member raised a query as to the Debt Recovery Policy and report that was missing from the action list, the Chief Financial Officer confirmed the same will be going to the next meeting.	

	<p>A Member also enquired after the costs that were assured would be updated for the Building Control review and the Chief Financial Officer confirmed he would send an email separately about that.</p> <p>A Member raised concern about the Adoption of Open Spaces (item no. 29) asking whether a report had been completed. The Leader confirmed that there is a technical issue that concerns an external matter which is why the report has not yet come to committee and was pulled by the management team on the two occasions prior.</p> <p>Members expressed their concern at items being removed or changed on the action list, particularly those without good reason or an update being provided.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Members noted the contents of the Action List.</p>	
<b>104.</b>	<p><b><u>PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS</u></b></p> <p>None.</p>	
<b>105.</b>	<p><b><u>EXTERNAL AUDIT - AUDIT PLAN 2014/15</u></b></p> <p>Yola Geen outlined the report and highlighted some key issues to Members. She noted that there is one significant risk in relation to capital expenditure on the leisure centre. She explained that the reason this has been identified as a significant risk is because it is out of the ordinary for Oadby and Wigston Borough Council to have such a project. She advised that when this is accounted for in the financial statement it will be in line with the International Financial Reporting Standards. She added that this would be worked on in April 2015 in time for the audit in July</p> <p>With regards to the VFM audit approach she advised that they are required to give an opinion regarding the efficiency of services and also consider financial resilience. She noted that it is challenging time for local authorities so they must ensure plans are in place on how resources will be best expended.</p> <p>With regards to the Audit fee, she drew attention to the £900 increase as mentioned in section 6 of the report. She said there is also an additional fee of £1700 to cover the supplementary work associated with the significant risk (however approval is awaited from the Audit Commission). A Member raised concern about the additional £900 but was advised that there was a reduction on claims of £1500 (as not all of the work for the NNDR work is required) but as some of the work was needed the £900 was charged.</p> <p>A Member said that management control the internal audit, but it was confirmed by the leader and the Chief Financial Officer reassured Members that unedited reports were presented at committee as they are used as a governance tool. A Member raised a query concerning the financial reports, asking if they would be made aware should there be any anomalies. The Chief Financial Officer confirmed that he had worked with the Finance Team and was satisfied with regards to the financial administration of the Council. Tim Ridout also</p>	

	<p>provided assurance that any anomalies would be flagged.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Members noted the contents of the report.</p>	
106.	<p><b><u>EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT ON CERTIFICATION OF CLAIMS AND RETURNS</u></b></p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer outlined his report, which considered the claims and returns submitted to Central Government in 2013/14.</p> <p>He highlighted the arrangements as per the report and noted improvement from before. He advised that the grant claims and returns had a total value of £25m of which a small adjustment of £167 had to be made for the grant claimed for housing and council tax benefit of 2013/14. He advised that Officers have looked at how the inaccuracy arose and have since introduced new procedures to minimise the risk of the errors in the future.</p> <p>Yola Geen reiterated the above, and said if members wanted a copy of the qualification report she can send it to them. With regards to the audit fees, she stated there is a £4k reduction for certification of claims and that next year's fee has not yet been decided. She said they are required to write with regards to the proposals and will come back this time next year concerning the same.</p> <p>Cllr B Dave left the meeting after this vote.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Members noted the contents of the report</p>	
107.	<p><b><u>INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2014/15 AND AUDIT PLAN 2015-17</u></b></p> <p>Tim Ridout outlined the report and highlighted some key issues to Members, and first discussed the progress report for 2014/15. He stated the field work had been done and that the internal audit team was working in accordance with the original plan subject to the amendments by the management team. He further noted that there were no items of particular concern; only 15 actions remain to be completed out of 195, details of which were set out in the report.</p> <p>A Member emphasised that the Debt Recovery Policy must come to Committee in July.</p> <p>A Member asked whether it was possible to carry days over into the next financial year. Tim Ridout confirmed the same stating that the work will be completed in accordance with managements instructions and will deliver all of the work paid for.</p> <p>With regards to the audit plan 2015 – 17, Tim Ridout outlined the plan and stated that it meets the requirements of delivering a risk based programme and provided assurance to management. He mentioned the charter in the appendix which illustrates how they are compliant with internal audit standards.</p> <p>A Member stated that there may be some flexibility required post</p>	

	<p>elections should the risks change. Mr Ridout confirmed that they would be able to adapt to the changes.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That:</p> <p>(1) Members noted the content of the progress report for 2014/15</p> <p>(2) Members approve the Audit Plan and note the plan for 2016/17 is indicative at this stage.</p>	
108.	<p><b><u>MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2014/15 -2017/18</u></b></p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer noted that these are the key documents of the year. He advised that the strategy report will be coming to the meeting in October and an updated strategy would be brought to committee in July.</p> <p>He confirmed that the Councillors pension contributions have been factored in. A Member queried the Capital receipts and it was confirmed that these would be one off transactions and that nothing would be sold without the prior approval of members. The Chair stated that the Council do not want to sell “the family silver”.</p> <p>The Leader stated that the Council has invests money in order to save it and therefore if land is sold as an investment then it is acceptable.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs J M Gore abstained from the vote.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Members approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy as set out in the report.</p>	
109.	<p><b><u>PRUDENTIAL TREASURY AND INVESTMENT STRATEGIES</u></b></p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer noted that this was a statutory report which is required to be produced every year. This report had been compiled in conjunction with external advisers and was very detailed and complex.</p> <p>It was confirmed by him that the life of the asset is not the same as length of the contract. The life of the asset is 40 years and the initial contract is 20 years.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs J M Gore voted against.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Members approved:</p> <p>(1) The Prudential Indicators 2015/16;</p> <p>(2) The Treasury Strategy and Plan 2015/16; and</p> <p>(3) The Investment Strategy 2014/15 to 2017/18.</p>	

110.	<p><b><u>CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015/16</u></b></p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer advised that this was approved by Council on 19 February 2015, where more detail was requested, and is contained within Appendix 1.</p> <p>The Head of Finance confirmed that the Customer Services Centre will open this summer. A member queried the revised site for the cafe (point 6 in appendix 1) and was advised that this is less likely to happen as it does not make economic sense.</p> <p>With regards to point 13 in Appendix 1, a Member wanted details on the costing and whether an additional engineer would be recruited in light of this. The Chair stated that a response would be sent out in writing by the Chief Financial Officer.</p> <p>It was noted that the indicative funding for the Disabilities Facilities Grants (DFG) should be £177k as opposed to £143k and the Head of Finance confirmed this was the case and would be amended.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs J M Gore abstained from the vote.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Members confirmed the 2015/16 Capital Programme as detailed in Appendix 1</li> <li>(2) Members approved the budgets to be carried forward as detailed in Appendix 1.</li> </ul>	
111.	<p><b><u>RESIDENTS FORUMS BUDGET POSITION</u></b></p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer outlined the report, which set out the requests from the respective Resident Forums.</p> <p>Members commented on the defibrillators and the Leader stated that this is Council money and that residents can direct the spending but ultimately Members make the decision.</p> <p>Councillor J Kaufman abstained from the vote.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Members noted the position of the Forum's budget;</li> <li>(2) Members approved the allocations requested by the Forums as set out in the report;</li> </ul>	
112.	<p><b><u>RETURNING OFFICERS FEES</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices delivered by the Head of Corporate Resources as set out in report pages 133-135, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p>	

	<p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Members formally approved the adoption of the scale of fees for the 2015/16 financial year as set out in the report.</p>	
113.	<p><b><u>HONORARIUM UPDATE</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report delivered by the Head of Corporate Resources as set out in report pages 136-137, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>A Member asked how an honorarium payment can be ongoing as the report states it cannot be longer than 12 months. The Head of Corporate Resources stated there may be exceptions to the 12 month requirement. The Member asked who would decide whether it can be for more than 12 months and how honorariums are determined and assessed. The Chair stated that a response in writing will be provided.</p> <p>Another Member shared the concern above and stated that an honorarium should be a lump sum payment at the end of the honorarium period as opposed to a monthly payment. The Head of Corporate Resources advised that the policy (that was approved by committee) makes provisions for either a lump sum or monthly payment. The Leader stated that the payment in “service area A” should be classified as significant additional duties/responsibilities because he knew who “A” was and he considered a policy review in about 6 months time.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Members note the contents of the report</li> <li>(2) The policy be considered for review in 6 months.</li> </ul>	
114.	<p><b><u>OADBY GRANGE COUNTRY PARK UPDATE</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report delivered by the Legal Officer as set out in report pages 138-140, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>Members welcomed the report and enquired as to the date contracts would be exchanged. It was confirmed by the Legal Officer it would be done shortly ( hopefully by the end of March) and Members would be notified by email. The Legal Officer advised that the Legal Team were ready on their part and were just waiting to hear from the other parties solicitor.</p> <p>A Member asked whether an indemnity insurance policy would be incorporated within the conditions of the contract for the potential of contaminated land. The Legal Officer stated that although the land is not classed as contaminated the condition would be considered as being incorporated as part of the contract.</p> <p>Members thanked and commended the Corporate Resources Team for their hard work.</p>	

	<p>Councillor L Bentley abstained from the vote</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Members noted the report.</p>	
115.	<p><b><u>MEADOW SPORTS GROUND UPDATE</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report delivered by the Legal Officer as set out in report pages 141-142, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Legal Officer confirmed that the completion date should be set with Blaby District Council before the end of the financial year.</p> <p>A Member asked how long the overage provision would last for. From memory the Legal Officer stated it was 50% over 50 years and would confirm in writing if it was otherwise. The Member also stated that the monies should go into a community asset reserve.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Members noted the report.</p>	
116.	<p><b><u>ACTION PLAN TO BRING FORWARD DEVELOPMENT SITES IN THE BOROUGH</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report delivered by the Planning Policy and Regeneration Manager as set out in report pages 143-145, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Planning Policy and Regeneration Manager stated that this report was requested by the Leader in December 2014 and the action plan in Appendix 1 sets out a number of generic stages to be undertaken for specific sites. He stated that the action plan is a working document and that the document is under constant review.</p> <p>A Member stated that taking ownership of 41 Canal Street was a logical decision and that it needs to be a separate document which needs to be presented to Place Shaping Working Group in September.</p> <p>It was stated by the Head of Community that between points 4.4 (which Members stated needs to be on separate document) and 4.5 timescales are being obtained and that there have not been any formal commitment as of yet.</p> <p>A Member stated that a revenue prediction is needed on each piece of land. He commented that the Oadby Swimming Pool and the Town Centres need their own appendix, with timescales for each.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Members approved the Action Plan</li> <li>(2) A revenue prediction is presented to committee, in light of the comments above.</li> </ul>	

117.	<p><b><u>RIPA POLICY</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendix delivered by the Head of Corporate Resource as set out in report pages 146-166, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Head of Corporate Resources advised the policy has been renewed in accordance with the guidance issued in December 2014. A Member noted that the Head of Corporate Resources has delegated authority to make minor amendments to changes in the law. This was confirmed and Members were advised that if there is a significant change only then will members be advised of the same and every March a report will come to committee regarding the Councils use of the Act.</p> <p>A Member asked what the Act states in relation to whom the authorising officers should be. It was confirmed that the Act has left the scope very wide and has stated it needs to be a Senior Officer within the organisation (i.e. Chief Executive, Director or equivalent).</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Members approve the RIPA Policy</li> <li>(2) Delegation is given to the Head of Corporate Resources to make any amendments arising from changes to the law or to the guidance publications provided by the Home Office and the Office of Surveillance Commissioners.</li> </ul>	
118.	<p><b><u>CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION POLICY</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendix delivered by the Head of Community as set out in report pages 167-181, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Head of Community advised that this policy has been amended in accordance with the guidance notes and code of practice issued by the Information Commissioners Office.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Members approve the CCTV Policy</li> <li>(2) Delegation is given to the Head of Community to make any amendments arising from changes to the law or to the guidance publications provided by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners.</li> </ul>	
119.	<p><b><u>SUSTAINABLE YOUTH PROVISION</u></b></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report delivered by the Head of Community as set out in report pages 182-183, which, should be read together with these minutes as a composite</p>	



	<p>document.</p> <p>The Head of Community advised that the report concerns the small changes in funding for the youth in the borough.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That Members granted the Head of Community delegated to take any reasonable measures, working with other organisations, that will result in securing the long term self sufficiency, sustainability and viability of youth clubs within the borough.</p>	
120.	<p><b><u>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC</u></b></p> <p><b>RESOLVED:</b> That under Section 100 A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the business to be transacted involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).</p>	
121.	<p><b><u>ACTION PLAN TO BRING FORWARD DEVELOPMENT SITES IN THE BOROUGH - APPENDIX 2</u></b></p> <p>The committee considered the confidential appendix.</p>	

**The meeting closed at 9.13 pm**