

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY, FINANCE AND
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES,
WIGSTON ON TUESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2014, COMMENCING AT 7.00 P.M.**

IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor S B Morris – Chair
Councillor D Gamble – Vice Chair

Councillors L A Bentley, G A Boulter, J W Boyce, J M Gore, R E R Morris, E Connell,
B Dave, J Kaufman and L Kaufman

Officers in Attendance: M Hall , A Court, K Garcha, P Loveday, A Thorpe and I
Dobson

Also in Attendance: T Ridout – Assistant Director for Audit (CW Audit), Anand
Persaud (CW Audit)

Min Ref	Narrative	Officer Resp
54.	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> L Broadley, K Loydall.	ID
55.	<u>APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES</u> None.	
56.	<u>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</u> None.	
57.	<u>MINUTES OF LAST MEETING</u> RESOLVED: That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 23 September 2014, be taken as read, confirmed and signed.	
58.	<u>PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS</u> None.	
59.	<u>ACTIONS LIST</u> Members noted the action list.	
60.	<u>INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2014/15</u>	

	<p>The Committee considered the report of the Chief Financial Officer and appendices as set out in report pages 10-27 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer informed Members that the report gave details of reviews and audits carried out by Internal Audit, including an analysis of grant funding in respect of partnership working. He also drew Members attention to the request to extend the CW Audit contract for Internal Audit until March 2016.</p> <p>A Member queried the cost of extending the contract, which was not clear from the report.</p> <p>The Assistant Director (Audit) for CW Audit confirmed that the existing contract allowed for such an extension at the same cost as currently agreed, which would represent continued good value for money for the Council.</p> <p>The Committee discussed a number of outstanding actions and it was confirmed that updates had been provided to CW Audit in each case.</p> <p>A Member requested an update on the Business Rates: Charitable Relief Policy. The Chief Financial Officer confirmed that it had been drafted. It was requested that the Policy be brought to Committee for adoption.</p> <p>A Member requested that CW Audit carry out an additional audit on current projects that rely on some form of external funding. He specified that financial and reputation risk should be assessed along with benchmarking against comparable organisations on making successful applications for grant funding.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the progress report for 2014/15 be noted 2. That the internal audit contract with CW Audit be extended until March 2016 	
<p>61.</p>	<p><u>COMMITTEE BUDGET REVIEW – APRIL TO AUGUST 2014</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Chief Financial and Section 151 Officer as set out in report pages 28-31 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p>	

	<p>The Chief Financial Officer informed Members that there was nothing significant to report and that the budget is continually monitored.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p>	
<p>62.</p>	<p><u>OVERALL BUDGET POSITION – APRIL TO AUGUST 2014</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Chief Financial and Section 151 Officer as set out in report pages 32 – 37 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer informed Members that there was no current overspend and that the budget is continually monitored.</p> <p>A Member queried the accuracy of £10 million budget for the Leisure Redevelopment and it was agreed by the Committee that this figure should be checked.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the current budgetary position on the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme be noted. 2. the revenue budget supplementary and virement requests listed in the report be approved. 	
<p>63.</p>	<p><u>FEES AND CHARGES 2015/16</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Chief Financial and Section 151 Officer as set out in report pages 38 – 66 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer stated that the report sought to obtain Member approval for Fees and Charges for 2015/16 and some minor corrections relating to the calculation on the retail price index would be updated prior to the fees coming into force.</p> <p>He went on to explain that the report also recommended that following an extensive consultation a subsidy for ‘other faith burials’ be reduced to £1000 from 1 November 2014 to be reviewed in 2016/17 budget setting.</p> <p>A Member of the Committee queried the use of the terminology of ‘other faith burials’. He also raised concerns about the</p>	

	<p>compatibility of the recommendation with the public sector duties contained within the Equality Act 2010 and requested that this be considered by Officers.</p> <p>The Director of Services confirmed that a wide consultation had taken place on the matter.</p> <p>The Committee discussed this point and it was agreed that this matter needed further work to consider whether the subsidy is feasible in the future which should consider the matter without making any assumptions about the needs of different faith groups for burial or cremation.</p> <p>The Chairman stated that the Council had recently appointed a Community Engagement Officer who would be requested to look into the other faith burial subsidy scheme.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the charges outlined in Appendix 1 be approved subject to minor changes to some miscalculations in respect of uprating in line with the Retail Price Index. 2. That the subsidy towards other faith burials be approved as a maximum of £1000 with effect from 1 November 2014 and to be reviewed in 2016/17 budget setting. 	
<p>64.</p>	<p><u>BUDGET STRATEGY 2015/16 – 2016/17</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Chief Financial Officer and Section 151 Officer as set out in report pages 67 – 89 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer informed Members that the report provided an update of the Council’s projected annual financial position for the 2015/16 & 2016/17 years. He went on to say that significant savings must be found to balance the budget. He informed Members that consultation with businesses and residents together with the Council’s agreed priorities would form the basis of future spending plans.</p> <p>A discussion took place around tight timescales of internal procedures for the drafting and finalisation of reports during the budget setting process. A Member made the point that this process is an operational matter for Officers to determine.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the financial projections be noted 	

	<p>2. the draft budget strategy be considered and noted</p> <p>3. the principles set out in the report be approved as a basis for the budget strategy for the financial years 2015/16 to 2016/17.</p>	
65.	<p><u>RESIDENT FORUM OUTTURN BUDGET POSITION AND ALLOCATION REQUESTS</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Chief Financial and Section 151 Officer as set out in report pages 90 – 94 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the Forum budget positions be noted. 2. the allocation requests from the Forums as set out in the report be approved. 	
66.	<p><u>RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Chief Financial and Section 151 Officer as set out in report pages 95 – 105 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the review of the Strategic Risk Register be noted.</p>	
67.	<p><u>BUSINESS RATES POOLING</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Chief Financial and Section 151 Officer as set out in report pages 106 – 113 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the delegation of authority to both the Chief Executive and the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Leader and Chair of the Policy, Finance and Development Committee to agree to this Council re-pooling business rates for the financial year 2015/16 with Leicester City Council, all Leicestershire District Councils and the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Combined Fire Authority if the Chief Financial Officer considers that the financial conditions are beneficial be 	

	<p>approved.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. That the delegation of authority to both the Chief Executive and the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Leader and Chair of Policy, Finance and Development Committee to agree the pooling governance arrangements, including the legal agreement be approved. 3. That the delegation of authority to both the Chief Executive and the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Leader and Chair of Policy, Finance and Development Committee to agree to withdrawal from the pool for the financial year 2016/17 if information in the Local Government Finance settlement in December 2015 indicates that continued pooling would not be in the best interest of the Council be approved. 	
<p>68.</p>	<p><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Chief Financial and Section 151 Officer and Head of Community as set out in report pages 114 -125 and appendix 2 in the supplementary agenda pack pages 1 - 11 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer confirmed that the consultant's review of the Housing Revenue Account is that it remains robust. He went on to say that there is currently no provision for the building of Council Housing but there is headroom of around £3 million that can be borrowed against the Housing Revenue Account for this purpose.</p> <p>He went on to explain that no more than 30% of Right To Buy receipts could be used to fund the building of new homes, which means that 70% of the cost of building would have to found from elsewhere such as borrowing against the Housing Revenue Account.</p> <p>A Member raised concern about a shift in emphasis from use of Housing Revenue Account funds to a split with Right To Buy receipts, which was not made clear when the decision was made to take on part of the national debt in exchange for keeping rental incomes.</p> <p>The Head of Community stated that the previous plan had been based on an assumption of only 1 or 2 Right To Buy sales per year. She went on to say that the market has now been reinvigorated and more houses are being bought at discounted rates. She informed Members that guidance</p>	

	<p>detailing the 70/30 split from the Department of Communities and Local Government had been released late which impacts upon Councils nationwide to replace Right To Buy homes like for like.</p> <p>A Member of the Committee suggested that consideration should be given to how the Council can best invest £100k from Right To Buy sales.</p> <p>The Committee discussed this matter and commented upon the excellent analysis provided by the Head of Community. They noted the importance of building 1 and 2 bedroom homes. Members were united in taking a mixed approach to achieving this target and it was suggested that external expertise in delivering this may be good use of some of the resource. It was agreed that all of the options contained within the appendix be considered as part of the action plan for achieving around 6 homes per year, which should be viewed as an aspirational and flexible target.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. progress on the Housing Revenue Account 30 year business plan for 2014/15 and three year forward financial projection be noted. 2. a report be produced for Policy, Finance & Development committee to develop an action plan for a mixed approach to building around an additional 6 council homes a year, which should be viewed as an aspirational and flexible target. 	
69.	<p><u>ADVICE AND INFORMATION SERVICES BY LEICESTERSHIRE CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Head of Community as set out in report pages 126 – 144 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Head of Community informed Members that the report provides details on the timetable for renewing the voluntary advice contract.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the report and timetable for the review of the voluntary advice contract in advance of the expiry in August 2015 be noted. 	

	<p>2. the proposed timetable for the consideration and approval of a new advice and information service contract be approved.</p>	
<p>70.</p>	<p><u>REVIEW OF THE BOROUGH OF OADBY & WIGSTON (OFF STREET PARKING PLACES) ORDER 2008</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Director of Services as set out in report pages 145 – 146 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Director of Services informed Members that approval was requested to enable the revised car parking arrangements and relining of bays to proceed.</p> <p>A Member expressed concern about not having a ticket machine in short stay car parks which could result in the public having to walk to a long stay car park in the event of wishing to park beyond the permitted period of free shoppers parking.</p> <p>The Director of Services confirmed that improved signage would clarify the distinction between short stay and long stay car parks.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That approval be given for the Legal Team to draft an amended Parking Order to be sent out for a statutory consultation.</p>	
<p>71.</p>	<p><u>PUBLIC REALM WORKS WITHIN WIGSTON AND OADBY TOWN CENTRES SPEND UPDATE</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Director of Services and Planning Policy and Regeneration Manager as set out in report pages 147 – 148 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That the report be noted.</p>	
<p>72.</p>	<p><u>PROGRESS WITH DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE BOROUGH</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Director of Services and Planning Policy and Regeneration Manager as set out in report pages 149 – 151 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That</p> <p>1. the position with regard to the potential development</p>	

	<p>opportunities in Borough be noted.</p> <p>2. the Council's commitment to use its compulsory purchase powers where necessary in order to assemble sites to achieve the Council's regeneration and development priorities be re-affirmed.</p>	
<p>73.</p>	<p><u>EVENTS POLICY</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Resources as set out in report pages 152 -167 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>Councillor Dean Gamble declared an interest in this item as a holder of a Street Trading Consent issued by the Council.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Policy and be adopted. 2. That determination of Road Closure Orders submitted in line with the Policy be delegated to the Head of Corporate Resources. 	
<p>74.</p>	<p><u>CORPORATE RESOURCES POLICIES</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Resources as set out in report pages 168 - 330 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Head of Corporate Resources informed Members that the Policies before them were essential to good governance and performance management.</p> <p>A Member made the point that Honorariums should be for work that has been carried out above and beyond the expectations of the employee and not for normal day to day duties.</p> <p>A report on current honorariums is to be presented to the next committee meeting.</p> <p>A Member commended the clearly written policies which would provide good protection the Council and it's staff.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That the Policies set out in the report be adopted and authority to be delegated to the Head of Corporate Resources to make amendments arising out of changes to the law.</p>	

<p>75.</p>	<p><u>ITEM ADMITTED TO THE MEETING UNDER SECTION 100B(4)(b) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972:</u></p> <p>RESOLVED: That by reason of special circumstance in that an additional item of business needs to be considered before the next meeting of the Committee, the Chair resolved that the following item should be considered at this Meeting as a matter of urgency.</p>	
<p>76.</p>	<p><u>GREEN WASTE</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive as set out in supplementary report pages 12 - 25 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Chief Executive informed Members that the collection of green waste service requires changes to the way in which it currently operates to address health and safety concerns in relation to crews and also to ensure that the service allows a continued collection of green waste for residents without introducing a charge.</p> <p>He went on to say that the report sets out a variety of options for Members to consider in relation to the collection of green waste, with the recommended option proposing a choice for residents to leave up to four bags or a wheeled bin. It would also be possible for residents to purchase additional bins if they required more capacity.</p> <p>Further, he stated that a high profile implementation strategy would run alongside the roll out to ensure that residents had an opportunity to make a choice in relation to the collection of green waste under the new system, which is to be launched February 2015.</p> <p>Members discussed this matter and acknowledged that the amount of green waste currently being left for collection is causing operational problems.</p> <p>The Chairman emphasised that the proposed scheme is not a method of bringing in wheeled bins for general waste and recycling services.</p> <p>A Member emphasised that a clause preventing wheeled bins from being left on the frontages of properties must be included. He also sought assurance from the Chief Executive that the scheme was deliverable within the timescales.</p>	

	<p>The Chief Executive confirmed that the scheme would be ready to start in February 2015 and that contingency plans were already in place to prevent slippage.</p> <p>In response to queries from the Committee, the Chief Executive confirmed that lead in times for delivery of the bins are reasonable and could be delivered directly to resident's homes.</p> <p>A Member suggested that additional resources be put in place for the initial stages of implementation to assist with queries relating to the scheme.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 The Council provide households with re-usable green garden sacks free of charge for garden waste. 1.2 the limit of four sacks to be provided to each household be approved 1.3 Where a household's requirement is more than four garden sacks, the use of sacks will be replaced with a bin free of charge. A bin can hold up to eight to ten sacks worth of green waste. 1.4 households which put out less than four garden sacks will also have the choice of being provided with a free bin. 1.5 additional bins be made available to ensure there is an unlimited collection service 1.6 a one off charge of around £20 be made for any additional bins. 1.7 the high profile implementation strategy as set out in Section 7 of the report be approved. 	
77.	<p><u>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC</u></p> <p>RESOLVED: 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>	
78.	<p><u>PROTECTING THE PUBLIC PURSE</u></p>	

	<p>The Committee considered the report of the Chief Financial Officer and the report provided by CW Audit on Counter Fraud Strategies.</p> <p>The Assistant Director (Audit) for CW Audit updated Members on a checklist that had been produced to assure Members that processes are in place in relation to counter-fraud strategies, policies and procedures.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the content of the appendix be noted.</p>	
79.	<p><u>SPORTS GROUND – LEICESTER ROAD, COUNTESTHORPE</u></p> <p>The Committee considered the report of the Chief Financial and Section 151 Officer as set out in report pages 341 -343 which should be read in conjunction with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Chief Financial Officer informed Members that this report provided an updated position following the meeting of the Committee in July.</p> <p>Members suggested that a clause should be included to ensure that if the land is sold for any other purpose in the next 50 years, the Council would be entitled to a proportion of the proceeds.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the sale of the Meadows Sports Ground be approved. 2. the continued hire arrangements stay in place. 3. Full and final payment of agreed amount be accepted. 	

The Meeting Closed at 21:39.