

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY, FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, STATION ROAD, WIGSTON ON TUESDAY, 29 MARCH
2016 COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM**

<u>IN ATTENDANCE:</u>		
Chair - Councillor Mrs S B Morris Vice-Chair - Councillor D A Gamble		
COUNCILLORS (11):		
G S Atwal	J W Boyce	Mrs S Z Haq
L A Bentley	B Dave	J Kaufman
Ms A R Bond	Mrs L Eaton	K J Loydall
G A Boulter	B Fahey	
OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE (3):		
S J Ball	S Glazebrook	M Hone
OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE (4):		
A Persaud	O Campbell	M Vigil
	M Luke	

Min Ref.	Narrative	Officer Resp.
79.	<p><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></p> <p>An apology for absence was received from Councillors M L Darr, R E R Morris and T Barr.</p>	
80.	<p><u>APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTES</u></p> <p>Councillors Mrs S Z Haq and Ms A R Bond and substituting for Councillors M L Darr and T Barr, respectively.</p>	
81.	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u></p> <p>Councillor G S Atwal declared that he was a signatory to the Oadby Swimming Pool Site Petition and that he had spoken to the Petitioner, in respect of agenda items 6a and 6b. The Member attended the meeting without prejudice and with an open mind.</p>	
82.	<p><u>READING, CONFIRMATION AND SIGNING OF MINUTES</u></p> <p>Councillor B Dave requested that the mismarking of his forename initial be corrected in the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 02 February 2016.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>(i) Subject to the correction aforementioned, the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 02 February 2016 be taken as read, confirmed and signed; and</p>	

	(ii) The minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Committee held on 18 February 2016 be taken as read, confirmed and signed.	
83.	<p><u>ACTION LIST ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 02 FEBRUARY 2016</u></p> <p>The Interim Chief Financial Officer reported that all items had been duly actioned.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>The Action List be noted by Members.</p>	
84.	<p><u>PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS</u></p> <p>Two Petitions were received by the Committee in respect of the Oadby Swimming Pool Site as set out at agenda items 6a and 6b respectively (at pages 17 - 35).</p>	
85.	<p><u>OADBY SWIMMING POOL SITE PETITION(S)</u></p> <p>Mr Matthew Luke presented and spoke upon the Petition(s) at agenda items 6a and 6b.</p> <p>Mr Luke stated that there were two requests within the Petition: the retention of ownership and recreational usage. He suggested that an indoor skate park or a soft play centre could make for the best indoor use of the site, thus limiting noise objections and providing a safer environment for young people. He further proposed a Community Arts Centre or the building's conversion into a Squash Centre. It was said that these options had the advantage of retaining the existing building and would benefit other visitors to Ellis Park. Mr Luke further suggested that the site could be returned to a green space in keeping with the original use of the land, potentially attracting external grants for redevelopment such as a sensory garden or raised communal planters to form part of the Edible Food Trail Lottery Bid. He invited the Council to engage in a meaningful dialogue with residents and appealed for cross-party agreement on the side of retention for a recreational use of the site in question.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce stated all the available options for future use of the site, including those raised by the residents of Oadby and the Petitioner, would be considered as part of the ongoing feasibility study currently being undertaken.</p> <p>Councillor Ms A R Bond supported the suggestions raised by the Petitioner.</p> <p>Councillor K J Loydall emphasised that Opposition Members had previously voiced their support for other potential uses of the site, including a general practitioners' surgery, additional schooling facilities and social/affordable housing.</p> <p>Councillor J Kaufman welcomed the views of the residents of Oadby and the Petitioner and noted that any intended future use of the land, whether that be recreational or otherwise, was to serve as betterment to the residents of the Oadby area.</p>	

<p>86.</p>	<p><u>INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2015/16 AND AUDIT PLAN 2016/17</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 36 - 78) as jointly-delivered and summarised by the Interim Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer) and Audit Manager at CW Audit Services, Mr Anand Persaud, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>Councillor B Dave welcomed the report and the opportunity to meet with the Audit Manager. With reference to 'Void Property Management' at paragraph 4 citing the recommendation for 'periodic reports ... detailing analysed debt levels' etc. (at page 50), the Member requested what timescales were to be given in respect of the same.</p> <p>The Interim Chief Financial Officer advised that six-monthly reports would be brought to the Committee for Members' consideration.</p> <p>With reference to 'Leavers' Access to Council's IT System' at paragraph 3.2 (at page 40), Councillor J Kaufman enquired as to whether this control applied to those Officers that had been suspended.</p> <p>The Interim Chief Financial Officer answered affirmatively.</p> <p>The Chair commended the correct identification of issues in the report and welcomes the progress made to date.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce requested that the nine 'High Risk Outstanding Issues' at paragraph 4 (at pages 45 – 51) be directly incorporated into the Action List.</p> <p>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The content of the Progress Report for 2015/16 be noted by Members; (ii) The Audit Plan for 2016/17 be approved; and (iii) The Audit Plan for 2016/17 be noted as indicative at this stage insofar as the days allocated to each audit may change following the reviews in 2015/16. 	
<p>87.</p>	<p><u>EXTERNAL AUDIT REPORT ON GRANT CLAIMS AND RETURNS AND THE EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2016/17</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 79 - 103) as jointly-delivered and summarised by the Interim Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer) and Assistant Audit Manager at KMPG, Mr Owen Campbell, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>Councillor J Kaufman enquired as to why the planned audit fee for 2015/16 was 25% less than for 2014/15.</p> <p>The Assistant Audit Manager advised that the Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) were responsible for the setting of audit fees.</p> <p>With reference to the 'Pooling of Housing Capital Receipts' (at page 87),</p>	

	<p>Councillor J W Boyce enquired as to whether the implication was fixable or if there existed a long-term problem. The Member further requested a report regarding audit tendering.</p> <p>The Assistant Audit Manager advised that there had been a one-off, isolated error that had since been resolved.</p> <p>Councillor G A Boulter enquired as to whether a future report was to be brought to this Committee setting out the implementation of the report's recommendations. The Member further sought clarification as to criterion to be used for identifying the Council's highest-valued housing stock for intended disposal.</p> <p>The Interim Chief Financial Officer advised that the recommendations and their implications would feature in the revised Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) due before the meeting of the Council on Tuesday, 19 April 2016. It was further advised that, due to the ongoing government-led consultation process, there was still uncertainty as to criteria to be used: however, it was noted that any intended disposal(s) would have an impact upon Housing Revenue Account (HRA).</p> <p>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>The contents contained within the report be noted by Members</p>	
88.	<p><u>RESIDENTS' FORUM BUDGET POSITION AND ALLOCATION REQUESTS</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 104 - 108) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer), which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Interim Chief Financial Officer advised that the Oadby Residents' Forum request at paragraph 3.2.2 required further investigation before being resolved by the Committee.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce requested that the information herewith contained in the Forums' Budget report take account of the renewed position from start of this Council's lifecycle (i.e. April 2015).</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce moved the recommendations as set out at paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 of the report and subject to delegated authority being granted to the Chief Financial Officer to address the Oadby Residents' Forum request at paragraph 3.2.2.</p> <p>The Chair seconded the recommendations (as amended).</p> <p>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>(i) The position of the Forums' Budget be noted by Members; and (ii) To the exclusion of paragraph 3.2.2, the allocation requested by the Forums (as set out at paragraphs 3.2 to 3.4 of the report) be approved; and (iii) Delegated authority be granted to the Chief Financial Officer to</p>	

	address the Oadby Residents' Forum request at paragraph 3.2.2.	
89.	<p><u>PROVISION OF ADVICE AND INFORMATION SERVICES IN THE BOROUGH</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 109 - 112) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Community Services Manager, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Interim Community Services Manager added that the dates, times and locations of advisory sessions would be discussed as part of the pre-contract negotiations with the Helping Hands Advice Centre (HH) and the Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) and Members would be advised of the same in due course.</p> <p>Councillor D A Gamble moved the recommendation as set out at paragraph 2 of the report.</p> <p>The Chair seconded the recommendation.</p> <p>Councillor G A Boulter requested that any pre-contract negotiations make clear the finality of the budget and that liability would be joint and several between both HH and CAB should one party be no longer to honour its contractual obligations.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce requested that once the contract specification had been finalised, that the information relating to advisory sessions be published.</p> <p>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>The Citizens' Advice Bureau and Helping Hands Advice Centre be appointed to provide advice and information services to the residents of Oadby and Wigston for a period of 3 years at a total cost of £55,000 per year commencing on 1 June 2016.</p>	
90.	<p><u>DRAFT HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 113 - 133) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer), in the absence of the Director of Services, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>Councillor L A Bentley welcomed the report and extensive work undertaken by Officers. The Member raised a concern as to the volume of the draft Health and Safety Policy ("the Policy"). He recommended that the Policy ought to consist of a more simplified, two-to-three page high-tier policy document with a number of detailed, policy documents operating underneath. He requested that greater emphasis be placed upon personal protection equipment and risk assessments.</p> <p>Councillor L A Bentley moved the recommendations as set out at paragraphs 2.1 to 2.3 of the report.</p>	

	<p>Councillor K J Loydall suggested that the Policy should incorporate a more defined structure as to the exact designations of responsibility and operating standards.</p> <p>Councillor B Dave echoed the sentiments of Councillor L A Bentley.</p> <p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>(i) The draft Health and Safety Policy be approved and adopted; (ii) The position on health and safety training be noted by Members; and (iii) The Director of Services be granted delegated authority, in consultation with the Chair, to make any changes to the policy in light of legislation or other changes in circumstances.</p> <p>Votes For 12 Votes Against 0 Abstentions 1</p>	
91.	<p><u>EQUALITY ASSESSMENTS</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 134 - 137) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer), in the absence of the Director of Services, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>Councillor K L Loydall suggested that a single, inclusive policy document was required to specifically identify those Officers responsible and their attendant obligations under, and in respect of the completion of, Equality Assessments.</p> <p>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>The contents contained within the report be noted by Members</p>	
92.	<p><u>SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 138 - 141) as jointly-delivered and summarised by the Interim Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer) and the Managing Director at Big Sound Marketing, Mr Mark Vigil, in the absence of the Director of Services, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Chair enquired as to how a formal tone of voice, oft-expected and suited to a local authority, was to be maintained and communicated on social media platforms and whether training was to be provided to members of staff to achieve this.</p> <p>Mr Vigil advised that it was important communications be grammatically-coherent and avoid a colloquial use of language to maintain the appropriate tone. He stated that two members of staff were to be appropriately trained.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs S Z Haq enquired as to whether Member's would be notified if they were the subject of a social media communication.</p>	

	<p>Mr Vigil confirmed that Members would be notified as a courtesy.</p> <p>Councillor Mrs L M Broadley enquired as to the robustness of the intended social media platforms against incidents of abuse, inappropriate content or “trolling”.</p> <p>Mr Vigil advised that both platforms were well-governed and abusive or inappropriate content could be moderated and deleted, accordingly. He warned, however, that there was a possibility that inappropriate content may be seen before deletion.</p> <p>Councillor G A Boulter voiced reservations about the use of social media if the channels of communication were not managed or moderated effectively. The Member further requested more information as to safeguards and long-term costings.</p> <p>Councillor B Fahey enquired as to what number of users and, or, followers would be considered a success and the timescales expected to achieve those numbers.</p> <p>Mr Vigil advised that a user/followship of approximately 10,000 was to be considered a success and sought to achieve this with 12-18 months of the platforms’ inception.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce noted the significance and relevancy of social media in the modern day as a means of a two-way communication, allowing easier and wider-interactions to be possible between the Council, its residents and stakeholders.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce moved the recommendation as set out at paragraph 2 of the report.</p> <p>Councillor J Kaufman seconded the recommendation.</p> <p>Councillor B Dave recognised the importance of social media as a means to better engage the young people of the Borough in aspects of the Council’s work.</p> <p>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>The proposals within the report as the basis for a Social Media Policy be approved.</p> <table data-bbox="279 1608 606 1709"> <tr> <td>Votes For</td> <td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Votes Against</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Abstentions</td> <td>2</td> </tr> </table>	Votes For	11	Votes Against	0	Abstentions	2	
Votes For	11							
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<p>93.</p>	<p><u>UPDATE ON OPEN SPACES AND LAND MATTERS ACROSS THE BOROUGH</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report and appendices (at pages 142 - 146) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer), in the absence of the Director of Services, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p>							

	<p>Councillor D A Gamble moved the recommendations as set out at paragraphs 2.1 to 2.3 of the report.</p> <p>The Chair seconded the recommendations.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce enquired as to whom the legal proprietor of the Archery Field at the Sports Ground at Leicester Road, Countesthorpe was. He further enquired as to whether the receipt of £15,000 was a one-off payment for the grant of rights in respect of construction and operations: if this was the case, the Member moved for delegated authority be granted to the Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with the Chair, to seek further consideration for ongoing access to the Solar Farm at Leicester Road, Countesthorpe.</p> <p>Councillor D A Gamble and the Chair agreed with Councillor J W Boyce's amendment.</p> <p>The Interim Chief Financial Officer advised that the ownership of land would be ascertained and the Member informed in due course. He further reported that the receipt was a one-off payment in respect of construction and maintenance.</p> <p>Councillor B Dave commended the prompt action taken by Officers in securing the adoption of the open space play area at Florence Wragg Way, Oadby.</p> <p>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The completion of the adoption of the open space play area at Florence Wragg way, Oadby as shown on the attached appendix A and the adoption of a further piece of open space at Hill Field, Oadby as shown on the attached appendix B be noted by Members; (ii) The position with the sale of the Sports Ground at Leicester Road, Countesthorpe to Blaby District Council be noted by Members; and (iii) Delegated authority be granted to the Chief Financial Officer, in consultation with the Chair, to seek further consideration for ongoing rights of access over the Council owned access strip as shown on the attached appendix C for the construction and operation of the Solar Farm at Leicester Road, Countesthorpe. 	
<p>94.</p>	<p><u>MELTON LOCAL PLAN - EMERGING OPTIONS (DRAFT PLAN)</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 147 - 148) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer), in the absence of the Director of Services, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>The Chair moved the recommendation as set out at paragraph 2 of the report.</p> <p>Councillor D A Gamble seconded the recommendation.</p> <p>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</p>	

	<p>The comments set out in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.6 of the report as Oadby and Wigston Borough Council's formal response to Melton Borough Council's consultation on its Local Plan be noted by Members.</p>	
<p>95.</p>	<p><u>NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITE ALLOCATION CONSULTATION DOCUMENT</u></p> <p>The Committee gave consideration to the report (at pages 149 - 150) as delivered and summarised by the Interim Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer), in the absence of the Director of Services, which should be read together with these minutes as a composite document.</p> <p>Councillor J Kaufman raised a concern as to the 'Equality Implications' citing 'No significant concerns' (at page 150) given the subject-matter of the report.</p> <p>Councillor J W Boyce advised that the recommendation as set out at paragraph 2.1 of the report (at page 149) sought to address the Member's concern.</p> <p>The Chair moved the recommendation as set out at paragraph 2.1 of the report.</p> <p>Councillor D A Gamble seconded the recommendation.</p> <p>UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:</p> <p>The comments set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report as Oadby and Wigston Borough Council's formal response to the Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocation Consultation Paper be noted by Members.</p>	

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.02 PM



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CHAIR
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TUESDAY, 19 JULY 2016
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