

Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held at Riverside, 4 Canning Road,
Lowestoft on **Wednesday, 14 March 2018 at 6.30pm**

Cabinet Members present:

Councillors M Bee (Chairman), S Ardley, M Ladd, B Provan, C Rivett, D Ritchie and M Rudd.

Deputy Cabinet Members present:

Councillors P Ashdown, N Brooks, A Cackett, J Ceresa and C Topping.

Also in attendance:

Councillors S Allen, M Cherry, J Murray and S Woods.

Officers present:

S Baker (Chief Executive), R Best (Communities Manager), A Bissett (Property Lawyer), A Jarvis (Strategic Director), H Javadi (Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer), N Khan (Strategic Director), B Law (Housing Programme Manager), S Taylor (Finance Manager for Compliance and Deputy Section 151 Officer) and N Wotton (Democratic Services Manager).

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G Catchpole and C Punt.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made on this occasion.

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 14 February 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 ISSUES ARISING FROM THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OR THE AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

(a) The Overview & Scrutiny Committee

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee reported that the Suffolk County Council's (SCC) Scrutiny Committee had been invited to attend a scrutiny review into the proposed closure of Lowestoft Records Office. It was noted that 2 Members of the SCC Scrutiny Committee would be in attendance. Information regarding this scrutiny meeting would be circulated to all Members of the Council, in due course.

Members were also advised that the Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee had written to the Chief Executive of Anglian Water, inviting them to attend a meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, to consider issues within the District. It was noted that the Chief Executive would have sight of the Committee's questions in advance of the meeting, so that detailed answers could be provided to Members.

(b) The Audit & Governance Committee

There were no matters to report on this occasion.

5 SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS FOR 2018/19

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Merger & Communities presented the report on Service Level Agreements for 2018/19. It was noted that the Council's East Suffolk Community Team had updated the Equality Impact Assessment to identify and prioritise the most vulnerable communities within Waveney and those communities most in need of support. The following priorities had been identified:

- Older People and Young People
- Vulnerable People
- People with disabilities including mental health issues
- Protected characteristic groups
- Volunteering

The Service Level Agreement (SLA) budget for 2018/19 was £124,000. It was noted that the SLA process ensured that those organisations delivering services on the Council's behalf have the necessary skills, capacity and experience to deliver a higher, competitive standard of service than the Council would otherwise need to provide itself and therefore met the Value for Money (VfM) criteria.

Members were advised that all VCS organisations must meet, as a minimum, the criteria for an SLA / grant. They must all have a Constitution and Terms of Reference and be able to prove financial sustainability. Individual SLA / grants were negotiated separately with each organisation to ensure best value, accountability and sustainability. Data quality would be ensured through a robust monitoring process, developed to ensure compliance with the SLA / grant.

It was reported that the Council had consulted with Waveney Housing Options and the Revenues & Benefits Teams in order to identify local priorities and vulnerable communities and had jointly met with each of the current SLA / grant holders to review monitoring information supplied, to make sure that it was current and relevant for 2018/19.

Members were reminded that the Council had agreed to pay NESCAP an extra £50,000 grant in 2015/16 to help the organisation to purchase St Margaret's House, Gordon Road, Lowestoft, as their new headquarters. It was noted that the Council had agreed to reduce the current and ongoing grant of £77,940 by £10,000 per year and therefore the payback of their extra grant would be achieved by 31 March 2021.

Members were advised that due to the specialist and varied work carried out by Access Community Trust (ACT) they had been awarded an exemption from the Contract Procedure Rules. As a result, the Council would not have to seek an annual procurement of the Service Level Agreement.

A Member sought clarification regarding the Small Grants Fund, which was mentioned on page 15 of the report. It was confirmed that this was a small pot of funding, which organisations could apply for. All applications received would then be considered by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Merger & Communities. Information on how to apply for this funding could be found on the Council's website or by contacting the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Merger & Communities and the Communities Manager. It was noted that only voluntary organisations would be eligible to apply for these grants.

Reassurance was provided that all of the previous issues with the Disability and Information Advice Line (DIAL) had been successfully resolved. The Council was closely monitoring their performance and was confident that they could provide the desired services. The Deputy Cabinet Member for Merger & Communities reported that she had the responsibility for DIAL and was attending all of their meetings. A new Manager had been appointed and many changes were underway, to ensure the long term sustainability of the service.

RESOLVED

1. That the process of identifying and awarding one year SLAs with Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Organisations to 31 March 2019, as outlined in Appendix A, be noted.
2. That one year Service Level Agreements (SLAs) to 31 March 2019, as outlined in Appendix A for DIAL and ACT be approved.
3. That the two year Grant Agreement with NESCAP to 31st March 2019 and approved previously by Cabinet, in line with an agreement to slice the yearly grant as part of a five year agreement supporting the purchase of St. Margaret's House as their new headquarters be noted.
4. That the two year grant agreement with the Association for Suffolk Museums to 31st March 2019 and approved previously by Cabinet be approved.
5. That the Cabinet Member for Merger and Communities be awarded delegated authority to allocate any remaining ring-fenced funding to VCS Organisations through further SLAs once identified, providing this addresses any gaps in services identified through the EqlA process and to support delivery of the East Suffolk Business Plan key priorities, be approved.
6. That the work of the East Suffolk Communities Team supported by the Procurement Team, to exempt Access Community Trust from Contract Procedure Rules be noted.

6 TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR 2018/19

The Cabinet Member for Resources & Welfare Reforms presented the report on the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy for 2018/19. It was noted that each year, every local authority had to approve a policy strategy, which would govern its day to day treasury management objectives for that year. Treasury Management was a balance between maximising the performance from investments, money market and capital market transactions, whilst minimising the risk to the Council's cash flows and banking. The overriding principle was always the security of Council monies. The main areas covered within the report were:

- the current treasury position;
- treasury indicators which limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council;
- prospects for interest rates;
- the borrowing strategy;
- policy on borrowing in advance of need;
- debt rescheduling;
- the investment strategy;
- creditworthiness policy; and
- policy on use of external service providers.
- The capital plans (including prudential indicators).
- Minimum revenue provision (MRP) strategy.

Members noted that Strategy was in a different format, when compared to previous years. This was due to the Council changing its external Treasury Advisors from Capita to Arlingclose.

Particular attention was drawn to the relevant economic factors. The report itself gave an overview of the current economic background, including the global economy, UK economy, inflation and the interest base rate. Appendix A to the report provided the Treasury Management Policy Statement for 2018/19 along with the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy showing investments of £44 million and the sources of external borrowing, whilst Appendix B outlined the Prudential Indicators and Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Statement for 2018/19.

The Finance Manager for Compliance and Deputy Section 151 Officer reported that there were some minor typographical errors contained in the table on page 23 of the report. The correct figures were provided and it was agreed that the report would be amended and re-published on the Council's website for clarity. It was confirmed that the figures within the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy report for Full Council on 21 March 2018 were correct.

RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL

That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2018/19 and the Prudential Indicators 2018/19 be approved by Full Council.

7 EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**RESOLVED**

That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public 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 Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

8 PURCHASE OF LAND IN LOWESTOFT

The Cabinet Member for Resources presented a report which sought approval for the purchase of a site in Lowestoft by private negotiation.

RESOLVED

1. That the purchase of the site by private treaty be approved, up to the sum as discussed at the meeting.
2. That Delegated Authority be granted to officers to continue the negotiations with regard to the purchase of this site.
3. That Delegated Authority be granted to officers to commence the necessary legal work for the acquisition of the site.

9 PURCHASE OF LAND IN CENTRAL LOWESTOFT

The Cabinet Member for Resources presented a report which sought approval to purchase the site in Central Lowestoft, for residential and commercial use.

RESOLVED

1. That the Council proceeds to purchase the freehold of the site, for the sum as discussed at the meeting.
2. That Delegated Authority be granted to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Chief Finance Officer, to conclude the purchase on terms that best protect the interests of the Council.
3. That on completion of the purchase of the site, Asset Management review all options to mitigate property costs and that Delegated Authority be granted to undertake the removal of notifiable asbestos for the sum as discussed at the meeting.

10 CLEVELAND ROAD DEVELOPMENT

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing presented a report, which sought approval for the re-development of the properties identified in Cleveland Road, which would be used to provide a number of units for the accommodation of people with identified care needs. The recommendations in the report were duly proposed by the Cabinet Member for Resources and were seconded by the Cabinet Member for Tourism & Economic Development.

RESOLVED

- 1 That, subject to recommendations 3, 4 and 5, the decision for WDC to spend up to the amount as discussed at the meeting, converting 31, 33, 35, 39 and 43 Cleveland Road into supported housing, consisting of self contained flats, providing accommodation for up to 14 individuals, and that such conversion works are to be procured via competitive tender or carried out in house via WDC projects team.
- 2 That subject to recommendations 3, 4 and 5 that the variation in design and spending up to a value of 15% of the value identified within recommendation 1 be approved.
- 3 That Cabinet's approval in Recommendation 1 above be subject to WDC entering into a nomination agreement with SCC for the occupation of up to 14 self contained flats.
- 4 That Cabinet's approval in Recommendation 1 above be subject to WDC obtaining planning consent for the proposed conversion and Cabinet approve WDC applying for planning permission in relation to the proposed conversion.
- 5 That Cabinets approval in Recommendation 1 above be subject to WDC entering into a Service Level Agreement with a Housing Support Provider. Such provider to be contracted by WDC via SCC's relevant framework and Cabinet approve WDC entering the said Service Level Agreement.
- 6 That Delegated Authority be granted to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Chief Finance Officer, to enter into all necessary contract / transfers on terms that best protect WDC's interest.

11 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**RESOLVED**

That the Exempt Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 14 February 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting concluded at 7.50 pm.

Chairman