

## **CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES** of the Meeting of the **RESOURCES OVERVIEW COMMITTEE** held on **4 DECEMBER 2018**

**PRESENT:** Councillor N Rose - Chairman

Councillors: A Bacon  
J Gladwin  
J MacBean  
V Martin  
D Phillips  
D Varley  
J Waters  
C Wertheim  
N Southworth

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Councillors C Jones, C Ford, A Garth, M Harrold and R J Jones

#### **52 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Resources Overview Committee held on 11 September 2018 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

#### **53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **54 CHILTERN LIFESTYLE CENTRE UPDATE**

The Chairman asked that item 9 on the agenda be considered first and the Committee agreed.

An update to the Chiltern Pools redevelopment project was provided to the Committee. The planning application for the project had been submitted that day. Public information events had been held and the comments received were listed on the website. Those against the project had said that they were concerned about the loss of flumes at Chiltern Pools and the loss of open green space. The Leisure Members Working Group considered the responses and it was being investigated whether the loss of the flumes could be mitigated by more flotation devices at Chesham and Chalfont St Peter leisure centres.

It was noted that restrictive covenants applied to the Chiltern Pools and wider leisure and community site. Although legal opinion had advised that the covenants are obsolete and unenforceable, it was recommended that insurance be taken out to cover the Council against the possibility of future claims.

With regard to the children's play area, a letter of intent was required from CDC to the Fields in Trust, to ensure that the land would be protected under the FIT covenant. This would progress the land swap so that the Children's Play area could be relocated and retained.

An options appraisal had been carried out on the enabling development and the constraints and opportunities were set out in the report. The residual land valuations were provided in the private appendix and were in accordance with the assumptions made in the business plan for the Chiltern Lifestyle Centre.

Members were concerned that the latest public engagement had not been extensive enough. There was also concern that the flumes were currently one of the reasons for the current success of the pools and requested a study be undertaken to find out exactly how important they were.

Members expressed views that the assumptions around how realistically the anticipated health and fitness membership forecasts would be achieved as they were a key risk for the project. This would be something the Scrutiny Sub Committee would wish to examine in detail. It was requested that these concerns be added to a future agenda for the new Chiltern Lifestyle Centre Scrutiny Sub Committee.

Members felt it would be helpful for the new Scrutiny Sub Committee if it had at its first meeting relevant extracts from the minutes of this cycles meetings of the Services and Resources Overview Committees.

## **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO CABINET**

- 1. To note the results of the public consultation and the comments made on the current design and location of the Chiltern Lifestyle Centre. The Committee had reservations however about the consultation process.**
- 2. To insure against any risk relating to the restrictive covenant being enforced by any successor in title of a MRCEL plot, it was recommended that the Cabinet agree to the Council taking out insurance to protect itself against any claim.**
- 3. That the Children's Play Areas be kept under a Fields in Trust Covenant to ensure they are maintained as such in the future.**
- 4. To note the initial residual land valuations that may arise from any**

**55 28 DAY NOTICE**

**RESOLVED**

**That the 28 Day Notices for the meetings of the Cabinet and the Chiltern and South Bucks Joint Committee be noted.**

**56 PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 2 2018/19**

The Performance Indicators for Quarter 2, 2018-19 were considered and it was noted that of the 47 PI's, only 3 were off target. The reasons for these were discussed in detail and the main points were:

1. Environment. The data had not yet been received from SERCO but would be available shortly.
2. Food hygiene targets had not been met because they had been short of staff but there was provision to bring in short term agency staff.
3. Planning and Economic Development had also been short of staff but was expected to get back on target shortly.
4. CdWR4 – number of missed containers. This PI had been recalculated to bring it in line with other Council's standards. This still remained a difficult target to achieve but was more realistic and in line with joint waste contract partners.
5. Customer Services had been short staffed but had 2 new staff members starting in November.
6. Support Services had had problems with the vWorkspace desktop environment during September and there had been major outage of the uniform system following an upgrade. This resulted in slightly slower response times from the helpdesk.

Councillors were concerned about the backlog of planning enforcement cases and asked how many remained to be resolved. It was advised that there were about 400 cases currently. Members requested that the number of open enforcement cases be added to the Data Only PI list. It was asked whether staff were able to take annual leave at the same time as there were staff vacancies. The response was that it was for the service manager to decide taking into account relevant factors.

There were currently 7 members of staff on long-term sick leave. It was advised that the Joint Staff Committee would get detail on these cases and discuss. There was concern that the number was increasing each month, even

though it was within the target figure, and the Cabinet should be aware of this trend.

PI CdWr2 the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting was discussed. Suggestions were made of ways that more plastic could be recycled. It was requested that this issue be highlighted for the Joint Waste Committee to seek improvement in this area.

## **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

**That Cabinet note the performance indicator reports and the comments of the Resources Overview Committee.**

*Note: Councillor A Bacon entered the meeting at 7.10 pm*

## **57 DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET 2019/20**

The Committee was reminded that the announcement of the decision to create a new unitary authority did not affect the legal responsibility to set a budget for 2019/20. There would need to be provision made for transition costs under the obligation to co-operate but these were not yet known. Most of the costs were now split as part of the shared services arrangement. The budgets had been scrutinised by Policy Holders and Officers. This resulted in budget reductions or additional income of over £300k.

The number of properties in the District that would be subject to Council Tax had increased slightly by 0.8%. The settlement details for local government had still not been received. It was expected that there would be no changes to the limit to the annual increase in Council Tax but the budgets would be reviewed once the settlement had been announced. A modest use of reserves of £107k was listed but this would be adjusted with the final figures.

Committee asked Cabinet to consider the following points when considering the budget:

1. Business rate growth forecasts. It was asked whether the trend for office conversions to residential accommodation by permitted development would undermine business rate forecasts. It was advised that Chiltern had for the last 2 years taken part in a business rates pooling scheme. It had also applied to take part in a business rates pilot scheme which would cover all the County's authorities.
2. It was asked if the 18/19 budget could be compared to the estimated outturn figures. It was confirmed that budget monitoring was done monthly and could be provided to future committees.

3. Amersham Multi-Storey Car Park. The interest payable on the car park compared to the minimum revenue provision was queried. It was suggested that the figures from the business case should be used in the budgets and it was confirmed that they were.
4. Inflation expenditure on the pension contributions (P39) were explained as a 2% increase for all.
5. Business Rate Precept for the Police (P37) it was confirmed that the Police are not funded through business rates.
6. Public Conveniences (P71) the figure had gone down. It was advised that there was a saving as business rates no longer payable following an announcement in the recent Budget.
7. Car Park Management. It was confirmed that the cost of the admin team was covered by car park income.
8. Depreciation on P54. It was advised that the decision had been taken to accelerate the depreciation on the Chiltern Pools as it would not be used beyond the next 2 years. It was explained that this was a local authority form of accounting that did not affect the bottom line. It was asked that the £2.9 million depreciation item be brought to the attention of Cabinet.
9. Council tax rates (P34). It was asked why the current Council Tax rates are higher in Chiltern compared to the other Bucks Districts. It was advised that this was largely historical and down to local political decisions.
10. Joint Community and Leisure Cost Share. It was advised that there was a joint team but some items were specific to each Council eg GLL payments were CDC only.
11. Appendix 9 Revised charges. A request was made to round up the charges so there were not odd pence. Concern was also expressed about charging for containers as some people in the district could not afford to replace their bins. It was suggested that a fund be set up for residents that need help. It was noted that this was a service issue rather than a financial one, and officers had discretion to waive charges, but Members requested detail on how discretion is exercised to help genuine cases with replacing their containers when they are stolen or after wear and tear or contractor damage.
12. Licensing Charges. It was advised that these are regulated and they are made in reflection of Officer time and seniority. It was likely that the shadow authority would compare fees with other local charges.
13. Economic Development Team. It was noted that it was being funded from Earmarked Reserves.
14. It was asked why income had reduced from pre-application advice. It was advised that this service had been unavailable for periods during the reorganisation and staffing changes. The previous target had also not been achievable. Members considered this to be an important

service and an aspiration in the shared service business case, so any reduction should only be of a short term nature.

15. Car park income. It was asked why the projected income from the car parks was going down. It was advised that the car parks had been re-evaluated for business rates and following a transitional relief period, costs would increase.
16. Disclosure Scotland Fees (P127). It was advised that these were CRB checks that were required by law for taxi drivers.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the draft revenue service budget for 2019/20 be noted and that Cabinet take into account the comments made above by the Resources Overview Committee.**

## **58 CHILTERN LIFESTYLE CENTRE SCRUTINY SUB COMMITTEE**

### **RESOLVED**

- 1. That the report be noted.**
- 2. That the Terms of Reference of the Chiltern Lifestyle Centre Scrutiny Sub-committee attached at Appendix 1 be agreed.**
- 3. That 5 Members from the Resources Overview Committee, 5 Members from the Services Overview Committee and 1 Non-Committee Member be appointed to the Chiltern Lifestyle Scrutiny Sub-committee, comprising of:**

**Resources Overview Committee: Cllr N Rose, Cllr C Ford, Cllr J Gladwin, Cllr V Martin and Cllr D Phillips**

**Services Overview Committee: Cllr J Burton, Cllr N Varley, Cllr L Smith, Cllr P Jones and Cllr M Harker**

**Non-Committee Member: Cllr G Harris**

- 4. That authority be delegated to the Chiltern Lifestyle Centre Scrutiny Sub-committee to undertake the scrutiny role of both Overview Committees in respect of the Chiltern Lifestyle Centre and that views and recommendations be reported to Cabinet.**

**5. That there be a new name, not the Chiltern Lifestyle Centre.**

**The meeting ended at 8.15 pm**