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**WYCOMBE**  
**DISTRICT COUNCIL**

Queen Victoria Road  
High Wycombe  
Bucks HP11 1BB

## Council

Date: 22 February 2018  
Time: 6.30 pm  
Venue: Council Chamber  
District Council Offices, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe, Bucks

You are hereby summoned to attend the Meeting of the Council to be held in the Council Chamber, District Council Offices, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe on 22 February 2018 at 6.30 pm to consider the business set out in the Agenda below.

Ms K Satterford  
Chief Executive

**Fire Alarm** - In the event of the fire alarm sounding, please leave the building quickly and calmly by the nearest exit. Do not stop to collect personal belongings and do not use the lifts. Please congregate at the Assembly Point at the corner of Queen Victoria Road and the River Wye, and do not re-enter the building until told to do so by a member of staff.

**Filming/Recording/Photographing at Meetings** – please note that this may take place during the public part of the meeting in accordance with Standing Orders. Notices are displayed within meeting rooms.

## Agenda

Item		Page
1	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> To receive apologies for absence.	
2	<b>MINUTES</b> To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meetings of Council held on 18 December 2017	1 - 13
3	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b> To receive any disclosure of disclosable pecuniary interests by Members relating to items on the agenda. If any member is uncertain as to whether an interest should be disclosed, he or she is asked if possible to contact the District Solicitor prior to the meeting.	

Members are reminded that if they are declaring an interest they should state the nature of that interest whether or not they are required to withdraw from the meeting.

#### **4 CHAIRMAN`S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive such communication as the Chairman of the Council may wish to make.

#### **5 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Written questions may be asked of the Leader or any Cabinet Member if submitted to the Head of Democratic, Legal and Policy Services no later than 12 noon on Thursday 15 February 2018. Questions will be submitted in the order in which they were received.

A questioner will have a maximum of 1 minute to ask a question and the answer shall not exceed 3 minutes. Any questioner may put one supplementary question without notice within a maximum time of 1 minute and the answer may not exceed 2 minutes.

#### **6 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

Questions to the Leader or any Cabinet Members must be submitted by 12 noon on Thursday 15 February 2018. Questions shall be taken first from the Group Leaders of the political parties who shall be entitled to ask an initial Leader`s question, including the right to adopt another Member`s question from his/her group, of which written notice shall have been given to the Head of Democratic, Legal and Policy Services prior to the meeting.

The order of questions shall then permit the first question from each other Councillor to be asked before any subsequent questions from the same Councillor. One question will be taken in turn from the same Councillor unless there are no other questions to be asked.

Every Member asking an oral question is permitted to ask one supplementary question without notice provided that it is not substantially the same as a question that was put to a Council meeting during the past 6 months.

The appropriate Member will respond to any questions remaining unanswered at the expiry of 30 minutes in writing. Any question remaining unanswered after 30 minutes will be answered within 10 working days in writing after the meeting by the appropriate member and appended to the minutes of the meeting.

#### **7 PETITIONS**

- (i) Council to receive any petition from a member of the public who lives, works or studies within the district or from a Councillor on his/her behalf as notified by the deadline of 5pm on Thursday 15 February 2018.

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<p>(ii) Council to consider any petition already received that meets the required number of signatures to qualify for a debate by Full Council. (The petition organiser will have 5 minutes to present the petition and then the Council will debate the matter for a maximum of 15 minutes and decide how to respond to the petition)</p>		
<b>8</b>	<b>TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY</b>	14 - 35
<b>9</b>	<b>CORPORATE PLAN</b>	36 - 60
<b>10</b>	<b>CABINET</b>	61 - 80
	To receive the minutes of and consider any recommendations from the following meetings:	
	Cabinet	18 December 2017(Special)
	Cabinet	5 February
<b>11</b>	<b>COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2018/19 AND PRESENTATION FROM LEADER OF THE COUNCIL (To Follow)</b>	
	The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 5 February 2018 recommend revenue estimates and the district and parish elements of Council tax levels for 2018/19.	
	Full Council is required to consider the Revenue Estimates and the district and parish elements of Council tax levels for 2018/19 and then to set out the full Council tax.	
	Details relating to the precept for Bucks County Council, the Thames Valley Police & Crime Commissioner and Bucks and Milton Keynes Fire Authority are awaited. The full report containing these details together with the full Council tax details across the district is therefore to follow.	
	Members are reminded that they must have regard to the Chief Financial Officer`s report when setting the Council tax.	
	In accordance with Standing Order 16.5 a recorded vote shall take place on decisions relating to the setting of the budget and Council tax.	
<b>12</b>	<b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE</b>	81 - 86
	To receive the minutes of and consider any recommendations from the following meeting:	
	Standards Committee	9 January 2018
<b>13</b>	<b>IMPROVEMENT &amp; REVIEW COMMISSION</b>	87 - 92

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To receive the minutes of and consider any recommendations from the following meeting:	
Improvement & Review Commission	10 January 2018
<b>14 AUDIT COMMITTEE</b>	<b>93 - 97</b>
To receive the minutes of and consider any recommendations from the following meeting:	
Audit Committee	25 January 2018
<b>15 HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE</b>	<b>98 - 105</b>
High Wycombe Town Committee	23 January 2018
<b>16 PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>	<b>106 - 111</b>
To receive the minutes of and consider any recommendations from the following meetings:	
Planning	15 November 2017
Planning	17 January 2018
<b>17 EXTENSION WORKS TO RISBOROUGH SPRINGS SWIM &amp; FITNESS CENTRE - PROCUREMENT PROCESS</b>	<b>112 - 116</b>
<b>18 QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 11.2</b>	
<b>19 URGENT ACTION TAKEN BY CABINET OR INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER</b>	
i) Approval of Community Support Grants 2018/19 (Community Services)	
ii) Approval of Community Support Grants 2018/19 (Planning & Sustainability)	
iii) Approval of the Community Support Grants for 2018/19 (Housing Portfolio)	
iv) Disposal of Property No.675 London Road High Wycombe	
v) Minor Amendment to Bucks Home Choice Policy following Local Government Ombudsman Decision	

**For further information, please contact Iram Malik on 01494 421204, [committeeservices@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:committeeservices@wycombe.gov.uk)**

## Council Minutes

Date: 18 December 2017

Time: 6.35 - 8.00 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor Miss S Brown (in the Chair)

Councillors Mrs J A Adey, Mrs S Adoh, K Ahmed, Z Ahmed, M Asif, D H G Barnes, Ms A Baughan, S Broadbent, D J Carroll, M Clarke, Mrs L M Clarke OBE, A D Collingwood, C Etholen, R Farmer, R Gaffney, S Graham, A R Green, G C Hall, M Harris, M A Hashmi, A E Hill, A Hussain, M Hussain, M Hussain JP, D A Johncock, Mrs G A Jones, M E Knight, D Knights, Mrs J D Langlely, A Lee, N B Marshall, H L McCarthy, I L McEnnis, R Newman, Ms C J Oliver, B E Pearce, G Peart, S K Raja, R Raja, S Saddique, J A Savage, R J Scott, D A C Shakespeare OBE, N J B Teesdale, A Turner, P R Turner, Ms J D Wassell, D M Watson, C Whitehead, R Wilson, L Wood and Ms K S Wood

### 49 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Honorary Aldermen: P Cartwright, Mrs K M Peatey and Mrs P Priestley. Councillors M C Appleyard, H Bull, M Hanif, C Harriss Mrs W J Mallen and Mrs J Teesdale.

### 50 MINUTES

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 9 October 2017 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### 51 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received

### 52 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced that she had undertaken many engagements since the last ordinary meeting of the Council, but did not intend to list each one. Instead she highlighted the following.

#### **Commemoration of the International day of People with Disabilities**

The Chairman stated that on 4 December she had been accompanied by Councillors Mr and Mrs Clarke, and Councillor P Turner in experiencing the use of a mobility scooter in High Wycombe.

All Members involved expressed that they had felt very vulnerable whilst using the wheelchair and somewhat invisible to the public, having to regularly brake sharply to avoid a collision. However Members emphasised that this had been a very worthwhile experience providing a deeper insight as to how wheelchair users felt going about their daily business.

## **53 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

### **Question from Mr R B Colomb to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration**

“With regard to the 210 tons of rubbish dumped by travellers earlier this year at the Handy Cross Hub would the Cabinet Member care to explain why no preventative action was taken to stop what must have been 70 truckloads entering the site whilst the travellers were in situ?”

Whilst I realise the rights of travellers are complicated surely it was possible to block entry to vehicles entering the site to break the law by illegal tipping of rubbish.”

### **Response from Councillor S Broadbent (Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration)**

“Once travellers had encroached onto the site, the District Council required a court order to restrict access. Immediately the trespass happened, the Council worked with TVP and BCC to regain possession as quickly as possible. Thames Valley Police did not invoke the relatively new power under Section 34B of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, to seize vehicles suspected of being involved in fly-tipping; however, we are working with the Police and BCC to establish how this power could be exercised in future, if circumstances deemed it appropriate, but the Council would still require a police presence at the scene, for vehicle, seizures, this would involve a high risk of disorder and potential for violent response from the vehicle owners.

Meantime, the Council is pleased to note that BCC has been successful with an initial prosecution relating to the incident, resulting in a fine and the Council understands that further prosecutions may be pending. The Council is also pleased to note the Environment Agency is currently investigating an organised crime group who have been involved in significant illegal waste deposits across North & South London and surrounding counties and will be providing them with details of the Handy X Hub incident. For the future, the Council continues to work with other stakeholders to be prepared for unauthorised occupations of whatever kind, to react as quickly as possible and use all possible legal steps to protect public funds and ensure that wrongdoers are punished.”

There was no supplementary question

## **54 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

### **(a)Question from Councillor R Raja to the Leader of the Council**

“As the cabinet has now approved the replacement of Saunderton Lodge as the future temporary accommodation provision for vulnerable members of society, would the Leader like to tell us what the likely plans are for the Saunderton Lodge land and can she reassure us that the land will only be used for social use and not be sold off to increase the surplus on the council’s balance sheet?”

**Response from Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council)**

“Saunderton Lodge is an isolated property in need of substantial investment. If and when it is declared surplus, the Council will be required to meet its statutory obligation upon disposals, which is to achieve the ‘best price reasonably obtainable’. This may well come from users such as a nursing home, sheltered housing or the like, or from an ‘institutional’ user, which have quasi-social purposes, but I cannot at this stage guarantee that this will be the case. The priority will be to find a future custodian so that once vacant, the property does not become vandalised. Any proceeds of disposal will be used to ‘cross finance’ the cost of the proposed new Temporary Accommodation, if that is the route we go down.”

**Supplementary Question**

“I would hope that we do see some action and that the land is not sold off. We need to use the land for the benefit of the residents. ”

**Supplementary Response**

“As I said in my original answer any proceeds of disposal will be used to cross finance the cost of the proposed accommodation. The proposals will not result in an increase the balance sheets.”

**(b)Question from Councillor M Knight to the Leader of the Council**

“It has been reported that the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Sajid Javed, is very close to making a decision regarding the unitary authority proposals. If he were to bring news that 2018 is to be a happy new year for you do you anticipate any changes would be made to the plans given that they were put together almost a year ago?”

**Response from Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council).**

“I’m delighted that you recognise that our submission is the stronger and have confidence it is the one most likely to receive the go-ahead. However I think we need to await the announcement before making decisions on our implementation plans.”

**Supplementary Question**

“Given that the decision is going to be later than originally expected, how do you envisage that this will impact upon the timelines and deadlines for changes to be implemented?”

**Supplementary Response**

“Clearly the implementation plans stated within the submission will need to be revised. However we cannot revise this until we get the required timelines.” Therefore I am unable to answer your question at the moment.”

**c)Question from Councillor K Ahmed to the Cabinet Member for Community**

“A Children’s Centre in Totteridge has 979 children under the age of 5 living in its catchment area. 628 of these (more than 64%) are registered with the Children’s Centre. 375 of these children (over 38%) have had at least one contact with the Children’s Centre over the last year and 191 (over 19%) have had multiple.

Clearly, this is a vital service on which many local residents rely, so why isn’t WDC protesting more actively against planned closure of this and many other centres?”

**Response from Councillor G Peart (Cabinet Member for Community)**

“Thank you Cllr Ahmed for asking this question about an issue that is very current and also for doing some research into the numbers of children registered with the Castlefield Children’s Centre. There has already been a question about this matter at a recent Council meeting.

As you will be aware BCC has announced a review of the delivery of children’s services generally including the children’s centres and we await the outcome early in the New Year. Until that review is complete and the results published it is not possible to make any further useful comment.

I can confirm that there has been communication with the relevant members of BCC on the matter to raise concerns about the delivery of children’s services that are much needed to better assist the most vulnerable families in Wycombe and particularly the children within those families. We have also offered to work closely with BCC to give assistance locally where we are able to provide it.

When the proposals are made known we will be able to assess the proposals and respond accordingly.”

**Supplementary Question**

“The Children’s Centre in Totteridge has 979 children under the age of 5 living in its` catchment area. More than 64% are registered with the Centre. 375 of these children have had at least one contact with the centre over the last year whilst 191 have had multiple.

Clearly this is a vital service on which many local residents rely, so why isn’t WDC protesting more actively against its planned closure?”

**Supplementary Response**

“We hope to see an improved connection and consequent improvement in delivery. We work closely with Bucks CC but cannot comment until the review is complete. ”



**(d) Question from Councillor M Asif to the Cabinet Member for Planning**

“Would the Cabinet Member for Planning like to tell us whether he is confident that WDC residents have given him a good idea about their concerns and reservations about the local plan; and would he like to tell us about the broad areas of public approval or concern?”

**Response from Councillor D Johncock (Cabinet Member for Planning).**

“The latest consultation on the New Local Plan was the final one before the plan is submitted for scrutiny in March next year. Many people have given us their input and played an active part in the local plan process. The plan we will be submitting to the Planning Inspector is the result of five years of detailed technical work and a number of different consultations over that period with local people and key stakeholders right across the District and beyond. I am therefore confident that we have a good handle on the issues and concerns that residents across the District have about the Plan. I am also pleased that the latest consultation has drawn many positive comments as well as negative ones.

At this stage, it is too early to give any detail on the broad areas of concern or approval as there has been a high level of response and the consultation only ended last Monday. My officers will, however, be producing a summary of the issues raised primarily for the benefit of the Inspector undertaking the examination of our Plan but I will ensure that all Members see an early draft of this document so that they too have a good understanding of the issues that have been raised by both local people and our statutory consultees.”

There was no supplementary question.

**e) Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Housing**

“Please can you update us on the numbers of residents currently placed in Bed and Breakfast outside of Wycombe District? I am particularly concerned about families with young children being placed there.”

**Response from Councillor Mrs J Langley (Cabinet Member for Housing).**

“At present we have 10 households with children staying in bed and breakfast out of the district. This changes on a weekly basis, but I can advise that these families are primarily in Slough on an average for about 4 weeks, and this changes on a weekly basis. We hope to move at least 4 families back to the District before Christmas. We have had some more properties released at Daws Hill.”

**Supplementary Question**

“I am pleased to hear that 4 of the families will be moving back to the district prior to Christmas, leaving just 6 out of the district. Does Saunderton Lodge offer the provision which will make B&Bs a thing of the past?”

**Supplementary Response**

“Subject to planning permission when the new temporary accommodation in Desborough Road is completed this will increase our capacity to house homeless households in the district considerably and do away with B&Bs.”

**(f) Question from Councillor M Abdullah Hashmi to the Leader of the Council**

“In light of the many episodes of harassment reported elsewhere and the lack of adequate processes for victims to make confidential complaints that these reports exposed, does WDC have any plans to update its own complaints procedures to offer greater guarantees of confidentiality to those raising the complaints and does the council have procedures in place to investigate such harassment complaints satisfactorily?”

**Response from Councillor Ms K Wood (Leader of the Council).**

“I share your concerns and had already discussed with the Chief Executive and with the Head of Legal Services, Head of Democratic Legal & Policy Services the adequacy of our existing complaints processes which also deal with issues of confidentiality. I am satisfied that they do allow action to be taken (within the scope of the legislation available to us) if we have concerns about any member or officer of this Council.

- The Council has a complaints process for members of the public to raise concerns about staff conduct,
- We have a separate process if it is alleged that Members have breached the code of conduct for members
- There are informal and formal mechanisms in place which are set out in the Council’s Grievance Policy, Procedure and Toolkit for staff who wish to raise concerns about other staff including managers.
- We have the member/officer protocol for dealing with concerns by staff against members or vice versa
- and finally we have a whistleblowing policy if staff or members of the public wish to raise concerns directly without going through the relevant service area or manager.

As you will appreciate there may be a need for a criminal investigation in some cases and where this is the case the complainant will be urged to consider making a complaint to the police. It is my view that where a Member or Officer is subjected to harassment as a result of their membership or employment with the authority then we will offer support to them if they wish to make a complaint to the police.

I personally would take any complaint I received about harassment by a member of this Council very seriously and would want to reassure anyone who was the victim of harassment that their complaint will be listened to and acted upon. I know that the Chief Executive shares my view about this with regard to any member of staff. In light of the recent reports in the media staff have been reminded in our weekly newsletter of the Council’s commitment to creating a safe and healthy working environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. As Leader of the Council I would like to make the same statement to every member of this Council - you do not have to suffer in silence. You were elected to serve your communities and that

involves, as we all know, taking criticism from time to time, but that does not mean you have to suffer harassment or abuse.”

There was no supplementary question

**(g) Question from Councillor S Graham to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration**

“The Bucks Free Press dated 24.11 2017 features a story that the historic Library could be used for offices.

The building has stood empty since the library moved to the Eden shopping centre.

A number of options have been considered for its future over the years including putting it up for sale or handing it over to charitable trust, but so far none of those options have come through.

The County Council now wants this historic town centre building to be used for a wide range of purposes including offices and community use.

My question to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development is whether he has been involved, or been contacted by the County Council, in respect of their interests as have been reported in the Free Press’?”

**Response from Councillor S Broadbent (Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration)**

“Over the past 10 years, the Council has frequently sought to encourage the County to bring this building back into beneficial use. The Council is pleased to note that the County is now progressing its own proposals for re-use.”

**Supplementary Question**

“Have the Conservatives given up on community cohesion? Many community organisations are crying out for meeting places. Why hasn’t this issue been considered with Bucks CC?”

**Supplementary Response**

“Discussions have been in shared areas. The focus has been on remedial work of the building. I am not influencing the choice of what is decided, and they will do as they see fit. We just want a suitable use for the Town Centre.”

**(h) Question from Councillor Ms J Wassell to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development & Regeneration**

The question was withdrawn

**(i) Question from Councillor M Knight to the Cabinet Member for Community**

“Attending the Christmas light switch on in Frogmoor it was a delight to see it full of many families from High Wycombe and the wider district enjoying themselves. It is unfortunate that the rest of the year Frogmoor is increasingly becoming an area which families avoid due to a small minority of people being drunk and behaving erratically. I hope to think that we all recognise that a balanced approach is needed to tackle this issue where both enforcement and comprehensive support for people with substance misuse issues go hand in hand. We have been promised a multi-agency coordinated approach in the past.

Could you provide an update on how this is going and what factors are inhibiting progress?”

**Response from Councillor G Peart (Cabinet Member for Community).**

“Thank you Cllr Knight for asking this question about a matter that is a great concern for all Members. We all want our main town areas to be an attractive and welcoming place for people to visit and spend time in.

In November a multi-agency meeting took place, which included both enforcement agencies and those agencies within the town who can offer support to people with housing and drug/alcohol issues. At this meeting we agreed that there is a need to raise awareness of the support that is available, and to try to encourage the public to support these agencies, rather than giving money directly to people who may be begging as for many it is probable that any money they are given will be used for drink or drugs.

At this meeting it was suggested that High Wycombe BIDCo consider relocating the food or general markets to Frogmoor to increase the number of shoppers in this area. Frogmoor was leased to the BidCo as they wished to develop more events there and we hope this will become a reality when their new Manager is appointed.

Regular multi-agency meetings are being organised by our new Anti-Social Behaviour Officer, Nick Adkins, to develop and implement action plans for each of the street drinkers/beggars so that we can safeguard the general community, and also protect these very vulnerable people.

We already have a Public Spaces Protection Order restricting drinking in the town and are issuing Fixed Penalty Notices. We will have posters printed asking the public to support Wycombe Homeless Connection. This will be followed up in the New Year with more signposting to support agencies and material to hand out to people begging or drinking, providing contact details for the support agencies. Nick will also contact other local towns to see if there is additional best practice that we can apply locally.”

**Supplementary question**

“I agree it is difficult to ensure we have sufficient policing resources, and there have been approximately 18% budget cuts in this area. Perhaps you ought to lobby your national party on these cuts which have had such a massive impact on our town.”

**Supplementary Response**

“I cannot comment on the police budget, but the police have been active and cooperative. The problem is twofold. Firstly, the problem of beggars, and secondly the issue of the welfare of people who need help. Both these issues need to be prioritised and pursued.”

*The Corporate Director clarified that Chiltern Shopping Centre was due to be purchased which would improve the area around Frogmoor. In addition the meeting was informed that the markets were run by Estates within the Council and not BidCo.*

## **55 PETITIONS**

No petitions were received by the deadline of 5pm on Monday 4 December 2017.

## **56 CABINET**

### **Minute 43 - Options for Temporary Accommodation Provision**

A Member commented that the sighting of Saunderton Lodge in Desborough Road was unfair on vulnerable people.

(P Turner wished it to be recorded that he had abstained from the vote on this item).

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13 November be received, and the recommendations as set out at minute numbers 39, 43, 46, and 47 be approved and adopted.

## **57 STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 10 October 2017 be received and the recommendations as set out in minute numbers 32 and 33 be approved and adopted.

## **58 IMPROVEMENT & REVIEW COMMISSION**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Improvement & Review Commission held on 8 November 2017 be received.

## **59 AUDIT COMMITTEE**

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee rose to present the minutes.

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 16 November 2017 be received.

**60 HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the High Wycombe Town Committee held on 21 November be received.

**61 PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 20 September and 18 October be received

**62 REGULATORY & APPEALS COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Regulatory & Appeals Committee held on 27 November 2017 be received.

**63 NOTICE OF MOTION**

A motion was submitted by Councillor Miss K S Wood and seconded by Councillor D H G Barnes.

***“WDC notes the increasing concern of councillors and members of the public regarding an apparent rise in instances of anti-social behaviour across the district and within Wycombe town centre in particular.***

***WDC believes giving greater prioritisation to the enforcement of available anti-social behaviour measures by Thames Valley Police will improve the situation before it becomes overly detrimental to the residents, businesses and visitors to the district.***

***WDC resolves to seek swift re-prioritisation of TVP resources to tackle this issue in conjunction with improved partnership working with other stakeholders to improve neighbourhood policing.”***

In proposing the motion, the Leader began by emphasising that it gave her no pleasure in bringing this forward before Full Council. She stated that Thames Valley Police (TVP) was an outstanding and exemplary force providing an excellent service overall for our residents. As such she had a great deal of respect for the force and was very grateful for the work they did.

The Leader stated that in spite of this she could not ignore that anti -social behaviour across the district was on the rise, and that implementation of policies and programmes alone designed to minimise such activity were ineffective in tackling the problems which presented themselves. The only way to resolve such issues was by working in close collaboration with TVP.

The Leader went onto state that whilst she fully understood that the significant levels of operational rationalisation and efficiency measures had an impact, she felt that TVP had not given the increasing level of disorder and unrest the focus

required to shut it down before it became too established in such areas as Frogmoor. She also gave mention to the negative response Councillor A Hussain had received from Chief Constable Habgood at a CC meeting with regards to the issue, whereby it had been asserted that enforcement was not the first option. The importance of engaging and working closely with charitable organisations locally was re-emphasised, but that TVP was now required to support us.

In seconding the motion, the Deputy Leader stated that he wished to echo the proposer's words and sentiments in every respect. He highlighted that he was passionate about improving and protecting the community, and had positive memories of working with the police who had very much shared that passion. As such he felt a sense of disappointment in having to present such a motion.

He emphasised that he felt that TVP had focused resources and strategy away from dealing with the types of low level crimes rife at Frogmoor. He informed the Members that he had been alarmed that upon having challenged on the issues of concern, TVP had connected the problems to the current level of homelessness in the district. The Deputy Leader felt that it was essential to draw a clear distinction between homelessness and anti-social behaviour.

The seconder then reiterated the duty to work together in tackling the issues, and expressed the Council's heartfelt desire to work, engage and achieve together.

In opening up the debate to Members, Councillor Ms J Wassell stated that there should be an interagency effort towards contributing resources to the cause. This she emphasised may not be in the form of hard cash but may be achieved through a set of plans and initiatives. She stated that the origins of this behaviour was brought about by a very complex set of underlying issues, which TVP alone would struggle to tackle. As such she felt that a more generous spirit towards the TVP should be displayed.

Councillor Ms J Wassell wished to propose an amendment to the motion. The proposal included the insertion of additional wording in the third paragraph of the submitted motion which would read as follows. "WDC resolves to seek swift reprioritisation of TVP, WDC and partner agencies who need to ensure resources."

Debate on the amendment then followed:

Councillor M Knight agreed that the Police alone could not shoulder the responsibility particularly in the light of severe budget cuts to the Police on a national level. He expressed the view that other options besides enforcement should be considered and that there should be an equal emphasis to deliver the desired outcomes.

Another Member pointed out that neighbourhood policing was limited and that there was a strong need for people on the ground. It was also highlighted by Councillor A Turner that the amendment was unnecessary, as the motion in its current form already dealt with the issue of partnership and collaboration in its final paragraph.

Upon a vote being taken the amendment was lost and the debate returned to the motion as originally proposed.

Councillor A Hussain also commented that he was very passionate about the Town Centre and that the current situation there saddened him deeply. He stated that someone needed to take a leading role, with a set timeline put into place for action to be taken.

A number of other Members also rose to present their views. Councillor L Wood stated that WDC was already doing much in collaboration with Partners to tackle the situation, and it was through an act of desperation that TVP was now being asked to step up and play their part in dealing with the issue at hand.

In summing up the Leader concluded that she still believed that the Force was an outstanding one, but that there was a very real concern as to the rise in anti- social behaviour for which swift action was required to be taken. She had felt heartened by Superintendent Brown`s willingness to engage, but that this attitude was required from officers at every level. As such she hoped that the Chief Constable would work with WDC to develop joint projects that addressed the needs of the whole District.

Upon a vote being taken, the motion was carried as a result of more than half of those Members present voting in favour of the Motion.

#### **64 QUESTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER 11.2**

There were none

#### **65 COMMITTEE CHANGES / APPOINTMENTS**

The change to membership of the outside body as set out in the summons as follows was duly noted.

##### **Health & Wellbeing Board**

Councillor Miss K Wood was replaced by Councillor G Peart to serve on the Health and Wellbeing Board until May 2018.

#### **66 URGENT ACTION TAKEN BY CABINET OR INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER**

The urgent action taken by Cabinet or individual Cabinet Member as set out in the summons was noted.

#### **67 REFRESHMENTS**

The Chairman wished all those present a Merry Christmas and Happy New year, and invited all Honorary Aldermen, Members and colleagues to join her in some light refreshments at the close of the meeting.



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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

- Dave Anderson - Interim Corporate Director
- Ian Hunt - Democratic Services Manager
- Iram Malik - Senior Democratic Services Officer

# Agenda Item 8

## **Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2018/19, Annual Investment Strategy 2018/19 and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement 2018/19**

**Officer Contact:** David Skinner: [David.Skinner@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:David.Skinner@wycombe.gov.uk)

This report was considered by the Audit Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018 and Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018 and it was agreed to recommend to Full Council.

### **Proposed recommendation to Council**

To approve:

- The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and Prudential Indicators for 2018/;
- Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) for 2018/19 at Appendix A;
- Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement for 2018/19 at Appendix B; and

### **1. Reason**

To comply with the Local Government Act 2003, other regulations and guidance and to ensure that the Council's investment plans are prudent, affordable, sustainable and comply with statutory requirements.

The Committee is responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategy.

### **Corporate Implications**

The Treasury Management Strategy plays a significant part in supporting the delivery of the Council's vision and corporate priorities.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1. The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to set out a statement of its treasury management strategy for borrowing and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy. This sets out the Council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments.
- 2.2. This report sets out the Council's proposed Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) for the year 2018/19.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1. The Council is required to operate a balanced budget, which broadly means that cash raised during the year will meet cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operation is to ensure that this cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are invested in low risk counterparties or instruments commensurate with the Council's low risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering investment return.

- 3.2. The second main function of the treasury management service is the funding of the Council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer-term cash flow planning, to ensure that the Council can meet its capital spending obligations. This management of longer-term cash may involve arranging long or short-term loans, or using longer-term cash flow surpluses. On occasion, when it is prudent and economic, any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives.
- 3.3. Treasury management is defined as:
- “The management of the local authority's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.”
- 3.4. **CIPFA requirements** - The Council has formally adopted CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management and complies with the requirements of the Codes as detailed below:
- a. Creation and maintenance of a Treasury Management Policy Statement which sets out the policies and objectives of the Council's treasury management activities.
  - b. Creation and maintenance of Treasury Management Practices (“TMPs”) that set out the manner in which the Council will seek to achieve those policies and objectives.
  - c. Receipt by the full Council and/or Cabinet of an annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement - including the Annual Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy - for the year ahead, a Half-year Review Report and an Annual Report (stewardship report) covering activities during the previous year.
  - d. Delegation by the Council of responsibilities for implementing and monitoring treasury management policies and practices and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions. The details of delegations and responsibilities are summarised in Appendix C.
  - e. Delegation by the Council of the role of scrutiny of treasury management strategy and policies to a specific named body. For the Council this role is undertaken by Audit Committee.
- 3.5. **Training** - The CIPFA Code requires the responsible officer to ensure that members with responsibility for treasury management receive adequate training in treasury management. This especially applies to members responsible for scrutiny. The training needs of treasury management officers are periodically reviewed as part of the Learning and Development programme. The officers attend various seminars and conferences throughout the year. As part of developing financial management training programme Members will be provided training as and when required.

### 3.6. Treasury management consultants

- a. Link Asset Services (The Link Group has acquired Capita Asset Services formerly part of Capita plc) are Wycombe District Council's external treasury management advisors. The Council recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the organisation at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon our external service providers.
- b. It also recognises that there is value in employing external providers of treasury management services in order to acquire access to specialist skills and resources. The Council will ensure that the terms of their appointment and the methods by which their value will be assessed are properly agreed and documented, and subjected to regular review.

### 3.7. Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID II)

- c. The Markets in Financial Instruments Directive, or MiFID II, is an EU regulation designed to offer greater protection for investors and inject more transparency into all asset classes: from equities to fixed income, exchange traded funds and foreign exchange.
- d. The EU has now set a deadline of 3 January 2018 for the introduction of regulations under MIFID II. These regulations will govern the relationship that financial institutions conducting lending and borrowing transactions will have with local authorities from that date. The Directive will result in the automatic reclassification of local authorities as retail clients unless they choose to elect to professional client status. The Council is electing to professional client status in order to preserve the range of financial instruments, advice and services that it currently accesses.

### 3.8. Treasury Management Strategy covers three main areas summarised below:

- i. Capital Strategy (Section 4)
  - a) Capital expenditure plans;
  - b) Capital Financing Requirement (CFR);
  - c) Affordability – Ratio of Financing cost;
  - d) Affordability – Incremental impact of capital investment decisions on Council Tax; and
  - e) The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy (Appendix B).
- ii. Borrowing strategy (Section 5):
  - a) Current borrowing position;
  - b) Indicators : Limits on External Borrowing;
  - c) Borrowing Strategy; and
  - d) Policy on borrowing in advance of need.
- iii. Treasury Management (Section 6)
  - a) Current treasury position;
  - b) Core funds and expected investment balances;
  - c) Expected return on investments and benchmarking; and
  - d) Investment Limits

### 3.9. The Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) at Appendix A provides more detail on how the Council will manage its risks and liquidity in 2018/19.

# Treasury Management Strategy Statement

## 4. Capital Strategy

### Capital Spending and funding plans

- 4.1. The Council's capital expenditure plans are the key driver of treasury management activity. The output of the capital expenditure plans is reflected in the prudential indicators, which are designed to assist members' overview and confirm capital expenditure plans.
- 4.2. Table 1 summarises the Council's capital expenditure plans, both in terms of those agreed previously, and those forming part of the current budget cycle. The table also sets out the Council's current expectations of how these plans are to be financed.

2016/17 Actual £m		2017/18 Forecast £m	2018/19 Estimate £m	2019/20 Estimate £m	2020/21 Estimate £m	2021/22 Estimate £m	2022/23 Estimate £m	Total £m
14.017	<b>Expenditure General Fund</b>	17.176	45.358	37.194	16.521	29.458	6.758	152.465
	<b>Funding</b>							
-2.214	Grants & Contributions	-3.946	-19.495	-7.261	-6.189	-4.115	-3.990	-44.996
-4.899	Capital Receipts	-13.230	-20.720	-9.000	-9.800	-5.000	-2.768	-60.518
-6.904	Revenue Financing	0.000	-5.143	-20.933	-0.532	-0.304	0.000	-26.912
0.000	Borrowing	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-20.039	0.000	-20.039
-14.017	<b>Total</b>	-17.176	-45.358	-37.194	-16.521	-29.458	-6.758	-152.465

- 4.3. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) have consulted on the proposed changes to the prudential framework of capital finance. The proposals fore for Local Authorities Investment Code and Minimum Revenue Provision Guidance. The outcome of the consultation is still awaited, however the proposed changes are incorporated within the strategy as detailed in paragraphs 4.4 to 4.7.
- 4.4. The prudential code on capital finance requires Council's to ensure that the capital investment plans are prudent, sustainable and affordable in the long term. In considering the capital programme, in addition to the initial investments, the financing, ongoing repairs and maintenance costs should be considered to ensure these are sustainable and affordable in the medium to long term.
- 4.5. As well as investing in assets owned by the Council and used in the delivery of services, the Council also invests, where appropriate, in commercial properties which generates revenue to support the delivery of service to the local community within the district.
- 4.6. Over the years the Council has organically grown its commercial portfolio and invested in traditional asset classes of offices, retail and industrial/logistics, which meet the Council requirements of sustainable economic growth within the district and the income to be secure and reliable and the investments low risk.
- 4.7. The current capital strategy includes proposals for strategic land acquisition and housing development to deliver Local Plan. These are long-term prudent proposals which will deliver the Council ambition of economic development for the district by investing in assets in such a way that not only delivers regeneration and growth in a sustainable way, but also generates annual revenue to support our services for the local residents.

4.8. As part of the due diligence process and risk assessment, consideration is given to the inherent nature of risks around valuations, volatility of property markets, sustainability of rental income and Council's dependence on this income stream to deliver services.

### Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

4.9. The CFR measures the extent to which capital expenditure has not yet been financed from either revenue or capital resources. It is essentially a measure of the Council's indebtedness and so it's underlying borrowing need. Any capital expenditure, which has not immediately been financed or paid for, will increase the CFR.

4.10. The CFR does not increase indefinitely, as the minimum revenue provision (MRP) is a statutory annual revenue charge which broadly reduces the indebtedness in line with each assets life, and so charges the economic consumption of capital assets as they are used.

4.11. The CFR includes other long-term liabilities such as embedded lease included within the Chiltern Waste contract. Whilst these increase the CFR, and therefore the Council's borrowing requirement, these types of contracts include a borrowing facility by the lease provider and so the Council is not required to separately borrow for these leases.

4.12. The Council's Capital Financing Requirement position at 31 March 2017, with forward projections are summarised on the following page in Table 2.

2016/17	Table 2	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Actual		Forecast	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
£m		£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
3.206	Gross Projected Debt	2.406	1.606	0.800	0.000	20.039	20.039
6.908	CFR 31st March	5.901	4.894	3.887	2.975	22.913	22.512
3.702	<b>Under borrowing</b>	<b>3.495</b>	<b>3.288</b>	<b>3.087</b>	<b>2.975</b>	<b>2.874</b>	<b>2.473</b>

4.13. The above projections confirms that the Council's gross debt does not exceed the total of the CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for current year and the following two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years if required, but ensures that borrowing is not undertaken for revenue purposes.

4.14. The Head of Finance and Commercial reports that the Council complied with this indicator in the current year and does not envisage difficulties for the future. This view takes into account current commitments, existing programme and the proposals in the budget report.

### Affordability

4.15. The objective of the affordability indicators is to ensure that the level of investment in capital assets proposed remains within sustainable limits, and in particular, the impact on the Council's "bottom line" as reflected in the impact on council tax. Table 3 below sets out the expected ratio of capital financing costs to income for General Fund. There is a significant increase in this ratio for 2018/19 and 2019/20 resulting mainly from revenue reserves being used to fund the Capital Programme.

4.16. The Council's financial strategy requires borrowing in 2021/22 to fund the capital programme and the impact of the financing cost on Council Tax is shown in the table below.

2016/17	Table 3	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Actual		Forecast	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
47%	Ratio of financing cost	-2%	33%	142%	0%	3%	2%
0.00	Incremental Impact on Council Tax	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.94	5.61

## 5. Borrowing

5.1. The treasury management function ensures that the Council's cash is organised in accordance with the relevant professional codes, so that sufficient cash is available to meet the day to day requirement for service delivery and also capital strategy. This will involve both the organisation of the cash flow and, where capital plans require, the organisation of appropriate borrowing facilities.

### Borrowing Limits

5.2. The Code requires the Council to set two limits on its total external debt, as set out in Table 4 below. The limits are:

- a. **Authorised Limit for External Debt** – This is the limit prescribed by section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 representing the maximum level of borrowing which the Council may incur. It reflects the level of external debt which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but may not be sustainable in the longer term.
- b. **Operational Boundary** – This is the limit which external debt is not normally expected to exceed. The boundary is based on current debt plus anticipated net financing need for future years.

2016/17	Table 4	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Actual		Forecast	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
£m		£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
	<b>Authorised Limit for external debt</b>						
3	Borrowing and other long term liabilities	11	10	9	8	28	28
	<b>Operational Boundary for external debt</b>						
0	Borrowing	4	3	3	3	23	23
3	Other long term liabilities	2	2	1	0	0	0
3	<b>Total</b>	6	5	4	3	23	23
	<b>Upper limit for fixed interest rate exposure</b>						
0	Net principal re fixed rate borrowing	4	3	3	3	23	23
	<b>Upper limit for variable rate exposure</b>						
0	Net principal re variable rate borrowing	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Upper limit for principal sums invested over 364 days	40	40	40	40	40	40

### Prospects for Interest Rates

5.3. The Council has appointed Link Asset Services as its treasury advisor and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. Further Economic Background is provided at Appendix D by Link Asset Services. The table on the next page gives the advisor's central view.

	Now	Dec-17	Mar-18	Jun-18	Sep-18	Dec-18	Mar-19	Jun-19	Sep-19	Dec-19	Mar-20	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21
Bank Rate	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.25	1.25	1.25
5 yr PWLB	1.50	1.50	1.60	1.60	1.70	1.80	1.80	1.90	1.90	2.00	2.10	2.10	2.20	2.30	2.30
10 yr PWLB	2.10	2.10	2.20	2.30	2.40	2.40	2.50	2.60	2.60	2.70	2.70	2.80	2.90	2.90	3.00
25 yr PWLB	2.70	2.80	2.90	3.00	3.00	3.10	3.10	3.20	3.20	3.30	3.40	3.50	3.50	3.60	3.60
50 yr PWLB	2.40	2.50	2.60	2.70	2.80	2.90	2.90	3.00	3.00	3.10	3.20	3.30	3.30	3.40	3.40

- 5.4. Borrowing interest rates increased sharply after the result of the general election in June and then also after the September MPC meeting when financial markets reacted by accelerating their expectations for the timing of Bank Rate increases. Since then, borrowing rates have eased back again somewhat. Apart from that, there has been little general trend in borrowing rates during the current financial year.
- 5.5. After a decade, Bank Rate was increased from 0.25% to 0.50% in November 2017. As detailed in the table above the current forecast is a gradual increase in base rates over time with the next increase of 0.25% is expected in the last quarter of 2018.

### **Borrowing strategy**

- 5.6. The Council is currently maintaining an under-borrowed position due to healthy cash balance and this seems likely to continue for the next two or three years at least. This position is measured against the Capital Financing Requirement which is a technical calculation and takes account of cash-flow timing difference. This puts the council in a good position as the capital borrowing need, has not been fully funded with loan debt as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow has been used as a temporary measure. This has served well especially in the recent years with low interest rates and high counter party risks.
- 5.7. The policy of avoiding new borrowing by running down spare cash balances has served well over the last few years. However, this needs to be carefully reviewed to avoid incurring higher borrowing costs in the future when the Council may not be able to avoid new borrowing to finance capital expenditure.
- 5.8. If borrowing is undertaken in this environment there will be a net cost of holding this money until it is used, sometimes called the "cost of carry". As borrowing is often for longer dated periods (anything up to 60 years) the cost of carry needs to be considered against a backdrop of uncertainty and affordability constraints in the Council's wider financial position.
- 5.9. The Council will adopt a flexible approach to any future long-term borrowing in consultation with, Link Asset Services. Affordability and interest rate risk will be considered prior to undertaking any external borrowing.

### **Policy on Borrowing in Advance of Need**

- 5.10. The Council has the power to borrow in advance of need in line with its future borrowing requirements under the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting)(England) Regulations 2003, as amended.
- 5.11. The Council will not borrow more than or in advance of its needs purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. Any decision to borrow in advance will be within forward approved Capital Financing Requirement estimates, and will be considered carefully to ensure that value for money can be demonstrated and that the Council can ensure the security of such funds.



5.12. Risks associated with any borrowing in advance of activity will be subject to prior appraisal and subsequent reporting through the mid-year or annual reporting mechanism.

## 6. Treasury Management

### Current cash position

6.1. Table 5 below shows the cash balance position as at December 2017.

	As at 31 March 2017		As at 31 December 2017	
	Principal	Average Rate	Principal	Average Rate
	£m	%	£m	%
<b>Investments</b>				
Specified	63.6		80.7	
Non - specified	11.0		13.0	
<b>Total Investments</b>	<b>74.6</b>	<b>0.67%</b>	<b>93.7</b>	<b>0.65%</b>

### Core Funds and expected Cash Flow

6.2. The application of resources to either finance capital expenditure or revenue budget will have an ongoing impact on investments. Detailed below are estimates of the year end balances for each resource.

2016/17 Actual	Year End Resources	2017/18 Estimate	2018/19 Estimate	2019/20 Estimate	2020/21 Estimate	2021/22 Estimate	2022/23 Estimate
£m		£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
- 9.739	General Reserves	- 9.739	- 9.739	- 9.739	- 9.739	- 9.739	- 9.739
- 35.360	Earmarked Reserves	- 35.768	- 29.506	- 7.787	- 6.937	- 6.287	- 5.637
- 18.329	Capital receipts	- 9.420	-	-	-	-	- 5.232
- 12.227	Capital Grants & Contributions	- 13.081	- 6.600	- 5.989	- 8.600	- 13.855	- 13.665
- 3.261	Provisions	- 3.261	- 3.261	- 3.261	- 3.261	- 3.261	- 3.261
- <b>78.916</b>	<b>Total core funds</b>	- <b>71.269</b>	- <b>49.106</b>	- <b>26.776</b>	- <b>28.537</b>	- <b>33.142</b>	- <b>37.534</b>
- 0.457	Working capital*	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000
3.702	Under Borrowing	-	-	-	-	-	-
75.401	Expected investments	66.269	44.106	21.776	23.537	28.142	32.534

\*Working capital balances shown are estimated year end; these may be higher at certain points during the year

6.3. The medium-term cash flow shows that the Council has a substantial positive cash-flow position with an average cash position of more than £25m for the medium-term.

6.4. Council policy is to set aside £5m to provide working capital and cover day to day contingencies. Therefore an average of £40m is available to be invested over the longer-term without impacting on the Council's need for liquidity.

## **Background Papers**

Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2017/18 (Approved by Council February 2017)

1. Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003, as amended
2. DCLG Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision 2012
3. DCLG Guidance on Local Government Investments – March 2010
4. CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, 2011
5. CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice, 2011

### Annual Investment Strategy

1. The Council holds significant surplus funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure, plus balances and reserves. Both the CIPFA Code and the CLG Guidance require the Council to invest its funds prudently, and in order of importance to have regard to the **security** and **liquidity** of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or **yield**.
2. Council will also consider long term investments to secure better yield. This will be subject to cash-flow requirements and will ensure that it is prudent and sustainable.
3. In accordance with the above guidance and to minimise the risk to investments, the Council applies minimum acceptable credit criteria to generate a list of highly creditworthy counterparties which will provide security of investments, enable diversification and minimise risk. The creditworthiness methodology used to create the counterparty list fully accounts for the ratings, watches and outlooks published by all three ratings agencies. The Treasury Management Adviser monitors counterparty ratings on a real time basis with knowledge of any changes advised electronically as the agencies notify modifications.
4. Further, the officers recognise that ratings should not be the sole determinant of the quality of an institution and that it is important to assess continually and monitor the financial sector on both a micro and macro basis and in relation to the economic and political environments in which institutions operate. The assessment will also take account of information that reflects the opinion of the markets. To this end the Council will engage with its adviser to maintain a monitor on market pricing such as “credit default swaps” and overlay that information on top of the credit ratings.
5. The aim of the strategy is to generate a list of highly creditworthy counterparties which will provide security of investments, enable diversification and minimise risk.

### Creditworthiness policy

6. The primary principle governing the Council’s investment criteria is the security of its investments, although the yield or return on the investment is also a key consideration. After this main principle, the Council will ensure that:
  - a. It maintains a policy covering both the categories of investment types it will invest in, criteria for choosing investment counterparties with adequate security, and monitoring their security. This is set out in the specified and non-specified investment sections below; and
  - b. It has sufficient liquidity in its investments. For this purpose it will set out procedures for determining the maximum periods for which funds may prudently be committed. .
7. The Head of Finance and Commercial will maintain a counterparty list in compliance with the criteria set out in the table at paragraph 20. The counter parties must meet the minimum criteria from all the three rating agencies. Any

revision to the criteria will be submitted to Council for approval as necessary.

8. **Use of additional information other than credit ratings.** Additional requirements under the Code require the Council to supplement credit rating information. Whilst the above criteria relies primarily on the application of credit ratings to provide a pool of appropriate counterparties for officers to use, additional operational market information will be applied before making any specific investment decision from the agreed pool of counterparties. This additional market information (for example Credit Default Swaps, negative rating Watches/Outlooks) will be applied to compare the relative security of differing investment counterparties.
9. Credit rating information is supplied by Link Asset Services, our treasury advisors, on all active counterparties that comply with the criteria listed in the table below. Any counterparty failing to meet the criteria would be omitted from the counterparty (dealing) list. Any rating changes, rating Watches (notification of a likely change), rating Outlooks (notification of the longer term bias outside the central rating view) are provided to officers almost immediately after they occur and this information is considered before dealing. For instance, a negative rating Watch applying to counterparty at the minimum Council criteria will be suspended from use, with all others being reviewed in light of market conditions.

#### **Specified and Non-specified investments**

10. The DCLG Guidance on Local Government Investments made under section 15(1) of the Local Government Act 2003, places restrictions on Local authorities around the use of specified and non-specified investments. A specified investment is defined as an investment which satisfies all of the conditions below:
  - a. The investment and any associated cash flows are denominated in sterling;
  - b. The investment has a maximum maturity of one year;
  - c. The investment is not defined as capital expenditure; and
  - d. The investment is made with a body or in an investment scheme of high credit quality; or with the UK Government, a UK Local Authority or parish/community council.
11. A non-specified investment is any investment that does not meet all the conditions above. For any such investments, specific proposals will be considered by the s151 Officer after taking into account:
  - a. cash flow requirements
  - b. investment period
  - c. expected return
  - d. the general outlook for short to medium term interest rate
  - e. creditworthiness of the proposed investment counterparty
  - f. other investment risks.
12. The value of non-specified investments will not exceed their Investment allocation. The Council must now formulate a strategy that allocates its cash in the most effective manner to short, medium and long term non-specified investments.



### **Country limits**

13. Due care will be taken to consider the country, group and sector exposure of the Council's investments. The Council has determined that it will only use approved counterparties from countries with a minimum sovereign credit rating of AA from Fitch. The list of countries that qualify using this credit criteria as at the date of this report are shown in the table below. This list will be added to, or deducted from, by officers should ratings change in accordance with this policy

### **Investment Strategy**

14. After a decade, Bank Rate was increased from 0.25% to 0.50% in November 2017. It is forecast there will be a further increase of 0.25% in the last quarter of 2018. Bank Rate forecasts for financial year ends (March) are:

2017/18	0.50%
2018/19	0.75%
2019/20	1.00%
2020/21	1.25%

15. Investment returns are likely to remain low during 2018/19 but to be on a gently rising trend over the next few years. The suggested budgeted investment earnings rates for returns on investments placed for periods up to 3 months during each financial year are as follows

2018/19	0.60%
2019/20	0.90%
2020/21	1.25%
2021/22	.1.50%
2022/23	1.75%

16. As the interest rates are expected to remain low during 2018/19, strategy will typically result in a lengthening of investment periods, where cash flow permits, in order to lock in higher rates of acceptable risk adjusted returns. However, caution will be taken into account to ensure that the Council is not disadvantaged by locking for too longer period to take advantage of the future rates rises.
17. In order to diversify a portfolio largely invested in cash, investments will be placed with a number of approved counterparties over a range of maturity periods which meets the credit criteria set out in the schedule below. Money market funds (MMFs) will be utilised to provide good diversification, better yield and liquidity.
18. The investment returns will be benchmarked against the 3 months LIBOR (London Interbank Offered Rate) rate.

### **Investment time limits**

19. In view of the limited investment returns currently being experienced on short term cash-based investments and the substantial positive cash-flow position over the medium term (see paragraph 7.2 in the main report), it is suggested that for 2018/19 and future years the Council considers increasing its limit on longer term investments to £40m for the next five years. This limit also has regard to the

Council's liquidity requirements and to reduce the need for early sale of an investment.

### Schedule of Credit Criteria for investments

20. The criteria for providing a pool of high quality investment counterparties (both specified and non-specified investments is:

Investments	Minimum Credit Rating Required (S&P/Moody's/Fitch)	Maximum Counterparty Limit (£m)	Maximum Tenor
Debt Management Office (DMO) and Gilts	Government Backed	Unlimited	25 years
Supra-nationals and Multilateral development Banks & European Agencies	Government Backed	£6m each £3m each	1 year 2 years
UK Local Authorities	N/A	£7.5m each	3 years
Money Market Funds (MMF) & Enhanced Money Funds	LT:AAA/Aaa/AAA	£7.5m per fund £40m in aggregate	Up to 7 day notice
Pooled Property Funds	Internal and External due diligence	£7.5m per single fund	Up to 5 years
UK Banks and Building Societies	LT:A+/A1/A+ & above  LT:A-/A3/A- & above	£3m each  £6m each	>1 Year to 5 Years  Up to 1 Year
Nationalised and Part Nationalised Banks		£4m each	1 Year
Non-UK Bank Maximum of £10m per country	LT:A+/A1/A+ & above SR:AAA  LT:A/A2/A & above SR:AA	£3m each  £6m each	>1 Year to 5 Years  Up to 1 Year
Direct Property Investments – Councils decision of 9 October 2017	Internal and External due diligence	£7.5m	Up to 5 years
<b>Sovereign approved list:</b> Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, Qatar, Singapore, Sweden, United Arab Emirates, Switzerland, United States			

### Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy

1. Capital expenditure is generally defined as expenditure on assets that have a life expectancy of more than one year. The accounting approach is to spread the cost over the estimated useful life of the asset. The mechanism for spreading these costs is through an annual MRP. The MRP is the means by which capital expenditure, which is financed by borrowing or credit arrangements, is funded by Council Tax.
2. Regulation 28 of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003, as amended (Statutory Instrument (SI) 3146/2003) requires full Council to approve a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement setting out the policy for making MRP and the amount of MRP to be calculated which the Council considers to be prudent. In setting a level which the Council considers to be prudent, the Guidance states that the broad aim is to ensure that debt is repaid over a period reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits to the Council.
3. The Council is recommended to approve the following MRP Statement:
  - a. For capital expenditure incurred before 1 April 2008, MRP will be calculated using Option 1 (the 'Regulatory Method') of the CLG Guidance on MRP. Under this option MRP will be 4% of the closing non-HRA CFR for the preceding financial year.
  - b. For all capital expenditure incurred after 1 April 2008 financed from unsupported (prudential) borrowing (including PFI and finance leases), MRP will be based upon the asset life method under Option 3 of the DCLG Guidance.
  - c. In some cases where a scheme is financed by prudential borrowing it may be appropriate to vary the profile of the MRP charge to reflect the future income streams associated with the asset, whilst retaining the principle that the full amount of borrowing will be charged as MRP over the asset's estimated useful life.
  - d. A voluntary MRP may be made from either revenue or voluntarily set aside capital receipts.
  - e. Estimated life periods and amortisation methodologies will be determined under delegated powers. To the extent that expenditure is not on the creation of an asset and is of a type that is subject to estimated life periods that are referred to in the guidance, these periods will generally be adopted by the Council. However, the Council reserves the right to determine useful life periods and prudent MRP in exceptional circumstances where the recommendations of the guidance would not be appropriate.
  - f. Freehold land cannot properly have a life attributed to it, so for the purposes of Asset Life method it will be treated as equal to a maximum of 50 years. But



if there is a structure on the land which the authority considers to have a life longer than 50 years, that same life estimate will be used for the land.

- g. As some types of capital expenditure incurred by the Council are not capable of being related to an individual asset, asset lives will be assessed on a basis which most reasonably reflects the anticipated period of benefit that arises from the expenditure. Also, whatever type of expenditure is involved, it will be grouped together in a manner which reflects the nature of the main component of expenditure and will only be divided up in cases where there are two or more major components with substantially different useful economic lives.
- h. Repayments included in annual PFI or finance leases are applied as MRP.
- i. Where borrowing is undertaken for the construction of new assets, MRP will only become chargeable once such assets are completed and operational.
- j. Under Treasury Management best practice the Council may decide to defer borrowing up to the capital financing requirement (CFR) and use internal resources instead. Where internal borrowing has been used, the amount chargeable as MRP may be adjusted to reflect the deferral of actual borrowing.

### **Treasury Management Delegations and Responsibilities**

The respective roles of the Council, Cabinet, Audit Committee and Section 151 officer are summarised below. Further details are set out in the Treasury Management Practices.

#### **Council**

Council will approve the annual treasury strategy, including borrowing and investment strategies. In doing so Council will establish and communicate their appetite for risk within treasury management having regard to the Prudential Code

#### **Cabinet**

Cabinet will recommend to Council the annual treasury strategy, including borrowing and investment strategies and receive a half-year report and annual report on treasury activities.

#### **Audit Committee**

This committee is responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the Treasury strategy and policies.

#### **Head of Finance and Commercial (Section 151 Officer)**

Council has delegated responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of treasury management decisions to the Section 151 Officer to act in accordance with approved policy and practices. The s151 Officer is responsible for the following activities:

- (i) Investment management arrangements and strategy;
- (ii) Borrowing and debt strategy;
- (iii) Approves changes to treasury management practices and procedures; and
- (iv) Chairs the Treasury Management Group (TMG).

#### **Treasury Management Group (TMG)**

Monitors the treasury activity against approved strategy, policy, practices and market conditions.

Reviews the performance of the treasury management function and of the appointed treasury advisor and recommends any necessary actions.

Ensures the adequacy of treasury management resources and skills, and the effective division of responsibilities within the treasury management function.

Monitors the adequacy of internal audit reviews and the implementation of audit recommendations.

#### **Chief Accountant (Deputy S151 Officer)**

Has responsibility for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions, acting in accordance with the Council's Treasury Policy Statement and CIPFA's 'Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management'.

#### **Treasury Team**

Undertakes day to day treasury investment and borrowing activity in accordance with strategy, policy, practices and procedures.

### Economic Background

**The commentary is provided by Link Asset Services (Treasury Adviser) which reflect their view of the economy.**

#### GLOBAL OUTLOOK.

**World growth** looks to be on an encouraging trend of stronger performance, rising earnings and falling levels of unemployment. In October, the IMF upgraded its forecast for world growth from 3.2% to 3.6% for 2017 and 3.7% for 2018.

In addition, **inflation prospects are generally muted** and it is particularly notable that **wage inflation** has been subdued despite unemployment falling to historically very low levels in the UK and US. This has led to many comments by economists that there appears to have been a fundamental shift downwards in the Phillips curve (this plots the correlation between levels of unemployment and inflation e.g. if the former is low the latter tends to be high). In turn, this raises the question of what has caused this? The likely answers probably lay in a combination of a shift towards flexible working, self-employment, falling union membership and a consequent reduction in union power and influence in the economy, and increasing globalisation and specialisation of individual countries, which has meant that labour in one country is in competition with labour in other countries which may be offering lower wage rates, increased productivity or a combination of the two. In addition, technology is probably also exerting downward pressure on wage rates and this is likely to grow with an accelerating movement towards automation, robots and artificial intelligence, leading to many repetitive tasks being taken over by machines or computers. Indeed, this is now being labelled as being the start of the **fourth industrial revolution**.

#### KEY RISKS - central bank monetary policy measures

Looking back on nearly ten years since the financial crash of 2008 when liquidity suddenly dried up in financial markets, it can be assessed that central banks' monetary policy measures to counter the sharp world recession were successful. The key monetary policy measures they used were a combination of lowering central interest rates and flooding financial markets with liquidity, particularly through unconventional means such as Quantitative Easing (QE), where central banks bought large amounts of central government debt and smaller sums of other debt.

The key issue now is that that period of stimulating economic recovery and warding off the threat of deflation is coming towards its close and a new period has already started in the US, and more recently in the UK, on reversing those measures i.e. by raising central rates and (for the US) reducing central banks' holdings of government and other debt. These measures are now required in order to stop the trend of an on-going reduction in spare capacity in the economy, and of unemployment falling to such low levels that the re-emergence of inflation is viewed as a major risk. It is, therefore, crucial that central banks get their timing right and do not cause shocks to market expectations that could destabilise financial markets. In particular, a key risk is that because QE-driven purchases of bonds drove up the price of government debt, and therefore caused a sharp drop in income yields, this then also encouraged investors into a search for yield and into investing in riskier assets such as equities. This resulted in bond markets and equity market prices both rising to historically high valuation levels simultaneously. This, therefore, makes both asset categories vulnerable to a sharp correction. It is important, therefore, that central banks only gradually unwind their holdings of bonds in order to prevent destabilising the financial markets. It is also likely that the timeframe for central banks unwinding their holdings of QE debt purchases will be over several years. They need to balance their timing to neither

squash economic recovery by taking too rapid and too strong action, or, alternatively, let inflation run away by taking action that was too slow and/or too weak. **The potential for central banks to get this timing and strength of action wrong are now key risks.**

There is also a potential key question over whether economic growth has become too dependent on strong central bank stimulus and whether it will maintain its momentum against a backdrop of rising interest rates and the reversal of QE. In the UK, a key vulnerability is the **low level of productivity growth**, which may be the main driver for increases in wages; and **decreasing consumer disposable income**, which is important in the context of consumer expenditure primarily underpinning UK GDP growth.

A further question that has come to the fore is whether **an inflation target for central banks of 2%**, is now realistic given the shift down in inflation pressures from internally generated inflation, (i.e. wage inflation feeding through into the national economy), given the above mentioned shift down in the Phillips curve.

- Some economists favour a shift to a **lower inflation target of 1%** to emphasise the need to keep the lid on inflation. Alternatively, it is possible that a central bank could simply 'look through' tepid wage inflation, (i.e. ignore the overall 2% inflation target), in order to take action in raising rates sooner than might otherwise be expected.
- However, other economists would argue for a **shift UP in the inflation target to 3%** in order to ensure that central banks place the emphasis on maintaining economic growth through adopting a slower pace of withdrawal of stimulus.
- In addition, there is a strong argument that central banks should **target financial market stability**. As mentioned previously, bond markets and equity markets could be vulnerable to a sharp correction. There has been much commentary, that since 2008, QE has caused massive distortions, imbalances and bubbles in asset prices, both financial and non-financial. Consequently, there are widespread concerns at the potential for such bubbles to be burst by exuberant central bank action. On the other hand, too slow or weak action would allow these imbalances and distortions to continue or to even inflate them further.
- Consumer debt levels are also at historically high levels due to the prolonged period of low cost of borrowing since the financial crash. In turn, this cheap borrowing has meant that **other non-financial asset prices**, particularly house prices, have been driven up to very high levels, especially compared to income levels. Any sharp downturn in the availability of credit, or increase in the cost of credit, could potentially destabilise the housing market and generate a sharp downturn in house prices. This could then have a destabilising effect on consumer confidence, consumer expenditure and GDP growth. However, no central bank would accept that it ought to have responsibility for specifically targeting house prices.

**UK.** After the UK surprised on the upside with strong economic growth in 2016, **growth in 2017 has been disappointingly weak**; quarter 1 came in at only +0.3% (+1.8% y/y), quarter 2 was +0.3% (+1.5% y/y) and quarter 3 was +0.4% (+1.5% y/y). The main reason for this has been the sharp increase in inflation, caused by the devaluation of sterling after the EU referendum, feeding increases in the cost of imports into the economy. This has caused, in turn, a reduction in consumer disposable income and spending power and so the services sector of the economy, accounting for around 80% of GDP, has seen weak growth as consumers cut back on their expenditure. However, more recently there have been encouraging statistics from the **manufacturing sector** which is seeing strong growth, particularly as a result of increased demand for exports. It has helped that growth in the EU, our main trading partner, has improved significantly over the last year while robust world growth has also been supportive. However, this sector only accounts for around 10% of GDP so expansion in this sector will have a much more muted effect on the overall GDP growth figure for the UK economy as a whole.

While the Bank of England is expected to give forward guidance to prepare financial markets for gradual changes in policy, the **Monetary Policy Committee, (MPC), meeting of 14 September 2017** managed to shock financial markets and forecasters by suddenly switching to a much more aggressive tone in terms of its words around warning that Bank Rate will need to rise soon. The Bank of England Inflation Reports during 2017 have clearly flagged up that it expected CPI inflation to peak at just under 3% in 2017, before falling back to near to its target rate of 2% in two years' time. The Bank revised its forecast for the peak to just over 3% at the 14 September meeting. (Inflation actually came in at 3.1% in November so that may prove now to be the peak.) This marginal revision in the Bank's forecast can hardly justify why the MPC became so aggressive with its wording; rather, the focus was on an emerging view that with unemployment having already fallen to only 4.3%, the lowest level since 1975, and improvements in productivity being so weak, that **the amount of spare capacity in the economy was significantly diminishing** towards a point at which they now needed to take action. In addition, the MPC took a more tolerant view of low wage inflation as this now looks like a common factor in nearly all western economies as a result of automation and globalisation. However, the Bank was also concerned that the withdrawal of the UK from the EU would effectively lead to a *decrease* in such globalisation pressures in the UK, and so this would cause additional inflationary pressure over the next few years.

At its 2 November meeting, the MPC duly delivered a 0.25% increase in Bank Rate. It also gave forward guidance that they expected to increase Bank Rate only twice more in the next three years to reach 1.0% by 2020. This is, therefore, not quite the 'one and done' scenario but is, nevertheless, a very relaxed rate of increase prediction in Bank Rate in line with previous statements that Bank Rate would only go up very gradually and to a limited extent.

However, some forecasters are flagging up that they expect growth to accelerate significantly towards the end of 2017 and then into 2018. This view is based primarily on the coming fall in inflation, (as the effect of the effective devaluation of sterling after the EU referendum drops out of the CPI statistics), which will bring to an end the negative impact on consumer spending power. In addition, a strong export performance will compensate for weak services sector growth. If this scenario was indeed to materialise, then the MPC would be likely to accelerate its pace of increases in Bank Rate during 2018 and onwards.

It is also worth noting the **contradiction within the Bank of England** between action in 2016 and in 2017 **by two of its committees**. After the shock result of the EU referendum, the **Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** voted in August 2016 for emergency action to cut Bank Rate from 0.50% to 0.25%, restarting £70bn of QE purchases, and also providing UK banks with £100bn of cheap financing. The aim of this was to lower borrowing costs, stimulate demand for borrowing and thereby increase expenditure and demand in the economy. The MPC felt this was necessary in order to ward off their expectation that there would be a sharp slowdown in economic growth. Instead, the economy grew robustly, although the Governor of the Bank of England strongly maintained that this was *because* the MPC took that action. However, other commentators regard this emergency action by the MPC as being proven by events to be a mistake. Then in 2017, we had the **Financial Policy Committee (FPC)** of the Bank of England taking action in June and September over its concerns that cheap borrowing rates, and easy availability of consumer credit, had resulted in too rapid a rate of growth in consumer borrowing and in the size of total borrowing, especially of unsecured borrowing. It, therefore, took punitive action to clamp down on the ability of the main banks to extend such credit! Indeed, a PWC report in October 2017 warned that credit card, car and personal loans and student debt will hit the equivalent of an average of £12,500 per household by 2020. However, averages belie wide variations in levels of debt with much higher exposure being biased towards younger people, especially the 25 -34 year old band, reflecting their lower levels of real income and asset ownership.

One key area of risk is that consumers may have become used to cheap rates since 2008 for borrowing, especially for mortgages. It is a major concern that **some consumers may have over extended their borrowing** and have become complacent about interest rates going up after Bank Rate had been unchanged at 0.50% since March 2009 until falling further to 0.25% in August 2016. This is why forward guidance from the Bank of England continues to emphasise slow and gradual increases in Bank Rate in the coming years. However, consumer borrowing is a particularly vulnerable area in terms of the Monetary Policy Committee getting the pace and strength of Bank Rate increases right - without causing a sudden shock to consumer demand, confidence and thereby to the pace of economic growth.

Moreover, while there is so much uncertainty around the Brexit negotiations, consumer confidence, and business confidence to spend on investing, it is far too early to be confident about how the next two to three years will actually pan out.

**EZ.** Economic growth in the eurozone (EZ), (the UK's biggest trading partner), had been lack lustre for several years after the financial crisis despite the ECB eventually cutting its main rate to -0.4% and embarking on a massive programme of QE. However, growth picked up in 2016 and has now gathered substantial strength and momentum thanks to this stimulus. GDP growth was 0.6% in quarter 1 (2.1% y/y), 0.7% in quarter 2 (2.4% y/y) and +0.6% in quarter 3 (2.6% y/y). However, despite providing massive monetary stimulus, the European Central Bank is still struggling to get inflation up to its 2% target and in November inflation was 1.5%. It is therefore unlikely to start on an upswing in rates until possibly 2019. It has, however, announced that it will slow down its monthly QE purchases of debt from €60bn to €30bn from January 2018 and continue to at least September 2018.

**USA.** Growth in the American economy was notably erratic and volatile in 2015 and 2016. 2017 is following that path again with quarter 1 coming in at only 1.2% but quarter 2 rebounding to 3.1% and quarter 3 coming in at 3.3%. Unemployment in the US has also fallen to the lowest level for many years, reaching 4.1%, while wage inflation pressures, and inflationary pressures in general, have been building. The Fed has started on a gradual upswing in rates with four increases in all and four increases since December 2016; the latest rise was in December 2017 and lifted the central rate to 1.25 – 1.50%. There could then be another four increases in 2018. At its September meeting, the Fed said it would start in October to gradually unwind its \$4.5 trillion balance sheet holdings of bonds and mortgage backed securities by reducing its reinvestment of maturing holdings.

**CHINA.** Economic growth has been weakening over successive years, despite repeated rounds of central bank stimulus; medium term risks are increasing. Major progress still needs to be made to eliminate excess industrial capacity and the stock of unsold property, and to address the level of non-performing loans in the banking and credit systems.

**JAPAN.** has been struggling to stimulate consistent significant growth and to get inflation up to its target of 2%, despite huge monetary and fiscal stimulus. It is also making little progress on fundamental reform of the economy.

# Agenda Item 9

## REFRESH OF CORPORATE PLAN 2015-2020

**Cabinet Member:** Katrina Wood

**Ward(s) Affected:** ALL

**Officer contact:**

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### **RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL**

That:

- (i) Members approve the refreshed Corporate Plan as attached to this report at **Appendix A**.
- (ii) Members agree to include the Corporate Plan document within the Budget and Policy Framework and that the Constitution be amended accordingly.

### **Reason for Decision**

To put in place the Council's priorities and work programme for this administration period.

To ensure that the Council's Corporate Plan forms part of the overarching policy framework of the Council set in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

### **Corporate Implications**

1. The Corporate Plan, upon approval, will become the key strategic document for the Council driving action and future resource allocation and is the framework against which the Council's progress and performance, as set out in the Annual Report will be judged by stakeholders.
2. The delivery plans for Prosperity and Progress are based on the objectives within the Council's Economic Development Strategy and Digital First programme.

### **Executive Summary**

1. The Corporate Plan sets out the priorities, ambitions (we want) and high level objectives (we will) to meet both the challenges and opportunities facing the council. The Corporate Plan is the key policy framework document for the Council and any changes made need to be approved by Full Council. This is the first 'refresh' that has been carried out on the Corporate Plan since its publication in January 2016.



2. The refresh has been an iterative process with involvement and input from Members throughout to help define the ambitions (we want) and objectives (we will). The last round of engagement took place on the 10 January 2018 with the review by the Improvement and Review Commission.
3. The output from this process is a refreshed Corporate Plan document presented at **Appendix A**. Although primarily an internal working document, our Corporate Plan is a key reference point for the public and stakeholders. It also provides an important part of the golden thread from a performance management point of view to enable staff to see how their individual actions contribute to the wider Council agenda. A high level outline of the performance management framework that is being put in place to track delivery with monitoring and review arrangements included in the plan.
4. Progress made will be reported each year as part of the Council's Annual Report. Our Corporate Plan will also be used as a framework to inform our communications and social media programme with the public going forward.

### **Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications**

5. The priorities set out in the refreshed Corporate Plan 2015-2020 form the Council's contribution to achieving the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for Wycombe District as well as our wider contribution to partnership plans such as the Community Safety Plan and the Health and Wellbeing Plan.

### **Background and Issues**

6. Our current Corporate Plan (approved by Council in December 2015 and published in January 2016) has been in place for two years. Within the 'delivering our priorities' section it is recognised that as the environment and circumstances that we work in change - and new opportunities (or challenges) arise, there is a need to periodically 'pause' and review the ambitions and activities. This is to ensure that we remain focussed on what is going to make the biggest difference and can be delivered within the resources that we have.
7. The refresh process started in June 2017 with involvement and input from Members to revisit and refine the focus of our ambitions (we want) in light of the journey we have taken since 2015 – to reflect where we are now and where we are going. The 'we want' ambition statements further translate into a set of 'we will' objectives.
8. This item presents the final outputs of the refresh process: an updated Corporate Plan that includes a summary as a 'plan on a page' (**Appendix A**). It also includes a high level outline of the performance management framework in place to track delivery and enable progress reporting to Cabinet.

### **Consultation**

9. The content of the Corporate Plan 2015-2020 draws on the latest district-wide resident's survey (2014) and data and intelligence drawn together to help inform the development of the joint Modernising Local Government Business Case in January 2017.

10. All Cabinet Members were consulted on these proposals at Leader's Strategic Briefing through June to October 2017. The priorities and outcomes (we will and we want) were discussed with the wider Member group at Member Seminars on the 12 October 2017 and 28 November 2017. The Improvement and Review Commission also considered these are meetings on the 13 September 2017, 8 November 2017 and 10 January 2018. Key feedback that has informed the refresh along with the rationale behind the changes made are set out in **Appendix B**. The revisions to the Corporate Plan have been considered by the Improvement and Review Committee at its meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018 and also by Cabinet at its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018 and its policy framework document recommended to Council by Cabinet in accordance with the process outlined in the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

## Conclusions

11. This report recommends to the refreshed Corporate Plan to Members for approval. This report also sets out how the Corporate Plan will drive the delivery programme, the performance management framework, the service plan development for 2018/19 and the Council's communication plans.

## Next Steps

12. To revise the performance management framework, strategic register, service planning and delivery programmes in accordance with the revised priorities and ensure that the plan is communicated effectively across the organisation to members and officers and more widely to stakeholders to drive the Council's activities during this administration and beyond.

## Background Papers

Corporate Plan 2015 – 2019:

<https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/pages/About-the-council/Council-policies/Our-corporate-plan.aspx>

Modernising Local Government Business Case:

<https://www.modernisingbucks.org/our-submission/>

Member Presentation: Corporate Plan Refresh

G:\Corporate Policy\Policy Development and Research\Corporate Plan\2017 Refresh

## APPENDIX A

# Corporate Plan 2015 - 2020

## Introduction from the Leader and Chief Executive

We are an ambitious Council and have a proud track-record of delivery. We are a forward-thinking Council that is striving to make a difference to people's lives.

Our Corporate Plan 2015 – 2019 was originally adopted in December 2015 following the elections in May that year. We recognise that things change over the life of a plan and that we need to periodically review our plan to ensure that we remain focused on what is going to make the biggest difference for our residents, visitors and businesses - and can be delivered in the resources we have.

In 2017 we did just this and the document that follows sets out our refreshed priorities to 2020 in more detail.

A great place to be – our **place** priority

Strong communities – our **people** priority

Growth and prosperity – our **prosperity** priority

Efficient and effective – our **progress** priority

We are fully committed to our four priorities as they set us a clear strategic direction as a Council with a sound financial footing.

The Council will continue to innovate and make the most of opportunities and respond to the challenges we face to ensure the best interests of our council tax payers and so that everyone continues to receive the services they need and our district continues to prosper and be **a welcome home** to all of our residents, visitors and businesses.

For the latest information please visit our website.

# Corporate Plan Quick Guide

## Our vision for Wycombe District

A WELCOME HOME:

**WELCOME** to visitors and business

**HOME** to all our residents

## Our priorities to 2020

A great place to be – our **place** priority

Strong communities – our **people** priority

Growth and prosperity – our **prosperity** priority

Efficient and effective – our **progress** priority

Our priorities are based on what residents have told us is important to them; national and local priorities - and opportunities, and our available resources and capacity.

## Our values

Our values provide a benchmark for behaviour across our organisation and underpin everything that the Council does - including how we work with others.

<b>Collaboration</b>	We work together as one Council Team
<b>Accountability</b>	We take ownership and responsibility
<b>Respect</b>	We value others and treat them with respect
<b>Value for money</b>	We use our resources effectively and responsibly
<b>Adaptability</b>	We are flexible in how we work and deliver services
<b>Challenge</b>	We challenge ourselves and find better way of doing things

## **Our priorities: place, people, prosperity and progress**

We have set ourselves four priorities to 2020:

**A great place to be** – our **place** priority

**Strong communities** – our **people** priority

**Growth and prosperity** – our **prosperity** priority

**Efficient and effective** – our **progress** priority

Our priorities are based on: what our residents have told us is important to them; national and local priorities and opportunities and our available resources and capacity.

Each **priority** is supported by a set of four **aspirations or ‘we want’**. Each aspiration is underpinned by a set of **‘we will’** statements which comprise specific projects and activities as set out on the pages that follow. Other activities and day-to-day work will also contribute to the delivery of our priorities.

Our aspirations are set to 2020 but due to scale, delivery of some project areas will require a longer time horizon to deliver ‘on the ground’. As you would expect, some projects and activities are still in development at this stage or include work already in progress. Others will be informed by changes in legislation.

The workstreams under each priority may therefore change or evolve over time, in the light of prevailing circumstances.

In many cases we also have specific performance measures and targets to help track delivery and will share our progress in our Annual Report that is published on our website at the end of June.

We cannot deliver these priorities on our own and will require the support and help of our partners and the public, as many of the projects require the active collaboration and, in some cases, approval and/or funding from other organisations.

There is a strong synergy between our priorities; this means that actions taken in one area may contribute to the delivery of more than one outcome.



Our Priorities 2015 - 2020



**Service Plans**  
projects + day-to-day activities

**Staff job objectives**

**Note:** The Corporate Plan is the Council's contribution to the **Sustainable Community Strategy**:



## **Our Place Priority**

**Our Place: a great place to be** is our priority which focuses on the environment, our towns and our rural areas, our buildings and our landscape. We want people who live and work in the area to have an environment that meets their needs, but also for visitors to enjoy all that Wycombe district has to offer. Wycombe District Council has a significant part to play in delivering this aspiration but we also work with others and rely on actions of our partners to deliver this priority.

### **We want our district to be a place people visit and enjoy**

To support this aspiration we will take the following actions within the lifetime of this Corporate Plan:

- Develop the district as a destination for leisure and business visitors
- Ensure that the place works well for people who live and work here
- Use design and place making to improve our built environment
- Lessen the impact of traffic and support sustainable transport

We will improve the experience of people who spend time in our District including those enjoying leisure activities and shopping. We will invest in high quality public realm. We will ensure that our district continues to attract visitors and have a vibrant economy. We will build the capacity of the district as an events and conference destination. Our Towns provide much of our employment and access to employment and we will ensure that the District works well for people who live and work here. We will use design and place making to improve our built environment; make our District a better place and enhance the character of the local area. We will work to lessen the impact of traffic including development management, noise mitigation, air quality improvement and will support means by which people can use alternative forms of transport.

### **We want our district to be known for its natural beauty and wildlife**

To support this aspiration we will take the following actions within the lifetime of our Corporate Plan:

- Minimise the impact of land use on our natural environment

We propose to deliver a local plan which, within the constraints of the legislative framework, supports the identified housing needs of our area whilst protecting the majority of the land in our district as natural landscape. Our District has a demand for more housing and our local plan is the key way in which we are able to ensure that development within the area is sensitive to the unique environment of the District. We continue to see our natural assets as key to our visitor economy and tourism now and in the future. Enjoyment of the natural environment will contribute to the experience of residents and visitors to the area, now and in the future.

## **We want our district to be a safe and attractive place**

To support this aspiration we will take the following actions within the lifetime of our Corporate Plan:

- Remove obstacles to enjoyment by tackling crime and anti-social behaviour
- Support people who look after their local area

As well as promoting the success of the place we will work to remove the obstacles to enjoyment of our District including anti-social behaviour and environmental crime. We will take action to enforce restrictions put in place to protect our environment. We will work with our partners and take action to prevent behaviours which threaten people's safety and their enjoyment of our District. We will also promote responsible behaviours; and support those who look after their local area.

## **We want our District to offer homes that meet housing needs**

To support this aspiration we will take the following actions within the lifetime of our Corporate Plan:

- Deliver more housing on council land and privately owned sites
- Speed up the delivery of affordable homes
- Further improve the quality of our housing

We will take action to deliver new housing on council land and support new housing being delivered on suitable privately owned sites. We will work to accelerate the delivery of affordable homes. We will work with private landlords and others to improve the quality of housing to support the health and independence of our residents. We will improve the quality and availability of temporary accommodation available to those in need.

Our Corporate Plan is a high level document which sets out our broad aspirations. There is more detail on our objectives and proposed actions in the following documents:

- The emerging Economic Development Strategy
- The current Local Plan and our proposed Local Plan
- The Homelessness Strategy 2014-19



## **Our People Priority**

**Our People: Strong communities** is our priority which focuses on the people who have made their homes within our District and who depend upon our services and those of our partners to provide them with education, care, leisure, homes, transport and employment. We want our children to have the best start in life; to promote the independence of our residents and to help keep our vulnerable safe. Wycombe District Council has a significant part to play in delivering this aspiration but we also work with others and rely on actions of our partners to deliver this priority.

### **We want our communities to work well together**

To support this aspiration we will take the following actions within the lifetime of our Corporate Plan:

- Support community resilience
- Engage with and include young people
- Support work to promote integration and cohesion
- Tackle extremism

We will work with our partners to support community resilience and work to overcome the issues which can arise from diversity. We will work to support integration and promote cohesion. We will support and promote 'neighbourliness' and facilitate residents helping each other through individuals and local groups. We will work with our partners and local communities to help tackle extremism and protect and support our young people

### **We want to ensure that people can get help when they need it**

To support this aspiration we will take the following actions within the lifetime of our Corporate Plan:

- Help those in need of help to gain the support they need from others
- Allocate homes fairly to those in greatest need

There are specific vulnerable groups or individuals with genuine needs which cannot be met through community groups or local support. We will continue to provide advice and support and signpost to where help can be found if we cannot help directly. The Council will work with other organisations to ensure that people get the help they need. We will allocate the homes to which we have access fairly to those in greatest need and we will continue to improve the quality and availability of homes for our residents.

## **We want people to be healthy and active**

To support this aspiration we will take the following actions within the lifetime of our Corporate Plan:

- Provide open spaces and support our leisure provision to enable people to live healthy lives
- Improve homes to support people to live safely and independently

Through our Leisure partners and more widely we will enable more people to take part in sport and activities which enhance their health and their wellbeing. We will continue to provide and enhance open spaces within our urban areas and support the enjoyment of our rural areas. We will improve homes and carry out specific works to ensure that people's homes support good health.

## **We want to support those who work for their communities**

To support this aspiration we will take the following actions within the lifetime of our Corporate Plan:

- Provide financial support to voluntary organisations working for those in need
- Support residents to help each other through individuals and local groups

We will continue to support the work of a range of community and voluntary organisations through funding and practical support. We will strive to ensure these organisations provide key support services within the community focused on specified outcomes.

Our Corporate Plan is a high level document which sets out our broad aspirations. There is more detail on our objectives and proposed actions in the following documents:

- The Community Safety Partnership Plan
- Prevent Action Plan
- Community Facilities Strategy
- Sports Facilities Strategy

## **Our Prosperity Priority**

**Our Prosperity: Growth and prosperity** is our priority which focuses on the economic prosperity of the District. The number, nature and size of our businesses, the skills of our residents and the infrastructure connectivity and support which help our businesses to thrive and grow. Wycombe District Council has a significant part to play in delivering this aspiration but we also work with others and rely on actions of our partners to deliver this priority.

### **We want everyone who wants to work or train to be able to do so**

To support this aspiration we will take the following actions within the lifetime of our Corporate Plan:

- Work with others to help our residents develop the skills employers need
- Support young people to find the right work locally
- Create higher value employment

We will work with our partners to develop the skills and talent that employers will need now and in the future. We will create higher value employment in sectors such as life sciences, information technology, digital media and low carbon technology. We will work closely with our partners to link growth orientated local businesses with resources and expertise within the Higher Education sector

### **We want to support the creation of new and growing businesses**

To support this aspiration we will take the following actions within the lifetime of our Corporate Plan:

- Work with others to increase the birth rate of new businesses
- Work with others to support the growth and internationalisation of our local businesses
- Work with others to support the growth and internationalisation of our local businesses
- Support business based innovation

We will support the growth and internationalisation of our local businesses. We will overcome obstacles faced by businesses. We will boost the birth rate of new businesses and promote entrepreneurship. We will encourage research based innovation to boost business growth.

## **We want to make physical and digital connectivity easier**

To support this aspiration we will take the following actions within the lifetime of our Corporate Plan:

- Work with others to improve strategic transport and ICT connectivity

We will improve strategic transport and ICT connectivity. We will work closely with our highways partners to achieve improved transport connections and deliver our transport priorities. We will work with BT and our partners to deliver improved digital connectivity and unlock the economic growth opportunities presented by improved connectivity.

## **We want to support economic growth**

To support this aspiration we will take the following actions within the lifetime of our Corporate Plan:

- Support inward investment
- Provide business accommodation
- Engage with and understand our businesses
- Work with others to provide seamless business support

We will work in partnership with local and national business support organisations to ensure seamless support services are delivered to businesses and inward investors. We will work to provide quality business accommodation to meet the needs of start-ups, growing companies and inward investors. We will engage actively with local businesses and understand how we can support their plans for growth. We will improve the District's inward investment offer and target prospective investors.

Our Corporate Plan is a high level document which sets out our broad aspirations. There is more detail on our objectives and proposed actions in the Economic Development Strategy.

## **Our Progress Priority**

**Our Progress: Effective and efficient** is our priority which focuses on how we will improve the service we provide to our customers. To serve our customers well we believe we need to have an efficient and effective organisation with well-motivated staff and a strong governance framework.

### **We want to make it easy for our customers to get what they need**

To support this we will take the following actions within the lifetime of our Corporate Plan:

- Develop responsive and flexible ICT
- Work to manage and share our data efficiently and safely
- Provide better faster customer services
- Communicate the right things well
- Improve efficiency in our delivery

We will improve our infrastructure to provide responsive and flexible information and communications technology. We will build a digital platform to ensure the safe and easy use and transfer of our data. We will review our services to provide better access and options for connecting us to our customers. We will improve our communications, engagement and marketing.

### **We want our elected members and staff to be our advocates**

To support this will take the following actions within the lifetime of our Corporate Plan:

- Continue to develop and value our elected members and staff

We will continue to value our Members and staff. We will strengthen our internal communications to ensure our Members and staff are able to effectively communicate our ambitions. We will continue to develop our Members and staff to provide services to customers in new ways in response to our changing world. We will support our Members and Staff to meet the needs of our customers.

### **We want to make the best use of our resources**

To support this we will take the following actions within the lifetime of our Corporate Plan:

- Maximise income from investment
- Generate new income streams

We will make best use of our resources and make wise investments to realise value from our assets. We will eliminate waste and improve processes through our service reviews. We will review our fees and charges to support our service delivery. We will align our budgets to our corporate priority to focus our revenues on our highest priorities.

### **We want to do the right things in the right way**

To support this we will take the following actions within the lifetime of our Corporate Plan:

- Deliver our plans
- Continuously improve our delivery
- Practise good governance

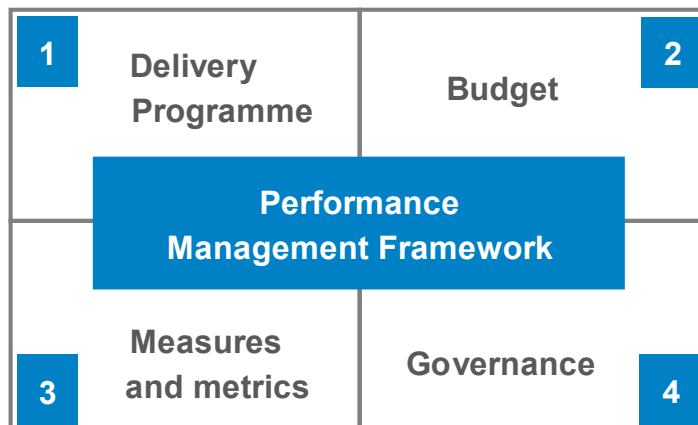
We will continue to review our governance to ensure that we provide efficient public services which recognise the rights of citizens. We will identify areas for improvement in the delivery of our services, manage risk effectively and challenge obstacles to meeting customer need.

Our Corporate Plan is a high level document which sets out our broad aspirations. There is more detail on our objectives and proposed actions in the following documents:

- The Digital First Strategy
- The Workforce Strategy
- The Medium Term Financial Plan
- The Code of Corporate Governance

## Delivering our priorities

To deliver and track the achievement of our corporate plan we use an integrated **performance management framework** approach made up of the four components:



### Delivery Programme

The Council has developed **four delivery plans** that sit under each priority. These delivery plans are targeted and focus on **specific areas** where we have identified there is the most need for change or opportunity for improvement:

**PLACE** – Housing Delivery Plan

**PEOPLE** – Strong Communities Delivery Plan

**PROSPERITY** – Growth and Prosperity Delivery Plan

**PROGRESS** – Digital First Delivery Plan

The content of our delivery plans comes from current and newly emerging Council strategies and plans. Other programmed work and day-to-day activities that contribute to broader delivery are captured in our annual service plans.

Progress made on the delivery of our plan is monitored regularly and published each summer in our Annual Report.

A headline '**delivery programme on a page**' can be found at the end of this plan.

### Budgets and financial management

We have a clear deliverable medium-term financial strategy and an efficiency plan as required by Government. More information is publically available in the Council's medium-term financial strategy on our website. This is regularly reviewed, updated and submitted to and approved by Cabinet.

We take a strategic approach to financial planning and decision making. To ensure that our decisions reflect corporate priorities and give a stable and sound future, we

have adopted a number of key strategies to support robust financial management across our organisation.

A headline '**budget on a page**' can be found at the end of this plan.

## **Measures and metrics**

The Council uses a wide range of measures and metrics to keep an overview of the wider world in which we operate - and to help us keep track of service performance and project delivery 'on the ground'.

Some of this data is collected locally and in other cases we use data collected by partners that is reported nationally such as crime and education data for example.

Service areas set performance measures as part of the annual Service Planning process and a basket of measures is selected and agreed by Cabinet in June each year for quarterly reporting.

The Council will adopt a set of metrics to use as bellwether measures for each of our four priorities. These will be reviewed annually and published on our website.

## **Governance**

The Council ensures that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

The Council also has a duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

We discharge this overall responsibility in a number of ways, including an annual governance review. Our arrangements are summarised in the **Annual Governance Statement**, with areas for improvement. This is a public document.

We have a **Strategic Risk Register** which we review quarterly to manage and mitigate risks. This is reported to the Audit Committee and Cabinet on a regular basis. Each service and major project has its own operational risk register which is reviewed regularly.

Every project we run, contract we let and the way we deliver our services consider **equalities** from the outset to ensure that we comply with the Equality Act 2010 – for our customers, staff and people who apply to work for us.

Every project we run and contract we let considers **sustainable development** from the outset and builds in ways to ensure we leave the planet better for future generations.

We also have responsibilities for **safeguarding** our most vulnerable children and adults from abuse.



## **Transparency and accountability**

The Council seeks to deal with as much of its business in open session as possible, as well as making information publically available, unless there are good reasons for not doing so, as determined by legislation.

The Council regularly publishes information on the website regarding its financial transactions, for example spending above £250 and contracts.

## **Linking to other policies and plans**

Many of our other policies and plans support the delivery of the Corporate Plan, for example, the new Local Plan is key to our place and prosperity priorities.

## **Working with others**

The Council recognises that it requires many partner organisations to work together to deliver our plan, for example to provide the infrastructure necessary for future developments. We will also take action on those matters that fall within our responsibility as part of our partnership working.

## **Our values**

The way we work is important in helping achieve our vision and the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan. The Council's core values inform what we do and how we do it. We refreshed our core values during 2015 and have set them out in full earlier in this document.

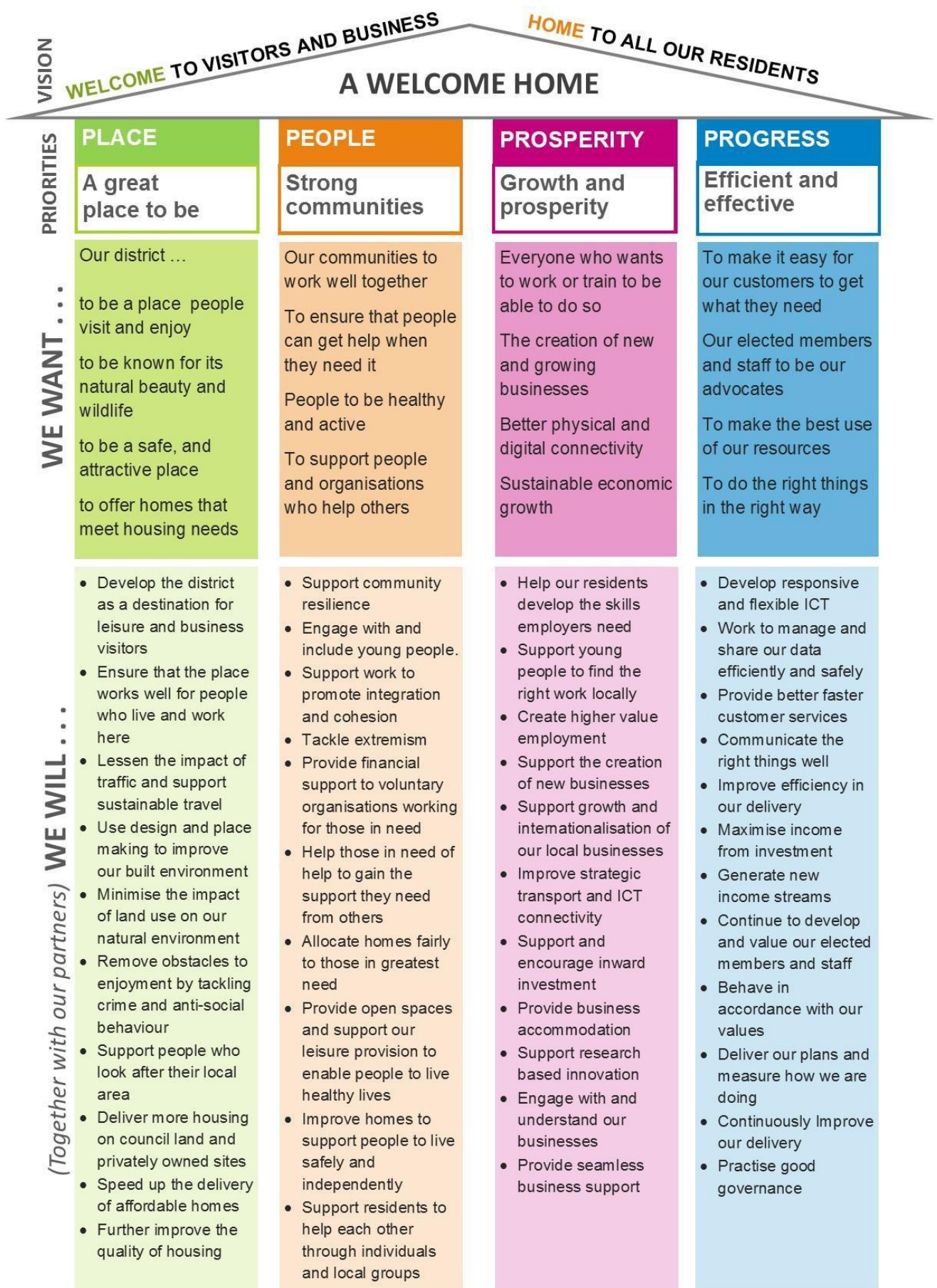
## **Reviewing and monitoring our progress**

The actions we take to deliver our priorities are reviewed on a regular basis. We have a detailed forward planning process and closely monitor progress against our major projects. We report service performance measures to Cabinet on a quarterly basis

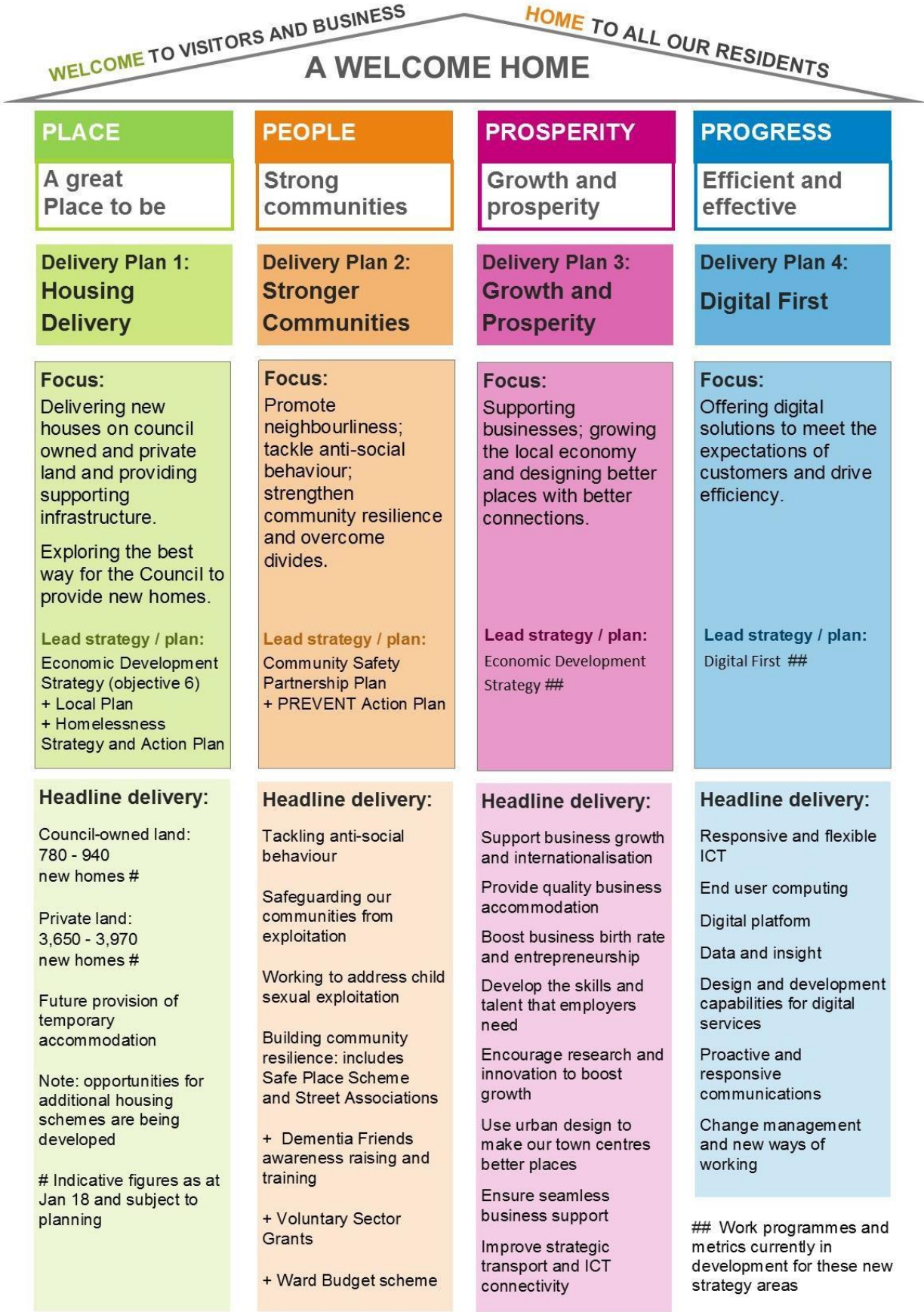
Every year, we produce an Annual Report outlining our progress against the Corporate Plan. This includes any updates needed to meet our changing circumstances.

More information about the topics covered in this section can be found on our website: [www.wycombe.gov.uk](http://www.wycombe.gov.uk)

# Our Corporate Plan 'on a page'



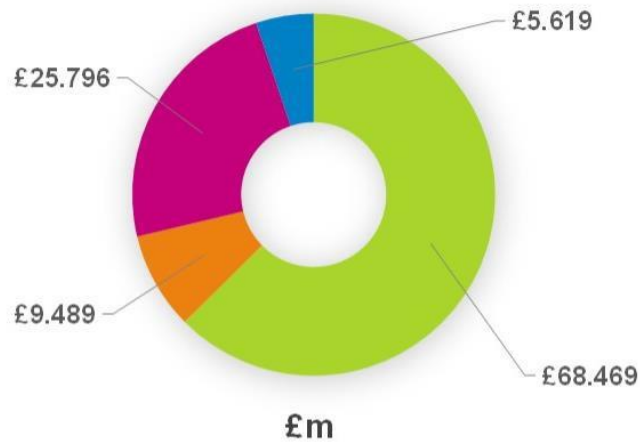
# Our Delivery Plans 'on a page'





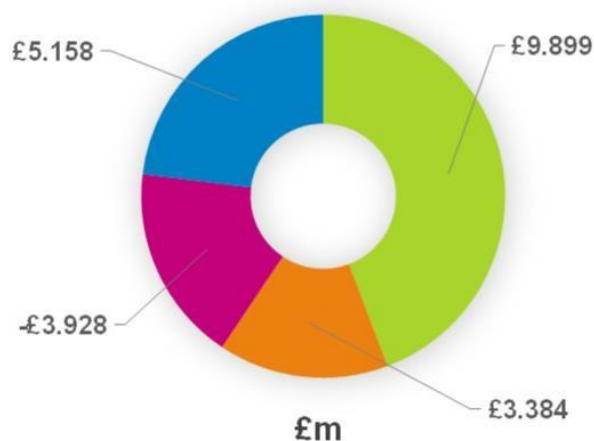
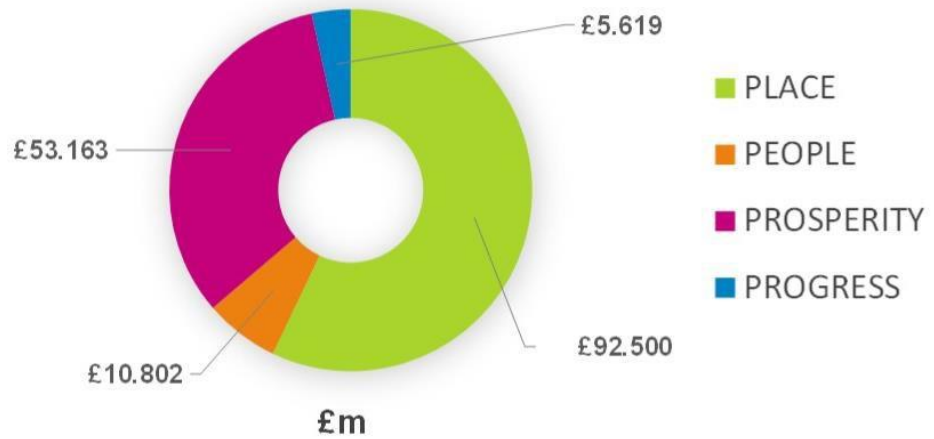
# Our Capital and Revenue budget 'on a page'

Approved by Council: 22 February 2018



This is a simple mapping of capital project and revenue spend on services by priority.

The outcome of our spend on **PLACE** and **PROSPERITY** are for the ultimate benefit of **PEOPLE** who live in, work in or visit our district.



**Top:** Capital programme 2017- 2022 £m (WDC funding only)

**Middle:** Capital programme 2017- 2022 £m (WDC funding and external funding)

**Bottom:** Revenue spend 2018/19

**APPENDIX B**

<b>Reasoning for Changes and Member / Workshop feedback</b>			
<b>PLACE</b>			
<b>Current ambitions:</b>	<b>Rationale for change:</b>	<b>Changes:</b>	<b>New ambitions (we want):</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver our major regeneration and development projects</li> <li>• Ensure a sustainable balance between homes, jobs and supporting infrastructure so we can accommodate required growth without compromising the quality of our valued natural environment and rural areas</li> <li>• Improve the vibrancy of Wycombe Town Centre</li> <li>• Facilitate opportunities for business growth and job creation</li> <li>• Identify opportunities to enhance our green space offer to benefit both people and wildlife</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes reflect discussion with members about the importance of distinguishing between investment projects which generate income and projects which deliver what is needed such as housing which may not achieve as high a return on investment. The ambition has been split into what the projects will achieve rather than delivery.</li> <li>• The balance between the needs for homes and protection of the environment has been restated as two separate ambitions – with an objective which refers to the balance.</li> <li>• The vibrancy of High Wycombe has been changed to the District as a whole as a place people visit and enjoy because Members in the workshop were clear that there should not be a focus on just the towns.</li> <li>• Because of the strong emphasis on the need for economic growth a separate priority has been proposed for this called Prosperity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ambitions are shorter and intended to be easier to remember.</li> <li>• They largely reflect the existing ones</li> <li>• The need to tackle anti-social behaviour and environmental crime has been added</li> <li>• The greater emphasis on housing has resulted in a specific outcome on meeting housing need as part of place.</li> </ul>	<p>Our district:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be a place people visit and enjoy</li> <li>• To be known for its natural beauty and wildlife</li> <li>• To be a safe and attractive place</li> <li>• To offer homes that meet housing needs</li> </ul>

## PEOPLE

Current ambitions:	Rationale for change:	Changes:	New ambitions (we want):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with young people to help meet their needs and aspirations locally</li> <li>• Encourage safe and supportive communities with strong social cohesion</li> <li>• Work on projects and schemes which benefit our local communities</li> <li>• Enable residents and communities to shape their local area</li> <li>• Ensure targeted and affordable help for those most in need</li> <li>• Ensure standards of private rented housing are safe and acceptable</li> <li>• Help address the affordability gap by exploring innovative housing solutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is nothing specific on any group within the community but there is an emphasis on communities working well together. There is a separate objective on youth – to show it will be a focus of action</li> <li>• Social cohesion is not referred to but is inherent in communities working together.</li> <li>• Because of the amount of work that we have been doing on our parks and open spaces and the work that is done on our behalf by our leisure partner it is felt that this is a priority although it was not previously included.</li> <li>• The emphasis on supporting residents to help each other in the workshops was highlighted and also to support groups who help others through grant funding etc. and therefore these ambitions have been restated in similar terms but with slightly different emphasis.</li> <li>• Housing has been included in both Place and People to reflect the separate goals of provision and fair allocation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ambitions are shorter and intended to be easier to remember</li> <li>• The outcomes are broadly the same except some housing has moved to place</li> <li>• Healthy and active people was not in the previous plan</li> <li>• There is also a greater emphasis on people being encouraged to support each other ‘neighbourliness’</li> </ul>	<p>We want</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our communities to work well together</li> <li>• To ensure that people can get help when they need it</li> <li>• People to be healthy and active</li> <li>• To support people and organisations who help others</li> </ul>

## PROSPERITY

Current (relevant) ambitions:	Rationale for change:	Changes:	New ambitions (we want):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver our major regeneration and development projects</li> <li>• Facilitate opportunities for business growth and job creation</li> <li>• Ensure a sustainable balance between homes, jobs and supporting infrastructure so we can accommodate required growth without compromising the quality of our valued natural environment and rural areas.</li> <li>• Consider new devolution opportunities and how this could benefit public services across our district</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through the workshops Members talked of the need to promote businesses and support economic growth.</li> <li>• It was felt this was not sufficiently expressed within the existing plan.</li> <li>• The emerging economic development strategy informed the articulation of the ambitions.</li> <li>• There were specific references about the need for more engagement on skills development</li> <li>• The important of roads, new rail links and digital infrastructure were also highlighted as key issues to support growth.</li> <li>• A need to target certain growth industries to facilitate them establishing themselves in the Wycombe District was also highlighted.</li> <li>• Members did not refer to Devolution as being a key issue in supporting growth and therefore this was not included within the new plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no prosperity strand in the existing plan.</li> <li>• There is something specific on supporting the development of skills and helping people to find work</li> <li>• There is a new ambition which recognises the need for the Council to support infrastructure to support businesses.</li> <li>• The focus on economic growth supports dedicated support to certain types of key industries</li> <li>• These outcomes reflect the emerging strategy.</li> <li>• Specific reference to Devolution is removed</li> </ul>	<p>We want</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone who wants to work or train to be able to do so</li> <li>• The creation of new and growing businesses</li> <li>• Better physical and digital connectivity</li> <li>• Sustainable economic growth</li> </ul>

## PROGRESS

Current ambitions:	Rationale for change:	Changes:	New ambitions (we want):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to innovate and transform our services to provide them in the most efficient and accessible way</li> <li>• Investigate the user-pay principle for services</li> <li>• Generate new annual revenue streams for the Council</li> <li>• Consider new devolution opportunities and how this could benefit public services across our district</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The priority is broader and relates to the organisational areas of focus including efficiency.</li> <li>• Neither user-pay nor devolution had a focus in the workshops and so specific reference is removed.</li> <li>• The continued focus on value for money services has been expressed as an ambition to provide a broader ambition to cover a number of activities including better treasury management, user-pay, income generation and improving efficiency in delivery.</li> <li>• The need to generate new income streams where possible continues within the objectives under the broader ambition.</li> <li>• The addition of the ambitions for staff and governance reflect the Council's ongoing work in these areas and the need for continuous improvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ambitions are shorter and intended to be easier to remember The title has changed from Pounds to Progress</li> <li>• Specific reference to user-pay has been removed</li> <li>• Specific reference to Devolution has been removed</li> <li>• The ambition on delivery is expressed from a customer perspective</li> <li>• An ambition about staff and another about governance have been included</li> </ul>	<p>We want</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make it easy for our customers to get what they need</li> <li>• Our staff to be our advocates</li> <li>• To make the best use of our resources</li> <li>• To do the right things in the right way</li> </ul>



## Cabinet Minutes

Date: 18 December 2017

Time: 5.30 - 6.25 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor Ms K S Wood (in the Chair)

Councillor Mrs J A Adey	- Cabinet Member for Environment
Councillor D H G Barnes	- Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Engagement and Strategy
Councillor S Broadbent	- Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration
Councillor D J Carroll	- Cabinet Member for Youth and External Partnerships
Councillor D A Johncock	- Cabinet Member for Planning
Councillor Mrs J D Langley	- Cabinet Member for Housing
Councillor G Peart	- Cabinet Member for Community
Councillor D M Watson	- Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
Councillor L Wood	- Cabinet Member for HR, ICT and Customer Services

### By Invitation

Cllr Shade Adoh	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing
Cllr Zia Ahmed	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Strategy and Communications
Cllr Ron Gaffney	- Chairman of the Improvement & Review Commission
Cllr Gary Hall	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Environment
Cllr Mark Harris	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration
Cllr David Knights	- Deputy Cabinet Member for HR, ICT and Customer Services
Cllr Rafiq Raja	- Leader of the Labour Group
Cllr Sarfaraz Khan Raja	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Community
Cllr Saeed Saddique	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
Cllr Alan Turner	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning

**Also present:** Cllr Richard Scott

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr M Knight

### **49 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13 November 2017 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman with the following amendment noted in that resolution (i) under Minute 43 be amended to read 'to proceed with' rather than 'implement' the Modular New Build option in High Wycombe Town Centre.

This amendment emphasises that the development of this option was still very much subject to the required planning permission.

## **50 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Ms K Wood declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in respect of minute 59 'Ashwells' and withdrew from the chamber during that item.

## **51 REFRESH OF CORPORATE PLAN**

From the report Members noted that this was the first 'refresh' of the Plan since publication in January 2016. The amendments effected to this high level document as a result of suggestions at the recent Members Seminar were noted.

The Corporate Plan, upon approval, would become the key strategic document for the Council driving action and future resource allocation and would be the framework against which the Council's progress and performance, as reported in the Annual Report would be judged by stakeholders.

Elsewhere in the agenda were items on Digital First: which set out the Council's vision and objectives in relation to digital transformation which was reflected in the proposed objectives of the Corporate Plan and, the Draft Budget for 2018-19 which was to go on to be considered by Cabinet on 5 February 2018 and if approved by Council on the 22 February 2018, both of which were linked to the Corporate Plan.

Members noted the focus within the plan on what was going to make the biggest difference and that could be delivered within current resources. Collaboration with other district councils in Buckinghamshire enhanced by the work carried out to develop and submit a business case to Government to modernise local government in Buckinghamshire was referenced along with the Local Plan and the scale and scope of housing development contained therein.

The following decisions were made in order to keep up to date the Council's priorities and work programme for the remainder of the four year administration period and to ensure that the Council's Corporate Plan forms part of the overarching policy framework of the Council set in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

**RESOLVED:** That (i) the vision, priorities, ambitions (we want) and objectives (we will) described in the plan on a page which will form the basis of the Corporate Plan refresh (for the period 2017-2020) be approved as set out in **Appendix A**;

(ii) the summary feedback and views from members to inform the broad ambitions and objectives through the Member Seminar on the 12 October 2017 **Appendix B** be noted; and

(iii) the final version of the Corporate Plan be timetabled to be considered at the 5th February 2018 Cabinet meeting after consideration by the Improvement and Review Commission and if approved be recommended to Council for inclusion as part of the

Council's Budget and Policy Framework as set out within the Constitution.

## 52 DIGITAL FIRST

The report before Cabinet outlined that the implementation of 'Digital First' equated to the application of the culture, practices, processes and technologies of the internet era to respond to peoples raised expectations.

Digital First was seen as an overarching strategy and was about how Wycombe District Council as an organisation engaged, communicated and responded to people, how it designed and delivered services and how it used information to make decisions, inform policy and evaluate performance and outcomes. It was a joined up and consistent approach across the organization as to how we worked and the supporting technologies, applications and data that were held and utilised.

Members noted the three key areas that investment in 'Digital First' delivered:

- Better, faster customer services;
- Improved operational efficiency; and
- The building of new revenue streams.

The following decisions were made in that the "Pounds" priority of the Corporate Plan set the ambition for the Council to "Continue to innovate and transform our services to provide them in the most efficient and accessible way," to achieve, "more accessible services and improved self-service options, including access to information making it easy to see how we are performing as a Council."

Additionally, as part of the requirements of the Local Government Finance Settlement Offer, the Council was required to develop and submit an Efficiency Plan, with the plan submitted to CLG (Department for Communities and Local Government) in July following Cabinet approval.

One of the actions within that Efficiency Plan was to develop a:-

"Corporate business case for empowering customers through adoption of a "digital by default" and increased self-service Customer Strategy. The business case was to consider the potential scope, benefits and the overall case for moving towards empowering customers through the increased use of self service and increased use of technology in service delivery."

**RESOLVED:** That (i) the Digital First Strategy & Roadmap and the outline business case be approved;

(ii) the inclusion of the Transformation Budget of £0.8m featured in the draft budgets item, later on this agenda, be agreed; and

(iii) the reallocation of capital costs towards the delivery of Digital First be noted and approved.

## **53 COMMUNICATIONS VISION**

Members had read in detail the extensive report and appendix which as a vision document set out the direction of travel and outlined a proposal for a new model for delivering communications. Wycombe District Council's communications should improve the lives of people and communities in the District; they should support the effective operation of services and deliver responsible and informative communications.

If supported it was proposed that officers would carry out further work to identify the detailed proposal for the steps necessary to bring about the proposed changes. The vision outlined a number of recommendations including;

- The development of a repository for intelligence and insight to provide data on audience, channels, campaigns and learning;
- The Strategic management of Communications at senior level across elected members and officers of the authority at appropriate points in project and strategy development;
- A detailed strategy for Communications and Marketing to be developed aligned to the Corporate Plan; and
- Recommendations in relations to skills development, relationship building, resources and business delivery.

The following decision was made as the current Corporate Plan included a Pounds priority which set the ambition for the Council to 'continue to innovate and transform our services to provide them in the most efficient and accessible way'.

It was part of our role as a Council to inform and engage with our communities effectively to help them to understand where they can get help when they needed it, and to inform the public about the way that we will deal with any requests for service or carry out our role. Delivering communications effectively was therefore one of the important aims of efficient and accessible services.

**RESOLVED:** That the 'Vision for Communications and Marketing in the Digital Age' set out in Appendix A be approved.

## **54 COUNCIL TAX BASE SETTING 2018-2019 & COLLECTION FUND ESTIMATED SURPLUS**

Members noted, from the report before them, the Council tax base figure to be used in the Council Tax setting calculation for 2018-19 along with the forecast of the

Council Tax Collection Fund balance for the year ending 31 March 2018 which was an estimated surplus of £2.404m. Wycombe District Council's share of this was £0.261m.

The consideration of the following in setting this base was noted:

- The Valuation List;
- Current exemptions, reductions and discounts;
- Discretionary discounts;
- Anticipated developments that may occur during the year; and
- Expected long term collection rates.

The following decisions were made as the Council tax base and the Collection Fund Estimated surplus are required to be set each year as they form the basis for calculation of the council tax levy for all precepting bodies.

The Local Government Finance Act (as amended) requires the Council to determine the estimated surplus or deficit on the Collection Fund in respect of Council Tax by the 15<sup>th</sup> January; this will enable the precepting authorities to take account of their share of any surplus before finalising their precepts for 2018/19.

**RESOLVED** that (i) Cabinet note in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 the amount calculated by Wycombe District Council (a) as its Council Tax base for the whole of its area for the year 2018-2019 shall be 68,083.50 and (b) as the Council tax Base for each of the parts of its area for the year 2018-2019 shall be:-

Parish	2018-19
Bledlow-cum-Saunderton	1208.17
Bradenham	231.56
Chepping Wycombe	6415.93
Downley	1973.67
Ellesborough	440.98
Fawley (Parish Meeting)	144.84
Great & Little Hampden	164.28
Great & Little Kimble cum Marsh	492.92
Great Marlow	719.64
Hambleden	843.36
Hazlemere	4001.40
Hedsor (Parish Meeting)	81.56
High Wycombe Town	22669.83
Hughenden	3993.46
Ibstone	145.96

Lacey Green	1249.37
Lane End	1423.53
Little Marlow	801.03
Longwick-cum-Ilmer	682.86
Marlow Bottom	1522.44
Marlow Town	6674.86
Medmenham	517.52
Piddington & Wheeler End	265.95
Princes Risborough	3546.12
Radnage	384.72
Stokenchurch	1955.49
Turville	217.99
West Wycombe	545.86
Wooburn and Bourne End	4768.20
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>68083.50</u></b>

(ii) Cabinet approves the calculation of the Council's tax base for the year 2018/19 incorporating an estimated collection rate of 98.2%; and

(iii) Cabinet approve the estimated surplus for 2017/18 on the Council Tax element of the Collection Fund of £2.404M; this is to be shared between the District Council, Buckinghamshire County Council, Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority, and the Police and crime commissioner for Thames Valley in proportion to their 2017/18 precepts on the Collection Fund.

## **55 DRAFT CAPITAL BUDGET 2018-19**

From the report submitted Members noted the programme included therein which set out how the Council would spend **£36.967m** in 2018/19 and **£81.706m** across five years from 2018/19 to 2022/23 (including 2018/19).

It was noted that this budget proposed greater capital investment across areas such as economic Development & Regeneration, Planning and Sustainability, Housing supply and other externally funded projects.

The draft programme presented was developed for 2018/19 and the 5 year programme and represented the ongoing commitment of the existing and 2018/19 programme. The longer term capital programme aspirations featured were noted as significant. The Council would continue to develop the future programme of investment, deliver corporate priorities and ensure that all was affordable within the financial envelope.

Members noted that the capital strategy to deliver the Council's vision featured the following:

- **Regeneration and Infrastructure**, by investing in our assets in such a way that not only delivered regeneration and growth in a sustainable way, but also generated annual revenue to support our services to the public;
- **Cohesive Communities**, ensuring activity was prioritised accordingly, with robust delivery plans in place, enabling delivery on time and at value, for example use of community infrastructure Levy (CIL) to invest in the area to improve infrastructure and reflect the growing needs locally; and
- **Value for Money Services**, ensuring external funding was leveraged, especially for development, which would maximise the financial envelope available for major projects such as Accelerated Construction Fund for development (unlock housing and jobs growth).

The following decision was made in order that the Cabinet formally approved a budget each year to achieve the Council's priorities. It was noted that regular monitoring reports were submitted to Cabinet for review during the financial year, with management actions highlighted to ensure that Cabinet could assess whether any further action was required.

**RESOLVED** That Cabinet note the draft capital programme in December 2017 for 2018/19 to 2022/23 totalling **£100.815m**. Recognising the actions already taken and supporting further actions to ensure that the programme is affordable and is adequately resourced to deliver.

## **56 DRAFT BUDGET 2018-2019**

Members considered the extensive report before them in respect of the draft revenue budget for 2018/19, this being the latest update enabling cabinet to evaluate, develop and initiate budget proposals before Council finalised the budget and set the Council Tax for 2018/19 in February 2018.

This report represented the output following a comprehensive refresh of the Council's 2018/19 draft budget. Further work needing to be done to identify savings of £0.130m to balance the remaining funding gap. This represented a significant achievement in light of continuing cuts to government funding for local government, alongside a growing population driving an ever increasing demand for locally provided services.

Members noted that savings had been developed under two broad themes: Service Transformation and Maximising Income.

The Cabinet Member updated Members on the movement from the 2017/18 baseline to the 2018/19 budget requirement handily summarised in table form. Business rates and Revenue Support Grant, New Homes Bonus, pay inflation and price inflation were also explained along with new growth, cost pressures and new savings and income.

The input of the Council's scrutiny body; the Improvement & Review Commission and their Budget Task and Finish Group's recommendations arrived at after consideration of the 2017/18 forecast outturn position and the impact on 2018/19 budgets (Appendix B) was withdrawn, further work was to be effected in respect of the Cabinet responses. These were now to be included in the Budget item at February 2018's Cabinet meeting.

The following decisions were taken in order that the Council abided by its statutory requirement to set a balanced budget for 2018/19, this report forming a key part of the budget setting process by setting out the likely Revenue expenditure for that year.

**RESOLVED** That (i) the draft budget proposals for 2018/19 and financial planning assumptions set out in the report be noted;

(ii) the draft budget for 2018/19 will be refined and updated for the Cabinet in February 2018, to recommended for approval at Full Council meeting in February 2018 to set the Budget and Council Tax for 2018/19 be noted; and

(iii) the 5 year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2018/19 to 2022/23 will be presented to the Cabinet for review in February 2018, be noted; and

## **57 INFORMATION SHEETS**

Cabinet received the following Information Sheet issued since the last meeting:

- 4/2017 Connected Counties Superfast Broadband Programme: Update 1– issued 7/12/17.

## **58 FILE ON ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

Cabinet received the following files on actions taken under delegated powers:

Community	C - 29-39/17
Finance	F - 24-25/17
Planning & Sustainability	PS - 60-61/17

## **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** That pursuant to Regulation 4(2)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Appendix A to Minute 55 and Minute Nos 59 & 60 because of their reference to



matters which contain exempt information as defined as follows:

**Appendix A to Minute 55 – Draft Capital Budget 2018-2019**

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (Paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972)

(The need to maintain the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure, because disclosure could prejudice the Council's position in any future tender process or negotiations).

**Minute 59 – Ashwells**

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (Paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972)

(The need to maintain the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure, because disclosure could prejudice the Council's position in any future tender process or negotiations).

**Minute 60 - File on Action taken under Exempt Delegated Powers**

**Community C - 9/17  
Economic Development and Regeneration EDR - 54-58/17**

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (Paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972)

(The need to maintain the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure, because disclosure could prejudice the Council's position in any future tender process or negotiations).

**COUNCILLOR D BARNES TOOK THE CHAIR**

Councillor Ms K Wood withdrew from the chamber in respect of her declared interest regards item 59 Ashwells; Councillor D Barnes (Deputy Leader) took the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

**59 ASHWELLS**

The report before members outlined the options in respect of Ashwells a Council-owned released Reserve Site.

Members noted that Ashwells reserve site was referred to in the Medium Term Financial Plan as a 'Pipeline Scheme'. A previous Cabinet report in November

2016 had approved a budget for expenditure on the feasibility testing, concept masterplan and planning application stages.

Of the three options featured in the report, members were recommended to approve funding of infrastructure works with a view to selling the site as serviced building plots, realising potentially greater value than a single site disposal.

Members read and considered the background notes included in the report and all the options featured in the Options Appraisal, along with the risks and mitigation featured.

The following decisions were made in order to commit to fund the servicing of the site with new access, spine road and utilities, to enable it to be sold as serviced plots, from the Council's Capital Programme. Because of the emerging uncertainty in the housing market (and the timescale for getting works on site), the construction contract would only go ahead if an independent external assessment of the market in 6 months' time indicated that demand and values were holding up.

**RESOLVED** That (i) progression of the Ashwells site as proposed in Option 3 of the Options Appraisal, to obtain and implement planning consent so as to provide infrastructure necessary to enable disposal of serviced sites is approved;

(ii) the funding of infrastructure works for the Ashwells housing site, in accordance with paragraph 20 of the report is approved; and

(iii) delegated authority to enter into such contracts as are required with the purpose of providing infrastructure to the Ashwells site, as described in the report, be given to the Corporate Director in consultation with the Head of Finance and Commercial, the District Solicitor, the Major Projects Executive, and the Leader and Cabinet Members for Finance and Commercial Services and Economic Development & Regeneration.

### **Recommendation to Council**

(i) To make an allocation in the 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 Capital Programme to fund the delivery of the infrastructure works, as detailed in Paragraph 20 of the report; and

(ii) so far as is necessary, to delegate authority to enter into such contracts as are required to provide infrastructure to the Ashwells site, as described in the report, to the Corporate Director, in consultation with the Head of Finance and Commercial, District Solicitor, the Major Projects Executive and the Leader and Cabinet Members for Finance and Commercial Services and Economic Development & Regeneration.

## **60 FILE ON ACTION TAKEN UNDER EXEMPT DELEGATED POWERS**

Cabinet received the following files on exempt actions taken under delegated powers:

Community  
Economic Development and Regeneration

C - 9/17  
EDR - 54-58/17

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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

Ian Hunt - Democratic Services Manager  
Peter Druce - Democratic Services  
Dave Anderson - Interim Corporate Director

## Cabinet Minutes

Date: 5 February 2018

Time: 7.00 - 8.25 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor Ms K S Wood (in the Chair)

Councillor Mrs J A Adey	- Cabinet Member for Environment
Councillor D H G Barnes	- Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Engagement and Strategy
Councillor S Broadbent	- Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration
Councillor D J Carroll	- Cabinet Member for Youth and External Partnerships
Councillor D A Johncock	- Cabinet Member for Planning
Councillor Mrs J D Langley	- Cabinet Member for Housing
Councillor G Peart	- Cabinet Member for Community
Councillor D M Watson	- Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
Councillor L Wood	- Cabinet Member for Digital Development & Customer Services

### By Invitation

Cllr M Appleyard	- Chairman of Audit Committee
Cllr A Collingwood	- Vice Chairman of Budget Task & Finish Group
Cllr R Gaffney	- Chairman of the Improvement & Review Commission
Cllr G Hall	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Environment
Cllr D Knights	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Digital Development and Customer Services
Cllr R Raja	- Leader of the Labour Group
Cllr S K Raja	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Community
Cllr S Saddique	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
Cllr A Turner	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning
Cllr R Wilson	- Chairman of Budget Task & Finish Group

### **Also present:**

Cllrs Mrs L Clarke OBE, M Clarke, T Green & P Turner

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ms S Adoh, Z Ahmed, M Harris & M Knight.

### **61 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 18 December 2017 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman. However in relation to Minute 59

Ashwells a note be inserted in the text to clarify that the allocation being recommended would only be required should planning consent be obtained.

## **62 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **63 REVENUE BUDGET, CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2018/19**

Cabinet were asked to consider and formally recommend the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme for 2018/19 to enable the Council to set the Council Tax for the forthcoming year.

It was to be noted that the figure quoted in paragraph 25 of the report that of the Council Tax requirement for the year should be £9.327m, as correctly quoted in recommendation (a).

The draft revenue budget presented to December Cabinet had featured a funding gap of £0.130m. Subsequently further work had been carried out to identify savings to balance this funding gap. The Report before Cabinet set out the revenue budget and capital programme proposals for 2018/19 following this extensive work carried out by Budget Holders and Cabinet Members.

The Report outlined details of the main changes to the 2018/19 provisional Local Government Finance Settlement from Central Government and importantly the Revenue Support Grant and Baseline Funding (the guaranteed element of Business Rates) contained therein.

Members referred to the 2018/19 Budget Requirement table contained within the Report which outlined Funding Sources and Budgetary Requirements and the movements incorporated therein.

Importantly within the funding sources contained within this table was the Council Tax budget requirement of £9.327m which resulted in Wycombe District Council's share of the Council Tax for a Band D property increasing by £5 to £136.99 for 2018/19. This being calculated on the approved tax base of 68,084 based on a collection rate of 98.2% which had resulted in a net increase of 945 to the base (1.4%) on the equivalent band D properties figure of 67,139.

High Wycombe Town Committee members present received clarification from the Cabinet Member for Finance in respect of the amendment to the Special Expenses budgets for the town of High Wycombe as featured in recommendation (e). This amendment being affected as a result of the decision to propose a council tax increase in this year's budget subsequent to the draft budget item of 18 December 2017, which had not contained such. The Leader of the Council assured Town Committee members of the Cabinet's assurance that they would openly consider a

virement if the resultant £8K reduction in contribution to Special Expenses reserves proved problematic to service delivery during the coming financial year.

In response to a question from Cllr Rafiq Raja, the Lead Member commented he would provide a written answer relating to the net movement of earmarked reserves.

The Cabinet Member for Planning also explained the £15m aspirational budget for 2019/20 and thereafter for land assembly by the Council for housing development whereby the mark up on land values as a result of planning permission would be utilised for infrastructure installation as per Central Government guidance.

The Vice Chairman of the Budget Task and Finish Group reported verbally on the most recent meeting of the Group subsequent to the publication of the Cabinet Budget Report being discussed, acknowledging the risks if the Council tax was not increased along with the still considerable risks even if increased.

Members also noted and agreed the responses prepared by officers in consultation with Portfolio holders in respect of the previously received recommendations of the Budget Task and Finish Group as appended (appendix J).

Cabinet expressed their thanks to Officers and the Budget Task and Finish Group for all their hard work.

The following recommendations were made to enable budgets to be set for 2018/19, at Council on 22 February 2018. Ensuring compliance with the statutory requirement to set a balanced budget and approval of revenue estimates and capital programme in accordance with the Council's approved policies.

### **Recommendations to Council:**

#### **Revenue Budget**

- (a) To set the Council Tax requirement for the Council of £9.327m for 2018/19;
- (b) To approve the base estimates for 2018/19 as shown in paragraph 31 with further details in Appendix A;
- (c) To approve the repairs and renewals fund programme totalling £0.526m for 2018/19 (Appendix B);
- (d) To approve the Higginson Park Trust budget for 2018/19 as set out in Appendix C;
- (e) To approve the Special Expenses budgets for High Wycombe Town Committee for 2018/19 totalling £0.376m (Appendix D);

- (f) To approve the Special Expenses estimate for West Wycombe closed churchyard for 2018/19 totalling £3,200, set out at Appendix E,
- (g) To note the Fees and Charges schedule for 2018/19 as set out in Appendix F;
- (h) To note that this budget paper, when approved by Council will form part of the Medium Term Financial Plan and
- (i) To approve the statement by the Chief Finance Officer regarding the robustness of the budget estimates and level of reserves as set out in Appendix G.

### **Council Tax**

- (j) To increase the Council Tax for a Band D property by £5 to £136.99 for 2018/19. All the seven options for Council Tax as detailed in paragraph 53 were considered before making the decision.
- (k) To approve that the Council pays to each Parish Council and Special Expenses a share of the Council Tax Support grant necessary to mitigate the projected impact of the reduction to their respective Council Tax Base following the introduction of Council Tax Support. In 2018/19 at a total cost of £94k.

### **Capital Programme**

- (l) To approve the 2018/19 Capital Programme of **£45.358m** as detailed in Appendix H;
- (m) To note the expected capital receipt schedule as detailed in Appendix I; and
- (n) To note future capital programme from 2018/19 to 2022/23 totalling **£135.289m**. This being to recognise the actions already taken and support further actions to ensure that the programme is affordable and is adequately resourced to deliver.

### **Budget Task and Finish Group**

- (o) To note the recommendations from the Budget Task and Finish group and proposed responses as set out at Appendix J.

## **64 REFERRAL FROM THE AUDIT COMMITTEE ON THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Under the Local Government Act 2003 the Council was required to set out a statement of its treasury management for borrowing and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy. The report before Cabinet set out the Council's proposed Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) for the forthcoming financial year 2018/19 as referred to Cabinet by the Council's Audit Committee.

The two main functions of the treasury management service were noted; that of operating with a balanced budget and setting out the funding of the Council's capital plans.

Compliance with CIPFA's (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) Code of Practice on Treasury Management was noted along with the requirement and putting into practice of the required training for Members responsible for treasury management. The Council's use of Link Assets Services as external treasury management advisors was noted along with the protection of the Council as investors under the 'Markets in Financial Instruments Directive' (MiFID II).

The Three main areas of the Strategy of:

- Capital Strategy; including capital spending and funding plans, capital financing requirements and affordability;
- Borrowing; including limits, interest rate prospects and policy on borrowing in advance of need; and
- Treasury Management; including current cash position, core funds and expected cash flow.

were outlined in detail.

The following recommendation was made in order that the Council complied with the Local Government Act 2003 and to ensure that the Council's investment plans were prudent, affordable, and sustainable and complied with statutory requirements.

### **Recommendation to Council**

To approve:

- The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) and Prudential Indicators for 2018/19;
- The Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) for 2018/19 at Appendix A; and
- The Minimum Revenue provision Policy Statement for 2018/19 at Appendix B.



## 65 QUARTER 3 BUDGET

Members considered the report before them in respect of Budget Monitoring for the third quarter of the current financial year as at 31 December 2017.

The Report contained a general fund revenue forecast indicating favourable variance of £0.253m as at the said 31 December 2017. The Report also outlined progress in achieving savings against the 2017/18 Efficiency Plan along with an update on the Repairs and Renewals Fund (including recommended use of £0.025m for cooling system / boiler works at the Wycombe Swan Theatre).

Programmed and actual spend in respect of the Major Projects Programme was also noted.

Members noted and agreed the proposed transfer from revenue to the Development fund in respect of improved amenities for people with disabilities and access to Totteridge recreation ground, of £0.065m to compliment the works there that were already being funded from Section 106 Developer Contribution monies.

The following decisions were made in order that the Cabinet remains updated on the current forecast position and performance against both the Medium Term Financial Plan and current financial year's budget.

**RESOLVED** That (i) the forecast outturn position for the financial year 2017/18 as at end of December 2017 be noted;

(ii) the £0.025m additional use of the Wycombe Swan Repairs & Renewals fund for the Cooling System/Boiler works at the Wycombe Swan Theatre (£0.100m is already included in the Repairs & Renewals programme) be approved; and

(iii) the transfer from revenue to the Development fund of £0.065m for works to be undertaken at Totteridge recreation ground to improve access to the park and amenities for people with disabilities be approved to compliment the works there that were being funded from s106 monies already allocated.

## 66 CORPORATE PLAN

Before Cabinet was a comprehensive report outlining the refreshed Wycombe District Corporate Plan for 2015-2020.

The refresh had been an iterative process with involvement and input from members throughout which had helped define the ambitions (we want) and objectives (we will) contained within the Plan.

Though primarily an internal working document, the Corporate Plan was a key reference point for the public and stakeholders. Progress made against the Plan was to be reported as part of the Council's Annual Report.

Members noted the useful summary 'plan on a page' contained within appendix A along with the inclusion in the Plan of data and intelligence which had been drawn together to help inform the development of the joint Modernising Local Government Business Case in January 2017.

Members acknowledged the considerable work put into the refresh document by the Head of Democratic, Legal and Policy along with her Policy team. The next key stage was the communication of the document with residents and the public.

The following recommendation was made in order that the Council's priorities and work programme could be put in place for the current administration period and ensure that the Council's Corporate Plan forms part of the overarching policy framework of the Council set in accordance with the Budget & Policy Framework Procedure Rules.

### **Recommendation to Council**

Approval of the refreshed Corporate Plan including the headline performance management framework to track delivery as set out in **Appendix A** for inclusion as part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework as set out within the Constitution.

## **67 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

'Wycombe – A Welcome home for Business' the proposed Economic Development Strategy (as **appended A**) was discussed. The Strategy complemented the Bucks Growth Strategy which had been published recently by the Buckinghamshire & Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership along with the key areas set out by the Government in its recently published Industrial Strategy.

The various strategic objectives dealing with issues including:

- Growth and Internationalisation;
- Business accommodation;
- The business birth rate;
- Tourism and visitor economy;
- Skills and talent;
- New housing;
- Research and innovation;
- Urban design and place making;
- Support services for business; and
- Transport and ICT connections.

were noted.

The consultation of the Improvement & Review Commission and Members in general via the recent successful seminar was referenced along with planned consultation of local businesses and key stakeholders. Business engagement meetings were planned to be undertaken in early 2018 with a view to the work programme being agreed prior to the start of the 2018/19 financial year.

The below recommendation to Council was made as the future economic prosperity of the District was of vital importance to the Council. The health of the local economy was critical to the continuing success of the District as an attractive location for businesses and source of employment opportunities for local people.

### **Recommendation to Council**

Approval of the Economic Development Strategy 'Wycombe – A Welcome Home for Business' as a framework for the Council's work with its partners to support the growth of the District's economy over the next decade.

## **68 CENTRAL AREA GROWTH BOARD - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Report before Cabinet represented the arrangements by which the appropriate local authorities (amongst which was Wycombe District Council) could discuss and agree future investment in Strategic Infrastructure for the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford corridor, by means of the Central Area Growth Board.

Though not actually located in the Growth Area; Wycombe needed to be involved to ensure input to this major initiative, the Cabinet Member for Planning referring to the Board's ambition to make the Cambridge – Milton Keynes - Oxford corridor the UK's 'silicon valley'.

Members noted that an expenditure of £5K as a contribution to administration costs had recently been effected.

The Terms of Reference of the Board as appended were noted. The decision featured below being made in order that a single Growth Board was established as the principal conduit for strategic discussion and communications with Government. Individual Councils and Local Enterprise Partnerships for the concerned area having been asked to endorse this proposal and agree the terms of reference.

**RESOLVED** That support be given to the proposed formation of a Central Growth as the principal means of governance for strategic decisions about transport, infrastructure and housing investment proposals in the central area of the Cambridge–Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor and to note in principle the broad themes in the terms of reference for the Central Area Growth Board as set out in appendix to this report. If the Terms of

Reference (TOR) were subject to change a further update was to be provided to Cabinet.

**69 FILE ON ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

Cabinet received the following files on actions taken under delegated powers:

Community C/40/17 – C/41/17 & C/01/18 – C/06/18  
HR, ICT & Customer Services HITCS 01/18  
Leader L/01/18  
Planning & Sustainability PS/62/17 & PS/01/18 – PS/02/18

**70 FILE ON ACTION TAKEN UNDER EXEMPT DELEGATED POWERS**

Cabinet received the following files on exempt actions taken under delegated powers:

Community Sheet Nos: C/10/17 – C/05/18  
Economic Development & Regeneration Sheet Nos: EDR/59/17 - EDR/09/18

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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

David Skinner - Head of Finance & Commercial  
Karen Satterford - Chief Executive  
Ian Hunt - Democratic Services Manager  
Peter Druce - Democratic Services

## Standards Committee Minutes

Date: 9 January 2018

Time: 5.30 - 6.08 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor C Etholen (in the Chair)

Councillors D J Carroll, M Clarke, A R Green, R Newman, S Saddique and H L McCarthy.

Independent Member: Mr G Houalla.

Parish Council Members: Mr A Cobden and Mr T Nolan.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J A Savage and Parish Councillor Mrs H Stearn (Hughenden Parish Council).

### **39 A MINUTES SILENCE**

The Chairman informed everyone present of the very sad passing of Mr Michael Pearce in early December. It was noted that Mr Pearce had served as an Independent Person on the Standards Committee since 2012.

The Committee showed its respect by holding a minute's silence in memory of Mr Pearce.

### **40 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Savage (Councillor McCarthy substituted).

Apologies for absence were also received from Parish Councillor Hilda Stearn.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and wished all present a Happy New Year.

### **41 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **42 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendment:

Minute 32 (Adoption of guidance on use of social media by Members)  
– to read *“The proposed guidance at Appendix 1, was based upon guidance recently issued by the London Borough of Waltham Forest.”*

#### **43 INDEPENDENT PERSON RECRUITMENT**

The District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer informed the Committee that the Council had decided to have two Independent Persons, and Mr Gilbert Houalla and Mr Michael Pearce had been appointed on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2013. It was noted that since then they had provided valuable support to the Standards Committee and the Council in general in support of its duty to promote and maintain high standards of conduct and specifically in providing consultative support on Stage 2 member conduct complaints. Members were informed that the recent death of Mr Pearce meant that there was now a vacancy in one of the roles.

The District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer informed Members that she proposed to advertise the vacancy on the WDC website and in the Bucks Free Press (17<sup>th</sup> January edition) and give a closing date of Monday 19 February 2018. It was noted that those who applied and met the criteria would be interviewed by the District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer and the Chairman of the Committee in February / March and that a report containing a progress update, and a recommendation for ultimate approval by full Council would be presented to the Standards Committee in March.

Members were informed that the legislation required a minimum of one Independent Person to be appointed, but many Councils chose to appoint at least two, in order to provide some resilience, prevent the whole of the necessary support falling to a single person, and allow for the various facets of the role to be covered.

The Chairman thanked Mr Houalla for all his hard work and for agreeing to commit to a further five year period as an Independent Person on the Standards Committee. It was noted that as Mr Houalla had indicated his willingness to extend his term for a further 5 years, the forthcoming report in March would therefore recommend that full Council re-approve his appointment until at least May 2023.

It was suggested that if an alternative to advertising in the Bucks Free Press which might be more effective in bringing attention to the vacancy was available, this should be considered, and that advertising on a community radio station (Wycombe Sound) might be a viable alternative. The District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer agreed to explore all options available to the Committee within the requirements of the legislation.

**RESOLVED: To note the process for recruiting and appointing an Independent Person and to approve the sifting process set out in the report prior to Standards Committee making a recommendation to full Council.**

**44 REVIEW OF THE MEMBER COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

The District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer informed the Committee that the Member Standards Complaints process had been in place since July 2012. The Code of Conduct, adopted at the same time, had been reviewed and amended in the meantime. Member comments on the operation of the system in relation to some of the complaints recently submitted under the process suggested that now was a suitable time to review how the complaints process worked, and whether any amendments to it should be made. The following points had been raised for consideration by Members.

<b><u>Points for consideration</u></b>	<b><u>Recommendations to the Committee</u></b>
<p>The Complainant could be anonymous, in the sense of requesting not to be identified to the Subject Member, which because the Subject Member was known to, and named by the Complainant, could be viewed as unfair.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>
<p>Complaints did not receive enough scrutiny at the outset for triviality, nuisance or frivolity. There was currently no facility for the Monitoring Officer to dismiss a complaint at pre-Stage 1 (i.e. before it was accepted as a complaint and sent to the member) where there was some obvious discriminatory motive on the part of a complainant which would be unlawful.</p>	<p>That a new criterion be added to Paragraph 4 of the Complaints Procedure. "What happens Next?" as follows:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“(h) the subject matter of the complaint reveals any manifest and/or obvious discriminatory motive on the part of the Complainant within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 in making the complaint”.</p> <p>That criterion (g) in Paragraph 4 of the Complaints Procedure be amended to insert the additional wording in italics below, so (g) will read:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“the same, or substantially the same issue has been the subject of a previous Code of Conduct allegation or service complaint and there is nothing further to be gained.”</p>
<p>There was no verbal discussion with the member before the complaint became formal. Communication with members was very formal, and could come as an unwelcome shock “out of the blue”. Members lack an effective point of contact whom they could contact to find out more about how the process would</p>	<p>That the Head of Democratic Legal and Policy Services nominate a “member contact” officer who has no direct involvement with the complaints process and whom members can contact for support and advice on the process. In the first instance this would probably be the Democratic Services Manager, and</p>

<p>work. Although it was accepted that the Monitoring Office's role needed to display impartiality as far as possible once a complaint had been made, and this could preclude detailed discussion with the Monitoring Officer about the facts of the case, it would be useful to have a contact point who was knowledgeable about process, yet not directly involved in it.</p>	<p>the complaints process document be amended to reflect this.</p>
<p>It was impossible to prove a negative.</p>	<p>No action required.</p>
<p>The 20 working day deadline for members to respond to the initial complaint could give the impression that the reply was expected to take this period to reply, rather than being a longstop date.</p>	<p>That correspondence with Members made it particularly clear in future that the 20-working day reference was a long stop date, and that they should respond as soon as possible and in any event within 20 working days.</p>

As well as points noted by Members, it was also noted that paragraph 9 of the Complaint process still made reference, when explaining who was an Independent Person, to the transitional provisions up until July 2013, which were now obsolete. It was proposed that this wording be amended accordingly to remove the unnecessary wording.

It was debated whether an additional section of wording should be added to the 20-working day reference to encourage Members to respond within a target of 10-working days where possible. The Committee felt this might put Members under unnecessary pressure, would create additional work for officers and could give the complainant an unrealistic expectation.

The District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer informed the Committee that during the last four years the Council did not appear to have had any serial complainants. It was noted that the Monitoring Officer was entitled to dismiss a complaint at the outset if the same or substantially the same issue had been subject of a previous Code of Conduct allegation or service complaint and there was nothing further to be gained. Mr Houalla advised the Committee that in his experience it was important not to label persistent complainants as a nuisance as some were real victims who could be suffering on a regular, sometimes daily basis.

The Committee was content with the suggested recommendations, as detailed above, with some reservations around the issue of the Complainant being able to have their identity withheld from the subject member.

**RESOLVED: That:**

**The District Solicitor and Monitoring Officer make enquiries with other Local Authorities to explore how they deal with complainants wishing to have their identity withheld from the subject member.**



**RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL: That:**

The following recommendations be presented to Full Council for approval, and incorporated into the Member Complaints system:

- i) That a new criterion be added to Paragraph 4 of the Complaints Procedure. “What happens Next?” as follows:

“(h) the subject matter of the complaint reveals any manifest and/or obvious discriminatory motive on the part of the Complainant within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 in making the complaint”.
- ii) That criterion (g) in Paragraph 4 of the Complaints Procedure be amended, so (g) will read:

“the same, or substantially the same issue has been the subject of a previous Code of Conduct allegation or service complaint and there is nothing further to be gained.”
- iii) That the Head of Democratic Legal and Policy Services nominate a “member contact” officer who has no direct involvement with the complaints process and whom members can contact for support and advice on the process.
- iv) That correspondence with Members makes it particularly clear in future that the 20-working day reference is a long stop date, and that they should respond as soon as possible and in any event within 20 working days.
- v) That paragraph 9.1 of the Complaint process be amended to read ‘Is, or has been within the past five years, a member, co-opted member or officer of the authority.’

#### **45 QUARTERLY COMPLAINTS UPDATE**

A report was submitted which provided an overview of recent complaint cases regarding Member conduct since October 2017.

It was reported that since the report to Committee on the 10 October 2017 at which time three complaints had been reported with three remaining at Stage 1, those three had all been completed and were not being referred for investigation. It was noted that one further new complaint had been submitted which had since been rejected at pre-Stage 1. There were currently no outstanding complaints.

Members asked about the timescales for dealing with matters and were informed that one of the complaints reported had taken just under three months to resolve as it had not originally been submitted on the official complaints form and had involved four Councillors rather than a single Councillor.

Mr Houalla reminded the Committee that sometimes the Independent Person might not be able to respond to the Monitoring Officer as quickly as would be ideal which could result in more time being taken to deal with some matters.

It was noted that there continues to be a relatively small number of complaints currently being received by the Council.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

**46 SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS (IF ANY)**

There were no supplementary items.

**47 URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)**

There were no urgent items.

**48 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The Chairman requested that the next scheduled meeting (Tuesday 13 March 2018) be moved to Tuesday 20 March with a 6pm start time to which everyone present agreed.

The Clerk was requested to check the Corporate Diary and if there were no clashes on the 20 March to make the necessary changes and notify all parties involved of the new date.

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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

Tanya Brown - Democratic Services Officer  
Julie Openshaw - District Solicitor

# Improvement and Review Commission Minutes

Date: 10 January 2018

Time: 7.00 - 9.10 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor R Gaffney (in the Chair)

Councillors K Ahmed, M C Appleyard, Miss S Brown, H Bull, Mrs L M Clarke OBE, A D Collingwood, A E Hill, A Hussain, R Newman, Ms C J Oliver and C Whitehead

Standing Deputies: Councillors H L McCarthy

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Etholen, M E Knight, Mrs W J Mallen, R Raja, J A Savage and R Wilson

**Also present:** Councillors S Broadbent, M Harris, L Wood and Ms K S Wood

## **31. CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION**

The Chairman wished all Members a Happy New Year and gave a brief outline of the possible work ahead for the Commission: - Brexit, Unitary Authorities, Local Plan submission to the Government and maybe HS2 – A busy time ahead.

The Chairman also informed the Commission that Cllr Wendy Mallen had been taken ill. No further details were available, but the Commission wished Cllr Mrs Mallen a speedy recovery.

## **32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **33. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Regarding Minute 22: Verbal Update on Houses in Multiple Occupation and Saunderton Lodge, it was noted that the word 'light' in the paragraph regarding Saunderton Lodge should be removed. The sentence should read ".....and reported that refurbishment was an option considered, but due to the building's age it was suffering."

Also in the same paragraph a section should be added to the following sentence to read "The number of units could not increase as Bucks County Council would not support any increase due to highways issues."

It was also noted that at the last meeting the Report of the Budget Task and Finish Group had been considered as exempt and no press had been in attendance.

Taking into account the above amendments it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Improvement and Review Commission held on 8 November 2017 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **34. UPDATE - REMAKING THE RIVER WYE TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

The Chairman of the Task and Finish Group, Councillor Hugh McCarthy provided an update on the status of the Remaking the River Wye Task and Finish Group. He noted that the task was bigger than expected and the Chairman of IRC along with the Leader had agreed that the Group be allowed more time to consider the recommendations. Therefore, it was expected that the final report would not come to IRC until its meeting in June 2018.

There has, so far, been five meetings including a visit to Sheffield to consider their de-culverting and regeneration project in the city. It was noted that Neil Marples from MWH Global had also offered his advice free of charge and attended meetings.

The proposal was to return the river between Westbourne Street and the Arch Way roundabout to be 3 metres wide at surface level with landscaping. It was noted that the economic benefits were yet to be proven however all aspects of remaking the River Wye needed to be considered and to consider the future of the town. Cllr McCarthy explained that existing culverts would need to be future proofed and remaking the river would transform the town to a destination town for visitors.

The Chairman, Cllr Gaffney added that the trip to Sheffield had been very informative and highlighted that there were a number of organisations who provided grants for this type of project. Also the Chairman commented there could be the option to open up the Hughenden stream which he believed ran under the Frogmore area in the town centre which could also help this area.

It was noted that the Sheffield City project had been a multimillion pound project and due to the size of the city the cost of this was not comparable to High Wycombe. Also work on the Sheffield project had been undertaken over a number of years.

In response to a query regarding the cost of initial investigations, it was reported that some funds would be required and these would help to understand future works needed and subsequently support invest to save schemes.

It was noted that Councillor Chris Whitehead was a member of the Task and Finish Group, this had been omitted from the report in error.

#### **35. CORPORATE PLAN (2015-19) REFRESH**

Catherine Whitehead, Head of Democratic, Legal and Policy Services, and Councillor Katrina Wood, Leader of the Council, introduced a report on the refresh of the Corporate Plan (2015-2019).

The Commission were required under the Council's Budget and Policy Framework to review the Corporate Plan before consideration by Cabinet on 5 February 2018. A draft version of the Corporate Plan Refresh had been shared previously with members and also at a Members' Training Seminar. Members were able to provide input and receive clarification on any details they may have had in respect of the Plan.

It was noted that the current plan had been in place since December 2015 and this was the first 'refresh' since its publication.

The four delivery programme areas were: Place, Strong Communities, Growth and Prosperity, and Efficient and Effective.

It was noted that some changes had been made to the Corporate Plan refresh following suggestions made by Members. Catherine confirmed that the presentation provided to Members at the seminar included these changes. The presentation would be made available with the report to Cabinet at its meeting on the 5 February 2018.

Catherine confirmed that the delivery programme areas provided areas where the Council has identified the need for change and improvement. The Corporate Plan would set the Council's direction of travel up to 2020. The programme areas would then feed through to the Councils' service plans for officers to action.

The Commission thanked Catherine for her work on the Plan and noted the report.

### **36. DRAFT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

Councillor Steve Broadbent, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration introduced a report on the draft Economic Development Strategy to be reviewed by the Commission before consideration by Cabinet on 5 February 2018.

The Commission were informed that the draft Economic Development Strategy "Wycombe – A Welcome Home for Business" set out the framework for the Council's work with its partners to support the growth of the Districts economy over the next 10 years. The vision was to help Wycombe become a more successful place with a strong economy.

Members made a number of points and received clarification on queries as follow:

- There had been a previous strategy however it was noted that this Economic Development Strategy would look at the next 10 years for a longer term roadmap.
- It was hoped that the Strategy could help and inform decision making processes at the Council.
- The Strategy would feed into the Corporate Plan themes and complement the Local Plan land use framework.

- Members supported an appointment of an Economic Development officer at the earliest opportunity.
- It was requested that the Chilterns AONB be given more consideration in the document. In response it was noted that leisure was included under the objectives.
- Regarding housing the population was expected to increase in Buckinghamshire by 14.2% and in Wycombe by 8%.
- It was noted that a feature of Wycombe was as a dormitory town however infrastructure needs were required to be met.
- It was suggested that the report be provided in a more user friendly format with a few pictures/photographs.

The Commission were also introduced to Jay Wheeler, Interim Economic Development Manager.

The Commission noted the report and thanked the Cabinet Member for attending.

### **37. DIGITAL FIRST**

Councillor Lawrence Wood, Cabinet Member for Digital Development and Customer Services provided the Commission with an update on the Digital First Strategy.

The Digital First Strategy had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 18 December 2017. As the Commission had not had time to scrutinise the Strategy Councillor Wood has set up a Policy Advisory Group (PAG) which included Members of the Commission to provide the opportunity for feedback. This was due to take place just before Christmas however due to the weather conditions this meeting had been cancelled. It was noted that the next meeting would be taking place on Tuesday 23 January and the Cabinet Member encouraged the PAG members to attend the meeting.

The Cabinet Member explained that there were urgent issues that needed to be addressed by 2019 such as the Capita contract and the withdrawal of support for Windows 10 by Microsoft. It was noted that the Digital First Strategy, Roadmap and outline business case had been approved by Cabinet. The transformation budget for the project had been included in the budget but this was yet to be agreed.

Members made a number of queries and responses included the following:

- In response to a query Councillor Wood noted that it was his intention to invite Cllr Marten Clarke and John McMillan to a meeting to discuss Digital First.

- Regarding the Modernising Local Government proposal Councillor Wood explained that the other District councils in the County had not been involved in Digital First. However when future savings were realised then this would be considered.
- It was noted that the development of Digital First had been a coordinated effort between the Cabinet Member and senior officers.
- With the current system there was no test environment available however once the servers had been moved to the public cloud then this would be an option. Also with this option if a user has issues with a system then this could be isolated and should not create a problem for everyone.
- At stakeholder engagement meetings it was agreed that teams should have a digital champion who would be able to help team members with certain issues.
- All users should have access to training and it was suggested that all Members receive training before being offered a new device. This would be discussed at the PAG meeting.
- With regards to the Capita contract the Cabinet Member explained that this would have to be considered and there was the option in the future to bring some services back in house. He noted that the Customer Service contract had been going well.

Councillor Collingwood confirmed that he has worked closely with the Cabinet Member, and provided feedback to him and the Leader on Digital First. He confirmed he would be attending the PAG meeting on the 23 January 2018.

The Chairman commented that not everyone used IT and some people would still require non-digital support. In response Councillor Wood confirmed that savings from infrastructure funds would be reinvested to support non-digital schemes.

The Commission thanked the Councillor Wood for the update.

### **38. COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME & CABINET FORWARD PLAN**

The Commission considered the work programme report featured along with the appended Cabinet Forward Plan and Commission Work Programme.

The Chairman requested that Councillor Mrs Julia Langley be invited to the next meeting and provide an update on the situation regarding the government response to Houses in Multiple Occupation.

The Budget Task and Finish Group had completed the 1<sup>st</sup> phase and responses from Cabinet to the recommendations would be included in the 2018-19 proposed budget. A meeting of the TFG 2<sup>nd</sup> phase would be taking place before the next Cabinet meeting and would report directly to Cabinet at its meeting on the 5 February.

Following the recent Full Council Motion, a new Task and Finish Group would be undertaken to scrutinise crime and policing in the District. Councillor Whitehead would act as Chairman and it was requested that a Ward Member from Marlow, The Risboroughs and Hazlemere be included in the TFG. A Work Programme Suggestion Form would be completed and invites for volunteers would then be sent out.

**39. COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION**

There were no Councillor Calls for Action.

**40. SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS**

There were no Supplementary Items.

**41. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no Urgent Items.

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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

Jemma Durkan - Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Catherine - Head of Democratic, Legal & Policy.  
Whitehead



## Audit Committee Minutes

Date: 25 January 2018

Time: 7.00 - 7.57 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor M C Appleyard (in the Chair)

Councillors A Lee, Ms C J Oliver, R J Scott and N J B Teesdale, P R Turner

**Also present:** Sue Gill, (External Auditor, Ernst & Young)

### 34 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hall, Councillor Wilson and Maria Grindley, Ernst & Young.

### 35 MINUTES

Regarding Minute 30 it was confirmed that the Chairman would write a letter to the Chief Executive of Wycombe District Council.

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 36 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 37 CERTIFICATION OF GRANTS AND CLAIMS

The Committee received the Ernst and Young Certification of Grants and Claims Annual Report 2016-17. It was noted that no recommendations for action had been identified in the report.

The Revenues and Benefits Manager, Andy Green, explained that the 2016/17 audit highlighted the improvements made since the last audit.

The Auditor, Sue Gill, thanked the Housing Benefit team for all their help and cooperation in accessing the information for the audit. It was noted that the information required was imposed by the Department for Work and Pensions and with the support of the team the audit had been positive.

It was noted that the outcome from the audit showed improvement from last year with the value of errors found to be £1,387 (0.003%) out of the total subsidy claim for £46m. The Revenues and Benefits Manager provided an explanation on the

thresholds set by DWP for Local Authority errors and the value of these errors. It was reported that the DWP set the limit at £241,297.

In response to Members queries it was noted that there was random initial testing on cases and if errors were found then more extensive/extended testing was required.

Regarding housing benefit fraud it was reported that from 2013 the DWP were responsible to investigate any suspected fraud. However the District Council were responsible for investigating Council Tax Reduction fraud.

**RESOLVED:** That the EY Certification of Grants and Claims Annual Report 2016-17 be noted.

### **38 ERNST & YOUNG ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN**

The Committee received the EY Annual Audit Plan for 2017/18. It was noted that the two significant risks to the opinion on the financial statement identified (risk of fraud in revenue and expenditure, and risk of management override) were standard risks and considered at all audits. It was reported that there were no particular risks to draw to Members' attention.

In response to a Member query it was reported that the methodology used by the actuary audit firms for pension disclosures was being considered in more detail. It was noted that there were several levels of assurance undertaken in this area.

**RESOLVED:** That the EY Annual Audit Plan for 2017/18 be noted.

### **39 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The Committee received a report which presented the 2018 Risk Management Policy. The Business Assurance Manager reported that the Policy was now aligned with the refreshed Corporate Plan and noted that the Corporate Governance Group was no longer in place. In respect of the oversight and reporting of the Councils' risk management arrangements this would now reside with senior officers.

In response to a query it was noted that once agreed the Policy would be distributed to senior managers. Also that the risk score matrix applied to Wycombe District Council and had been refreshed along with the Corporate Plan.

Regarding resources to implement the Policy it was reported that work was underway to revise the process for collating both the strategic risk register and service based operational risk registers and recently purchased risk software would be used to hold risk register information.

**RESOLVED:** That the Risk Management Policy 2018 be approved.

### **40 DRAFT AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT**

The Committee received a report which presented the draft 2017 Annual Report that reflected the work of the Committee during 2017 and provided information regarding the Committee's work programme for 2018.

It was noted that work would be undertaken on the next Annual Report and this was expected to be more streamlined and would provide information on outcomes of work undertaken.

**RESOLVED:** That the draft 2017 Annual Report of the Audit Committee be agreed.

#### **41 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2018/19**

The Head of Finance and Commercial presented the Treasury Management Strategy for 2018/19.

It was noted that the final version of the Strategy would be presented to Cabinet on 5 February 2018, to recommend to Council for approval.

In response to a query it was reported that work would be undertaken in the near future to look at key Council contracts.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Prudential Indicators for 2018/19, be noted;
- (ii) the draft Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) for 2018/19 at Appendix 1, be noted,
- (iii) the draft Treasury Management Policy Statement, attached at Appendix 1 of the report, be noted,
- (iv) the Head of Finance & Commercial be authorised to update the prudential indicators and the report following completion of work on 2018/19 capital programme.

#### **42 AUDIT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Audit Committee work programme as appended to the agenda was reviewed by the Committee. The Committee noted that the meeting in March had been cancelled and dates had been amended to reflect the timeline for the delivery of the Statement of Accounts.

As there was currently no provision in the timetable for the mid-year Treasury Management report a date could be amended to allow for this to be considered.

**RESOLVED:** That the work programme be noted.

## **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED:** That the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item as it contains exempt information as defined in Regulation 4(2)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, more particularly as follows:

Minute 43 – Q3 Strategic Risk Register Monitoring Report

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information (Paragraph 3, Part 1 of schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972)

[The need to maintain the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure because disclosure could prejudice the Council's position in any future tender process or negotiations]

## **43 QUARTER 3 - STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the Strategic Risk Register for Quarter 3, 2017/18. The Business Assurance Manager provided specific information on various risks and amendments to the register.

The Committee were reminded that risk owners could be invited to attend meetings as required in order to provide information relating to the individual strategic risks that they are responsible for. The Chairman suggested that a Senior Manager be invited to a future meeting regarding Emergency Response Planning.

Also following a discussion the Committee requested that an audit trail be provided as to the decisions taken by the Senior Management Board regarding changes to risks and actions taken with regards to the Strategic Risk Register.

**RESOLVED** that

- i) a senior officer be invited to attend a future Audit Committee meeting regarding Emergency Response Planning,
- ii) Minutes of the Strategic Management Board be produced to inform the Committee on the changes and actions taken regarding the Strategic Risk Register,
- iii) the Strategic Risk Register for Quarter 3 2017/18 be noted.

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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

- Jemma Durkan - Senior Democratic Services Officer
- Mike Howard - Business Assurance Manager
- Andy Green - Revenues and Benefits Service Manager
- David Skinner - Head of Finance & Commercial

# High Wycombe Town Committee Minutes

Date: 23 January 2018

Time: 7.00 - 9.05 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor A R Green (in the Chair)

Councillors K Ahmed, Z Ahmed, M Asif, Ms A Baughan, H Bull, M Clarke, R Farmer, S Graham, A E Hill, M Hussain JP, A Hussain, M E Knight, B E Pearce, R Raja, S K Raja, N J B Teesdale and Ms J D Wassell.

Also present: Chief Inspector Hadley (Thames Valley Police).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs L M Clarke OBE, M P Davy, M Hanif, M A Hashmi and M Hussain.

## 29 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lesley Clarke, Matthew Davy, Mohammed Hanif, Muhammad Abdullah Hashmi and Maz Hussain.

## 30 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman declared for information that relation to Item 6 (Special Expenses Budget 2018/2019), he was Chairman of the Twinning Association who received a grant.

He remained in the meeting during the discussion and took full part in the discussion.

## 31 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on the 21 November 2017 be agreed as a correct record subject to the following change:

*Annual Fees and Charges Review – to read ‘Councillor A Hussain, seconded by Councillor M Hussain, proposed that the Saturday one-off burial fee should remain at £263.57, but that the proposed increases be implemented for the other areas.’*

## 32 POLICING UPDATE

The Chairman welcomed Chief Inspector Hadley of the Thames Valley Police to the meeting and invited him to provide the Committee with an update on policing matters within the town.

Chief Inspector Hadley informed the Committee that his colleague, Inspector Robinson (the Town Inspector), had intended to attend to accompany him to the meeting but had to give her apologies on the day.

Chief Inspector Hadley presented the performance data / crime statistics and reported that domestic burglary had risen by 13% (23% in the Thames Valley) and violence excluding domestic violence in the town had increased by 6% (fourth lowest trend). It was noted that whilst there had been no increases in grievous bodily harm there had been an increase in violent crime and knife crime was down 5% on previous years. The Committee was informed that the Police were doing a lot of campaigning, locally and nationally, on hate crime which was currently at 19%. It was noted that with regard to the force restructure High Wycombe was now fully migrated to the operating model and had seen an increase of 14 new recruits. With regard to neighbourhood policing and problem solving it was noted that the Police were trying to increase the use of social media, neighbourhood action groups and world café groups (community engagement, World Café was an example of such). It was noted that the first closure orders had been used in the town as a result of drug users causing anti-social behaviour.

Chief Inspector Hadley went onto explain that the Police were looking at the issue of begging in the town centre and were working alongside Wycombe District Council to look at individuals profiles. The Committee was informed that the Police could use Section 34/35 powers when it came to tackling anti-social behaviour which had to date been used on 58 occasions. It was noted that the Police had issued 6 tickets related to the Public Space Protection Orders to date which had resulted in one arrest.

Chief Inspector Hadley explained that in order to be pro-active there were numerous plain clothed operations underway. On one operation 114 opportunities when people had found themselves to be vulnerable were rectified. The Committee was informed that there had been very few licensing breaches in the town which had not been the case a year ago. It was noted that 'Operation Rowlock' had resulted in 5 men being sentenced to 18 years in prison after they had been found to be dealing drugs in High Wycombe. Members were informed that Police Cadets were increasingly being used in public operations such as 'Operation Grotto' at Christmas time.

The Committee was informed that Chief Inspector Hadley was unable to confirm whether crime in High Wycombe on the whole had increased or decreased. It was noted that whilst Chief Inspector Hadley had the crime statistics split by categories rather than by town but would seek to make the town statistics available upon request.

In discussion Members were informed of the following:

- That the Community and Diversity Officer was a permanent appointment who brought a lot of experience from Yorkshire.
- That the Commissioner was personally committed to retaining the mounted police which were seen as an extremely valuable resource that helped increase public engagement. It was noted that this was currently under review and the options were either to leave them as they were, to make reductions in both the officers and horses or to do away with the section altogether.
- That anti-social behaviour Section 34/35 powers worked via a triage system which was ran out of the Police control centre that looked at threat, risk & harm. It was noted that an initial response would take place if needed and if deemed suitable a neighbourhood officer would allocate an appointment to the victim. Members were informed that some appointments were within an hour (if needed), some were same day and some took place next day. Members were informed that the Police shared information / issues with partners (e.g. lighting issues).
- That Chief Inspector Hadley informed Members that his officers had been through a period of significant change and that he was pleased with the overall performance of his officers. It was noted that national media was not always pro-Police but Chief Inspector Hadley assured Members that there was always internal debates taking place about who should carry tasers, whether a lone officer should be out in a car on patrol on their own, etc.
- Chief Inspector Hadley assured Councillor Rafiq Raja that intelligence would look into the incidents he had referred to regarding a specific family in High Wycombe who were being targeted by a drug dealing person / business based in the High Wycombe area. It was noted that the Police needed to ensure safeguarding was taking place.
- That with regard to the plan for Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGs) the Police were looking into using virtual NAGs and social media. It was noted that the Police were still engaged with making NAGs LPA wide and were also working with Wycombe Wanderers to launch a Youth Group. Members were informed that once the new command team were in place by the 01 March 2018 it would be advertised in the Bucks Free Press.
- Members informed Chief Inspector Hadley that the NAG Police representative for the Terriers and Amersham Hill ward had not turned up to a NAG meeting on the 22 January 2018. It was requested that going forward the NAG Police representative inform the meeting organisers whether they were or were not planning to attend as members of the public often attended.
- Chief Inspector Hadley confirmed that he would like to see environmental audits undertaken in neighbourhoods. Members highlighted the Frogmore area as an area of particular concern to them and Chief Inspector Hadley assured them he would let his colleagues know an environmental audit had been requested in that location.
- That a force intelligence hub and a bureau looked into the use of closure orders nationally.
- That there was some correlation between offenders released from prison and the 13% increase in domestic burglary. It was noted that the Police were alerted to relevant prison releases and that they were able to take measures if felt necessary.



- That the Police tailored a plan to incidents reported as they were not always hate crime. Members were informed that the Police liaised with partnerships and schools if an incident occurred in a school and that they preferred to educate young offenders as ignorance was often to blame. It was noted that the Police often joined in various campaigns to help raise public awareness of hate crime.
- Members informed Chief Inspector Hadley they would be disappointed if the mounted Police were to disband as they felt their presence reassured locals particularly when incidents had taken place.
- Chief Inspector Hadley informed Members that they had a specific department which dealt with domestic abuse. With regard to support strategies it was noted that the Police had a positive intervention policy in place. Chief Inspector Hadley explained that the Police had invested a lot of provision in to support strategies with regard to domestic abuse, were working with women's groups and had a Community Safety Plan in place. Members were informed that the earlier the Police were able to intervene and give advice the better.
- Members were assured by Chief Inspector Hadley that information about domestic abuse incidents that could be shared were shared with partners such as midwives, etc.
- Chief Inspector Hadley was informed that the Micklefield ward had organised a couple of events to help raise awareness about domestic abuse.
- Chief Inspector Hadley informed Members that by working in partnership and sharing information at the regular Prevent Board meetings and via Safeguarding helped to tackle domestic violence and ASB. Members were informed that Chief Inspector Hadley hoped to be able to hold specific Community Partnership meetings to help streamline the process. It was noted that one of his PCSO's had been recruited as the ASB Officer which he believed would help with regard to partnership working.
- Chief Inspector Hadley informed Members that no cuts had been made to the 101 service and that the contact service was imminent which would deal with the initial 101 calls from the public, prioritising urgent calls. Members were informed that Chief Inspector Hadley had been unaware of the delay in 101 calls being answered as they should be diverted if unanswered after a certain amount of time.
- Chief Inspector Hadley assured Members that officers in the Response Team did receive comprehensive briefings which included the PCSO's. It was noted that whilst the Response Team did not directly deal with drinking prohibition orders they were aware of them. Members were informed that the Desborough Road area was the responsibility of the Neighbourhood teams which were not fully resourced at present.
- Chief Inspector Hadley informed Members that the Police did have a priority in 'Big Society' that had morphed into community resilience. It was noted that the Police had people, usually graduates that worked with them for two or three years to develop their public service knowledge. With regard to what could be done to help support the Police, Members were informed that technology assistance would be welcomed as it would allow people to be empowered to call about small issues as well as big issues. Chief Inspector Hadley confirmed that he did have posters available that could be put up to help attract volunteers to the Police which he could provide to Members upon request.

The Chairman thanked Chief Inspector Hadley for attending the meeting and updating Members, which was echoed by the Committee.

### **33 VERBAL UPDATE ON THE DESBOROUGH ROAD REDEVELOPMENT**

The Chairman welcomed the Major Projects and Estates Executive to the meeting and invited him to provide the Committee with an update on the Desborough Road re-development.

The Major Projects and Estates Executive informed Members that he had a detailed plan of the area which was undergoing massive re-development. It was noted that at the town end of the redevelopment a couple of hundred residential apartments were going to be built and that at the Green Street end of the re-development discussions were still underway regarding the redevelopment of the Leigh Street factories which could potentially create 200+ new apartments.

The Major Projects and Estates Executive went onto explain that the Wycombe District Council (WDC) were currently on the first phase of Baker Street (Aldi) and that a 30 unit small workspace scheme would start in June. Members were informed that planning permission had been granted this week on Collins House at the bottom of Bridge Street.

The Major Projects and Estates Executive informed Members that changes had already been seen with the relocation to Dovecot MSCP of temporary long-term stay car park in Baker Street. It was noted that there would be 90 minutes free parking at the Aldi site which would have 92 spaces and that 26 Pay & Display spaces had been kept back for patients of Riverside Surgery.

Members were informed that the WDC had looked at the possibility of adding decking at East Richardson Street car park but it would be an extremely expensive solution which could attract anti-social behaviour.

The Major Projects and Estates Executive informed Members that the proposed new temporary accommodation development on Desborough car park would displace 46 spaces. It was noted that the lost spaces could largely be replaced in the last phase of the Baker Street redevelopment (on the old Grant & Stone site).

In discussion Members were informed of the following:

- That issues with the Westbourne Street / Desborough Road highway area should be raised with the Highways Authority.
- With regard to the proposed new temporary accommodation on Desborough Road car park, it was hoped that the introduction of ANPR gateways and CCTV should help reduce criminal activities in that area.
- The suggestion that the Saunderton Lodge facility, which was felt not to be fit for purpose, should be located elsewhere be raised with the Housing team. It was noted that the drugs and prostitution issues in that area should be raised with the Police. Members felt that these schemes should be looked at holistically.

- Members expressed concern that the social housing on the old Bingo site at the west end of Desborough Road had not been developed. Members asked if any pressure could be applied to request that the site be tidied up as it was felt to be an eye sore. The Major Projects and Estates Executive suggested that Members raised their concerns through the Chairman or to the Chief Executive. (The Major Projects and Estates Executive informed Members that it was not part of his role to negotiate with third party developers which was part of the role of the Planning team).
- The Major Projects and Estates Executive stated that he had found the changes made to the road layout (Bridge Street) encouraged drivers to slow down and have good manners.
- The Major Projects and Estates Executive informed Members that some retail was still planned for the Central Square site.
- Members were informed that 'drive thru' proposal was still under discussion.
- The Major Projects and Estates Executive informed Members that he had received some strong interest in the Cressex Island site.
- Members were informed that if Aldi was to open later this year 300 metres from Lidl it was likely to help alleviate the parking issues currently experienced at Lidl.

The Chairman thanked the Major Projects and Estates Executive for attending the meeting and giving a very full update.

#### **34 SPECIAL EXPENSES BUDGET 2018/2019**

The Committee welcomed Julia Turner, Senior Accountant, to the meeting who explained that the report set out the proposed budget for 2018/19 for Special Expenses and the impact on the precept. It was noted that the details of the estimates for 2018/19 were attached at Appendix A.

Members were informed that the Council Tax precept was based on the tax base calculated in terms of Band D equivalent properties. The tax base for 2018/19 was 22,670 (21,971 in 2017/18). The increase in properties meant that the precept for the unparished area of High Wycombe would increase by £12,117 if the Band D tax for Special Expenses was left unchanged, amounting to a total precept of £388,107 in 2018/19.

The Senior Accountant informed Members that there was a reoccurring date error within the report which should read 31 March 2019 rather than 31 March 2018 and these references could be found in paragraphs 2, 12, 13, 14 and 15.

The Senior Accountant explained that the Queensway Cemetery Phase 1 fees had been approved in October which could be found on page 7 of the agenda.

The Committee were referred to the three options for setting precept listed on page 5 of the agenda in sections 13, 14 & 15. The Senior Accountant requested that Members bear in mind the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) work and Phase 2 & 3 of Queensway Cemetery.

In discussion Members questioned where the bus shelters the Council had paid towards, via special expenses, were located and also who was responsible for footway lighting in private roads. The Senior Accountant responded by stating that she was unable to answer both those questions but would ask Community & Facilities Management for a response.

It was questioned why the Committee would want to fund BIDCO to tackle ASB. The Senior Accountant responded by explaining that she had been advised the Committee may work with BIDCO in the future which she would investigate further.

Members questioned why 'maintenance to grounds' with regard to High Wycombe Cemetery for 2016/17 equated to £8,529 and had then been budgeted for £21,900 for 2017/18 and again in 2018/19. The Senior Accountant responded by stating that she was unable to answer the question and would need to talk to Community Officers who contract the work and set the level of the budget she would find out and get back to the Committee Member.

Members questioned how the rates with regard to High Wycombe Cemetery were worked out. The Senior Accountant responded by stating that business rates would be calculated on the building(s) at the cemetery she would contact Revenues and Benefits and get back to the Committee Member.

It was raised that the balances for 2016/17 to 2018/19 had practically halved and it was questioned what a normal reserve balance was. The Senior Accountant responded by stating that the minimum level of reserves was £150k but the level of reserves would depend on the Committee's future spending aspirations. It was noted that the Senior Accountant believed a 5-Year Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) was needed which was something she planned to work on over the summer. Members stated that the Committee would welcome a 5-Year MTFP.

The Chairman responded to a question on match-funding by explaining that if Members wished to help improve / repair community facilities they could do so by applying for available grants (up to £10k).

**RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:** That the current level of Band D tax for Special Expenses be left unchanged.

### **35 HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE - FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee's draft work programme looking ahead to November 2018 was presented for review.

Members requested that an informal working group be established to look at the High Wycombe Town Market. It was requested that the Clerk email the Committee to request volunteers for the working group and set up a scoping meeting if enough interest was received.

**RESOLVED:** That the forward work programme be noted and an informal working group to discuss the High Wycombe Town Market be

established, with the group reporting back to the Town Committee in due course.

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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

Tanya Brown	- Democratic Services Officer
Charles Brocklehurst	- Major Projects and Estates Executive
Ian Hunt	- Democratic Services Manager
Julia Turner	- Senior Accountant

## Planning Committee Minutes

Date: 15 November 2017

Time: 7.00 - 8.10 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor P R Turner (in the Chair)

Councillors Mrs J A Adey, M Asif, Ms A Baughan, S Graham, A E Hill, D A Johncock, A Lee, N B Marshall, H L McCarthy, Ms C J Oliver, S K Raja, N J B Teesdale, A Turner and C Whitehead.

Standing Deputies present: Councillors Mrs W J Mallen.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: C B Harriss.

### LOCAL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Mrs L M Clarke OBE

### APPLICATION

17/06814/FUL

### 65 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 18 October 2017 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### 66 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 67 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

**RESOLVED:** that the reports be received and the recommendations contained in the reports, as amended by the update sheet where appropriate, be adopted, subject to any deletions, updates or alterations set out in the minutes below.

### 68 17/05241/FUL - WHARF BUSINESS CENTRE, WHARF LANE, BOURNE END, BUCKS, SL8 5RU

The Committee voted in favour of the motion that they were minded to grant permission subject to an amendment to condition 12 requiring retention of balcony screening and the completion of a Planning Obligation or other agreement and that the Head of Planning and Sustainability be given delegated authority to grant Conditional permission provided that a Planning Obligation was made to secure the following matters:

- a) Financial contribution towards the provision of off-site Affordable Housing.

or to refuse planning permission if an Obligation could not be secured.

**RESOLVED:** that the application be granted subject to completion of a Planning Obligation or other agreement.

The Committee was addressed by Councillor Lee, the local Ward Member.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Alex Lidgate in objection and Mr Peter Tanner, the applicant.

**69 17/06814/FUL - 2 KNIGHTS HILL, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKS, HP12 3NX**

The Committee voted in favour of the motion to approve the application subject to the amendments as laid out in the Update Sheet in relation to the screening and that an additional Condition be added to ensure that a plan was submitted in relation to the levels of landscaping of the rear garden.

**RESOLVED:** that the application be approved subject to the amendments as stated above.

The Committee was addressed by Councillors Mrs L Clarke, OBE and M Hussain, the local Ward Members.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Martin Ball in objection and Mr Shoaib Kayani on behalf of the applicant.

**70 17/07081/FUL - 32 FENNELS WAY, FLACKWELL HEATH, BUCKS, HP10 9BY - DEFERRED**

This item was deferred prior to the meeting. No debate took place.

**71 PRE-PLANNING COMMITTEE TRAINING / INFORMATION SESSION**

The Committee was informed that Bloor Homes, who were due to make a presentation at the next Information Session had withdrawn their request so therefore, as it stood, there would be no Information Session held. However, the Chairman explained that Members would be informed should a presentation be arranged and that failing that, he proposed that the 13 December Committee meeting commenced at 6.30pm.

A request was made for a presentation on Enforcement. It was agreed that this would be too much information to get into the forty minutes allotted for a Training Session but that some training would be arranged in due course.

**72 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS FOR SITE VISITS**

**RESOLVED:** That in the event that it was necessary to arrange site visits on Tuesday 12 December 2017 in respect of the agenda for the meeting on Wednesday 13 December 2017, the following Members be invited to attend with the relevant local Members:

Councillors: Mrs J A Adey, Ms A Baughan, S Graham, D A Johncock, T Lee, N B Marshall, H L McCarthy, Mrs C Oliver, N J B Teesdale, A Turner and P R Turner.

**73 DELEGATED ACTION UNDERTAKEN BY PLANNING ENFORCEMENT TEAM**

The Committee noted the Delegated Actions undertaken by the Planning Enforcement Team.

The Committee also discussed ways of developing a simplified and more straight-forward system to record the Action noted on the Delegated Action Sheets and noted this work was currently being undertaken.

The Committee was informed that should any Member wish to look at a Delegated Action Sheet, the folder was available to view in Democratic Services.

**74 FILE ON ACTIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

The file on actions taken under delegated authority since the previous meeting was circulated for the Committee's attention.

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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

Mrs S Armstrong	Principal Development Management Officer
Mrs J Caprio	Principal Planning Lawyer
Mrs L Hornby	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Mr R Martin	Development Management Team Leader
Mr P Miller	Technical Officer



# Planning Committee Minutes

Date: 17 January 2018

Time: 6.30 - 8.08 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor P R Turner (in the Chair)

Councillors Mrs J A Adey, Ms A Baughan, S Graham, C B Harriss, D A Johncock, A Lee, N B Marshall, H L McCarthy, Ms C J Oliver, S K Raja, N J B Teesdale and C Whitehead.

Standing Deputies present: Councillors M A Hashmi.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: M Asif and A Turner.

## LOCAL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor A Green

## APPLICATION

17/07627/FUL

## 75 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 15 November 2017 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## 76 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 77 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

**RESOLVED:** that the reports be received and the recommendations contained in the reports, as amended by the update sheet where appropriate, be adopted, subject to any deletions, updates or alterations set out in the minutes below.

## 78 17/05769/FUL - THE SPINNEY, UPPER ICKNIELD WAY, WHITELEAF, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, HP27 0LY

Before debate on the application took place the Chairman read out a statement from the Ward Member who was absent from the meeting due to illness.

Members noted in the Update sheet that the recommendation had been amended to read:

**Minded to grant permission subject to completion of a Planning Obligation.**

That the Head of Planning and Sustainability be given delegated authority to grant Conditional Permission provided that a Planning Obligation is made to secure the following matters:

- 1) prevent further development pursuant to previously granted application ref: 15/06439/CLP; if permission 17/05769/FUL was implemented;
- 2) require all other outbuildings on the site to be demolished; if permission 17/05769/FUL was implemented.

Or to refuse planning permission if an Obligation cannot be secured.

Following a full debate, Members voted on the motion to refuse the application on the grounds of the development being inappropriate in the Green Belt and therefore contrary to Wycombe District Council Planning Policy. This motion fell away as a majority in favour of the motion was not reached.

Members then voted on the motion to approve the application, subject to the amendment to the recommendation and the additional condition to include retention of boundary trees and appropriate root protection. This motion was carried.

**RESOLVED:** that the Head of Planning and Sustainability be given delegated authority to grant Conditional Permission provided that a Planning Obligation was secured as referenced above.

The Committee was addressed by Mr John Biggs in objection and Mr Martin Crook, the agent on behalf of the applicant.

**79 17/07627/FUL - LAND ADJACENT TO 32 QUEEN STREET, HIGH WYCOMBE, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, HP13 6EZ**

Members noted that despite the concerns raised when refusing the previous planning application, the Planning Inspector only accepted the impact on the outlook of the neighbour. Therefore, while their concerns persisted, this appeal decision was a material planning consideration.

The Committee also noted the concerns expressed by the Conservation Officer in relation to the arrangement of the windows on the front elevation. He considered that there should be single central windows as two was overcrowded and architecturally unresolved. It was considered that this could be relatively easily addressed and a motion to defer the application to seek these changes was passed.

The Committee therefore voted in favour of the motion to give delegated authority to the Head of Planning and Sustainability to grant Conditional Permission, provided that the fenestration amendments could be agreed with the applicant.

**RESOLVED:** that the Head of Planning and Sustainability be given delegated authority to grant Conditional Permission, provided that the fenestration amendments outlined above could be agreed with the applicant.

The Committee was addressed by Councillor A Green, the Local Ward Member.

The Committee was addressed by Mr Richard Wilkinson in objection and Mr Duncan Gibson, the agent on behalf of the applicant.

**80 PRE-PLANNING COMMITTEE TRAINING / INFORMATION SESSION**

The Committee noted that no requests had been received and therefore no pre-Committee training/information session would be held. The Chairman agreed that the next Committee meeting could start at 6.30pm.

**81 DELEGATED ACTION AUTHORISED BY PLANNING ENFORCEMENT TEAM**

Members noted the Delegated Action authorised by the Planning Enforcement Team.

**82 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS FOR SITE VISITS**

**RESOLVED:** That in the event that it was necessary to arrange site visits on Tuesday 13 February 2018 in respect of the agenda for the meeting on Wednesday 14 February 2018, the following Members be invited to attend with the relevant local Members:

Councillors: S Graham, C B Harriss, D A Johncock, T Lee, N B Marshall, H L McCarthy, Mrs C Oliver, N J B Teesdale, A Turner, P R Turner and C Whitehead.

**83 FILE ON ACTIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

The file on actions taken under delegated authority since the previous meeting was circulated for the Committee's attention.

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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

Mr T Cowell	Senior Development Manager
Mrs G Davies	Development Management Officer
Mrs L Hornby	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Mr P Miller	Technical Officer
Mr A Nicholson	Development Manager
Ms R Steele	Assistant Solicitor

# Agenda Item 17

## Extension Works to Risborough Springs Swim & Fitness Centre - Procurement Process

**Cabinet Member:** Cllr Graham Peart

**Ward(s) Affected:** None

**Officer contact:** Elaine Jewell

Ext No. 3800

Email address: elaine.jewell@wycombe.gov.uk

### **RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL**

- To provide an exemption from Contract Standing Orders (“CSO’s”) to allow the non-competitive award of a Development Agreement with a value of £1.2m to allow Places for People (“PFPL”) to complete development works at Risborough Springs Swim and Fitness Centre (“RSSFC”).
- To delegate authority for entering into a Development Agreement, Deed of Variation and any associated legal documents in relation to the existing Leisure Operator Agreement to the Head of Community Services, in consultation with the District Solicitor, Head of Finance and Commercial Services with the Cabinet Member for Community Services.
- To delegate authority for the surrender and re-grant of the lease to PFPL for RSSFC, and amendment as required to the ground lease for RSSFC with Princes Risborough Town Council to the Major Projects & Property Executive in consultation with the District Solicitor, the Cabinet Member for Growth and, Regeneration, the Head of Community Services and the Cabinet Member for Community Services.

### **Corporate Implications**

Broad EU Principles and case law set the wider legal framework for those contracts which fall below the threshold for EU Procurement. The broad principles include the requirement to prevent, identify and remedy conflicts of interest, to avoid any distortion of competition and to ensure equal treatment of economic operators.

Officers have considered best value, case law and the EU principles, taking into account any risk, and recommend that the Council enters into a development agreement with People for Places directly without advertising to enable them to deliver the project.

The Council’s Contract Standing Order stipulate that its rules should not be waived without Member consent. This paper seeks that consent and sets out the alternative that Officers propose should be followed.

The scope of the project is within the 2017/18 approved capital programme.

## **Executive Summary**

1. This report seeks an exemption from CSO's to allow the non-competitive award of a Development Agreement ("DA") with value of £1.2m for PFPL, the incumbent Leisure Operator to complete development works at RSSFC, which will provide larger studio and fitness facilities.

The Council's standard award process would be to advertise the opportunity on the Government's national portal "Contracts Finder" (Contracts Finder is a national website which provides information to potential bidders about contracts worth over £10,000 with the government and its agencies), and to run an open competitive tender exercise to select the most economically advantageous tender in accordance with relevant legislation and the Council's CSO's. In this case it is proposed that the Council will procure the design and improvement works via PFPL in order to utilise the benefit of its established supply chain to secure design and works that are competitively priced, of high quality and minimise delays and disruption to the day to day operations of the centre.

## **2. Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications**

3. The need to comply with a procurement process which achieves best value is a principle within UK law. This continues to apply alongside other requirements for contracts below the EU threshold. The Development Agreement (the "DA") and associated legal documents will include the requirement for PFPL to achieve and demonstrate competitive pricing through its supply chain and procurement procedures. This approach involves PFPL seeking best price from its building contractors, and using the same design team as it has used on similar procurement at other Local Authority owned leisure facilities so that a track record can be demonstrated.

## **Background and Issues**

4. Research conducted on behalf of the Council has identified that there is already latent demand for leisure facilities at RSSC. The local plan proposes the building of around 2500 additional homes in the Princes Risborough area. The resulting increase in population will add to that demand. The Council intends to sign a DA with its current leisure management contractor PFPL so that PFPL can directly manage the building works from design through to construction of the enlarged health and fitness facilities at RSSC.
5. Officers believe the most appropriate procurement route is to:
  - (i) non-competitively sign a DA with PFPL, which will provide an agreed sum of money to develop and manage the works on the Council's behalf;

(ii) To enter into a Deed of Variation varying the Leisure Operator Agreement to allow for the improvement works to be carried out and varying the services to allow for the new facilities. There will also be a surrender and re-grant of leases on completion to take into account any changes in the plans for the facilities.

The characteristics of a Development Agreement (the “DA”) are as follows:

- a. It will form the legal agreement between the Council and PFPL as to the outline scope of what building works will be delivered and what funds are to be made available by WDC in order to do this. PFPL will be required to carry out and complete the improvement works in accordance with the requirements set out in the DA, using all reasonable endeavours to achieve completion by an agreed planned completion date.
  - b. It will set out mechanisms for collaborative working during the project, and also for reviewing costs and making payments against an agreed schedule. It will also include detail of how PFPL will communicate and manage any issues relating to cost or quality that may arise during design development and works.
  - c. PFPL would remain responsible for any latent defects arising in the improvement works.
  - d. The professional team appointed by PFPL and the eventual contractor selected by PFPL will be required to provide appropriate collateral warranties for the benefit of the Council and any other third party that has an interest in RSSC.
6. PFPL’s ownership of the procurement and management of the improvement works has been identified as the most suitable approach as this will mean they ‘own’ the quality of the design and works from the start; ensuring the works deliver a fit for purpose enlarged sports centre that provides an improved service to local residents. As well as this overarching reason for the chosen approach, Officers believe that non-competitive award of the DA to PFPL is the most appropriate procurement route because:
- A benefit to PFPL being awarded responsibility for the design and works via their established supply chain of contractors is that, as the current operator of the facility under the Leisure Operator Agreement, they are best placed to closely manage works to minimise closures and or disruption to the centre. PFPL’s established relationship with their contractors means that the contractors are experienced in ensuring any disruption is minimised and in H&S and other aspects of carrying out works in a ‘live’ site open to the public. For the Council to appoint a third party/ its own professional team and Design & Build contractor directly would be highly disruptive to the continued operation of the facility, and would present an increased delivery risk for the Council. This would include having to appoint professional team, manage multiple contracts directly and also having to manage any claims from PFPL if anything was to go wrong.
  - If there were any works changes required, the Council would have to manage that process and coordinate between contractor/s and PFPL and deal with

any impact those changes could have on PFPL's projected FM costs, as well as facilities mix and expected revenue. This could lead to a higher cost for the works from contractors/ consultants having to take into account those interface issues and possible associated delays. It would also be resource intensive – with cost implications - for the Council to manage this process. If PFPL procures and manages the design development and works, it manages those risks itself and will be able to utilise the benefits of having an established supply chain to achieve value for money.

- Another benefit is that if PFPL procures the improvement works, and once they are complete, PFPL will remain responsible for any latent defects in those works for the duration of the Leisure Operator Agreement and would have to rectify any such defects at its own costs, leaving PFPL with the risk of recovering any damages/ costs incurred and loss of revenue from the contractor in default. If the Council procures the Improvement Works, that risk remains with the Council.
  - In addition, under paragraph II.2.1 of the OJEU Contract Notice for the Council's appointment of PFPL to provide leisure management services, the scope of the required services includes the management, operation and maintenance of WDC's leisure centres. PFPL's project management of these works could be said to fit within the scope of this appointment given that PFPL is responsible for maintaining the new improved facilities.
7. In addition to the reasons stated above, in order to further ensure that the approach achieves value for money, PFPL have agreed to conduct a competitive procurement process.
8. It is necessary to exempt this procurement from the Council's CSO's because, subject to the commitments set out in the Development Agreement, the appointment of any advisors PFPL may require and the appointment of the works contractor will be in accordance with PFPL's processes and outside of the Council's control.
9. The Development Agreement has value of £1.2m and so is below the EU works threshold so the Public Contract Regulations 2015 as they relate to "above threshold contracts" do not apply.

However Part 4 Chapter 8 of the PCRs applies to contracts valued between £25,000 and relevant threshold ("Below Threshold Contracts"). PCRs require: "where a contracting authority advertises a contract award opportunity"... "In those circumstances the Contracting Authority shall publish information about the opportunity on Contracts Finder". The Council's CSOs require us to advertise contracts over £10,000, so following the standard Council process would result in this opportunity being advertised nationally.

Setting CSOs aside will remove this obligation so that the process outlined in this report can be followed.

## **Risks**

10. The benefits this approach delivers in terms of financial and operational risks are stated above. Potential risks to the Council include the following:

- a. The works delivered under the contract established with PFPL's successful tenderer does not match the Council's requirements. This will be mitigated by clear procedures for collaborative working and agreement of designs (as permitted under the contractual approach adopted), plus reviews of works as they progress. Council officers will agree with PFPL the designs and then will let PFPL manage the D&B contract. A joint project Board and team has been set up and will be in constant communication throughout the project.
- b. The works costs of the PFPL procurement come in above budget. This would be dealt with contractually by PFPL as part of robust contract monitoring and management, and the joint Project Board will regularly review progress and cost reports. The Development Agreement will allow for the requirement for the joint Board to meet to review any issues arising and reach agreement as to way forward. This risk is also mitigated by the choice of a Design & Build contract type where the contractor will be responsible for delivering the works to the designs it has completed within its contractual budget.
- c. **Publication of contract award.** Where a Below Threshold Contract is awarded, Regulation 112 of PCRs requires Contracting Authorities to publish certain basic information about that contract on Contracts Finder, this obligation would apply to the Council's award of the DA to PFPL. For contacts below the EU Thresholds there are general requirements for transparency and competition imposed under EU Treaty Principles. If the procurement were to be found to be subject to these principles there is a risk of challenge. However PFPL have provided details that they have followed processes similar to that outlined above on several occasions and no such challenge has ensued.

The risk of challenge is considered low – the works are specialist in nature and are complex in terms of timing and linking to operations at the centre. The works relate to improving the current operations within the sports centre and PFPL regularly carry out improvement works of a smaller scale using their own contractors at the centres as part of their contractual responsibilities.

- d. Risks relating to increased costs for closure/ loss of income and operational related delays would be much higher with a new contractor brought in, that potentially has less experience (or none) of working on a 'live' site that is operational and open to the public during the period of the works.

## 11. **Next Steps**

If Council approves the decisions requested in this report, the next step will be for the Development Agreement, Deed of Variation and or any other associated legal documents to be completed under delegated authority, and then signed by the Council and PFPL. PFPL will then instruct their professional team to start on more detailed design, with a view to developing designs sufficiently to select their preferred Design & Build contractor.