

Minutes

Policy Review Committee

Venue: Committee Room

Date: Tuesday 17 January 2017

Time: 5.00pm

Present: Councillors J Deans (Chair), M Hobson (Vice Chair), K Arthur, J Cattanach, D Hutchinson, R Packham and Mrs J Shaw-Wright.

Apologies for Absence: None.

Officers Present: Karen Iveson – Chief Finance Officer and Palbinder Mann - Democratic Services Manager.

20. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

21. MINUTES

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2016.

RESOLVED:

To approve the minutes of the Policy Review Committee held on 15 November 2016 for signature by the Chair.

22. CHAIR'S ADDRESS

The Chair reported that there would be an additional Committee meeting in March to discuss a Review of Parks Byelaws and the Gambling Policy.

23. DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/18 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

The Chief Finance Officer presented the Draft Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2017/18 and Medium Term Financial Plan.

The Chief Finance Officer went through the budget presentation delivered to Members and explained some of the key points arising from the presentation:

- there are a number of financial pressures facing the Council including rising demand for services such as Street Scene;
- the Government announced the draft finance settlement on 15 December 2016 - this confirmed the multi-year offer made in February 2016 and core funding cuts over the next three years;
- Revenue Support Grant would be phased out by 2020 meaning greater reliance on Council Tax and Business Rates.
- changes to New Homes Bonus would also impact – with the scheme moving from the current 6 years down to 5 and then 4 years by 19/20; along with the introduction of a 0.4% baseline growth below which NHB would not be paid.
- Allowing for cost rises and funding reductions this means there is an estimated core funding shortfall of £4.6m over the next three years.
- At this stage no allowance for additional renewable energy business rates from 2017/18 has been included in the draft estimates – we await confirmation of the figures for next year in April 2017.
- The draft budget assumes a £5 council tax increase for a Band D property – in line with Government expectations and the MTFs;
- The draft budget includes a 1% reduction in housing rents in line with Government policy.

The Chief Finance Officer explained that the budget was currently out for consultation. The following discussion took place:

- In response to a query relating to how much of the savings would reduce the budget deficit next year, the Chief Finance Officer explained that the savings plan included £345k for 2017/18;
- In response to the Executive's request for further savings options – members queried the sale of potential surplus Council assets such as Profiles Gym and industrial units. A Member advised that he knew of interested parties who currently rented industrial units from

the Council that wished to purchase them. It was agreed the respective Member would provide details to the Chief Finance Officer;

- It was queried why the costs for PLAN Selby were high and a breakdown was requested. The Chief Finance Officer explained that some of the costs were associated with obtaining specialist staff for the work involve;.
- Discussion took place on the Access to Employment initiative under the Programme for Growth and it was clarified this was associated with individuals having access to attend employment.

RESOLVED:

- i) To ask the Executive to consider the sale of surplus Council assets (in particular Profiles Gym and Industrial Units) as part of work to identify additional revenue savings.**

19. WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

The Work Programme 2016/17 and Forward Plan were noted.

RESOLVED:

- i) To note the Work Programme 2016/17 and the Forward Plan.**

The meeting closed at 5.55 p.m.