

**MINUTES OF: THE CABINET**

**Date of Meeting: Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2013**

**Present: Councillor A Barnes (in the Chair)  
Councillors Jackson, Lamb, MacNae, Marriott and  
Serridge**

**In Attendance: Mrs H Lockwood, Chief Executive  
Mr S Sugarman, Director of Business  
Ms F Meechan, Director of Customers and Communities  
Mr P Seddon, Head of Finance and Property Services  
Mrs J Cook, Committee Officer**

**Also Present: Councillors Essex, Farrington, Morris and D. Smith  
4 members of the public  
0 members of the press**

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 All Cabinet members were present.

**2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2013 be approved as a correct record.

**3. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

3.1 The Leader of the Council noted that there were two urgent items of business as follows:-

Item A3(i) – Acceptance of the proposed Deed of Variation to the Section 106 Agreement for the Weavers Dene Housing Development at Helmshore.

Item A3(ii) – /Community Right to Bid/Assets of Community Value

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

4.1 No declarations of interest were made.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

5.1 Mr Chris Smith asked a question regarding Mytholme House. Mr Smith was advised to attend the next Full Council meeting or the speak with the Leader of the Council after the meeting.

## 6. REFUSE, RECYCLING AND STREET CLEANSING REVIEW

6.1 The Portfolio Holder for Operational Services and Development Control outlined the report which had been brought back to Cabinet following agreement for consultation to commence in June 2013. The report recommended changes to the Refuse, Recycling and Street Cleansing Service for the 2014/15 budget as set out in Appendix 6 of the committee report and summarised in paragraph 5.13 of the same report:-

- Re-profile the Town Centre Caretaker service to generate savings of c£39,100;
- Renegotiate funding dedicated to the Whitworth Town Centre Caretaker Service, in accordance with the Whitworth Town Council wishes as per 5.8;
- Market Caretaker post to become full-time at a cost of c£5,000. This is reflective of the reduction in the TCC service and to allow the Market Caretaker to take on full responsibility for opening and closing all markets;
- Remove recycling 'bring sites' across the borough, and bring forward revised policies for the collection of garden waste, and missed bins. Collectively this will generate savings of c£66,500;
- Remove one cage truck and one post – generating a saving of c£30,500;
- Remove one pavement sweeper and one post to generate savings of c£34,000;
- Stand down one road sweeper to be used as a spare and remove one post to generate savings of c£64,000;
- Remove one supervisor post from the establishment to generate savings of c£30,000.

6.2 The Portfolio Holder outlined the extensive consultation which had taken place, including a cross-party Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group, Management Team, Unions, Staff and the Citizens Panel questionnaire.

6.3 Members were invited to comment on the report and the following comments were made:-

- Extensive consultation had been carried out.
- A large amount of detail had been amassed regarding the positioning of bins which would allow for duplicates to be removed and to optimise the location of bins throughout the borough.
- Some members expressed concerns regarding the cleanliness of the town centres.
- The Leader of the Council stated the members and the public should let the Council know of any concerns once the new arrangements were in place.

### **Resolved:**

1. That the service changes set out in Appendix 6 and summarised in paragraph 5.13 of the committee report be approved and the budget for 2014/15 be reduced accordingly.
2. That all future minor amendments to the proposals to be delegated to the Director of Customers and Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

## **Reason for Decision**

To enable to council to remain focused on identifying and delivering the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

## **Alternative Options Considered**

None

## **7. PARKS AND OPEN SPACES REVIEW**

7.1 The Leader of the Council outlined the report which had been brought back to Cabinet following agreement for consultation to commence in June 2013. The report provided members with an update on consultation carried out around proposed changes to the Parks and Open Spaces service as set out in paragraph 5.9 of the committee report:-

- Continue to give the same priority to cemeteries, memorials, park frontages and gateway and town centre sites.
- More use of shrubs and perennials instead of bedding plants.
- Vary the amount of maintenance in each park, with the changes to be agreed in consultation with local parks groups.
- Consider options for self-management for council maintained land, in consultation with local groups who use them.
- Remove some areas from the grass cutting schedule to support wildflowers and insects.
- Reduce the area cut on verges to 1-2m strips; and
- Reduce the number of formal flower displays.

7.2 The Leader of the Council outlined the comprehensive consultation that had taken place on the proposals, in particular a community consultation session on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2013. From this session it had been found that the Allotment Societies were broadly supportive of self-management and that the Bowling Clubs would require further engagement.

7.3 Members were invited to comment on the report and the following comments were made:-

- Joint services were discussed and the Leader of the Council noted that this would only be considered where there was a financial benefit to the Council.
- It was noted that the 5-days unpaid leave currently undertaken by staff would be consulted on again.
- It was noted that the community groups in Rossendale were strong and resilient.

### **Resolved:**

1. That Cabinet recommend to Council that £100k is removed from the 2014/15 budget to be achieved via the changes to the Parks and Open Spaces service as set out in Section 5.9.
2. That all future minor amendments to the Parks and Open Spaces service be delegated to the Director of Customers and Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

### **Reason for Decision**

To enable the council to remain focused on identifying and delivering the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

None.

## **8. STAN (SERVICES TO A NEIGHBOURHOOD)**

- 8.1 The Portfolio Holder for Customers, Legal and Licensing outlined the report which provided an update on the achievements/progress of the STAN service. It was noted that the initial three year project with Rossendale, Pendle and Ribble Valley was now coming to an end and that Pendle had confirmed they would not be continuing.
- 8.2 The Portfolio Holder noted that the project could be extended for a further 12 months between Rossendale and Ribble Valley and that funding would need to be sought for the project to continue past this point.
- 8.3 Members were invited to comment on the report and the following comments were made:-
- Transition funding and networks could be looked to assist the STAN service.
  - Other ways of working could be explored.
  - The feedback received showed that the service had a valuable role to play in supporting customers.
  - The impact of relocated the One Stop Shop was noted.

### **Resolved:**

1. That members would support the extension of the STAN Service for a further 12 months until September 2014.
2. Members noted that there was no secured funding in place after September 2014 and to enable STAN services to continue, external funding and/or additional council funding budget allocation would need to be sought should members determine the service continue to be supported.

### **Reason for Decision**

To enable the project to continue for another 12 months.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

None

## **9. COUNCIL TAX WRITE-OFFS**

- 9.1 The Portfolio Holder for Customers, Legal and Licensing outlined the report which requested member authority to write off bad debts of council tax of £7,968.88, for a bankrupt individual, which was above the delegated limit of £5,000.
- 9.2 Members were invited to comment on the report; however no comments were made.

**Resolved:**

1. That the write off of £7,968.88 of irrecoverable council tax debts be approved.

**Reason for Decision**

To continue robust management of the council's resources.

**Alternative Options Considered**

None

**10. FINANCIAL MONITORING 2013/14 QUARTER ONE**

- 10.1 The Portfolio Holder for Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources introduced the report which provided members with an update on the final financial monitoring period of 2013/14 for quarter one. It was noted that the Central Government settlement grant was expected to reduce by 27.6%, which would have an impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy going forward.
- 10.2 Members were invited to comment on the report and the following comments were made:-
  - It was noted that financial stability for local government may not occur until the end of the decade.

**Resolved:**

That the contents of the report are noted.

**Reason for Decision**

To continue robust monitoring of the council's finances.

**Alternative Options Considered**

None

**URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

**11. ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROPOSED DEED OF VARIATION TO THE SECTION 106 AGREEMENT FOR THE WEAVERS DENE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AT HELMSHORE**

- 11.1 The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Environmental Health outlined the report which asked for Cabinet's agreement to vary the conditions of the Section 106 agreement for the Weaver's Dene Housing Development at Helmsshore. The proposed variations were outlined as follows:-
  1. Amendment to the mortgagee in possession clause to allow greater acceptance of the S106 by more mortgage providers.
  2. Removal of the stated open market value of the shared ownership units to be replaced with wording to the effect of 'compliant with standard "affordable price" clauses as proposed by the Homes and Communities Agency (HVA) or other such regulator.

3. Amendment to the cascade policy with regard to the allocation of affordable housing to allow applicants from the whole of Rossendale to be considered at 6 weeks rather than the existing 12 weeks.

11.2 Members were invited to comment on the report and the following comments were made:-

- Concerns regarding the proposed variations were made.
- It was noted that reduction of the timescales could ensure that the homes did not remain empty for too long.

**Resolved:**

That the amendments to the Proposed Deed of Variation to the Section 106 Agreement for the Weavers Dene Housing Development at Helmshore, as outlined at 11.1 of these minutes, be approved.

**Reason for Decision:**

To enable to Deed of Variation to be amended.

**Alternative Options Considered:**

None

**12. COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID/ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE**

12.1 The Director of Business outlined the report which asked for Cabinet approval to set up a working group to determine whether to list 2 properties as Assets of Community Value. It was noted that these bids had been submitted prior to the Policy being finalised. The Properties were:-

- The Old Market Hall, Bacup, OL13 8GW
- Bacup Conservative Club, Irwell Terrace, Bacup, OL13 9AW

12.2 The Director of Business briefly outlined the proposed Policy and asked that the Cabinet agree to follow this procedure for the 2 bids currently submitted.

**Resolved:**

1. That the proposed Policy would be followed for the 2 bids currently submitted.
2. That a Working Group would be urgently established to determine the bids.

**Reason for Decision**

To enable a decision to be made whilst the Policy is under development.

**Alternative Options Considered**

None

**The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 7.20pm**

\_\_\_\_\_ CHAIR \_\_\_\_\_ DATE