

SOUTH RIBBLE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING – 23 JANUARY 2013

REPORT OF THE CABINET

The Cabinet met on the evening of Wednesday 9 January 2013.

On that occasion, the Cabinet considered the matters set out below. Decisions shown in boxed areas are subject to Council confirmation; the reports considered by the Cabinet were available to all members in advance of the Cabinet meeting.

1. Residential Extensions SPD – Adoption

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Housing introduced this item which sought to ensure that house extensions and alterations should relate well to the character of the property and general street scene, whilst ensuring that they did not adversely impact on neighbouring properties.

A Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared which focused on residential development including design principles and guidance to homeowners and developers. The SPD supported the design standards within policies 17 and 27 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy, Policy B6 in the Publication Version Site Allocations Development Plan Document and the Central Lancashire Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

It was decided to:-

1. Recommend that the Council adopt the Supplementary Planning Document
2. Recommend that the Council delegates authority to the Director of Planning and Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Housing to make minor text, layout and formatting amendments following the completion of the four week period stipulated by Part 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

2. Preston City Deal: Expression of Interest

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Housing introduced this item which informed members of the Government announcement on 29th October 2012 of Wave 2 of its City Deals programme and the invitation to 20 cities to express their interest in participating. Preston had been included in the list and the Government had invited Preston City Council, the County Council and the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to make a submission. It was apparent that the inclusion of Preston in the list referred to a larger geographic area than that of the City Council, and included (at least) South Ribble. Preston City Council had approached the Borough Council to work alongside it, and the County Council and LEP to develop the Expression of Interest required at this stage.

The focus of the submission was to secure the necessary infrastructure to promote economic growth, and align funding streams both national and local to deliver this infrastructure as quickly as possible.

The Government required Expressions of Interest (EOI's) by 15th January 2012. Government would select the Wave 2 City Deal areas it intended to support by March, with the process of negotiation and confirmation of Deals completed by November, 2013.

It was decided to support and endorse the Expression of Interest for the Preston City Deal proposals as set out in the report and to seek to rename the proposal "Preston South Ribble City Deal".

3. South Ribble's Tenancy Strategy Document

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Housing introduced this report which informed members that The Localism Act 2011 introduced a statutory duty on local authorities to prepare and publish a tenancy strategy and that the main aims of the strategy were to:

Set out expectations for the housing providers that work or intend to work in the area to ensure that their policies make the best use of social and affordable housing and contribute to sustaining communities.

Set out the matters that housing providers should consider when developing policies in relation to types of tenancy, circumstances in which they would grant a tenancy, length of term and circumstance when a further tenancy would be granted.

Set out the principles that providers need to consider if offering a fixed term tenancy and that they should be for no less than 5 years.

It was decided that:-

1. In order to progress the strategy through to implementation the Council be recommended to approve the contents of the draft Strategy for consultation purposes, and to
2. Delegate to the Director of Planning and Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Housing the power to amend the draft Strategy in the light of any representations made during the consultation period and to then implement.

4. Localisation of Council Tax Support Scheme

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources introduced this report which, following a consultation exercise, provided a response to a specific Government requirement that, with effect from April 2013, would change the nature of the existing Council Tax Benefit scheme and see the introduction of a local Council Tax Support scheme. The Government had also reduced local authority funding for Council Tax Support by 10% and, therefore, any local scheme must address this issue as well as being formally adopted by 31 January 2013.

The report provided details of the various options open to the Council, which had also been included in the consultation exercise.

Concern was expressed at the impact that these changes would have and at the possible effect on Council Tax collection rates.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources accepted that there may be an impact on collection rates but that the extent was unknown at this stage. He also informed members that the figures in the report were indicative at this stage and firmer figures would be available at the Council meeting.

It was decided to recommend to Council:

1. To seek to recover any reduction in funding to Council Tax Benefit in full from working age claimants
2. To implement (and therefore publish in January 2013) a flat rate deduction (sufficient to recover losses from Government Grant reductions) from working age claimants
3. To develop a scheme based on (2) above for publication in January 2013

5. Timetable of Meetings

The Leader of the Council presented this report which proposed a timetable of meetings for 2013/14. The Timetable was substantially similar to previous years.

It was decided that the timetable of meetings for 2012/13 attached as Appendix B to this report be approved.

6. Mayor and Deputy Mayor 2013/14

It was decided that:-

Councillor Mrs D Gardner be confirmed as Mayor elect for 2013/14 and Councillor G Walton be nominated as Deputy Mayor elect for 2013/14.

7. The Cabinet's Forward Plan

It was decided to approve the Forward Plan submitted under section 22 of the Local Government Act 2000.

8. Pay Policy

The Leader of the Council presented this report which informed Members that The Localism Act 2011 required all local authorities to set out its position on a range of issues relating to the remuneration of its employees and set out a Policy which required approval by Council by the end of March each year and for publication on the Council's website.

The Pay Policy sets out the existing approach to the remuneration of all posts within the Council. In particular it specified certain mandatory requirements that must be detailed within the Policy.

It was decided that the Pay Policy be recommended for approval by the Council.

I hereby commend the report of the Cabinet to the Council.

COUNCILLOR MRS MARGARET SMITH

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL