

SOUTH RIBBLE BOROUGH COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING – 19 November 2014
REPORT OF THE CABINET

The Cabinet met on the evening of Wednesday 5 November 2014.

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. Member Development Plan

The Leader of the Council introduced this report and indicated that it had already been discussed by the Scrutiny Committee.

A Member Development Plan had been developed and approved by the Council in 2012. The Plan set out the Priority Objectives for the period 2012 – 15 and identified Key Actions to be addressed on an annual basis. The report provided a narrative of the progress against the Key Actions in 2013-14 and delivery of those key actions for 2014-15.

It was decided to note the report.

2. Technical Updates Localisation of Council Tax Support Scheme

The Cabinet member for Shared Services & Corporate Support introduced this item and reminded members that in April 2013 the council was required to introduce a Council Tax Support Scheme (LSCT) to replace Council Tax Benefit (CTB). In addition under the Local Government Finance Act 2012 local authorities were required to approve their Council Tax Support Scheme on an annual basis by 31 January for the following financial year.

The Cabinet acknowledged that the council's system appeared to be working with a 70+% collection rate that was a lot better than some other schemes in Lancashire and nationally.

It was decided to:-

1. delegate authority to the Director of Governance and Business Transformation in consultation with the Cabinet member for Shared Services and Corporate Support to make all necessary updates to this council's Council Tax Support Scheme to comply with any prescribed requirements that may be issued by central government. This may be by the making of specific regulations as in 2013 or by amendment to the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and 2012;
2. delegate authority to the Director of Governance and Business Transformation in consultation with the Cabinet member for Shared Services and Corporate Support to make all necessary amendments to the council's scheme to uprate the allowances and premiums in accordance with Revised HB Circular when it is issued in December 2014/January 2015 by the DWP. This process is a requirement of the prescribed elements of the scheme;
3. publicise the updated scheme in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 2012; and
4. approve the level of the deduction to be applied to Working Age recipients of Council Tax Support from the 1 April 2015 will be finalised and agreed in accordance with South Ribble's Scheme and as part of the Council's Budget and Council Tax Setting at the Council Meeting on the 4 March 2015. This figure will continue to be within the range consulted upon during the introduction and implementation of the council's scheme in 2012.

3. Performance, Budget and Risk Monitoring Report – Mid Year 2014/15

The Leader introduced this item on the council's performance for the first six-months of the year from 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014 against the Corporate Plan key actions, Budget, financial performance and risk management. The report enabled members to assess how the Council was performing, to ensure it was delivering on the key things that mattered to South Ribble and ensured the council continued to improve. The report was considered last Tuesday by the Scrutiny Committee. Adding the report's revised format was well received and agreement it was very positive with were a number of good items.

An update on regeneration projects indicated that the improvements in Longton were anticipated to be completed in a few weeks and both Penwortham and Bamber Bridge were quickly moving forward. A member present reported complementary comments from residents regarding the Longton scheme and the creation of a cycle track in the Western Parishes.

The Cabinet was advised that in Appendix 1 (page 6) reference to 23 unique visits to the Visit Leyland website should read 23,000.

In response to a member of the public, the Chief Executive commented that this was a half year report showing achievements against topics identified in February/March 2014 with some areas yet to deliver savings. In relation to the transitional employee budget savings, a significant proportion of this was from areas subject to review. The report indicated savings at mid-year, yet some were expected to over achieve their target for the full year equivalent. On the whole it was felt to be an excellent achievement at mid-year.

It was decided to note the report.

4. Worden Park Vision Plan

The Deputy Leader and Neighbourhoods and Street Scene introduced the long term vision for Worden Park covering a 20 year period. The Vision Plan provided a starting point to consolidate the council's aims/aspirations for the park rather than a previous ad hoc approach. The park was well visited and regarded as a jewel in the crown of South Ribble. The plan had recently been considered by the Scrutiny Committee.

In respect of the buildings and potential for entertainment events, the Cabinet member confirmed that every effort was being made to best utilise the facilities available. Although in respect of potential use for entertainment, whilst the Cabinet felt expressions of interest would be explored, it was also very conscious of the park's surrounding area in Leyland and the differing expectations from both its users/visitors and the local community.

It was decided to adopt the Worden Park Vision Plan.
--

5. Car Parking Enforcement

The Deputy Leader and Neighbourhoods and Street Scene reported on the council's car parking enforcement arrangements which for the last five years had been through a framework agreement with Lancashire County Council. This council was now looking at the re-tendered agreement for another period of five years.

The report would not normally have been considered by the Cabinet. However, over the five year period the cumulative value of the agreement was over £75,000. The service had operated effectively over the five years without any issues and as part of the re-tender process had been identified as the better option.

It was decided to approve the joint procurement and the continued use of the Lancashire County Council framework agreement.

6. Dual Use Agreement Leyland St Mary's

The Cabinet member for Regeneration, Leisure and Healthy Communities believed that school premises should be accessible and available for use by the wider community. He reported that following the fire some of the re-built school premises were no longer in the same place. As a result some premises associated with the artificial turf pitch were no longer readily accessible to the public.

After an assessment, Serco and South Ribble Community Leisure were content for the school to be removed from the leisure agreement. This would produce a saving of approximately £11,000 and release a PAISA investment (£74,500) for use elsewhere in the leisure partnership. Councillor P Smith added that before the recommendations were pursued he wanted confirmation from the school that it would remain available for community use.

It was decided subject to the Cabinet member for Regeneration, Leisure and Healthy Communities being satisfied that Leyland St Mary's would remain available for community use to:

1. authorise the Director of Regeneration and Healthy Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to work with the school to develop a new operational model and associated business plans to enhance and sustain wider community use of the facilities;
2. approve the varying of all relevant Legal Agreements (involving South Ribble Community Leisure and Serco) to remove Leyland St. Mary's Artificial Turf Pitch from the Leisure Partnership; and
3. authorise the Director of Regeneration and Healthy Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to engage with representatives of the school to negotiate withdrawal from the Dual Use Agreement and complete a Deed of Termination.

7. Penwortham Improvements

The Cabinet member for Regeneration, Leisure and Healthy Communities presented the report. The council's budget included £110,000 for this scheme, £50,000 of which had already been authorised to enable a start, which had included substantial consultation. Highlighting this council's working with the City Deal, he added that a paper requesting £100,000 be brought forward for lighting in Penwortham (A59 area) had been submitted to the City Deal Executive.

The Leader confirmed that last Friday the City Deal Executive had considered and given the go ahead for the lighting scheme on Liverpool Road, enhancing this council's scheme for Penwortham.

However, the Cabinet was mindful that the condition of the former government buildings site on Cop Lane was a distraction to improvements and a way forward needed to be pursued.

It was decided to:

1. approve the Penwortham Improvement Scheme as detailed in the report;
2. approve the allocation of capital funds to create the Penwortham Improvement Scheme;
3. grant authority under Section 3.4 of the Financial Regulations to incur capital expenditure in the sum of £60,000 to carry out capital works; and
4. authorise the Director of Regeneration and Healthy Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Member for Regeneration, Leisure and Healthy Communities to finalise details on the scheme going forward.

8. Centenary Fields

The Cabinet member for Regeneration, Leisure and Healthy Communities introduced this initiative aimed to protect in perpetuity areas that provided fitting commemoration to the First World War as a significant milestone in the country's history. This had been widely promoted in the borough by Councillor Ogilvie (the council's Armed Forces Champion) and the Regeneration Team. It was proposed to allocate two sites; Dandy Brook Park and Hutton Playing Field. There were also discussions with St Catherine's Hospice to create a link with Dandy Brook Park.

It was decided to:

1. obtain Centenary Field designation for Dandy Brook Park and Hutton Playing Field through a deed of dedication between the council and Fields in Trust;
2. approve for the deeds of dedication to be signed by the Duly Authorised Officer, the council's Legal Services Manager; and
3. allocate funding to allow improvements to be made to Dandy Brook Park, site of the proposed Borough Memorial and Peace Garden and also to assist with a major lottery funding bid.

9. The Cabinet's Forward Plan

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

EXEMPT ITEMS

10. Extension of Existing Insurance Long Term Agreements

The Cabinet member for Shared Services & Corporate Support presented the report which detailed the joint procurement exercise and proposal to extend the present Long Term Agreements.

It was decided to approve the extension of the council's Long Term Agreements as set out in the terms of the report.

11. Corporate Personal Computer (PC) Replacement

Further to min. no.11, 10 September 2014, the Cabinet member for Shared Services & Corporate Support introduced the report which detailed the procurement process and reasoning for the replacement of the council's personal computers (PCs).

It was decided to:

1. invoke part 44, paragraph 44.1 of the Contract Procedure Rules to allow the waiving of the standard procurement process due to exceptional circumstances within the nature of the marketplace:

‘the nature of the market for the works to be carried out or the goods or services to be provided has been investigated and is demonstrated to be such that a departure from the requirements of the Rules is justifiable’

2. allow the direct procurement of replacement desktop PCs from the existing supplier at the cost and for the reasons detailed in the report.

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

COUNCILLOR MRS MARGARET SMITH

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL