

SOUTH RIBBLE BOROUGH COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING – 30 September 2015
REPORT OF THE CABINET

The Cabinet met on the evening of Wednesday 9 September 2015.

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. The Reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

The Leader of the Council referred to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II becoming, today, the country's longest reigning monarch and congratulated her and Prince Philip on their service and duty to the country as Queen and Consort and wished them well and continued good health.

It was decided that a letter of congratulations be sent to Her Majesty.

2. Central Lancashire Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Supplementary Planning Document

Councillor Hughes, the Cabinet member for Strategic Planning, presented the report to members concerning the Central Lancashire Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which provided guidance for applicants in terms of understanding the relevant Central Lancashire policies and what is required as part of the planning application process including guidance in relation to ecological networks. Once adopted, this SPD should be afforded significant weight as a material consideration in determining planning applications. He pointed out that this document had been jointly with Preston and Chorley. The Leader welcomed the report and commented on the continuing benefits of the Joint Planning Advisory Committee.

It was decided that the Council be recommended to:

1. Adopt the Central Lancashire Biodiversity and Nature Conservation SPD attached at Appendix 1 to the report; and
2. Delegate authority to the Planning Manager in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Housing to make any minor text, layout and formatting changes on the publication of the document

3. Performance, Budget and Risk monitoring report - year end 2014/15 (April 2014 – March 2015)

Councillor Bennet, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources introduced the Performance, Budget and Risk year end monitoring report together with the Budget Out-turn report for 2014/15 and commented on some of good points contained in the report.

The leader welcomed the excellent reports and praised both members and officers for their contribution.

It was decided that the report be noted

4. Procurement of Ride on Mowers

Councillor Mullineaux Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Street Scene introduced this item which referred to the replacement of six ride on mowers which were included in the Council's vehicle and plant replacement capital programme. The report requested approval to commit capital expenditure and accept the most economically advantageous tender for the procurement of the machines.

Clarification was sought on the reasoning behind the selection process and the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Street Scene explained that the recommended machines would meet the Council's operational needs better.

In answer to a question from a member of the public Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Street Scene confirmed that out sourcing was always kept under review.

It was decided that

1. The tender from Company A in Table 2 in the report be accepted
2. Authority under Section 3.4 of the Financial Regulations to incur capital expenditure of £160,194 for the purchase of six ride on mowers be granted.

6. Business Rates Retention (BRR) Proposed Pooling Arrangements 2016/17

Councillor Bennett Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources presented to Members a report on the option to join a Lancashire Business Rates Retention pooling arrangement for the 2016/17 financial year. The report also provided an indication of the potential benefits and risks to be considered.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources explained the considerable potential benefits to the Council particularly given the beneficial situation the Council was currently in due to recent business development.

The Leader of the Council in supporting this proposal commented on the detailed discussions at district level that had taken place and the fact that South Ribble would be one of the best beneficiaries of the arrangements.

Councillor Foster expressed his concern at the recommendation to delegate the final decision on this and sought assurance that if the due diligence review was concluded in time for the Council meeting the results would be reported to Council.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources confirmed if available they would be reported.

It was decided that the Council be recommended to:

1. Approve South Ribble Borough Council joining the proposed Lancashire Business Rates Pool Agreement for the financial year 2016/17 should a due diligence review in September 2015 evidence it is potentially financially beneficial to the Council.
2. Delegate the final decision to join the pool, post the due diligence review, to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources.

7. Scrutiny Report: Review of Loneliness and Social Isolation affecting Older People

Councillor Michael Green Cabinet Member for Housing & Healthy Communities introduced this response to the Scrutiny of Review of Loneliness and Social Isolation affecting Older People. He thanked the Scrutiny Committee for undertaking the review and for highlighting this as an issue that affects many people across all social spectrums.

He commented that the Scrutiny Report was helpful in that it recognised that a great deal of work was already taking place throughout the Council and through its partners to support elderly and vulnerable people. Loneliness and Social Isolation clearly affected older people, and there are a myriad of triggers, ranging from poor health through to bereavement.

However although the report was keen to develop a series of initiatives which it listed within its recommendations unfortunately the report did not contain quantifiable data to allow for meaningful extrapolation; it was difficult to assess the scale of the problem and whether existing partners are in a position to support any latent demand that could be uncovered.

Cabinet Member for Housing & Healthy Communities informed Cabinet that Lancashire County Council were undertaking a review of Loneliness & Social Isolation and it was worth considering whether to support this review by undertaking a pilot exercise locally. LCC's approach is for a review that is pan-Lancashire, but will inevitably lack a depth and richness that a deep and narrow pilot could achieve but a local pilot could produce the quantifiable data that the review lacked.

Councillor Foster, on behalf of Scrutiny Committee said they were exceptionally disappointed at the Cabinets response to the Review.

Councillor Bell asked which recommendations Cabinet actually supported and the Cabinet Member for Housing & Healthy Communities went through the recommendations commenting on each and noting that some were not for Cabinet but for other bodies such as My Neighbourhoods but that he would draw the attention of the My Neighbourhoods Chairs to the recommendations.

Councillor Forrest commented on the difficulty of helping the lonely and isolated if we don't know who they are.

Councillor S Jones expressed her disappointment at the response to the review and commented that it was Scrutiny's role to investigate and make recommendations not to take them forward. Scrutiny felt that it needed something other than the South Ribble Strategic Partnership to take it forward and that as this Council has an Older People's Champion this was a role that they could take forward. She expressed her disappointment that the response to the Review implied that the Task Group had not done a good job.

Councillor Bennett commented that he felt that this had been discussed extensively over the last few months and that Cabinet's response was appropriate and that it should be noted that a pilot scheme to take this further had been proposed.

It was decided that the Cabinets response to the Scrutiny Review as set out in the report be approved.

8. Borough War Memorial - Urgent Decision under Standing Order 38 of the Council Procedure Rules

Councillor P Smith Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Leisure introduced this item which informed members that South Ribble Borough Council was creating a new Borough War Memorial as part of the WW1 Centenary following extensive consultation using the My Neighbourhood Forums which showed considerable support. As the launch of the Borough War Memorial was planned for the 11th November 2015 an Urgent Decision under Standing Order 38 of the Council Procedure Rules was necessary to ensure the launch date was met.

Members present expressed their support for the project whilst acknowledging the significant cost of the project which it was hoped would not escalate further.

It was decided that:

1. The Urgent Decision Number 840 for the approval of spend on the additional options to the Borough Memorial be noted.
2. The arrangements for the build and launch of the Memorial be noted

9. The Cabinet Forward Plan

It was decided that the Forward Plan submitted under Section 22 of the Local Government Act 2000 be approved.

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

COUNCILLOR MRS MARGARET SMITH

LEADER OF THE COUNCIL