

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Meeting held: 15th November 2017

Present: Councillor Russell Roberts (Chair)
Councillors Lloyd Bunday, David Howes, Ian Jelley and
Mark Rowley

Also Present Councillors Maggie Don, Andrew Dutton and Mick
Scrimshaw

17.EX.37 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dearing
and Thurland.

17.EX.38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mark Rowley declared a personal interest in Item 13
as the relative of an employee employed by one of the
contractors submitting a tender.

17.EX.39 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the
Committee held on 18th October 2017 be
approved and signed as a correct record.

17.EX.40 WORK PROGRAMME

The Council's work programme published on 8th November 2017
was noted.

17.EX.41 MAINTAINING A DURABLE BUDGET

A report was submitted which:-

- Reminded Members of the context/background to the Council's budget and medium term financial strategy;
- Illustrated the latest budget model, the delivery of efficiency savings for 2017/18 and the estimated level of budget savings that may be required over the next few years;
- Considered the car park charging strategy going forward; and
- Provided an outline budget timetable for 2018/19

Councillor Mick Scrimshaw addressed the Executive and asked a number of questions relating to an adverse variance in relation to fee income; business rates; homelessness; commercial investments and consultation on the car parking strategy.

Councillor Andrew Dutton also addressed the Executive on the subject of car parking charges, the use of income from business rates and investment in the town centre.

In response to the above questions and comments from the speakers, it was noted that budgets were regularly assessed and projected forward. There had been a reduction in income from cremation charges and planning fees. Pilot authorities in relation to business rates retention for 2018/19 were not yet known and the variance of £225k related to projected growth. Work on homelessness was ongoing in terms of using the latest information available. The budget position going forward reflected savings and commercial investments realised.

During debate, it was noted that both the national and local financial position were now even more uncertain. A commitment had previously been given to review car parking charges, and a zero per cent increase over the last seven years, coupled with amending the charging periods as outlined in the report, in order to provide some benefits for longer stay users, represented a reduction in charges in real terms. It was also proposed to maintain concessions for swimming pool users, pop and shop spaces and free parking for blood donors. If the proposed car park charging strategy was approved by the Executive for the next three years, this would allow the Council to monitor both the local and national economy and give confidence in delivering a balanced budget, whilst at the same time continuing to regularly monitor the situation.

Members of the Executive welcomed the proposal to maintain the £40,000 earmarked for town centre initiatives and continue free parking days in the town centre.

It was proposed by Councillor Howes and seconded by Councillor Bunday that the recommendation contained in the report be amended to reflect a three-year duration for the revised car park charging strategy from 2018/19, and it was subsequently

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and associated guiding principles be noted;
- (ii) the Council's current Medium Term Financial Forecast and the progress being made for the delivery of efficiency savings for 2018/19 and future years be noted;
- (iii) the medium term strategy for car parking charges as outlined in Section 6 of the report be approved for three years from 2018/19;
- (iv) the annual revenue budget for the sum of £40,000 for town centre initiatives be maintained for the next three years;
- (v) the summary budget timetable for 2018/19 (as outlined in Appendix C to the report) be noted.

17.EX.42 **NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL – BUDGET CONSULTATION AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS**

A report was submitted which:-

- (a) Provided members with a high level summary of the two budget reports that were presented to Northamptonshire County Council's (NCC) Cabinet on 19th October 2017 – the first report provided an update on NCC's Medium Term Financial Plan together with a number of initial saving options that were being consulted on;
- (b) Based upon the information that was currently available, provided members with some preliminary comments about the potential impact that the saving options could have on

the services currently provided by Kettering Borough Council (and other District and Borough Councils in the country);

- (c) Reminded members of KBC's agreed policy position in relation to potential service/funding reductions of other public sector partners; and
- (d) Agreed an approach to respond to NCC's current budget consultation.

Councillor Mick Scrimshaw addressed the Executive on the subject of the proposals in relation to bus subsidies, which he felt could result in a reduction in footfall to town centres. Councillor Scrimshaw also expressed concern regarding increased workloads at KBC and disappointment that a final report on the consultation would not be brought back to the Committee before being submitted.

In debate, it was agreed that the point regarding bus subsidies would be included in the consultation response. It was noted that senior members of the NCC cabinet had agreed to attend the next meetings of the geographic forums to answer questions on NCC budget proposals..

During debate it was noted that Kettering Borough Council was willing to provide advice in relation to setting up library trusts and provide help in kind to maintain a travelling library service in the Borough by working with other districts and boroughs in the county.

Discussion was held on NCC budget gaps, both for this year and in the medium term, and the potential effect of reductions in bus services on rural residents.

Members were reminded of KBC's financial guiding principles and golden rules. It was felt that the Council should be ready to provide help and support wherever it could within its adopted policy position.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the updates provided in the report be noted;
- (ii) the financial challenges that are facing Northamptonshire County Council be recognised;
- (iii) a collective response with other District and Borough Councils in relation to the savings options that are being consulted upon be

submitted where possible;

- (iv) authority be delegated to the Head of Resources (in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder) to formally respond to the current NCC budget consultation.

17.EX.43 AWARD OF CONTRACT – ROOF RENEWAL PROGRAMME 2017-21

A report was submitted which requested the Executive Committee to accept the recommended tender from Contractor A in the sum of £573,705 for the re-roofing of 158 properties on the Pytchley Road estate under a phased programme over a four-year period.

Councillor Mick Scrimshaw addressed the Executive in respect of potential budget benefits in respect of the programme.

Councillor Maggie Don also addressed the Executive, urging the appointment of local contractors for such works wherever possible.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing, Communications and Youth assured Members that the procurement process was robust, and it was noted that any budget benefit could be used to provide more roofs or other works within the programme.

RESOLVED that the tender from Contractor A in the sum of £573,705 for the re-roofing of 158 properties on the Pytchley Road Estate, Kettering, be accepted.

(It was subsequently noted that Contractor A was Warkton Roofing, a local contractor.)

At this point, Cllr Mark Rowley left the room.

17.EX. 44 AWARD OF CONTRACT – HOMES FOR THE FUTURE PHASE III

A report was submitted which sought approval for the refurbishment of council houses in Alexandra Road and Harrington Road, Desborough, under the Homes for the Future Programme.

It was noted that work on the project had been suspended earlier this year as the contractor had gone into liquidation with work on eight properties remaining outstanding. The tendering exercise had been undertaken so that work could recommence at the earliest opportunity.

Councillor Mick Scrimshaw addressed the Executive and asked a question in relation to capital improvements to the housing stock. It was noted that the works represented full house refurbishment.

RESOLVED that the tender from Contractor C in the sum of £433,120 for the completion of the Homes for the Future contract in Desborough be accepted.

(It was subsequently noted that Contractor C was Kier Group plc, a national contractor.)

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and ended at 7.13 pm)

Signed
Chair

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