

**BOROUGH OF KETTERING**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**16<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

**(Meeting held virtually)**

**Present:-**

Councillor Russell Roberts (Chair)  
Councillors Lloyd Bunday, Mark Dearing, Scott Edwards,  
David Howes, Ian Jelley, Mark Rowley and  
Lesley Thurland

**20.EX.01 APOLOGIES**

None

**20.EX.02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mark Rowley declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in Item 10 on the agenda, and indicated that he would leave the meeting during discussion and voting thereon.

**20.EX.03 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**20.EX.04 URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**20.EX.05 ISSUES REFERRED FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

None.

**20.EX.06 ISSUES REFERRED FROM FORUMS**

None.

**20.EX.07 ISSUES REFERRED FROM COUNCIL**

None.

**20.EX.08 THE COUNCIL'S DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME**

The draft Work Programme to be published on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020 was noted, having been previously circulated by email.

**20.EX.09 PROTOCOLS FOR REMOTE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES**

A report was submitted which sought adoption of temporary protocols to enable the committee to be held remotely, so that meetings could take place and properly function during the COVID-19 lockdown and any subsequent restrictions on meetings or gatherings.

Councillor Andrew Dutton addressed the Committee under the Right to Speak policy and welcomed the report. Cllr Dutton expressed some concern regarding transparency and public accessibility to remote meetings by disadvantaged members of the community, suggesting that the Council communicate with the public via free local publications, such as 4Locals, to make them aware of other ways of raising any concerns they may have.

**RESOLVED** that:-

- (i) it be noted that a notice providing details of proposed revised protocols and procedures for Members and the public to access remote meetings had been posted on the Council's website for 5 days prior to the meeting;
- (ii) the procedures and protocols set out in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 of the report, and the use of video-conferencing software be approved to enable Council Committees to be held remotely for the duration of the period set out in the Coronavirus Act 2020; and
- (iii) the temporary amendments to meeting procedures, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, be approved to enable the provision of remote meetings.

(Voting: Unanimous)

*(Having previously declared a disclosable pecuniary interest, Councillor Mark Rowley was placed in the virtual waiting room during consideration of the following item and voting thereon)*

## **20.EX.10 COVID-19: BUDGET IMPLICATIONS AND MONITORING**

A report was submitted which:

- Provided a high level analysis of the financial implications that the COVID-19 Pandemic had brought
- Considered a range of possible budget outcomes for the remainder of the current financial year, and into the medium term
- Appraised members of the Small Business Grants scheme(s) and sought delegated authority to amend the current scheme, if required.

Councillors Mick Scrimshaw, Anne Lee and Andrew Dutton addressed the Committee under the Right to Speak policy, raising the following points:-

- It was important for councillors to understand how criteria had been modelled and clarity was sought on national economic predictions
- The potential impact on council tax and commercial investment income
- The process for consideration of urgent items
- Unprecedented losses in the leisure services industry and the Council's long-term recovery plan to secure leisure services to residents
- Costs relating to additional work and PPE and cleaning items required in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic
- The measures that were being taken to support local businesses

In relation to the three scenarios outlined in the report, members noted it was difficult to formulate firm estimates, but the period of any national economic downturn was being reviewed on a monthly basis. There was no impact on the council tax base and business rates in 2020/21, but any impact would be evident in budgets for 2021/22. There were no current fundamental pressures on the commercial investment portfolio, but this would continue to be monitored and reports brought back to the Executive as appropriate.

Recovery of leisure services was a national issue and the government was looking at ways the leisure industry could be supported in the long-term. Kettering Borough Council were currently working closely with local leisure providers to support them through the difficult times

Costs due to Covid-19 were continuing to be met through existing budgets. The full impact of additional pressures would continue to be closely monitored as the Council progressed through the remainder of the financial year. Work was being undertaken with local businesses to support them through difficult times, including the availability of discretionary grants.

Although the report under consideration related specifically to Covid-19, the government was looking at how money borrowed could be used, and this would be a consideration for the new unitary authority as part of its deliberations. There was no need for the Council to dispose of its assets. The Council's financial model had been redrawn and was now focusing on the next few months.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance outlined the Council's achievements in responding to the pandemic. It was noted that Kettering had been rated in the top five Councils nationally for helping local businesses and was proud of its performance in preventing businesses from failing. As a result of good financial management in the past, Kettering was better placed than most local authorities to protect the Borough's residents in a variety of ways.

**RESOLVED** that:-

- (i) the potential range of financial implications resultant from the current COVID-19 Pandemic be noted; and
- (ii) the previous action of the Council regarding the criteria and processes for the administration of the Small Business Grant Schemes be endorsed, and delegated authority be delegated to the Executive Director, Lisa Hyde (in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder) to amend the current Discretionary Scheme to ensure that it continued to fit local circumstances.

*(Voting: Unanimous)*

*(Councillor Mark Rowley rejoined the meeting)*

**20.EX.11 COVID-19: REVISIONS TO THE HRA CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2020/21**

A report was submitted which sought approval for budget virements in respect of the 2020/21 HRA Capital Programme.

Councillors Anne Lee, Andrew Dutton, Clark Mitchell and Maggie Don addressed the Committee under the Right to Speak policy and raised the following points:-

- A request was made for the Adaptations budget to be maintained and go ahead as originally planned
- Some tenants had been waiting for replacement bathrooms and kitchens and these should be done if work could be safely carried out
- Changes to the HRA budget should be delayed until the autumn

(Executive Committee No. 4)

16.6.2020

- Tenants' Forum should be involved in any decision to amend the HRA budget
- There should be an increase in testing of electrical installations to ensure they were safe, particularly those where work was planned to be deferred
- Information was sought on the number of people waiting for aids and adaptations to their homes

A note from Councillor Anne Lee regarding national regulations and health and safety requirements for tradespeople had been separately circulated.

Members noted that Adaptations covered by the HRA Capital Programme were major projects where remodelling of properties and intrusive work was required. This would result in tradespeople being present in people's homes for an extended period time, due to the restrictions imposed by the Coronavirus Regulations, and work was likely to be very disruptive. Such work was not being stopped, but would inevitably take longer to complete due to social distancing restrictions. Urgent work would continue. No information was readily to hand on the number of people on the waiting list for aids and adaptations, but this information would be sent to the speakers separately.

During debate, members of the Committee endorsed the contents of the report, noting that without revisions to the HRA Capital programme, residents could be without bathrooms and kitchens for a considerable amount of time. In addition, builders' merchants had either closed or were offering a reduced service and it would take time to recover to a full service. It was felt that it would be sensible to move funds to areas of work that could be completed without excessive disruption, and also to respect for residents' wishes where they had concerns.

It was stressed that the virements proposed in the report were cost neutral and aimed at maximising safety to both residents and tradespeople. The virements should not be seen as cutting costs. Emergency repairs would continue.

**RESOLVED** that the budget virements to the 2020/21 HRA Capital Programme as set out in Table 1 of the report be approved.

*(Voting: Unanimous)*

## **20.EX.12 DOG CONTROL PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO)**

A report was submitted which sought agreement to continue the existing Public Spaces Protection Order (Kettering Borough Council) (Dog

Control) for a further three years as required by the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014.

Councillor Anne Lee addressed the Committee under the Right to Speak Policy stating that she was in favour of extending the PSPO, whilst commenting on the consultation carried out and drawing attention to residents' requests for greater enforcement. Cllr Lee also suggested launching a campaign to remind dog owners of their obligations.

In discussion, Members endorsed a suggestion that a publicity campaign be undertaken in August 2020 to increase public awareness through the Council's website and social media pages.

**RESOLVED** the existing Public Spaces Protection Order (Kettering Borough Council) (Dog Control) be continued for a further three years, renewing from 30<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

## **20.EX.13      MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES**

A report was submitted which sought approval of a recommendation to Council for continuation of the current Members' Allowances Scheme, or approval of the appointment of an Independent Remuneration Panel to report back on a new scheme.

**RECOMMENDED** to Full Council that the existing index inflator to the Scheme of Members' Allowances be continued until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 or until the vesting day for the North Northamptonshire Council, whichever was the later.

*(The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 7.20 pm)*

Signed .....  
Chair

AI