
BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

CABINET

**Held on Tuesday, 28 November 2017 at 9.30 am in
Norfolk & Dereham Rooms, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

PRESENT

Mr J.W. Nunn (Chairman)	Mr J.P. Cowen
Mr S. H. Chapman-Allen (Vice-Chairman)	Mr M. S. Robinson
Mr S.G. Bambridge	Mr A.C. Stasiak
Mr P.D. Claussen	Mrs A. M. Webb

Also Present

Mr P. S. Wilkinson

In Attendance

Anna Graves	- Chief Executive
Christine Marshall	- Executive Director Commercialisation (S151 Officer)
Maxine O'Mahony	- Executive Director of Strategy & Governance (Monitoring Officer)
Rob Walker	- Executive Director Place
Mark Stinson	- Executive Manager Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Alison Chubbock	- Chief Accountant (Deputy Section 151 Officer) (BDC)
Adrian Mills	- Strategic Manager (Benefits)
Julie Britton	- Democratic Services Officer

Action By

117/17 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

118/17 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

None.

119/17 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

None.

120/17 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

None.

Action By

121/17 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 5)

Councillor Peter Wilkinson.

122/17 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (IF ANY) (AGENDA ITEM 6)

None.

123/17 BRECKLAND COMMUNITY FUNDING APPLICATIONS (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 7)

None.

124/17 QUARTER 2 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2017-18 (AGENDA ITEM 8)

The Executive Member for Finance presented the report.

The report provided information on the forecast full year financial position of the Council as at 30 September 2017 and progress to date on the Moving Forward Transformation Programme.

The key matters to note were: above budget revenue spend of £215K; the Moving Forward Transformation Programme which had delivered savings of £945k (73%) against a target of £1,290k; a capital forecast out-turn spend of £6,496K (70%) against the budget at this early stage of the year; and treasury - the interest income forecast of £101k above budget for the year as a result of loans to 3rd parties for a longer duration than initially budgeted.

Members were informed that the Council remained in a reasonable position to achieve the Transformation savings.

The Leader expressed some concern that the Council was behind with the savings target. He felt that it could be a struggle going forward and asked if realistic targets had been set. The Executive Director for Commercialisation & S151 Officer explained that it was not unusual to be behind target at this stage but the target dates may have to be adjusted in future.

The Executive Member for Growth & Commercialisation drew attention to paragraph 1.2 on page 18 of the report and asked if the £215k was in relation to one particular item. Members were informed that it was an amalgamation of overspends and underspends; the major items had been set out in the report.

REASONS

To provide timely information to Members on the overall financial position of the Council, enabling resource allocation to priorities where necessary.

OPTIONS

That the report and appendix be noted.

RESOLVED that the report and appendix be noted.

Action By

125/17 DRAFT BUDGET SETTING, MEDIUM TERM PLAN AND CAPITAL STRATEGY (AGENDA ITEM 9)

The Executive Member for Finance presented the report. The report asked Members to consider and review the draft Capital and Revenue budget estimates, the Medium Term Financial Plan and the Capital Strategy.

This was the first stage of the budget setting process. The final budget would be presented to Cabinet and Full Council in February 2018, incorporating final information such as the Government Settlement, along with the formal Council tax report. The estimates would be updated once further information became available.

Members were reminded there had been a 4.4% increase to Band D Council Tax levels in 2017/18. A similar increase for 2018/19 could be considered, but was dependant on the Government Settlement. Even at a 4.4% increase Breckland Council would still have the lowest Council Tax in the Country.

Special expenses, fees and charges and the requirements for the Capital Programme were highlighted and discussed.

Further to the above, Members were asked to note that under the affordable housing element, of the £292,301 S106 funding, £205,970 had to be spent by September 2018. How and where this money could be used depended upon the terms of each S106 Agreement. It was agreed that Ward Members would be kept informed of S106 monies to be spent in their area.

REASONS

To comply with budgetary and policy framework.

OPTIONS

- That the draft Capital and Revenue Budget Estimates, the draft medium Term Financial Plan and the draft Capital Strategy be reviewed.
- There are no alternative options presented.

RESOLVED that the draft Capital & Revenue Budget Estimates, the draft Medium Term Financial Plan and the draft Capital Strategy be reviewed.

126/17 LOCALISED COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME (LCTRS) 2018-19 REVIEW (AGENDA ITEM 10)

The Executive Member for Place presented the report.

Each year the Council was required to review its Local Council Tax Reduction Support Scheme (LCTRS). The report advised the Cabinet about the conclusion of the 2017 annual review, the resultant proposals previously agreed and the consultation exercise undertaken to revise the LCTRS to take effect from 1 April 2018.

The report recommended similar levels and similar support as in the previous

Action By

year.

The Strategic Manager for Benefits (Anglia Revenues Partnership) provided Members with a detailed overview of the proposed scheme.

A number of questions were asked including whether or not this proposed scheme would include housing benefit/council tax benefit for war widows' pension, and how Breckland compared to other authorities in relation to collection rates. The Strategic Manager for Benefits explained that as far as the latter was concerned Breckland Council compared favourably sub-regionally, regionally and nationally. As far as the war widows' pension was concerned, this should be embedded in the Council Tax scheme but he would check and report back.

Members were informed that the consultation had now concluded; there had not been any responses from the public. The proposals had, however, been warmly welcomed at a Shareholders' Liaison meeting.

In response to a question, the recommendations were clarified. The final report to Council would be amended accordingly.

REASONS

To align calculation rates to present levels, to harmonise to Government welfare reforms prevalent in Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support for Pensioners as applicable, and to prepare for the expansion of Universal Credit.

OPTIONS

Option 1

That the Council retains the existing scheme for the 2018/19 year.

Option 2

That the Council implements the recommendations in paragraph 8 of the report, to revise the scheme for the 2018/19 year.

RECOMMEND to Council that the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) for 2018/19 be revised in line with the proposals at paragraphs 8.2 to 8.6 of the report (as summarised at paragraph 10.2 of the report).

127/17 QUARTER 2 2017-18 PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW REPORT (AGENDA ITEM 11)

The Deputy Leader presented the report which updated Members on Council performance for the period 1 July 2017 to 30 September 2017.

The current status of the key performance indicators was explained.

REASONS

The report was for information only.

Action By

OPTIONS

The report was for information only.

RESOLVED to note the contents of the report.

128/17 AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION (AGENDA ITEM 12)

The Executive Manager for Governance presented the report.

The report set out a number of proposed amendments to the Constitution which had been supported by the Overview & Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on 2 November 2017.

REASONS

The amendments had been proposed in order to provide clarity within the Constitution, ensure consistency, and eliminate errors.

OPTIONS

- To agree each proposed amendment
- To disagree each proposed amendment
- To require alternative amendments

RECOMMEND to Council that:

1. the amendments as detailed in Appendices A to F of the report be approved and the Constitution be amended accordingly; and
2. membership of the Governance & Audit Committee at Part 3, Section D1 (Delegations to Committees), which currently refers to "6 Members and 2 substitutes politically balanced" be amended to read "6 non-Cabinet Members and 2 substitutes politically balanced."

129/17 REFERENCE FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION (AGENDA ITEM 13)

a. Amendments to the Constitution

See Minute No. 128/17 above.

b. Investment & Commercialisation

An email from the Vice-Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission was read aloud - this expanded and offered more clarity to his proposal in relation to forming a land formation company (see supplementary agenda, paragraph 2.3).

Members felt that such a proposal could have financial implications and it was agreed that further discussions should be had by Members at a future Cabinet meeting - the outcome of which could be reported to an Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting in 2018.

Action By

130/17 NEXT MEETING

The arrangements for the next meeting on Tuesday, 2 January 2017 at 9.30am in the Norfolk Room were noted.

The meeting closed at 10.25 am

CHAIRMAN