



MEETING OF THE CABINET
13 JANUARY 2014 - 11.00 AM – 11.47 AM

PRESENT:

Councillor Paul Carpenter
Councillor Mrs Frances Cartwright
Councillor John Smith
Councillor Mike Taylor
Councillor Teri Bryant
Councillor Bob Adams

Councillor Mrs. Linda Neal - Chairman

Chief Executive (Beverly Agass)
Strategic Director Corporate Focus/Section 151 Officer
(Daren Turner)
Head of Finance (Richard Wyles)
Property Development Manager (Neil Cucksey)
Head of People, Projects and Performance (Sue Griffiths)
Service Manager Human Resources & Organisational
Development (Joyce Slater)
Head of Legal & Democratic Services/Monitoring Officer
(Lucy Youles)
Cabinet Support Officer (Lucy Bonshor)

Non-Cabinet Members : Councillor Nick Craft

CO31. MINUTES

The decisions from the meeting held on 2nd December were agreed as a correct record.

CO32. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS (IF ANY)

None disclosed by Members.

The Chief Executive said that although officers did not have a pecuniary interest in item 6 on the agenda (Pensions Policy 2014) officers would leave the meeting whilst this issue was being discussed. The Head of People, Projects and Performance and the Service Manager Human Resources & Organisational Development would remain in the meeting to answer any questions from Members. The Democratic Officer would also remain to take the minutes.

CO33. *BUDGET REQUIREMENTS 2014/15

Decision:

General Fund

- 1.1 To note the provisional settlement for 2014/15.
- 1.2 Agrees a provisional target General Fund Budget Requirement of £13.152m for 2014/15 (inclusive of Special Expenses).
- 1.3 Considers feedback from the consultation with respect to Council Tax in order to recommend a council tax level at the Cabinet meeting on 3rd February 2014.

Housing Revenue Account

- 1.4 To approve in line with the current policy of achieving rent convergence, an indicative rent increase for consultation purposes with the Tenant consultation forums. This is an average increase for SKDC tenants of 5.13%.
- 1.5 Agrees to review the proposed rent increase at recommendation 1.4 above, at the February Cabinet meeting, in light of consultation, and other related information.

Considerations/reasons for decision:

- 1) Report HOF262 from the Head of Finance.
- 2) The provisional finance settlement for 2014/15 had been confirmed at £6.956m.
- 3) The award for 2014/15 included all elements of grant including Council Tax Freeze grant (agreed in 2011/12 for 4 years), homelessness grant and Council Support grant. It was no longer possible to identify the allocation of Council Tax support grant as it was incorporated into the overall grant.
- 4) The new funding allocation was split between locally raised business rates which were retained and revenue support grant.
- 5) For the period 2010/11 to 2015/16 the grant had been reduced by £4.285M or 43% in cash terms.

- 6) The Councils current policy to keep in line with the Government's guidance on rent restructuring.
- 7) Consultation results to date (subject to change once all postal consultations were received) indicated that over 50% of those consulted were happy with a 1.75% increase in the Council Tax.
- 8) Comments made by the Portfolio Holder Strategic Resources thanking the officers and their team for their hard work.
- 9) Comments made by a Member about not knowing the actual grant settlement for specific grants.
- 10) Comments made by the Strategic Director Corporate Focus about the revenue support grant and the baseline grant settlement.
- 11) Comments made by the Leader about the grant formula.
- 12) Comments by Members about the need to have clarity in any literature sent out concerning the budget and Council Tax notification.

CO34. *GROUND MAINTENANCE FRAMEWORK - CONTRACT AWARD

Decision:

Cabinet confirm the award of the new framework contract to Glendale Grounds Management Limited (Glendale) for a four year period, with any extension dealt with in accordance with the call off framework, for the provision of grounds maintenance within the district of South Kesteven and delegate the signing of the contract documentation to the Strategic Director – Corporate Focus.

Considerations/reasons for decision:

- 1) Report PD012 from the Property Development Manager.
- 2) Invitations to tender sent out by Procurement Lincolnshire and the evaluation of the tenders supplied by three service providers.
- 3) Glendale was a specialist green service provider and had been delivering tailored diverse green solutions to public and private clients for over 25 years.
- 4) Glendale's method statement linked to South Kesteven District Council's Priority outcomes and projects.
- 5) Comments made by the Portfolio Holder about the work that the previous contractor had done especially in the supported housing complexes and had contributed to the green flag status of Wyndham Park.

Other options considered

The current contract had the option to extend the contract period by up to three years by mutual agreement of the terms. The contract was extended by one year by mutual agreement with the terms unaltered until 28 February 2014. This was to align contract end dates with other district councils tendering this area of work to allow Procurement Lincolnshire to assemble

suitable Lots for the tender process.

The incumbent Grounds Maintenance service contractor informed us on 4th September 2013 that they would not be submitting a tender for the Lincolnshire Grounds Maintenance framework. Therefore, there was no option to further extend the existing contract.

CO35. *PENSIONS POLICY 2014

(11.23am all Officers present left the meeting during the following item except the Head of People, Project and Performance, the Service Manager Human Resources and Organisational Development and the Democratic Officer)

Decision:

- 1) **That Cabinet approves the South Kesteven District Council policy statement in respect of the new Local Government Pension Scheme 2014.**
- 2) **That the policy is kept under review, pending the release of further guidance and that any subsequent changes are reported back to the Cabinet for approval.**

Considerations/reasons for decision:

- 1) Report HR&OD119 from the Service Manager Human Resources and Organisational Development.
- 2) Regulation 60 in SI 2013 2356 required the Council, as a scheme employer, to publish a written statement of its policy in relation to the exercise of its functions.
- 3) The Local Government Pension Scheme 2014 (LGPS 2014) was changing from a final salary scheme to an account based Care Average Re-valued Scheme from 1st April 2014.
- 4) Pension was now calculated on the contributions paid into an employee's pension account, on a new set of employee contribution rates which ranged from 5.5% - 12.5%.
- 5) Each year's contribution was revalued using the consumer price index rate.
- 6) A comment made by a Member about the need to keep the document under review.
- 7) A comment asking for clarity about the revaluation of the contributions made.

Other options considered

The policy is required by regulations.

The option not to adopt discretions 5.2 and 5.8 in relation to added pension contributions or employer award of additional pension had been proposed in

the policy statement because of the financial implications. If the Council were to adopt these discretions there were both significant financial costs that would arise and a detailed set of criteria would need to be specified to ensure a fair application of those discretions. In the current financial climate it was felt that the cost implications of adopting discretions 5.2 and 5.8 outweigh the value of enhancing reward packages.

(11.30am all officers returned to the meeting)

CO36. *CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY

Decision:

Cabinet approves the Customer Access Strategy as attached to report PPP01 which will determine the way in which customers receive services from the council.

Considerations/reasons for decision:

- 1) Report PPP01 from the Head of People, Projects and Performance.
- 2) Good customer service made for an efficient organisation as it provided what the customer wanted and reduced failure demand.
- 3) The Strategy was based on the Council's values and provided a clear picture of what the council wanted to achieve.
- 4) The Citizens Panel had provided valuable information about how people contacted the council and how they may choose to contact the council if there were more choice. (Increased use of technology for simple transactions)
- 5) Consultation on the Strategy had been undertaken with both the Cabinet and the Engagement PDG.
- 6) The Strategy set out the Council's vision and an overall model to achieve the intended outcomes across five themes essential to the maintenance and development of excellent customer services. The themes would be supported by detailed action plans, refreshed on an annual basis.
- 7) Comments made by various Members that the customer first attitude must come before any financial savings and must not be to the detriment of the services given to vulnerable customers.

DATE DECISIONS EFFECTIVE:

Decisions CO33, CO34, CO35 and CO36 as made on 13th January 2014 can be implemented on Wednesday 22nd January 2014, unless subject to call-in by the Scrutiny Committee Chairman or any five members of the Council from any political Group.