

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 24th OCTOBER, 2019
AT NELSON TOWN HALL**

PRESENT –

Councillor M. Iqbal (Chairman – in the Chair)

Councillors

*N. Ashraf (Substitute)
C. Carter (Substitute)
V. Fletcher (Substitute)
M. S. Foxley
C. Lioni (Substitute)
B. Newman*

*Q. Shazad (Substitute)
Y. Tennant (Substitute)
C. Wakeford
D. M. Whipp
T. Whipp (Substitute)*

Officers in attendance:

<i>Dean Langton</i>	<i>Chief Executive</i>
<i>Philip Mousdale</i>	<i>Corporate Director</i>
<i>Susan Guinness</i>	<i>Chief Financial Officer</i>
<i>Jane Watson</i>	<i>Head of Democratic Services</i>

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors N. Ahmed, Musawar Arshad, D. Clegg, P. Foxley, M. Goulthorp, J. Henderson, Y. Iqbal and A. Mahmood).



90. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members were reminded of the requirements of the Member Code of Conduct concerning the declaration of interests.

91. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from members of the public.

92. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 19th September, 2019 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**93. LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT 2020/21
TECHNICAL CONSULTATION – DRAFT RESPONSE**

The Chief Executive submitted a report which set out the Council's draft response to a technical consultation of the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2020/21.

The consultation comprised of 9 questions on various matters such as the distribution of Revenue Support Grant, Council Tax Referendum Principles, New Homes Bonus Allocations and the allocation of Social Care Grant. The draft responses were listed in Appendix A attached to the report.

RESOLVED

That the draft response to the Technical Consultation on the Local Government Finance Settlement 2020/21 as detailed in Appendix A attached to the report be approved.

REASON

To continue with the implementation of the Council's Financial Strategy and to inform the development of the Council's budget for 2020/21.

94. TREASURY MANAGEMENT – MID YEAR REPORT 2019/20

The Chief Financial Officer submitted a report which provided an update on the treasury management activities of the Council for the period ending 30th September, 2019. This included:

- An economic update for the first six months of 2019/20;
- A review of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy;
- The Council's capital expenditure as set out in the Capital Strategy (prudential indicators);
- A review of the Council's investment portfolio for 2019/20;
- A review of the Council's borrowing strategy for 2019/20;
- A review of compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits for 2019/20.

RESOLVED

That the work on the Council's treasury activities for the period ending 30th September, 2019 be noted.

REASON

To comply with the Council's Treasury Management Policy and good practice in treasury management generally.

95. RECOMMENDED WRITE-OFFS

The Revenues Manager, Liberata submitted a report recommending the write off of debts relating to Housing Benefit Overpayments, Council Tax, Business Rates and Sundry Income.

RESOLVED

That the sums of £44,152.53 in respect of Housing Benefit Overpayments, £139,683.67 in respect of Council Tax, £107,303.96 in respect of Business Rates and £1,044.79 in respect of Sundry Income be written off as irrecoverable.

REASON

The prudential and considered writing off of bad debts is an essential requirement for the efficient management of the debt recovery functions.

96. ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER FOR YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 2019

The Chief Financial Officer presented the Annual Audit Letter issued by the Council's external auditors Grant Thornton. The Letter summarised their key findings from the audit work they carried out for the year ended 31st March, 2019.

RESOLVED

That the Annual Audit Letter for the year ended 31st March, 2019 be noted.

97. MATTERS REQUIRING FINANCIAL APPROVAL

The Chief Executive submitted a report advising of a request for financial support from Burnley FC in the Community (BFCC) towards the installation of a high ropes facility (and associated facilities) at Whitehough Outdoor Education Centre, Barley.

BFCC had approached the Council seeking financial support of £30,000 towards the cost of installing this facility and the refurbishment of part of the facilities at the Whitehough Outdoor Education Centre. BFCC had indicated that, in addition to the £20,000 already spent in the removal and transport of this equipment to Whitehough, a further total spend of £70,000 was anticipated on the project.

RESOLVED

- (1) That a supplementary estimate of £5,000 from the Budget Support Reserve be agreed towards the costs of the installation of the High Ropes facility at Whitehough Outdoor Education Centre.
- (2) That Burnley Football Club in the Community be advised to approach Lancashire County Council for financial support towards the cost of installing this facility at Whitehough Education Centre and that they be advised that the Council would support them with this request.

REASON

To support the installation of the high ropes facility at Whitehough Outdoor Education Centre.

**98. COMPULSORY PURCHASE OF THE FORMER BLOCKBUSTER STORE,
45 MARKET STREET, COLNE**

The Planning, Economic Development and Regulatory Services Manager submitted a report informing the Committee of the requirements of a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) for 45 Market Street, Colne.

The report stated that following inspection of the property on 4th October, 2019 no further works had been undertaken since minor cosmetic work earlier in the year. Some of the windows were either broken, decaying or boarded up and this gave the impression of a derelict building that was being left to decay.

The report set out the options available to the Committee with regards to the CPO of the property along with factors which needed to be considered if this was to be pursued.

It was noted that there was no finance in place to fund the purchase and redevelopment of the property and costs of doing this could be considerable.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the information regarding the requirements for pursuing a Compulsory Purchase Order for 45 Market Street, Colne be noted.
- (2) That the Chief Executive be authorised to establish the financial implications for pursuing a Compulsory Purchase Order and a report be brought back to Committee to consider these implications.
- (3) That a scheme for the potential redevelopment of the site be developed.
- (4) That discussions be undertaken with the owners of the building to ascertain if it could be purchased by negotiation and that a report be brought back to Committee on this within 3 months.

REASON

- (1) ***In order that Committee understand the process of pursuing a Compulsory Purchase Order.***
- (2) ***The financial implications of pursuing a Compulsory Purchase Order need to be understood and provision made for the finances to be available in order to be able to successfully pursue a Compulsory Purchase Order and in order to understand the financial impact of doing so on the Council.***
- (3) ***In order to assess the financial implications for redeveloping the site and to ensure a scheme is in place should a Compulsory Purchase Order have to be pursued.***
- (4) ***To ascertain if the building could be acquired without the need to pursue a Compulsory Purchase Order.***

99.

ELLIOTT HOUSE, NELSON

The Chief Executive submitted a report to seek agreement to a proposed disposal strategy for Elliott House, Nelson. Following the Council's Office Accommodation Rationalisation Project this building was now surplus to the Council's requirements.

It was reported that Positive Action in the Community and The Lightbeam Academy had approached the Council and both wished to acquire the building. Discussions had been held with both organisations and each had confirmed an intention to acquire the building and proposed to develop it into a community hub.

Committee were asked to consider inviting full expressions of interest (along with sealed bids to acquire the building) with a view to agreeing a disposal by way of a negotiated tender process. It was also noted that as a result of these discussions the building had not yet been offered for sale on the open market. The Committee were advised that they may wish to consider this option.

RESOLVED

That full expressions of interest (along with sealed bids to acquire the building) be invited from both Positive Action in the Community and The Lightbeam Academy and that details of these be reported to this Committee on 21st November, 2019.

REASON

To dispose of the building and to realise the savings assumed in the Council's budget and a capital receipt from disposal.

100. ACE CENTRE – LETTING OF OFFICE SPACE

It was reported that this item had been withdrawn prior to the meeting.

**101. FOREST OF BOWLAND AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB)
MANAGEMENT PLAN 2019-2024**

The Planning, Economic Development and Regulatory Services Manager submitted a report which provided an update on the Forest of Bowland AONB Management Plan. A draft Management Plan had been agreed by the Forest of Bowland AONB Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) in March, 2019 following a public consultation exercise.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Forest of Bownald AONB Management Plan for 2019-2024 be adopted.
- (2) That the Planning, Economic Development and Regulatory Services Manager be granted delegated authority to agree any amendments to the management plan prior to publication.

REASONS

- (1) ***To provide a strategic approach to the management of the AONB.***
- (2) ***To conserve and enhance the landscape of the Forest of Bowland AONB.***

**102. PENNINE LANCASHIRE HEALTHY WEIGHT PROGRAMMES
HEALTHY WEIGHT DECLARATION**

The Chief Executive submitted a report on raising the profile of healthy weight as a key emerging policy area.

Committee were reminded that an announcement earlier in the year that Pennine Lancashire had successfully been identified as one of the 5 national Trailblazer areas to tackle childhood obesity, as part of the Local Government Association's Childhood Obesity Trailblazer Programme. Pennine Lancashire was also one of 12 Sport England Local Delivery Pilot areas which aimed to increase physical activity across the patch.

To support the delivery of both of these programmes and to demonstrate local leadership and commitment to healthy weight, the Council was requested to adopt the Healthy Weight Declaration which was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the principals and local commitments of the Healthy Weight Declaration (attached to the report at Appendix 1) be endorsed.
- (2) That the declaration be signed, on behalf of the Council, by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.
- (3) That the Healthy Place, Healthy Future District Plan (attached to the report at Appendix 2) be approved.
- (4) That Area Committees be asked to nominate representatives as set out in the report.

REASON

To demonstrate community leadership and commitment on healthy weight and support whole system change.

103. PENDLE ICT STRATEGY (REFRESH) 2019/20

The updated ICT Strategy for 2019/20 was submitted for consideration. The Strategy had been updated with the current plans and progress based on feedback from the Management Team and the Liberata Head of IT Operations. It also reported on progress to date and re-aligned future plans with service objectives.

RESOLVED

That the Pendle ICT Strategy (Refresh) 2019/20 be noted and supported.

REASON

To acknowledge the changed priorities for delivery and to ensure a whole Council approach to facilitate the change from manual to technological channels of service delivery.

104. TENDERS

The Corporate Director submitted a report on tenders which had been received and accepted along with a note of an exemption from the Contract Procedure Rules with regards to the river modelling and design options for the riverbank reinstatement for the Phase 1 Extension at Lomeshaye Industrial Estate.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the tenders which had been received and accepted be noted.
- (2) That the exemption granted from Contract Procedure Rules for Lomeshaye Phase 1 Extension – River Modelling and Design Options for Riverbank Reinstatement be noted.

REASON

To agree acceptance of tenders/offers in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules.

105. MATTERS REFERRED FROM AREA COMMITTEES

(a) West Craven Flood Defence and Resilience

At a meeting of the West Craven Committee on 8th October, 2019 it was resolved “that the Policy and Resources Committee be asked to use every endeavour to obtain £3.3m gap funding for the Birley Playing Field Flood Storage Area Scheme.”

Notes of the West Craven Flood Meeting held on 18th September, 2019 were submitted for information.

Reference was made to the shortfall for the three Environment Agency schemes costing over £7m and the ESIF funding required to help fund these schemes.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Environment Agency be reminded of the need to ensure that the completion of the schemes for the flood wall on New Cut (Albert Street/Boot Street) and the Victoria Clough Flood Storage area in Earby comply with the timescales for securing the ESIF funding.
- (2) That letters be sent to the Environment Agency, the Chairman of the Yorkshire Flood and Coastal Committee and Pendle’s MP Andrew Stephenson to ask for assistance in obtaining the £3.3m gap funding required for the Birley Playing Field Flood Storage Area Scheme.

REASON

- (1) ***To protect residents from flooding.***
- (2) ***To enable the Environment Agency flooding resilience schemes to go ahead.***

Chairman _____