

REPORT BY THE LEADER ON THE WORK OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The attention of Members is drawn to the following items which have been discussed by the Policy and Resources Committee since the last ordinary meeting of the Council:-

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE 10th DECEMBER, 2020

- **Planning Applications**

The following two applications were refused:

20/0572/FUL Full: Change of use from dwelling (Use Class C3) to retail (Use Class A1) (resubmission) at 174 Railway Street, Nelson and

20/0524PIP Permission in Principle: Erection of up to 6 dwelling houses on land to the north of Rockwood, Halifax Road, Nelson

- **Council Tax Base 2021/22**

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 we agreed that the amount calculated by the Borough of Pendle as its Council tax base for the year 2021/22 as 23,898.0.

- **Colne Neighbourhood Plan**

We agreed that the final response be delegated to the Planning, Economic Development and Regulatory Services Manager in consultation with the three Group Leaders.

- **Acquisition of Trafalgar House, Booth Street, Nelson**

The Committee agreed the acquisition of Trafalgar House, Booth Street, Nelson. The Chief Executive has been authorised to pursue options available for the demolition of the building and redevelopment of the site.

- **Community Engagement Framework**

The Framework was approved by the Committee.

- **Land at 21 Sefton Street, Brierfield**

We refused to suspend the enforcement action connected to this site following a request from the Brierfield and Reedley Committee. We agreed to give the occupier a further six months (until the end of June, 2021) to comply with the Enforcement Notice, but if additional time was needed the Planning, Economic Development and Regulatory Services Manager has been granted delegated authority to determine this.

- **Motions Referred from Council**

The Climate Ecology Bill

On behalf of the Council the Committee noted the work that was taking place following its declaration of a local climate emergency, through the Climate Emergency Working Group and elsewhere and thanked the staff who were involved in this work in these difficult times. We noted that a cross-party Private Members Bill – the Climate and Ecology bill – would shortly have its Second Reading in the House of Commons and that it had wide support throughout the country. We also supported the principles and objectives of this Bill and called on the House of Commons to give it a Second Reading and on the Government to provide sufficient parliamentary time for it to be thoroughly scrutinised and to progress through both Houses of Parliament.

Fireworks

On behalf of the Council we asked that the nuisances caused by the inappropriate use of fireworks be looked at again in the light of statements by the Government that further controls over the use of fireworks were a matter for local decision-making. We asked that a report be submitted to a future meeting setting out the Government Regulations and options available to the Council in relation to fireworks.

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 21st JANUARY, 2021

• Planning Applications

We refused planning permission for planning application 20/0740/HHO Full: Erection of a single storey rear extension at 35 Percy Street, Nelson and we granted planning permission for 20/0448/FUL Full: Erection of three storey building to accommodate three flats at 27 Railway Street, Brierfield.

• General Fund Revenue Budget 2021/2022

The Committee requested that in view of the seriousness of the Council's forecasted financial position over the medium term that the report be shared with all Councillors so that they were fully aware of the position. We approved the Revised Budget for 2020/21, including the payment of up to £1m additional funding to the Pendle Leisure Trust to reflect the financial impact of Covid-19. Issues arising from the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2021/22 were noted and we approved the response to the related consultation. The draft Base Budget for 2021/22, the forecasted Medium Term Financial Plan and the current assumptions underpinning both were noted as was the financial planning assumption of a Band D Council Tax increase of 1.99%. Management Team's budget proposals were noted before consideration by Full Council in February. We agreed that in the context of the Council's forecasted budget deficit over the medium term, a review of the draft Base Budget for 2021/22 be undertaken to identify any areas where further savings proposals might be brought forward for consideration as part of the budget process.

• Developing the Medium Term Capital Programme 2021/22

The Committee noted the projected position on the Capital Programme for 2020/21; a review of the Council's Land and Asset Management Strategy was agreed with a view to identify surplus land and property for disposal; we noted that the capital bids submitted for 2021/22 exceeded the projected resources available by £0.936m and were therefore unaffordable. We also noted the draft Capital Programme for 2021/22 pending a further report to the February meeting.

• Lomeshaye Industrial Estate Extension – Phase 1

We noted progress with delivery of the scheme and the increased costs incurred as well as the waiving of Standing Orders to appoint Aptus to provide the new incoming services at a cost of £1,113,301. We agreed that the land receipts be ring fenced within the Capital Programme to cover the increased costs of the scheme.

• Joint Venture Procurement

The Committee agreed the re-procurement of a joint venture partnership to deliver regeneration and development projects; a new procurement exercise be undertaken to select a developer partner using the 'competitive procedure with negotiation' process. A further report on the outcome of the procurement exercise will be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee before a developer is selected.

- **Local Plan**

We agreed the Local Plan and that it be made available for public consultation. All appendices attached to the report were also to be included in the consultation, alongside previously adopted evidence base and supporting documents.

- **Public Toilet Provision in Nelson**

We asked for a report to be submitted to Nelson Committee on the outcome of the negotiations with the owner of the premises and the issue of public toilet provision be considered at this time.

- **Rollout of Fibre to the Property Broadband in West Craven**

A virtual meeting was to be arranged with the representatives from Openreach, the Leader, Group Leaders, relevant Councillors and officers to discuss the upgrade of fibre broadband to rural areas of the Borough.

- **Capital Programme 2020/21 – Replacement Basket Swing**

We noted the request from Colne Committee for funding of £1,246 for a replacement basket swing. It was agreed that a virtual meeting be arranged, chaired by Councillor D. Whipp, with officers, Ward Councillors, representatives from the Millennium Green Trust and representatives from Colne Town Council to discuss issues associated with the ownership and maintenance of the Millennium Green play area.

- **Speeding Vehicles**

The issue of road safety issues, including speeding cars, was raised at the West Craven Committee on 5th January. The Leader agreed to raise this issue with County Councillor K. Iddon for discussion at a meeting pending on highways issues.

- **Internal Audit Service**

We agreed the appointment of Mersey Internal Audit Agency as the Council's preferred bidder for the provision of the Internal Audit Service.

SPECIAL BUDGET POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE 11th FEBRUARY, 2021

- **Planning Applications**

We approved planning application 20/0707/FUL Full: Erection of three dwelling houses on land south west of White Holme, Ribblesdale Place, Barrowford and refused planning application 20/0613/FUL Full: Change of Use from Use Class E (commercial, business and service) to a mixed use of shop and cash and carry (Use Class E and B8 (storage and distribution)) at Springbank Buildings, 226-248 Every Street, Nelson.

- **Capital Programme 2021/22**

We recommended Council note the forecasted outturn position on the Council's Capital Programme for 2020/21; consider the draft Capital Strategy 2021/24; consider the proposed Capital Programme for 2021/24; grant delegated authority to the Chief Executive, as the Council's Chief Financial Officer, to determine the most appropriate method of financing the Capital Programme for 2021/22 to ensure the use of resources was optimised by the Council; and note the indicative programmes for 2022/23 and 2023/24 acknowledging that these would be subject to further review as part of the development of future year's capital programmes.

- **General Fund Revenue Budget 2021/22**

We recommended Council note the proposal to maintain the General Fund Minimum Working Balance at £1.0m; note the projected outturn position in the current financial year; take into consideration the residual saving proposals for 2021/22 and agree to provide a grant to Pendle

Leisure Trust of £1,445,140 in 2021/22 (noting the proposal to hold an additional contingent sum of £400k in the event it was necessary to further support the Trust due to the impact of Covid-19; consider the General Fund Revenue Budget Requirement for 2021/22 having regard to the recommended budget; consider introducing a Band D Council Tax of £276.01 for 2021/22, being an increase of £5.39 (1.99%) on the current level of Council Tax; require each Service to operate within its budget for 2021/22 once approved and that these budgets be cash limited and subject to regular monitoring and control; acknowledge the uncertainty attached to the current assumptions and financial modelling for 2023/24 in view of the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review, the Fair Funding Review and changes to the Business Rates Retention system; and request that a further report be brought back to a future meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee updating the Financial Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan for 2022/23 to 2024/25.

- **Strategic Monitoring Report to 31st December, 2020**

The Committee expressed its sincere appreciation to all staff acknowledging the response from everyone to the impacts and demands the Covid-19 pandemic had had, not only on the delivery of the day-to-day job, but also the additional roles and responsibilities that had resulted from this pandemic. We also noted progress made on actions identified in the Strategic Plan.

- **Nelson Cemetery Lodge, Walton Lane, Nelson**

We agreed to Nelson Cemetery Lodge and the additional area of land, identified on the plan attached to the report, be declared surplus to requirements and be sold on the open market, as set out in Option 3 in the report. We granted authority for the submission of a planning application for the additional area of land to be used as a vehicle access, parking and garden. We also noted and supported the making of a grant application to the Heritage Fund and the seeking of other additional funding to improve the condition of the listed features.

- **Community Champions: Local Authority Fund**

The Committee noted a report advising of a successful bid to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government for funding of £90,458 from this Fund.

- **Acquisition of Former Public Conveniences, Market Street, Nelson and Acquisition of 39/41 Scotland Road, Nelson**

We approved the acquisition of these properties by way of private treaty.

- **GDPR Legislation**

The Committee asked for recommendations be made to the Government and the Local Government Association requesting a change to the GDPR legislation to allow discussion of issues of public concern, such as planning enforcement cases, in an open forum.

- **Nelson Town Investment Plan**

The Nelson Town Investment Plan was approved and submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. If successful, we authorised the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Chairman of the Nelson Town Deal Board, to negotiate the Heads of Terms for a Town Deal, which would then be brought back to this Committee for agreement.

Councillor M. Iqbal,
Leader,
Pendle Borough Council