

## POLICY COMMITTEE

12<sup>th</sup> April 2016

**Present** – The Chairman (Foster) and Councillors Dawson, Heseltine, Hull, Ireton, Jaquin (substitute for English), Kerwin-Davey, Mulligan, Myers, Place, Quinn and Sutcliffe.

Also in Attendance: Councillors Shuttleworth and Staveley.

**Officers** – Chief Executive, Director of Services, Corporate Head of Business Support, Strategic Manager – Financial Services (S.151 Officer), Strategic Manager – Planning and Regeneration, Housing and Environmental Health Manager, Member Services Manager and Committee Administrator.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barrett, Brockbank, English and Lis.

Start: 6:30pm

Finish: 7.44pm

The minutes of the Committee's meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2016 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

### Minutes for Report

#### POL.745 SELECT COMMITTEE REVIEW OF THE BUDGET AND COUNCIL PLAN CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Chairman of the Select Committee presented a report on the outcome of a review on the budget and Council Plan consultation process. The review had been requested because despite best efforts, responses to the annual consultation had been consistently low and Members had expressed concern regarding the low response rate. The Council had a duty to engage with businesses and the public regarding its business, although how that consultation was conducted was left to the discretion of the Council.

In order to inform their review the Working Group received examples of the processes followed a number of other local authorities together with copies of this Council's consultation documents and questionnaires for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 budgets, with the analysis thereof.

Having taking into account the views of Members and relevant officers, the Select Committee's Working Group made the following recommendations:

1. Budget consultation should take a more strategic direction focussing on discretionary rather than statutory services.
2. In depth budget consultation need not be carried out annually, possible an in depth consultation one year in four, with light touch consultation in between.
3. Greater use should be made of social media, in particular Twitter.
4. Inducements should be considered as a way of encouraging responses such as a £50 prize.
5. Councillors should be supplied with a list of statutory duties and reports should state whether the subject relates to a discretionary or a statutory duty.

In receiving the report, Members thanked the Select Committee's Working Group for their work on the review, and it was

**Resolved** – That, the recommendations are approved.

POL.746

**GROWTH DEAL PROJECT PROPOSALS**

The Strategic Manager, Planning and Regeneration, submitted a report informing Members about the development of growth deal proposals for the Leeds City Region and York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnerships. Members were also asked to agree the list of projects for consideration by the North Yorkshire LEP and give delegated authority to the Director of Services to agree the final submission.

The Government's growth deal was a way of providing funding to local enterprise partnerships for projects that benefitted the local area and economy.

Craven had already been successful in securing investment for the Skipton Flood Alleviation Scheme in an earlier growth deal and whilst it was not expected that any projects in the Craven District would be sufficiently developed or at the necessary scale to fit in the Leeds City Region LEP at this time, York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP had requested partners, including Craven, to submit proposals that could feed into a strategic pipeline of future projects.

The Strategic Manager, Planning and Regeneration's report detailed a list of projects that the Economic Development Team was developing or supporting that could form part of the growth deal submission. The submission, when agreed, would be negotiated with the Government and the level of funding allocated. At this stage, the Government's timescale for agreeing to the deal was not known.

**Resolved** – (1) That, the list of projects as detailed in table 2 in the report now presented, is submitted for consideration by the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership for Local Growth Fund investment as part of a future growth deal.

(2) That, delegated authority is given to the Director of Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Enterprising Craven to agree the final project submissions for the YNYER LEP growth deal.

POL.747

**THE MICROCHIPPING OF DOGS (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2015**

The Director of Services submitted a report outlining the Council's responsibilities under the Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015 which came into force in April 2016 making it compulsory for all dogs over the age of 8 weeks to be microchipped.

It was estimated that lost and stray dogs cost local authorities and charities in excess of £32m each year and microchipping was one method of tracing registered keepers quickly and efficiently.

Resolved – (1) That, the report is noted.

(2) That delegated authority is granted to the Director of Services to authorise the taking of enforcement action or other legal action including prosecution in relation to the Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015 and authorise in writing "Authorised Persons".

POL.748

**MINUTES FROM SUB-COMMITTEES**

The Chairman presented the minutes of the Community Grants Sub-Committee held on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2016 and the Craven Spatial Planning Sub-Committee held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2016.

Further to Minute CG.80/15-16 of the Community Grants Sub-Committee, Policy Committee was asked to re-appoint the Sub-Committee for the 2016/17 municipal year to enable it to meet on one more occasion in order to consider a final round of community grant applications thereby utilising an uncommitted allocation of £3,000.

**Resolved** – (1) That, the minutes are received and noted.

(2) That, the decision to re-appoint the Community Grants Sub-Committee to enable it to meet on one more occasion to consider a final round of community grant applications, is deferred to the first meeting of this Committee in the 2016-17 municipal year.

### Minutes for Decision

#### POL.749      **ESTABLISHMENT OF A COUNCIL OWNED TRADING COMPANY**

The Director of Services submitted a report seeking Members' approval for the establishment of a wholly owned arms' length company of the Council to manage assets that would generate a revenue stream for the Council.

Due to the increasing pressure on the public sector to strategically manage and operate property assets commercially, many local authorities are acting to reduce reliance on Government grants by trading commercially to generate revenue income. This would ensure the Council would be able to continue to provide vital local services to its communities without reducing levels of service.

The Craven District Council wholly owned company would be limited by shares and known as Craven Asset Management Limited. The share issue would be £1 per ordinary share. The company would need to appoint a board of directors consisting of officers and Members of the Council and would have its own legal identity with the benefit of limited liability. The company would market and manage the rental of investment acquisitions and homes developed for rent. Business cases for each proposed acquisition, development or any other trading activity would be submitted to this Committee for approval.

**RECOMMENDED** – (1) That, the incorporation of a company limited by shares wholly owned by the Council is approved.

(2) That, the trading company's objective 'to manage assets that generate a revenue stream for the Council' is approved.

(3) That, the company's governance arrangements as those set out in section 7 of the report now submitted, are approved and delegated authority is given to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Section 151 and Monitoring Officers to finalise the detailed arrangements establishing the company.

(4) That, the appointment of the Members and Officers set out in paragraph 7.4 of the report now submitted, is approved, subject to the titles of Chief Executive and Director of Services each being replaced with the designation of 'Senior Officer'.

(5) That, the Articles of Association as set out at Appendix A to the report now submitted is approved and delegated authority is given to the Director of Services in consultation with the Monitoring and Section 151 Officers to make any minor amendments.

(6) That agreement is given in principle to provide to the company, funding through state aid compliant loans, subject to such funding being in line with the Council's financial strategy and delegated authority is given to the Council's Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Leader of the Council, Lead Member for Financial Resilience and the Council's Monitoring Officer to agree the Heads of Terms of loan agreements.

(7) That, a business case for each acquisition, housing development and any other trading activity identified, that would lead to Council assets and/or resources being transferred to the trading company is submitted to the Council's Policy Committee for approval.

POL.750

### **AMENDMENT TO THE TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT FOR 2016/17**

The Strategic Manager, Financial Services (S.151 Officer) submitted a report informing Members of the results of a review of the strategy with regard to the assessment of counterparties for unspecified investments.

The Treasury Management Strategy for 2016/17 was approved by Policy Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2016 but a typographical error currently stated that the minimum asset base should be £2.5bn when it should have read £0.25bn. This had been the Council's minimum criteria for a number of years but it was now considered that this asset base was insufficient to provide the Council with sufficient protection against loss. It was recommended that the minimum should be £1bn and that this level should be kept under review in light of emerging risks.

**RECOMMENDED** – That, the criteria for the use of UK building societies is limited to those with a minimum asset base of £1bn.

POL.751

### **PEOPLE STRATEGY**

The Corporate Head of Business Support submitted a report presenting a People Strategy 2016 - 2020 which outlines specific actions in order to deliver the skills and abilities required of the Council's employees. The Strategy would also help plan and predict future workforce demands in order to achieve the Council's objectives.

The Council's first Workforce Strategy was first developed in 2008 for a four year period followed by the People Strategy 2012 – 2016 and the report highlighted the key actions that had been achieved.

The proposed 2016 – 2020 Strategy set out the framework for the Council to meet the challenges and on-going changes that faced the public sector and specified its approach to workforce development and ensuring that the workforce was appropriately trained and supported to deliver excellent services.

**RECOMMENDED** – That the People Strategy, as now submitted, is adopted as the direction to improve the performance of the Council by recruiting, retaining and developing the right people for the future.

Chairman