

POLICY COMMITTEE

17th January 2017

Present – The Chairman (Foster) and Councillors Brockbank, Dawson, Heseltine, Ireton, Jaquin, Lis, Mulligan, Myers, Place, Rose (substitute for Madeley), Shuttleworth (substitute for Barrett) and Welch.

Officers – Chief Executive, Director of Services, Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer), Strategic Manager – Financial Services (S.151 Officer), Strategic Manager – Planning and Regeneration, Economic Development Manager, Revenues and Benefits Manager, Environmental Services and Housing Manager, Communications and Partnerships Manager, Interim Waste Management Manager, Senior HR Officer and Committee Administrator.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barrett, Heseltine and Morrell. Councillor Solloway arrived at 7.25pm.

Start: 6.36pm

Finish: 7.56pm

The minutes of the Committee's meeting held on 13th December 2016 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

That, in accordance with the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules, the public is excluded from the meeting during consideration of Minute POL.807 marked\$) below on the grounds that it is not in the public interest to disclose the Category 3 exempt information (financial or business affairs of any particular person including the Council).

Minutes for Report

POL.799

SMOKING POLICY AT WORK

The Corporate Head of Business Support submitted a report seeking approval to implement a revised and updated Smoking at Work Policy. The Policy had been reviewed in response to concerns raised by managers who had highlighted that it was difficult to monitor and enforce the management of time taken for smoke breaks, due to lack of clarity within the current Policy. A period of consultation ensued with comments, mainly related to recording of smoke breaks on flexi-sheets, being considered and where appropriate, incorporated into the Policy.

Resolved – That, the implementation of the revised and updated Smoking at Work Policy is implemented with effect from 1st February 2017.

POL.800

TOUR DE YORKSHIRE 2016 FINAL REPORT

The Chief Executive submitted a report informing Members on the impact of the Tour de Yorkshire in Craven, as detailed in the attached economic impact study. Information was also provided on the financial outcome for Craven District Council.

The impact study confirmed that the event had been a huge success with an economic boost of nearly £60 million to Yorkshire. The report revealed that more than two million people lined the route over the three days of the event, it was televised in 178 countries and watched by 11.4 million global viewers.

During the discussion, the Members thanked officers and all those involved in ensuring that the event was a great success.

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

POL.801

MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES

The Chairman presented the minutes of the Craven Spatial Planning Sub-Committee held on 18th October 2016 and 22nd November 2016.

Resolved – (2) That, the minutes of the Craven Spatial Planning Sub-Committee held on 18th October 2016 and 22nd November 2016 are noted.

Minutes for Decision

POL.802

**COLLECTION FUND COUNCIL TAX SURPLUS/DEFICIT
2016/17**

The Strategic Manager – Financial Services submitted a report declaring an estimated surplus of £750,000 on the Council's collection fund in respect of council tax for the financial year 2016/17.

There was a statutory requirement to declare an estimate of the surplus or deficit likely to occur. The calculated surplus would be shared between the precepting authorities as follows:

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|---|----------|
| • North Yorkshire County Council | £522,593 |
| • Police and Crime Commissioner North Yorkshire | £99,141 |
| • North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority | £30,098 |
| • Craven District Council | £98,168 |

Craven District Council was required to take the £98,168 in account when setting its element of the council tax for 2017/18.

RECOMMENDED – (1) That, an estimated surplus of £750,000 on the Council's collection fund at 31st March 2017 relating to council tax collections is declared.

(2) That, as part of the budget strategy, the Council's element of the estimated surplus is used in calculating the level of council tax for 2017/18.

POL.803

**COLLECTION FUND NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC
RATES SURPLUS/DEFICIT 2016/17**

The Strategic Manager – Financial Services submitted a report declaring an estimated deficit of £1,209k on the Council's collection fund at 31st March 2017 relating to national non domestic rates (NNDR) transactions.

Under the rates retention scheme, local authorities are able to keep a proportion of the business rates collected, giving authorities a direct financial interest and therefore an incentive to work with businesses to grow local economies.

Any surplus or deficits had to be shared in prescribed proportions and based on estimated deficit, the amount that had to be distributed between the precepting authorities was as follows:

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| • North Yorkshire County Council | £108,800 |
| • Central Government | £604,500 |

- North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority
- Craven District Council

£12,100
£483,600

Members were advised that Craven District Council had to take the £483,600 into account when it set its element of the council tax for 2017/18.

RECOMMENDED – (1) That, an estimated deficit of £1,209k on the Council's collection fund at 31st March 2017 relating to NNDR transactions is declared.

POL.804

COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT FOR EMPTY AND UNOCCUPIED PROPERTIES IN 2017/18 AND BEYOND

The Corporate Head – Business Support submitted a report reviewing the options regarding current council tax discount for empty and unfurnished properties.

Further to minute POL.779-16/16, a consultation exercise had been undertaken on the various options that could be applied to empty and unoccupied properties. The current policy had been in place for four years and it was now considered prudent to review the scheme.

Of the three options, there was a preference to reduce the 100% discount period from a maximum three months to a maximum of 1 month. Collection rates were between 98% and 99% and there was no reason to believe that would be different should that option be approved. In addition, there was potential for additional income in the region of £20,000.

RECOMMENDED – (1) That, council tax discount period for empty and unoccupied properties is reduced from a maximum of three months to a maximum of 1 month.

(2) That, the new Craven District Council empty and unfurnished property discount scheme includes:

- a. there must be a minimum period of 6 months' continuous occupation at a property by any liable party before a further discount is permitted to that liable party who has already received any empty and unfurnished discount at the same property; and
- b. an empty and unfurnished property is defined as not having sufficient furniture or furnishings for the household to occupy it as a main and sole residence.

POL.805

COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME FOR 2017/18

Further to Minute POL.771-16/17, the Corporate Head – Business Support submitted a report asking Members to consider changes to the current council tax reduction scheme following a review. Full consultation had taken place and although the response had been minimal, the proposed changes had been supported by the majority. The amendments to the scheme would be in alignment with the Department for Work and Pensions' main changes to Housing Benefit as approved by Parliament.

RECOMMENDED – (1) That, Craven's Council Tax Reduction Scheme is aligned with the main changes applied to Housing Benefit by the Department for Work and Pensions as approved by Parliament.

(2) That, the changes are:

- a. Removal of the family premium for all new claims.
- b. Changes to temporary absence rules for all persons who leave GB (4 weeks).

- c. SDP not to be granted where a person receives UC (carer element) for them.
- d. Dependents will be limited to two (in line with amendments to Housing Benefit as specified in the Summer budget 2015) for new claims after April 2017 – certain exemptions will apply.
- e. New claims ESA Work Related Activity Group will not receive Work Related Activity Component.

POL.806

WASTE COLLECTION ARRANGEMENTS

The Director of Services submitted a report advising Members on the outcome of the assessments required to demonstrate compliance with waste regulations and requested approval to introduce co-mingling of glass, metals, plastic and paper.

All local authorities continued to be under pressures to make efficiency savings, having faced a 40% reduction in funding since 2010, with reductions expected to continue. This, together with a collapse in the global commodities market for dry recyclables, meant the Council was receiving significantly less in income from the materials it collects.

As the Council had previously offset the costs of operating the waste collections service against income from the sale of recycling material, it was now faced with paying for the processing of recyclables, resulting in an adverse budget swing of £400,000 per annum.

Policy Committee had previously agreed in principle to introduce co-mingled collections of recyclable materials subject to a 'Technical, Economical, Environmental Practical (TEEP) assessment, which had concluded that it is not technically, environmentally and economically practical for the Council to collect recyclable materials separately and consequently it was permissible to co-mingle glass, metals, plastics and paper in a single bin.

The Council was currently in a contract with Yorwaste for the separate disposal of recyclables and in order to implement a co-mingled service, a new contract was required. However, the Council could sign up to a Yorwaste Teckal Collaboration Agreement without the need to follow EU procurement rules. This would mean that the Council could start co-mingling in April 2017.

In discussing the new waste arrangements, Members commented on the need to communicate effectively with residents about the changes to the waste collection service.

RECOMMENDED – (1) That, the completion of the TEEP assessment is noted and that the introduction of a co-mingled collection of glass, metals, plastic and paper with effect from April 2017 is approved.

\$POL.807

LOCAL GROWTH DEAL UPDATE

A separate excluded Minute has been prepared for this item. It is published (on pink paper) for Members, relevant officers and other agencies only, who are entitled to know the outcome. This version is for all those who are not entitled to the exempt version of the Minute.

Chairman