

## POLICY COMMITTEE

17<sup>th</sup> June 2014

**Present** – The Chairman (Councillor Knowles-Fitton) and Councillors Beck, Foster, Harbron, Heseltine, Jaquin (substitute for English), Kerwin-Davey, Lis, Moorby, Mulligan, Myers, Sutcliffe and Turner.

**Officers** – Chief Executive, Director of Services, Monitoring Officer & Corporate Legal Advisor, Finance Manager, Economic Development Manager, Communications and Partnerships Manager, Assets and Projects Manager, Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services Manager, Committee Officer and Committee Administrator.

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

Start: 6:30pm

Finish: 8:02pm

The minutes of the Committee's meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2014 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman subject to a minor amendment. Members were updated on the outcome of the Council's bid to purchase a property in Skipton.

(The Chairman left the room whilst the matter was discussed, as he had declared an Appendix A Interest with regard to the property as he was a Governor of Craven College).

### 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 the minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2014, on the grounds that it is not in the public interest to disclose the Category 3 (financial or business affairs of any particular person including the Council) exempt information therein.

### Minutes for Report

POL.591

#### ARMED FORCES VETERANS' CHARTER 2014

The Chairman of the Select Committee submitted a report presented the recommendations of the review of the proposal to create a joint working group with the local Royal British Legion Committee in order to produce a an armed forces veterans charter for Craven and organise an annual commemorative armed forces day.

Mr Alex Bentley, who represented the Veterans' Advisory and Pensions Committee for Yorkshire and Humber had addressed Council in February 2014 asking the Council to adopt Armed Forces Day as only local authorities were able to apply for grant funding.

The Select Committee had subsequently been tasked with considering the issue and Mr Bentley had been invited to address the Committee.

It was pointed out that the Select Committee had not explored in any depth the potential resource implications were the Council to accept responsibility for armed forces day. Currently local authorities could apply for financial support from the Community Covenant Grant Scheme 2011-2015 but any grant would need to be match funded by the Council. It was also unclear as to grant funding beyond 2014/15.

**Resolved** - (1) That, a joint working group is established with the local Royal British Legion Committee in order to produce an armed forces veterans' charter for Craven.

(2) That, the Council is not minded to take on responsibility for the organisation of Armed Forces Day, but indicates that it will assist within its limited means where possible.

(Councillor Kerwin-Davey declared an Appendix B interest in the above item as he was a member of the Royal British Legion.

Councillor Moorby also declared an Appendix B interest in the above item as he had been a member of the Select Committee when the above matter had been considered).

POL.592

### **CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2013/14 – OUTTURN**

The Corporate Head of Financial Management submitted a report informing Members of the outturn position of the Council's capital programme for 2013/14 and the sources of financing. The agreed capital programme of £1,842k had since been revised to £1,647k.

The final expenditure for 2013/14 was £633,699 and projects that had been committed to, but not fully defrayed was £873,275. Requests had been made for this to be carried forward to 2014/15. In addition, £1,010k of additional resources had been generated giving a total of £2,335k of funding to support future years including the projects carried forward to 2014/15.

**Resolved** – (1) That, the outturn position of the 2013/14 capital programme is noted.

(2) That, how the 2013/14 capital programme has been financed, is noted.

(3) That, £873,275 for completion of 2013/14 projects in 2014/15 is confirmed.

POL.593

### **INTERIM REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING – QUARTER 4 2013/2014**

The Corporate Head of Financial Management submitted a report advising Members of the Council's revenue budget position based on a review of income and expenditure to the end of March 2014.

The Council had a General Fund unallocated balance of £1030k at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 which had remained during 2013/14 in order to mitigate against the risk of unplanned movements from budgeted net expenditure levels and variances.

The Council had managed its budget and generated savings for its budget targets in 2014/15 and beyond. The total projected underspend within the revenue budget was £792k which when added to the additional income from the new business rates retention scheme, an estimated surplus of £1,305k was expected.

It was recommended that the Council contributed to specific earmarked reserves for the funding of capital or revenue projects including buildings, IT, vehicles, planning and enabling efficiencies.

Main risk areas for the Council in the 2013/14 budget had been the impact of the economy on income streams and this would continue into 2014/15 so regular monitoring through quarterly budget clinics was vital.

**Resolved** – (1) That, the interim revenue budget monitoring position as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014, is noted.

(2) That, £172,500 of the savings achieved this year and identified as green in Appendix B to the report now submitted is noted and that these savings are to be transferred to an earmarked reserve to support the 2015/2016 budget and beyond.

(3) That, £25,000 is carried forward to 2014/2015 to increase the contingency to £100,000.

(4) That, £148,215 is carried forward to 2014/2015 to complete revenue commitments.

(5) That, a contribution of £200,000 to the Business Rates Contingency reserves is approved.

(6) That, the transfer of the balance of the revenue budget surplus to earmarked reserves is approved, the allocations of which are delegated to the Corporate Head (Financial Management) Section 151 Officer.

(Councillor Turner declared an Appendix B interest in the above item, insofar as it related to Skipton Bowling Club, as she was a member of the Yorkshire Crown Green Bowling Association).

POL.594

### **PERFORMANCE MONITORING – QUARTER 4 2013/2014**

The Corporate Head of Financial Management submitted a report presenting the Council's performance monitoring report for quarter 4 2013/14 in accordance with arrangements set out in the Council's performance management framework.

The monitoring exercise had showed that good progress had been made with implementing the Council Plan actions with 16 of the 27 having been assessed as on target. Targets had been set for five of the nine indicators attached to the Council Plan whilst the remainder were viewed only as context information. Of the five indicators, four targets had been achieved and one relating to the number of affordable homes delivered was below target, as only 9 homes had been delivered against a target of 40 for the year.

**Resolved** – That the progress and outcomes achieved are noted.

(Councillor Heseltine declared an interest in the above item, insofar as it related to the delivery of the flood alleviation scheme as he was a Skipton Town Council appointed trustee of the Tarn Moor Estate which would benefit from the scheme).

POL.595

### **TRADING ON COUNCIL OWNED CAR PARKS**

The Corporate Head of Financial Management submitted a report seeking approval to formally amend the Council's parking order(s) to permit trading on Council owned car parks and agree a licence fee for trading space to be including in the Council's fees and charges schedule.

The Council's Asset Management Plan required an ongoing review of assets to seek opportunities to maximise income and, by selling trading licences on areas of car parks unsuitable for parking spaces or other pieces of land, additional income could be generated for the Council.

Traders would only be permitted to sell cold food, non-alcoholic drinks and services/utilities etc. Due to a higher risk of litter and nuisance it was not proposed to allow hot food or alcohol to be sold.

**Resolved** – (1) That, the Director of Services is authorised to take the necessary action to permit trading on Council owned car parks and is granted delegated authority to make the

necessary formal Order including considering and deciding on duly made objections to the proposals.

(2) That, licence fees are included in the Council's fees and charges schedule.

POL.596

### TOUR DE FRANCE

The Chief Executive submitted a progress report on the delivery planning in respect of the Tour de France. The report also included details of additional financial implications for the Council.

Members had already agreed to a budget of £87,000 being set aside to cover the costs associated with the delivering element of the Tour de France through Craven, but at that time both the District and County Councils were not aware of the full extent of additional responsibilities that would fall upon the local authorities involved.

Further expenses had been incurred in connection with route delivery costs, servicing the operational structure, increased waste management tasks and assurance demands from the Tour de France Hub e.g more stewards in Skipton due to expected crowd numbers.

Previous research had shown that international sporting events such as the Tour de France could bring significant economic benefit to an area. In addition, the event would showcase and promote the whole District and would leave a lasting economic legacy for Craven.

The Chairman took the opportunity to express his thanks to the small delivery team of officers who had worked tirelessly on the project.

**Resolved** – (1) That, the extent of the delivery planning work that has taken place so far and the increased responsibilities borne by both Craven District Council and North Yorkshire County Council is noted.

(2) That an additional £60,000 from the New Homes Bonus is set aside to cover the costs associated with the event.

(3) That it is noted that a further report will be submitted to this Committee with a probably request for further funding once the central procurement is concluded and the costing for radio communications and medical cover is known.

(Councillor Moorby declared an interest in the above item as he was a haulage contractor whose business would be affected by any road closures as a result of the Tour.)

POL.597

### SMALL AND MEDIUM COMMUNITY GRANTS - CRITERIA

The Corporate Head of Financial Management submitted a report asking Members to adopt the proposed revisions to the criteria and assessment framework for the award of funding under the Council's small and medium community grants programme as agreed by the Community Grants Sub-Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

The revisions would tighten up the criteria giving more clarity and guidance for applicants whilst enabling the Council to provide more effective monitoring.

**Resolved** – (1) That, the proposed revisions to the criteria and assessment framework for the award of small and medium community grants as agreed by the Community Grants Sub-Committee and set out in Appendix A to the report now submitted.

(2) That, authorisation is given for applications received from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to be assessed in accordance with the revised criteria.

POL.598

### **SUB-COMMITTEES AND PANEL : APPOINTMENT**

The Corporate Head of Business Support submitted a report asking Members to consider appointing two sub-committees and a consultative group and, in addition, to consider the terms of reference of those bodies.

**Resolved** – (1) That the Craven Spatial Planning Sub-Committee is re-appointed for 2014/15, on the same basis as 2013/14, with a membership of seven and three named substitutes, comprising the Deputy Leader of the Council (in lieu of the Leader), the Chairman of the Planning Committee, Leaders from the Independent and Liberal Democrat Groups and three other Councillors to ensure political proportionality, namely Councillors Barrington, Sutcliffe and Turner (2 Conservative and 1 Independent), with terms of reference as shown in the Appendix to the report submitted.

(2) That the Craven Employees' Consultative Group is re-appointed for 2014/15, on the same basis as 2013/14, with a membership of four, comprising the Leader of the Council, one other Conservative (Brockbank), 1 Independent (Barrett) and 1 Liberal Democrat (to be appointed), with terms of reference as shown in the Appendix to the report submitted.

(3) That the Community Grants Sub-Committee is re-appointed for 2014/15, on the same basis as 2013/14, with a membership of nine comprising six conservatives Brockbank, Hart, Myers and Turner (with 2 to be nominated by the Conservative Group), 2 Independents (Mason and Solloway) and 1 Liberal Democrat to be nominated by the Group, with terms of reference as shown in the Appendix to the report submitted.

POL.599

### **MEETINGS : START TIME**

**Resolved** – That for the remainder of the current municipal year, ordinary meetings of this Committee continue to start at 6.30pm

### **Minutes for Decision**

POL.600

### **NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATE – RETAIL RELIEF**

The Corporate Head of Financial Management submitted a report asking Members to adopt a policy to award 'retail relief' in accordance with the discretionary rate relief powers as contained within S47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (as amended). The Government's 2013 Autumn Statement indicated an intention to provide relief of up to £1,000 to all occupied retail properties with a rateable value of £50,000 or less for up to two years 2014-15 and 2015-16.

By awarding the discretionary rate relief the Council would be adhering to Government guidelines and would be fully reimbursed by means of a grant under S31 of the Local Government Act 2003. It was estimated that around 704 of Craven's retail businesses would qualify for the extra financial support.

**Recommended** – That the Retail Relief policy as now submitted, is adopted.

(Councillor Myers left the room and took no part in the debate or voting thereon as he had declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (Appendix A) in the above item as he owned a retail premises).  
Councillors Kerwin-Davey and Heseltine both remained in the room having declared interests in the above item as the owners of affected premises but did not vote).

POL.601

### **FOREST OF BOWLAND AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY MANAGEMENT PLAN 2014-2019**

The Corporate Head of Financial Management submitted a report asking Members to agree to the adoption of the 2014-2019 Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan. The plan provided a framework to enable all partners to work towards the delivery, objectives and vision for the Forest of Bowland.

The nationally protected Forest of Bowland was important for its heather moorland and blanket bog which sustained rare species such as the hen harrier and merlin whilst providing a stronghold for brown hares and lapwings. The area extended to 803 square km of which 73 square km fell within the Craven District.

The statutory partnership that managed the AONB had undertaken a 'light touch' review of the 2009 – 2014 management plan. Workshops and meetings with stakeholders and interested parties had taken place to help inform the review. In addition, relevant plans, strategies and policies had been reviewed to ensure they were reflected in the new plan.

**Recommended** – That the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014-2019 is approved.

Chairman