

POLICY COMMITTEE

5th October 2016

Present – The Chairman (Foster) and Councillors Barratt, Brockbank, Hull, Ireton, Jaquin, Madeley, Morrell, Place, Solloway (substitute for Heseltine), Thompson (substitute for Lis), Welch and Whitaker (substitute for Dawson).

Officers – Chief Executive, Director of Services, Corporate Head of Business Support, Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer), Strategic Manager – Financial Services (S.151 Officer), Housing and Environmental Health Manager, Member Services Manager and Committee Administrator.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dawson, Heseltine, Lis, Mulligan and Myers.

Start: 6:30pm

Finish: 8:07pm

The minutes of the Committee's meeting held on 13th September 2016 were, subject to a minor amendment, confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved – That, in accordance with the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules, the public is excluded from the meeting during consideration of Minute POL.\$786 (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.784

WHOLE COUNCIL ELECTIONS

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking Members to authorise consultation with interested parties on a proposal to change the Council's electoral cycle from election by thirds to whole-council elections from 2018.

A move to whole council elections would mean that District Council elections would be held once every four years, rather than in three out of every four years. Indeed, the Electoral Commission's view is that all local authorities should hold whole council. These arrangements currently exist in all the other North Yorkshire District Councils.

A change to the electoral cycle also provided an opportunity to consider whether any changes to ward boundaries and the number of councillor were required.

Following the debate, it was

Resolved – That, no further action is taken on the proposals at this time.

Minutes for Decision

POL.785

SYRIAN REFUGEES

The Director of Services submitted a report informing Members of the current position with regard to the resettlement of Syrian refugees in Craven and sought approval for Craven District Council to take part in the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Programme.

In January 2016 (Minute POL.724/15-16 refers), Members agreed that Craven District Council should accept 25 refugees and the first two families totalling 11 refugees were housed in Skipton in July 2016 and it was expected that by March 2017, Craven would have successfully completed its resettlement programme.

At the request of Members, the Chief Executive carried out a detailed assessment to see if the Authority could resettle more than 25 refugees on compassionate grounds. Discussions with North Yorkshire County Council and Migration Yorkshire had revealed that, whilst there was an option for Craven to take additional numbers, it was likely to be April 2018 before this could take place. This was because along with other North Yorkshire authorities the current quota of refugees in the Home Office's current programme had been met.

However, the Government had asked local authorities to consider increasing their current resettlement pledges to include vulnerable children as part of its new scheme to resettle about 3,000 refugee children and their families over the lifetime of the current Parliament. The County Council would act as the lead authority, project managing the operation delivery of the scheme. This would equate to an extra 3 refugees for Craven taking the Council's total commitment to 28. As Members had previously been reluctant to use social landlords, Craven would not be in a position to accept families this Autumn.

Recommended – (1) That, the reasons given by North Yorkshire County Council and Migration Yorkshire on why Craven will be unable at this time to take a greater allocation of refugees as part of the Government's Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme are noted.

(2) That, participation in the extended resettlement schemes to include the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Programme is agreed.

(3) That, a pledge is made to achieve the total additional number for the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Programme of three as proposed by Migration Yorkshire subject to there being sufficient private sector housing available.

POL.\$786

LAND AT HORSE CLOSE, SKIPTON

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