

POLICY COMMITTEE

5th February 2019

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

Also in attendance – Councillor Hull

Officers – Chief Executive, Director of Services, Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer), Strategic Manager for Planning and Regeneration, Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer, Accountancy Services Manager, Human Resources Manager and Committee Administrator.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barrett, Jaquin and Morrell.

Start: 6.30pm

Finish: 7.20pm

Councillors Madeley and Myers left the meeting at 6:48pm.

The minutes of the Policy Committee meeting held on 15th January 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Minutes for Decision

POL.974

PREPARATION OF GROWTH STRATEGY FOR SKIPTON RAILWAY STATION AND ADJACENT AREAS

The Strategic Manager for Planning and Regeneration submitted a report presenting Members with the proposed scope and outputs for the preparations of a growth strategy and masterplan for Skipton Railway Station and adjacent areas.

In June 2017, the Council had been awarded £5m from the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership to deliver a scheme known as the Skipton Employment and Housing Growth project. The scheme included the preparation of a masterplan focussing on the re-development of the area surrounding the Railway Station which provided a mix of housing and commercial space.

An essential element of the brief for the preparation of the masterplan would be to ensure extensive engagement and consultation with the public and stakeholders. A multi-disciplinary team would be required, bringing together proven expertise to lead the debate and consultation, with all aspects undertaken in agreement with the Council. A joint working group including the Council, key stakeholders and the masterplanners would be created. North Yorkshire County Council (transport and development) and Network Rail have indicated their willingness to be involved in the process.

Masterplanners would be appointed in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Masterplan would be developed and consulted upon in accordance with the Town and Country (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 before being considered by the Council for adoption.

During the debate Members welcomed the initiative and it was seen as an exciting opportunity to transform the area surrounding Skipton Railway Station, stimulate economic growth and provide employment and recreational opportunities.

RECOMMENDED – (1) That, the objectives for the preparation of a masterplan for the future development of Skipton Railway Station and adjacent area(s) are approved.

(2) That, the study area for the masterplan as detailed in Section 4.2 of the report now submitted, is approved.

(3) That, the key outputs and deliverables for the masterplan as outlined in Section 4.3 of the report now submitted, are approved.

(4) That, delegated authority is given to the Director of Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Enterprising Craven, to agree any changes to the study area and key deliverables for the preparation of the masterplan.

(5) That, permission is given for an allocation of £250,000 to be included in the Council's revenue budget for the 2019/20 financial year and this to be funded from the Local Growth Deal (round 3) monies awarded by the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership.

(Councillor Heseltine declared an interest in the above matter under Appendix B of the Council's Code of Conduct as he was a Trustee of the Coulthurst Sandylands Trust.)

POL.975

PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2019-2020

The Human Resources Manager submitted a report seeking approval to implement a 2019/2020 Pay Policy Statement in accordance with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. The statement articulated the Council's policy towards the pay of the workforce, particularly senior staff and the lowest paid employees. The relevant provisions in the Act ensured increased accountability, transparency and fairness in the setting of pay and the statement would be published on the Council's website and considered annually by full Council.

RECOMMENDED – That, approval is given to implement the 2019/20 Pay Policy Statement as set out in Appendix A to the report now submitted.

POL.976

COUNCIL PLAN 2019-2020

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report presenting the Council Plan 2019-2020 for approval. The plan set out the Council's agenda for improving service delivery to Craven's communities and organisational change. The plan focussed on the Council's top priorities for improvement and set out the Council's vision for the next municipal year although it contained projects which would be delivered post 2020. The plan also detailed the actions and projects to be provided by the Council against the priorities in improving service delivery.

Members were informed that the Council Plan as submitted was only for 2019/20 and a new Plan for 2020 and beyond would be developed over the coming months to shape the Council's vision and longer term priorities.

RECOMMENDED – That, the Council Plan 2019/20 is approved and delegated authority is given to the Chief Executive to:

- a) make minor amendments including the revision of delivery mechanisms and amend timescales for delivery as necessary;
- b) Agree performance indicators and associated targets that will be used to measure progress against the achievement of the priorities and objectives set out in the Plan.

POL.977

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2019-2020

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report seeking approval for the 2019/20 – 2022/23 capital programme, subject to there being sufficient capital resources.

Following a bidding process, the total capital expenditure of £1,719m proposed for 2019/20 included plant and equipment replacement programme, disabled facilities grants, shared ownership housing and IT replacements and improvements.

- RECOMMENDED** – (1) That, £44,000 of continuing projects from the 2018/19 – 2020/21 programme is noted and no slippage is confirmed at this stage.
- (2) That, the new capital programme projects of £1,127,550 are approved.
- (3) That, a total capital programme for 2019/20 of £1,763,248 is approved.
- (4) That, the final allocation of funding for the 2019/20 capital programme is confirmed once the outturn position of the 2018/19 revenue budget is finalised.

POL.978

**REVENUE BUDGET 2019/20 AND MEDIUM TERM
FINANCIAL PLAN 2019/20 TO 2021/22**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report identifying a fully funded budget for 2019/20 together with recommending a prudent level of general fund reserve balances for the financial year. The report also outlined the medium term financial plan (MTFP) to 2021/22.

As the final settlement had not been confirmed, the 2019/20 budget was based on the draft grant settlement announcement in December 2018. Little change to the figures was expected. As part of that announcement, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government gave permission for Council's in 2019/20 to increase their Council Tax by 2.99%, without triggering a referendum or £5 whichever was the greater. A £5 increase gave Craven a Council Tax of £172.21 at band D.

In accordance with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Chief Finance Officer made a specific personal statement that the revenue budget as now submitted, was robust and would deliver a balanced budget in 2019/20.

During the debate, Members thanked the Chief Finance Officer and her team for all their hard work in producing a balanced budget.

- RECOMMENDED** – (1) That, the revenue budget assumptions, as detailed within the Chief Finance Officer's report are noted.
- (2) That, the revenue budget for 2019/20 of £6,735,044 set out in Appendix A to the report now submitted is approved.
- (3) That, the schedule of growth bids of £67,250 as identified in Appendix C to the report now submitted are approved.
- (4) That, the savings of £21,780 as identified in Appendix D to the report now submitted are approved.
- (5) That, a contribution from the New Homes Bonus Reserve of £50,000 is made to support the 2019/20 budget, in addition to £198,400 for approved projects, giving a total of £248,400.
- (6) That, the assessment of the robustness of the budget and adequacy of reserves in Paragraph 10 and Appendix F of the report now submitted, is approved.
- (7) That, the estimated sum of £995,000 as identified as the General Fund Balance as at 31st March 2018 in Paragraph 10 and Appendix F of the report now submitted, is approved.

- (8) That, the Council Tax is increased at Band D by £5 to £172.21.
- (9) That, the revenue budget incorporates the net contributions to/(from) earmarked reserves as detailed in tables 1 and 2 , Paragraph 4.8, Appendix A and Appendix F (annex 1).
- (10) (a) That, as part of the budget setting report to Council, an update is provided on the estimated Craven District Council allocation of retained business rates North and West Yorkshire pilot; and
- (b) That, any significant variance to the figures included within the budget report proposals are adjusted through contributions (to)/from the business rates equalisation reserve.
- (11) That, should additional resources be available through the retained business rates scheme, a matching contribution to the business rates contingency reserve is made to mitigate against future uncertainties.
- (12) That, the Section 25 report on the robustness of the budget contained within Section 10 of the report and Appendix F to the report now submitted, is noted.
- (13) That, the funding sources identified in the report and Appendix A now submitted are approved:

		£'000
a)	Revenue Support Grant	0
b)	Rural Services Grant	280
c)	Housing Grant	46
d)	New Homes Bonus	516
e)	Retained Business Rates	1,893
f)	Business Rates Collection Fund (Deficit)	(103)
g)	Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus	96
h)	Council Tax	3,879
i)	Contribution from General Fund Balance	0
j)	Contributions (to)/from Earmarked Reserves	128
	Total Funding	6,735

POL.979

**2019/20 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY
STATEMENT, MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION
STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report presenting for approval the proposed Treasury Management Strategy together with the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement, Prudential Indicators and the Annual Investment Strategy for 2019/20 as required by the Department of Communities and Local Government and CIPFA.

The Council was required to operate a balanced budget and part of treasury management was to ensure that cash flow was adequately planned with cash being available when needed. Surplus monies were invested in low risk counterparties with security of capital and liquidity of funds being considered before investment return. The counterparty lending limits enabled the Council to take full advantage of investment opportunities whilst maintaining a sufficient level of security of capital.

The strategy ensured that the required funding sources would be available to support the Council's capital spending plans and longer term cash flow planning was necessary to ensure capital spending obligations were met.

The strategy also determined the limits to borrowing and investments that officers would apply over the next 12 months in order to ensure the Council's capital investment plans were affordable, prudent and sustainable.

Members were advised that changes to the CIPFA Prudential and Treasury Management Codes requires all local authorities to prepare an additional capital strategy report to ensure that all elected members fully understood the overall long-term policy objectives and resultant capital strategy requirements, governance procedures and risk appetite.

RECOMMENDED – (1) That, the operational boundary for 2019/20 is set at £10.5m.

(2) That, the authorised limits for 2019/20 is set at £12.75m.

(3) That, delegated authority is given to the Chief Finance Officer (S.151 Officer) to effect movement within the agreed operational boundary and authorised limits for long-term borrowing for 2019/20 onwards.

(4) That, the Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2019/20 incorporating the Minimum Revenue Position Policy Statement and the Annual Investment Strategy is approved.

(5) That, the Prudential Indicators for 2019/20, which reflect that the capital expenditure plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable, are approved.

POL.980

CRAVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL CAPITAL STRATEGY 2019 - 2023

The Chief Finance Officer submitted a report presenting for approval a Capital Strategy that was intended to give a high level overview of how capital expenditure and financing plans are decided upon and how they contributed to the delivery of the Council Plan Long Term Financial Strategy, Medium Term Financial Plan and overall delivery of services.

The Strategy would be refreshed on an annual basis to enable it to remain totally consistent with the Council Plan which was set periodically and refreshed in the intervening years. The Strategy gave a framework for budget considerations for the next four years and gave an indication of the likely factors that would have an impact on the budget setting process.

RECOMMENDED – That, the Capital Strategy 2019/2023 is approved and that it will be refreshed on an annual basis alongside the Treasury Management and Investment Strategies.

Chairman