

## **POLICY COMMITTEE**

14<sup>th</sup> January 2020

**Present** – The Chairman (Foster) and Councillors, Barrett, Brockbank, Ireton, Lis, Madeley, Morrell, Mulligan, Myers, Noland. Place, Rose, Solloway (substitute), Welch and Wheeler.

**Officers** – Chief Executive, Director of Services, Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer), Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer, Strategic Manager, Chief Information Officer and Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer.

**Also in Attendance** – Alan Iveson.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rose and Heseltine.

**Start:** 6.30pm

**Finish:** 8.00pm

The minutes of the Policy Committee meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**Exclusion of the Public** –

**Resolved** – That in accordance with the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules, the press and public is excluded from the meeting during the consideration of \$POL.1035 on the grounds that it is not in the public interest to disclose Category 3 (financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council)) exempt information.

### **Minutes for Report**

POL.1036

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Chairman introduced Mr Alan Iveson to the meeting who addressed the Committee on his views regarding the introduction of 5g. He delivered a speech which was also circulated to Members. He emphasised the health risks associated with 5g and the lack of specific research into 5g. Mr Iveson demonstrated radiation levels omitted when making a call on a 2g network with a measuring device. Members were asked to carefully consider the contents of the speech and take into account moratoriums and push backs in place at other Town Councils such as Glastonbury and Kingsbridge.

The CIO provided a brief response. Members were informed that 5g was based on radio waves at the non-ionising end of the electromagnetic spectrum which meant it lacked sufficient energy to cause cellular damage. As the matter was more of a national concern, Craven District Council would follow Central government guidance.

POL.1037

### **COLLECTION FUND COUNCIL TAX SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) 2019/20**

The Chief Finance Officer (s151) submitted a report which declared the estimated surplus on the Collection Fund Council Tax for 2019/20.

Members were informed that prior to the Council setting its budget it must declare whether a surplus or deficit is expected on its Council Tax Collection Fund. Any Surplus or deficit relating to the Council Tax Collection Fund is shared between County Council, Police and

Fire and Rescue Authorities and Craven District Council in the same proportion as the amount of their precepts for the year.

The estimated surplus calculated on the Collection Fund for 2019/20 was £200k, a variance of 0.36%. Craven District Council must take into account the precept, £25,055, when setting its element of the Council Tax for 2020/21.

Members attention was drawn to the surpluses from previous years, the increase was as a result of new properties coming into the Council Tax system, the proportion of properties claiming discounts and the collection rate. The level of surplus was consistent with expectations.

**Resolved** – (1) That, the £200,000 estimated surplus on the Council's Collection Fund at 31st March 2020 relating to Council Tax transactions is declared.

(2) That, Members recommended as part of the budget strategy the Council's element of the estimated surplus is used in calculating the level of Council Tax for 2020/21.

POL.1038

### **COLLECTION FUND NNDR SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) 2019/20**

The Chief Finance Officer (s151) submitted a report which declared the estimated National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) surplus/(deficit) on the Collection Fund for 2019/20.

The calculated surplus on the NNDR Collection Fund for 2019/20 was £35,393 which was to be shared between the precepting authorities. Craven District Council must take into account the £14,157 when it sets its element of Council Tax for 2020/21.

Members were assured that it was not unusual for a variance to be estimated on a Collection Fund, when dealing with figures in excess of £21m a surplus/deficit could occur. It was possible for surplus/deficits to occur as a result of differences between actual results and estimates made when predicting the cashflows in the NNDR1 form. The differences included movements in the provision for appeals and for bad debts, businesses closing and no one taking them over and collection rate. A trend was difficult to predict because the factors affecting rates payable were outside the Council's control.

The Chief Finance Officer (s151) clarified for Members the importance of maintaining reserves especially to manage the transition to 3 yearly evaluations.

**Resolved** – (1) That, the £35,393 estimated surplus on the Council's Collection Fund at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 relating to NNDR transactions is declared.

POL.1039

### **NORTH YORKSHIRE REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT**

The Housing Options Manager submitted a report which provided Members with an overview of the government's recently announced global resettlement scheme for refugees and sought Members approval for Craven District Council's participation in the scheme. Members were also asked to commit to resettling a minimum of 19 persons between 2020/21 and 2023/24.

Members were informed of the amalgamation of existing refugee resettlement programmes into one new 'Global Resettlement Scheme'. The aims and intentions of the new resettlement scheme were summarised which included the aim to resettle 5,000 refugees nationally in the first year of the scheme's operation and the intention to run the new programme in the long term.

It was for each authority to decide the number of refugees they were willing to resettle, although the common approach was to agree a figure based on percentage of population size. Across North Yorkshire this equated to 200 people - approximately 19 people in Craven. It was anticipated that these people would be in family groups rather than single people and therefore be no more than 5 households in total.

As a result of the ensuing debate Members agreed the 19 persons should be viewed as a minimum and it be stated that Craven District Council was willing to rehouse more refugees under the scheme subject to demand.

**Resolved** – (1) That, Members agreed to support a North Yorkshire wide Global Refugee resettlement scheme;  
(2) That, Members agreed to resettle a minimum of 19 persons between 2020/21 and 2023/24;  
(3) That, delegated authority is given to the Chief Executive to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with North Yorkshire County Council and other North Yorkshire District Councils concerning the scheme;  
(4) That, delegated authority is given to the Director of Services to:  
enter into an agreement with Migration Yorkshire to enable overall regional co-ordination and support.  
vary existing nomination agreements with Registered Providers to enable the allocation of social housing to the refugees subject to private sector availability being considered in the first instance.

POL.1040

### **ESTABLISHMENT OF A CHARITY FOR CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN CRAVEN**

The Cultural Services Manager submitted a report which sought Members agreement to establish a fundraising charity to support wider cultural development in Craven. It also sought Members support in using the charity to raise funds for Skipton Town Hall as a cultural hub for the District and associated village halls and venues across Craven.

The foundation for this work had already begun with the recently launched Rural Culture project for which CDC received funding from Arts Council England. Over the next two years the project officer would work with an initial group of village halls exploring co-production of creative events and activities as well as utilising the live streaming capacity at Skipton Town Hall to support Craven's rural communities.

One of the methods to raise funds for refurbishment and upgrading spaces was to apply for grants. Local authorities were able to apply for funding from Arts Council England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund (CDC had been successful in attracting capital and project funding from both). Due to not being eligible to apply to many other charitable trusts and grant giving bodies, it was therefore proposed that an independent charity was set up to raise funds for cultural projects and venue improvements across Craven. There were several options explored including, Unincorporated Association, Trust, Charitable Company limited by Guarantee and the preferred choice - Charitable Incorporated Organisation (considered fit for purpose and offered future proofing). There were two options for the type of Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and it was decided a Foundation CIO was most suited.

The next steps to be carried out by officers should Councillors, in principle, support the Foundation CIO were explained.

**Resolved** – (1) That, the establishment of a fundraising charity to support wider cultural development in Craven and to support Skipton Town Hall as a cultural hub for the district is agreed.

(2) That, the governance option of a Foundation Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) is supported.

(3) That, a report to Policy Committee to approve the final governance structure and other matters set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report is accepted.

POL.1041

### **HISTORIC HIGH STREET, SKIPTON – HERITAGE ACTION ZONE**

The Strategic Manager of Planning and Regeneration submitted a report which updated Members on the progress of the Skipton High Street Heritage Action Zone and sought approval for Craven District Council to act as Accountable Body for the funding if successful.

Members were informed of the objectives for the Heritage Action Zone identified by partners which were encouraging younger residents to reengage with the town centre, re-using heritage buildings, the creation of public spaces for new and diverse activities, enhancing the links between the High Street and secondary retail areas, developing youth markets and festivals, increasing the number of young creatives working in the centre of Skipton and making Skipton more walkable and cycle friendly.

Historic England determined that there would be four key threads – community engagement, physical intervention, conservation and heritage and a cultural programme. As the programme covered four years the identified activities ranged from early well-defined projects to others that would be subject to considerable development.

It was envisaged that the Programme Board directing the programme would be comprised of the Craven Arts Trust, Craven Civic Society, Craven District Council, North Yorkshire County Council, Skipton Business Improvement District, Skipton Town Council, Tarn Moor Trust and Youth Champion. Historic England would contribute to the costs of programme management and delivery; the discussions were ongoing to agree the best approach.

Members attention was brought to Table 1 of the report which showed the budget split by project. A £1,278,480 grant was anticipated from Historic England. Due to the project's early stage the match funding from partners was based on estimates subject to further discussions. A further £25,000 had been requested from Historic England to support the development of the SMART Town concept and it was envisaged that Skipton Town Council and Craven District Council would contribute £25,000 each in order to expand coverage across the town centre.

There would be a future report on the development of the Otley Street Arts House including the purchase of the building from NYCC and proposed funding package.

Members discussed in detail the priorities of the project which included the upkeep and development of Skipton Market, the replication of the positive objectives throughout Craven and the addition of pedestrian only zones in Skipton Town Centre with a view to improve the pedestrian experience.

**Resolved** – (1) That, the objectives of the Skipton High Street Heritage Action Zone are noted.

(2) That, Craven DC will act as accountable body on behalf of the partnership for the Skipton High Street Action Zones funding.

- (3) That, a grant from Historic England for the purposes of delivering the Skipton Heritage Action Zone Heritage Action Zone – anticipated to be £1,278,480 is accepted.
- (4) That, delegated authority to the Director of Service in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) to enter into a funding agreement with Historic England is given.
- (5) That, £25,000 from the New Homes Bonus is allocated to support the delivery of the SMART Town system.

\$POL.1042            **JOINT VENTURE - REDEVELOPMENT OF FORMER COUNCIL  
DEPOT SITE, LANGCLIFFE QUARRY**

(A separate excluded minute has been prepared for this item. It is published (on pink paper) in an Appendix to Committee Members, relevant officer and others who are entitled to all details.)

\$POL.1043            **JOINT VENTURE – DEVELOPMENT OF NEW BRIDGE CAWDER  
LANE TO KEIGHLEY ROAD, SKIPTON**

(A separate excluded minute has been prepared for this item. It is published (on pink paper) in an Appendix to Committee Members, relevant officer and others who are entitled to all details.)

\$POL.1044            **SHARED OWNERSHIP HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

This item was withdrawn from the agenda - officers were asked to provide further information in terms of comparative costs for a carbon neutral housing development.

Chairman