

**MINUTES  
OF THE MEETING OF THE  
CABINET  
TUESDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2016**

Held At 7.00pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Pavilion Road, West Bridgford

**PRESENT:**

Councillors J N Clarke (Chairman), R L Butler, J E Cottee, N C Lawrence, S J Robinson

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Councillors H Chewings, S J Hull, R Jones, G R Mallender, A MacInnes  
7 members of the public

**OFFICERS PRESENT:**

A Graham	Chief Executive
P Linfield	Interim Executive Manager – Finance and Commercial
K Marriott	Executive Manager - Transformation
V Nightingale	Constitutional Services Officer
A Poole	Constitutional Services Team Leader

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:**

Councillors D J Mason

43. **Declarations of Interest**

There were none declared.

44. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12 January 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

45. **Bridgford Hall Procurement**

Councillor Robinson presented a report which outlined information about the procurement of the contractor for the Bridgford Hall redevelopment. He stated that, as an Authority, the Borough Council was committed to bringing a very important building back in to use in April 2017 both as a Registry Office and an aparthotel run by Corona Park Hotel. Income from the Hall was profiled at £60k in 2017/18 and £115k in 2018/19.

Councillor Robinson explained that, as this was a specialist refurbishment of a listed building, of the five contractors invited to submit proposals, only two compliant tenders had been received. Each tender had been scored against predetermined criteria and the pricing structure assessed. The price proposals for both tenders had come in above pre-tender estimates, due to the current upturn in the construction industry coupled with shortages in skills and

supplies. Price proposals had been verified independently by cost consultants and the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Councillor Robinson recognised that officers had worked hard to get contractors in place and achieve value for money. It was also noted that officers were negotiating with the contractor and it was hoped that there would be £100,000 of re-engineering of costs.

In support of the proposal Councillor Cottee queried whether the £200,000 was contingency funding for the project. The Executive Manager – Operations and Transformation explained that the contingency covered two areas – accuracy of the contractor's pricing and to ensure that the build followed the HLF guidelines. It was anticipated that by June 2016, there would be a firm idea as to whether the contingency was required. She explained to Members that although the contractors had visited the site on many occasions it was not possible to envisage what work would be required until work started on some areas of the building.

Councillor Butler queried how receptive the HLF would be to a request for extra supportive funding. The Executive Manager – Operations and Transformation explained that they were aware that a contribution towards the additional uplift would be requested.

Councillor Clarke supported the proposal and stated that it was important that the correct contractor was appointed as this was an important Grade II building and it would require specialist heritage work to be undertaken. Officers explained that both the HLF and English Heritage would be supervising the build.

RESOLVED that:

- a) Contractor A is appointed to undertake the construction works for the Bridgford Hall project.
- b) The capital programme allocation for Bridgford Hall is increased by £200k from £2.122m to £2.322m to reflect the increase in contract price.
- c) The Chief Executive is asked to undertake a value engineering exercise with contractor A to secure the most cost effective price for the works.
- d) The Chief Executive submits a request to the Heritage Lottery Fund to seek further funding along the existing apportionment split (65 percent Heritage Lottery Fund : 35 percent Rushcliffe Borough Council).

#### 46. **Draft Corporate Strategy**

Councillor Clarke presented the draft Corporate Strategy for 2016-2020, explaining that it continued the good work carried out by the Borough Council, enabling it to deliver the important agendas of housing and economic growth and ensuring that the Borough of Rushcliffe was a great place to live. He asked officers how this document would be publicised. The Chief Executive stated that it would be featured in the Council's Rushcliffe Reports and be published on the Council's website.

Councillors Robinson, Butler, and Lawrence supported the comments made. He stated that the document focused on building the economy of the area and maintaining/enhancing the residents' quality of life.

RESOLVED that Cabinet had considered the Corporate Strategy 2016-2020 and recommended it to Council for endorsement and publication.

**47. Strategic Asset Review – Edwalton Golf Course**

Councillor Robinson explained that Edwalton Golf Course was a significant financial and community asset for the Borough, covering 40 hectares. It was currently under lease to Glendale Golf until December 2017 who had requested an extension to the contract to 2025. This extension would bring them this contract in line with the leisure contracts run by Parkwood Leisure Limited. It was noted that both companies were part of the Parkwood Group.

The proposals included a request for a reduced payment of £110,000 to Rushcliffe Borough Council, which would result in a significant drop in income. However, the offer did include a commitment to a capital spend of £50,000 on the facility in 2016/17.

Councillor Robinson proposed that a cross party working group should be established to consider the proposal and the way forward for the Golf Course. He highlighted the terms of reference and the timescales for the Group. It was noted that the Chairman would be a member of the Cabinet,

In support Councillors Cottee, Lawrence and Clarke stated that they welcomed the proposals however they were concerned about the reduction in revenue.

RESOLVED that:

- a) Members of the Executive Management Team, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders (Finance and Communities), are tasked with continuing negotiations with Glendale regarding the current request for an extension of the contract prior to bringing back a further report recommending a final decision at the March 2016 Cabinet meeting.
- b) A Cabinet-led Member Working Group be formed to consider the future viability and use of the land at Edwalton and make recommendations to Cabinet as detailed within the timeline and Terms of Reference detailed in Appendices 1 and 2.

**48. Budget and Financial Strategy**

Councillor Robinson presented a report which outlined the detail of the 2016/17 budget and the 5 year Medium Term Financial Strategy from 2016/17 to 2020/21. He explained that there was currently a unique and significant environment of financial reform and he acknowledged the excellent work undertaken by the Interim Executive Manager – Finance and Commercial and his Team.

He stated that Government policies had recommended that, as the Borough Council was in the bottom quartile, it could increase its Council Tax allocation by £5.00. It was proposed that the Borough Council would increase its Council Tax by £4.95 (4.2%) for a Band D property in each of the next 2 years, and thereafter a 2% per annum increase had been included for budgetary purposes. This still ensured that Rushcliffe's Council Tax remained the lowest in Nottinghamshire and among the lowest in the country. He also stated that the Revenue Support Grant would be reduced to zero by 2020, a reduction of 85% since 2013/14.

Councillor Robinson explained that the revenue generated from business rates was a significant challenge. This was mainly due to the situation with the power station, which formed a significant proportion of the Council's income from business rates as the policy allowed the company to appeal against the charge, which they had done each year. The Borough Council was required to refund the business rates, but, in turn, this was not refunded by Government. He informed Members that the Government was presently consulting on how Business Rates were decided and a report would be presented in October 2016 on the outcome.

He explained that the Government were also consulting on the New Homes Bonus and therefore a more prudent approach had been taken when considering this income.

Members were informed that, as part of the Transformation Strategy, the Borough Council had worked hard and made savings of £4.5 million but it was recognised that an extra £1.24 million needed to be saved in the next 5 years.

Councillor Robinson explained that he was proud of the Borough Council's ambitious capital programme recognising that few local authorities had such ambitious plans. He detailed projects such as the Bridgford Hall redevelopment and the Arena, and several smaller projects. He explained that £2.6m will be retained as a general fund and contingency going forward.

He stated that the Member Budget workshops had enabled Members to work through the items to create more revenue with minimum impact on services and he was pleased to say that savings of £137,000 had been identified. The deficit would be £15,000, which without the savings there would still have been a requirement for £152,000 to be found in 2016/17.

Councillor Clarke updated Members that the Secretary of State had made a formal announcement of the final settlement, allocating transitional funding of £70,000 to Rushcliffe, which was as a result of Members lobbying Government.

He also explained that the Secretary of State planned to consult on an increase to planning fees in line with inflation over the last 4 years. Councillor Clarke explained that this would support the resourcing of administering planning applications, as it was acknowledged that the ambitious targets for building and housing could have an adverse effect on the Development Control team.

Members were informed that it had also been announced that transitional arrangements and extra income would be in place to support local authorities in meeting the challenges. However, it was expected that finances could be more pressurised.

Councillor Clarke stated that, the fact that the Council Tax would increase by only £4.95 over a year, which equated to less than 10 pence per week, illustrated that the Council was being prudent. He reminded Members that the Government had planned that all local authorities would be self-financing and would no longer receive central funding.

In proposing the recommendations Councillor Robinson asked that the word 'consider' in recommendation 'e' be changed to 'accept'.

Councillor Lawrence supported the proposal recognising the hard work put in by officers to achieve such a balanced budget. He also stated that he had spoken with residents who supported the rise in Council Tax rather than a reduction in the service offered. He highlighted the Garden Waste Scheme which was proposed to raise approximately £1million in income. He said that this was a good example of how services were being delivered to hold costs down and maximise revenue.

Councillor Clarke supported the comments stating that there was no Government grant for freezing the Council Tax, as had previously been the case.

The Chief Executive thanked Members for their support to officers in developing the budget, in a very challenging year.

Councillor Butler supported the comments made.

RESOLVED that Cabinet recommends that Council:

- a) adopts the budget setting report and associated financial strategies 2016/17 to 2020/21 (attached Annex) including the Capital Strategy (Appendix 5) and the Transformation Strategy and Programme (Appendix 3) to deliver efficiencies over the five year period.
- b) adopts the Capital Programme as set out in Appendix 4.
- c) sets Rushcliffe's 2016/17 Council Tax for a Band D property at £122.94 (increase from 2015/16 of £4.95 or 4.2%).
- d) sets the Special Expenses for West Bridgford, Ruddington and Keyworth, Appendix 1, resulting in the following Band D Council tax levels for the Special Expense Areas:
  - i) West Bridgford £52.92 (£52.44 in 2015/16)
  - ii) Keyworth £1.48 (£1.76 in 2015/16)
  - iii) Ruddington £3.53 (£3.57 in 2015/16)

- e) accepts the 'four year offer' as part of the draft financial settlement
43. RESOLVED that the public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of the following item of business pursuant to Regulation 4 (2) of the above Regulations on the grounds that it is likely that exempt information may be disclosed as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.
44. **Land North of Bingham**

Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Manager - Transformation and Operations in respect of acquiring a piece of land in Bingham.

RESOLVED that:

- a) Cabinet acquires the additional 0.8 hectares and delegates the final negotiations within the agreed price envelope to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources
- b) the 2016/17 capital programme is amended to include this purchase price plus associated fees
- c) following acquisition Cabinet agrees to the marketing of the site with a view to disposal of part of the site to local businesses wishing to expand as detailed in the report of 8 September
- d) Cabinet considers the results of the marketing at a future Cabinet report, to include comments and feedback from the Bingham and Radcliffe Growth Board, and Bingham Town Council.

The meeting closed at 7.55pm.

CHAIRMAN