MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
CABINET
TUESDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2019

Held at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber Area B, Rushcliffe Arena, Rugby Road, West Bridgford

PRESENT:

Councillors S J Robinson (Chairman), D Mason (Vice-Chairman), A Edyvean, G Moore and R Upton

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillors R Jones, A MacInnes, R Mallender

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

D Banks	Executive Manager - Neighbourhoods
C Caven-Atack	Performance, Reputation and Constitutional Services Manager
T Coop	Constitutional Services Officer
A Graham	Chief Executive
P Linfield	Executive Manager - Finance and Corporate Services
K Marriott	Executive Manager - Transformation and Operations
D Mitchell	Executive Manager - Communities
S Sull	Borough Solicitor

APOLOGIES:

There were no apologies.

40 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

41 Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 11 December 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 11 December 2018 were declared a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

42 Opposition Group Leaders' Questions

What progress is being made on: a) the relocation of the Councils recycling2go service to Nottingham City Eastcroft Depot, b) Streetwise in finding an alternative site, and c) the decontamination of the Abbey Road site so that it can be developed for housing?

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, provided the following response.

A joint working group (Rushcliffe and Nottingham City) is continuing to make good progress and the move of Recycling2go to Eastcroft remains on track for April – June 2019. Streetwise continue to explore alternative options for their location with the support of the Council. Regarding decontamination of the site, full reports have been undertaken on the site and a remediation strategy will be put in place as part of the planning process.

Councillor MacInnes also asked:

“What work has been completed by officers to progress the Councils ambition to build housing on the Depot site which would provide: a) much needed additional housing, b) assist in meeting the 5 year Housing Supply of Land, and c) deliver further economic growth within the Borough and therefore help the Council to achieve its corporate priorities.”

Councillor Edyvean, Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth and Business, provided the following response.

“Following on from the Cabinet report of October 2018, a design team has been appointed and it is anticipated that a planning application for the site will be submitted in March/April 2019. Proud of record as council of affordable housing having delivered more than any other council in Nottinghamshire.”

43 Citizens' Questions

The following question was submitted by Ms Carys Thomas.

“Authority to grant outline planning permission for the land South of Clifton was delegated to the Executive Manager (Communities) on 25 January 2018, so the Council’s decision to grant permission is now hurtling towards its first birthday. Why has the planning permission not yet been granted? Every delay worsens the prospects for attaining/maintaining the 5-year housing land supply you require and moves more projected completions beyond the current plan period, meaning that additional sites have to be found elsewhere. I understand that a government grant was awarded to help provide roads for the Clifton development – is there a time limit for spending it?”

In the absence of Ms Thomas, the question was asked by the Monitoring Officer.

Councillor Upton provided the following response.

“The delivery of this strategic site has been, and continues to be, a top priority of the Council.

Officers worked hard to get Council approval to the development, which was achieved at the Planning Committee in early 2018 subject to the completion of a Section 106 agreement.

Over the last 12 months officers have been engaged with the lead developer in finalising this agreement so the permission can be issued.

Despite officers' hard work, the completion of the Section 106 agreement is outside the control of the Council and relies on the agreement of the consortium of landowners. This situation is not unusual for large complex sites that require significant long term investment.

It is hoped that in the very near future the Section 106 agreement can be completed and then further detailed planning applications can be progressed for the delivery of the housing, employment and the required infrastructure.

We continue to work closely with Homes England who understand the difficulties we are facing and are seeking to provide appropriate support officer and financial support. Like many authorities we still await formal feedback from them in relation to the Housing Infrastructure Grant provisionally identified for the site.

In summary, can I assure you that the delivery of this site remains a top priority of the Council."

Key Decisions

44 **Empty Homes Strategy**

Councillor Upton proposed the report of the Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods which asked for Cabinet approval of a revised Empty Homes Strategy for the authority. He highlighted that there were over 900 empty residential properties in the Borough with 100 of these having been empty for over two years. These long-term empty properties were increasingly a cause of alarm to neighbours as they attracted pests and fly-tipping, led to over-grown gardens, and were a focus of crime and disorder. Alongside an analysis of why homes become empty, the strategy outlines what assistance can be given to home owners, and what action can be taken by the authority, to bring homes back into occupation.

Councillor Edyvean endorsed the comments of Councillor Upton in seconding the report.

Councillor Robinson added that in light of the pressure within the Borough to increase the number of new homes, it seemed right do what was necessary to bring empty properties back into use.

It was RESOLVED that

a) The Empty Homes Strategy 2019 -2024 be approved and,

b) The Executive Manager – Neighbourhoods be authorised to make minor rvisions to the Strategy during its lifespan

Reasons for Recommendation

To create a strategic framework and associated action plan which will detail how the Council will seek to target and address empty homes in the borough.

Non-Key Decisions

45 **Bingham Leisure Centre - Review of Chapel Lane Site**

Councillor Mason proposed the report of the Executive Manager – Communities requesting Cabinet approval to move to the next phase of development on the Chapel Lane site in Bingham. The interim report proposes the development of a new Leisure Centre, community hall and stand-alone office complex effectively linking the existing community with the new residential properties being built north of the town. The £20m capital investment would be overseen by a Cabinet-led member panel reflecting the support given to the development of Rushcliffe Arena.

Councillor Edyvean seconded the report and outlined how building a new leisure centre in Bingham would support the Council's continuing goal of providing high quality leisure facilities as well as addressing the future needs of this expanding town.

Councillor Upton commented that the existing building was beyond its useful life and was not cost effective to update. He was very supportive of the proposal which gives the Council the opportunity to meet modern disability and energy efficiency standards as well as providing an excellent modern community facility. Councillor Moore also supported the proposal and welcomed the opportunity to put to use many of the lessons learnt from building Rushcliffe Arena.

Councillor Robinson concluded the discussion by highlighting that Bingham was a major growth area in the Borough and that it was positive that we were able to provide a significant piece of community infrastructure as part of that expansion.

It was RESOLVED that

a) the outcome of the options appraisal be noted and the preferred option of a new leisure centre (with community hall) and stand-alone offices be approved;

b) the procurement of a professional team to proceed to the next stage to proceed to the next stage of design, planning approval and tender development be authorised;

c) a Cabinet led Member group to oversee the leisure aspect of the report be appointed;

d) the financial implications identified within the report be noted and the inclusion of £20m in the Councils Capital Programme together with the funding and resource implications associated with the development in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy be approved and presented to Full Council on 7 March 2019;

e) once successful planning permission has been achieved a further report be provided with pre-tender estimates and any revised funding

consequences.

Reasons for Decision

Development of a new leisure centre alongside stand-alone serviced offices responds to market requirements combined with intelligence indicating good levels of local demand for offices at competitive rents. Although this option does not provide the Council with the highest return on investment it complements the wider masterplan for Bingham by creating an attractive gateway to and from the new housing development within the north of the town as well as providing employment and economic regeneration benefits.

46 **Budget and Financial Strategy 2019/20**

Councillor Moore presented the report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services outlining the Council's proposed budget for 2019/20 and the five year Medium Term Financial Strategy. The proposed budget set the Council Tax for the coming year at £137.39 for a Band D property (which represents an increase of £4.95 or 3.73%) as well as the additional Special Expenses for West Bridgford, Ruddington and Keyworth. The report presents a balanced budget despite an ambitious capital programme and further cuts in central government funding. Councillor Moore further outlined that despite the proposed increase, Rushcliffe's Council Tax would remain the lowest in Nottinghamshire and within the lowest quartile nationally. As a result of this prudent and responsible budget, Councillor Moore was pleased to announce that the Council was now self sufficient and thanked Mr Linfield and his team for all of their hard work.

The report was seconded by Councillor Upton who made no further comments. Councillor Mason expressed the belief that this was an excellent and restrained budget which demonstrated as desire to protect services as well as a willingness to invest in the future. Councillor Robinson also thanked Mr Linfield and his team for delivering a balanced and robust budget at a very difficult time.

It was RESOLVED that Cabinet **recommend that Council**;

a) adopts the budget setting report and associated financial strategies 2019/20 to 2023/2024, including the Transformation Strategy and Efficiency Statement to deliver efficiencies over the five year period.

b) Adopts the Capital programme, as set out in Appendix 4 of the annex to the officer's report.

c) Adopts the Capital and Investment Strategy, as set out in Appendix 5 of the officer's report.

d) Sets Rushcliffe Borough Council's element of the 2019/20 Council Tax for a Band D property at £137.39.

e) Sets the Special Expenses for West Bridgford, Ruddington and Keyworth, as detailed at Appendix 1 of the annex to the officer's report, resulting in the following Band D Council tax levels for the Special

Expenses area:

i. West Bridgford £48.51
ii. Keyworth £1.60
iii. Ruddington £3.37

Reason for decisions

To comply with the Local Government Finance Act (1972) and ensuring the budget enables corporate objectives to be achieved. The Council is required to set a balanced budget and that it has adequate funds and reserves to address its risks.

47 **Revision to the terms of reference of the Economic Prosperity Group**

Councillor Robinson proposed the report of the Chief Executive outlining revised terms of reference, costs and constitution for the Economic Prosperity Group (formally Committee) which brings together the local authority leaders of all councils to drive forward growth and the creation of jobs. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Mason.

It was RESOLVED that:

a) The membership of the EPC be continued.

b) The amended Constitution (Terms of Reference, Membership and procedures) of the EPC be approved.

c) Nottingham City Council continue to host the Committee and provide all secretarial, legal and financial support services, (including S151 and Monitoring Officer roles) be approved. The annual costs be agreed by the constituent authorities and to be met in equal shares. The chairing of the Committee may be transferred to Nottinghamshire County Council in future as is allowed for in the terms of reference.

Reason for decisions

To support this Council's continued membership of the EPC.
To update Cabinet on the amendment to the terms of reference of the EPC.
To note the costs of membership of the EPC.

48 **Discretionary Rate Relief Policy Review**

Councillor Moore proposed the report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services covering a technical change to the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy. This was last reviewed in 2016 and approved for a three-year period. It awards rate relief to charities, community groups and village halls for example thus enhancing community well-being within the Borough. The report was seconded by Councillor Upton who further commented that this scheme was valued by the community.

It was RESOLVED that:

a) The new policy for Discretionary Rates Relief be approved.

b) The Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services be given delegated authority to amend the policy within the next 3 years following expected changes to the current business rates scheme in 2020/21.

Reasons for decisions

To ensure that there is a consistent approach to the award of any discretionary rate relief (DRR).

The meeting closed at Time Not Specified.

CHAIRMAN