

## CABINET

Wednesday, 20th January, 2016

**Present:-** Councillor Elizabeth Shenton – in the Chair  
Councillors Beech, Kearon, Turner, Williams and Rout

### 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from the Chief Executive – John Sellgren.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest stated.

### 3. MINUTES

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting, held on 11 November, 2015, be approved as a correct record.

### 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Councillor Turner queried Item 6 – Land at Sheldon Grove. The item had been Called-In and it had been assumed that it would be brought back to tonight's meeting.

Members were advised that, given the new information in the Cushman and Wakefield report to the Asset Policy Committee, the previous decision would need to be reviewed in view of the additional detail, and possibly remove Land at Sheldon Grove at this stage.

### 5. COUNCIL TAX BASE - 2016-17

Consideration was given to a report requesting that Members approve the Council Tax Base to be used to calculate the 2016/17 levies.

In addition, Members were asked to delegate the responsibility for the calculation, in future years to the Executive Director for Resources and Support Services in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder.

**Resolved:** (i) That, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amounts calculated as the Council Tax Base for 2016/17 shall be as follows:-

#### **Band D Equivalent properties**

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| <i>Newcastle Borough Council</i>       | <b>36,078</b> |
| <i>Kidsgrove Town Council</i>          | <b>6,536</b>  |
| <i>Loggerheads</i>                     | <b>1,878</b>  |
| <i>Audley</i>                          | <b>2,510</b>  |
| <i>Balterley, Betley and Wrinehill</i> | <b>576</b>    |

|                                 |              |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Chapel and Hill Chorlton</b> | <b>192</b>   |
| <b>Keele</b>                    | <b>332</b>   |
| <b>Madeley</b>                  | <b>1,445</b> |
| <b>Maer</b>                     | <b>260</b>   |
| <b>Whitmore</b>                 | <b>814</b>   |
| <b>Silverdale</b>               | <b>1,457</b> |

- (ii) That approval be given to delegate responsibility for the calculation of the Council Tax Base in future years to the Executive Director (Resources and Support Services) and that the Council's Scheme of Delegation be amended accordingly.

## 6. SCALE OF FEES AND CHARGES 2016-17

Members considered a report requesting approval for the proposed scale of fees and charges which would apply from 1 April, 2016.

The fees and charges which the Council makes need to be reviewed in order to keep them in line with the cost of service provision and ensure compliance with the Charging Policy.

Attention was drawn to page 20 of the report which showed some new charges and page 22 which showed deleted charges.

In addition, the Council's Executive Director – Resource and Support Services advised members of a minor change in the report. The section headed 'Land Charges' at the bottom of page 36 indicated no VAT to all. However, VAT will be added to Con 29 and therefore this would be added into the Land Charges figures where appropriate.

**Resolved:** That the fees and charges proposed to apply from 1 April, 2016, as set out in Appendix 1 be approved.

## 7. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS 2016-17

Consideration was given to a report on Revenue and Capital Budgets for 2016/17.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, IT and Customer thanked all officers who had been involved in the preparation of the budgets.

Members were advised that a decision had had to be made as to whether Council Tax should be increased for the year 2016/17 and unfortunately, due to circumstances, an increase of 1.99% was necessary.

Attention was drawn to page 59 of the agenda which indicated changes to the Medium Term Financial Strategy since its approval in November, 2015. Page 61 listed savings which had been made and page 61 showed that there would be no shortfall for 2016/17.

A suggestion was made to include a leaflet in with the Council Tax bills when they are sent out giving as breakdown of the individual charges for the County, Fire Service, Police and ourselves.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the assumptions set out in the report be approved.
  - (ii) That it be agreed to increase the Council Tax levy by 1.99% for 2016/17.
  - (iii) That the Finance, Resources and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee be asked to consider what comments it wishes to make on the draft Budget and Council Tax proposals before the final proposals are considered at Cabinet in February 2016.

**8. HACKNEY CARRIAGE TARIFF**

The Cabinet considered a report with a request from the Hackney Carriage Association to change the commencement time of Tariff Two from midnight to 10pm.

The item had been considered by the Council's Public Protection Committee on 3 November, 2015 where it had been recommended to reject the request as it would have a harmful effect on the night time economy.

The Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities also recommended that the request be rejected.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the request from the Chair of the Hackney Carriage Association be refused.
  - (ii) That the Council continue with the current arrangement for tariff 2.

**9. COMMUNITY CENTRES REVIEW ACTION PLAN**

Consideration was given to a report updating Members on the progress made in implementing the actions from the Community Centre Review.

Members were advised that five Community Centres had taken on, or were about to sign for, a lease. In addition there were a few who were ready to enter discussions regarding a lease.

The Chair expressed her thanks to the officers who had carried out the work on this and also to the people working in the community to keep them going.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the progress made in implementing the Community Centre Review actions be noted and that it be recognised that there is still further work to be done.
  - (ii) That the continuation of the Cabinet Panel to provide ongoing oversight of the implementation of the Community Centres Review Action Plan be approved.

**10. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY VIABILITY**

Consideration was given to a report giving Members further guidance on the prospects of pursuing the bringing in of a Community Infrastructure Levy.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That Members note again that the advice received by the City Council that it would be inappropriate to proceed at this point in time with progressing a Community Infrastructure Levy is considered still to apply.
  - (ii) That officers continue to consider and advise the Planning Committee in specific cases whether particular obligations, following the coming into force of the provisions of Regulation 123 on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2015, are lawful.
  - (iii) That officers bring forward a timetable, with resource implications, detailing how it is proposed to develop proposals for a Community Infrastructure Levy Draft Preliminary Charging Schedule for consultation purposes, the approval of a Draft Charging Schedule and its submission for examination, and its examination following or at the same time as the Examination of the Joint Local Plan in 2018.

**11. PUBLIC SECTOR HUB : EXPANSION OF ICT FACILITIES AT KIDSGROVE CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE**

A report was submitted to Cabinet seeking approval for the procurement of new and replacement ICT hardware which is required to expand the Council's current ICT facilities at Kidsgrove Customer Service Centre, in support of the Public Sector Hub.

Members were advised that when the Hub opens, the back-up which is currently at Kidsgrove, would be moved to the Hub.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the procurement of new and replacement ICT hardware to expand the Council's current ICT facilities at Kidsgrove Customer Services Centre in support of the Public Sector Hub, as detailed in the report be approved.
  - (ii) That the authority to award the various contracts be delegated to the Executive Director (Resources and Support Services) in consultation with the portfolio holder for Finance, IT and Customer.

**12. SELECTIVE LICENSING**

A report was submitted to Cabinet to present the case for Selective Licensing in the Miners Estate in Kidsgrove and to recommend the next steps.

It was felt necessary on this estate, to introduce Selective Licensing, to address low housing demand and high levels of private renting.

Members were advised that anti-social behaviour was high in this area and as a result people did not reside there for very long. The area also suffers from low demand.

Under the scheme, action could be taken against landlords who do not adequately maintain their properties. The Scheme would also allow the Council to control what is happening with properties in that locality.

Before the scheme is introduced, a consultation process would have to be undertaken and sufficient evidence given.

If it proved to be successful, it could be rolled out to other areas within the Borough. Members were advised that there were now more private landlords than social ones.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, IT and Customer expressed his thanks to the officers who had carried out this work.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That it be confirmed that Cabinet believes the Selective Licensing Proposal is appropriately evidence based and robust.
  - (ii) That it be agreed to move forward to a ten week consultation of local residents, landlord's, businesses and other stakeholders.
  - (iii) That a report on the outcome of the consultation which will consider the representations made be brought to a future meeting.

### **13. LOCAL PLAN UPDATE**

A report was submitted to Cabinet seeking approval to go out to public consultation on the Joint Local plan and to agree a revised work programme for its production.

Members were advised that an email had been received from Stoke on Trent City Council stating that they had approved the document.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That public consultation on the Issues Paper Consultation Document (Appendix 1), be approved, in line with the methods of consultation set out in the adopted Joint Statement of Community Involvement.
  - (ii) That the results of the consultation be brought back to Cabinet at the next stage in the Joint Local Plan Process – Strategic Options in summer 2016.
  - (iii) That the revised work programme for the production of the Joint Local Plan, set out in the report and that this is published as an update to the Council's Local Development Scheme be approved.

**14. THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BOROUGH MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY**

A report was submitted to Cabinet outlining options for the future development of the Borough Museum and Art Gallery along with the development of a plan for its management.

Members were advised that if the application for funding was successful, the Museum could move towards a more interactive offering whereby people could 'get involved' with exhibits.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That a Stage One application be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the refurbishment of the Borough Museum and Art Gallery.
  - (ii) That a further report be submitted to Cabinet on the outcome of the Stage One application and the options for potential future operating and governance models for the Museum Service.

**15. PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS**

A report was submitted to Cabinet seeing approval to pursue the introduction of Public Sector Protection Orders (PSPO's) within the Borough.

The Orders would mean that the possession of legal highs would also be prohibited in areas where alcohol is currently not allowed.

Members were advised that some areas used PSPO's to push the homeless out of certain areas. Reassurance was given that Newcastle would not use the Orders to such affect but would help then in any way possible but if any problematic behaviour occurred the Order would then apply.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the consultation with relevant partners and stakeholders on the potential coverage of PSPO's be approved.
  - (ii) That Officers be authorised to pursue introduction of PSPO's for the indicative issues detailed in the report.

**16. PROCUREMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S LONG TERM AGREEMENT (INSURANCE)**

A report was submitted to Cabinet informing Members of the approach used to re-procure the Council's Long Term Agreement for Insurance.

Members' attention was drawn to paragraph 5.4 of the report which showed an opportunity to save £201,000 when compared to the Council's budgeted/anticipated spend.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, IT and Customer thanked the officers involved in this process and for the savings made.

- Resolved:**
- (i) That the procurement approach adopted by officers be acknowledged.
  - (ii) That approval be given to formally award a contract to the successful provider following completion of the procurement on the basis of the 'Most Economically Advantageous Tender.

**17. URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no Urgent Business.

**COUNCILLOR ELIZABETH SHENTON**  
**Chair**

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