

FINANCE, RESOURCES AND PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 24th January, 2018
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

Present:- Councillor Joan Winfield – in the Chair

Councillors Burgess, Fear, Frankish, Heesom,
Pickup, Proctor and P Waring

Officers Jayne Briscoe - Democratic Services
Officer and Executive Director
(Resources and Support Services) -
Kelvin Turner

Also in Attendance Councillor Sweeney (Portfolio Holder for
Finance and Resources)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Spence, Stubbs, Woolley and Wright.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2017 be agreed as a correct record.

4. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2018-19

The Executive Director (Resources and Support Services) presented the Treasury Management Strategy 2018/19 for scrutiny by members of the Committee. The report included the Prudential Indicators, Investment Strategy and Minimum Revenue Provision Strategy. Members were made aware that the results of the consultation undertaken by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and any impact this may have on proposals to update the guidance on Local Authorities Investments and on Minimum Revenue Provision and any impact on the Treasury Management Strategy was due to be received in the near future.

Members asked if the delayed move to Castle House would have a negative impact on the financial assumptions relating to the Ryecroft development site. It was considered that this would not have any immediate effect, due to the terms of the contract which allowed for the site to be available towards the end of the year.

Agreed: The Committee approved the strategy for submission to Full Council on 21 February 2018.

5. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS 2018-2019

The Executive Director (Resources and Support Services) submitted a report which reviewed progress on the journey towards completion of the revenue and capital budgets for 2018/19 following agreement of the 5 year Medium Term Financial Strategy and provided the Committee with an opportunity to scrutinise the draft Budget and Council Tax proposals prior to consideration by Cabinet at their meeting on 7 February 2018.

In response to a suggestion from a member that the pressures could be reduced if Council Tax was raised to 3% it was noted that Cabinet had decided (17/01/2018) to increase Council Tax by 2.70%, £5.00 on Band D properties.

In response to Members questions on the impact on anticipated savings of the delayed move to Castle House it was stated that these would be compensated for by a financial levy paid by the contractor.

Members looked at the other areas of savings and to discussions with the BID which may offer an opportunity to make savings in certain areas of responsibility.

In respect of the repairs to J2, although it was agreed these were essential members asked if they could be covered by the warranty period.

The Capital Programme was funded to £1.5m which would be achieved through land sales.

Members scrutinised the costs of replacement waste bins and asked Cabinet to examine this in more detail as £150k seemed high..

A member asked why the Mayors budget had been reduced and, in response, the Portfolio Holder explained how the Mayors Allowance had been based on a Spinal Column point which had increased in line with officer salaries, this was in contrast to other members allowances which had not increased. Additional savings would be made by not replacing the dedicated Mayoral support.

Continuing, the Portfolio Holder explained that from May 2018 it was anticipated that the member iPad scheme would be discontinued.

In respect of Planned Activities for 2018-19 members asked that any jargon such as the word “resilience” be removed (reference number 1.13).

Agreed: That the budget for replacement of waste bins be examined further by Cabinet.

6. **WORK PLAN**

Members noted that, due to the delay in moving into Castle House and the need for staff to concentrate on the move, it was not possible to scrutinise the following reports as planned:

- Scrutiny of the time taken to answer calls to the Contact Centre including those transferred to the call holding system
- Review of the move to Castle House – specifically the HR implications and workforce development.

In response to a member question concerning a meeting with the BID, the Scrutiny Officer reported that members of the Economic Development and Enterprise Scrutiny Committee would meet with the BID on 21 March and that members of this Committee could be invited to attend.

Members noted that there was a lack of business to be transacted at the next meeting on 12 March and it was decided that this meeting should be cancelled, without prejudice.

7. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

8. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no Urgent Business.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that, due to a lack of business to be transacted, the next meeting of the Finance, Resources and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee due to be held on 12 March, 2018, be cancelled.

COUNCILLOR JOAN WINFIELD
Chair

Meeting concluded at 8.20 pm