

CABINET

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 8th September 2015 at Worksop Town Hall

Present: Councillor S A Greaves (Chair),
Councillors A Chambers, K Dukes, J Evans, J A Leigh and J White.

Advisory Member: Councillor H M Brand

Liaison Members: Councillors H Burton, K H Isard, D G Pidwell and T Taylor.

Officers: B Alderton-Sambrook, D Armiger, S Brown, J Hamilton, M Hill, L Prime,
N Taylor and S Wormald.

Also present: Councillor S E Farncombe – Young Person’s Ambassador

(Councillors H M Richards, J M Sanger, K Sutton and C Troop were also in attendance but left the meeting at various points throughout its duration.)

(The meeting opened at 6.30pm.)

(The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and read out the Fire Evacuation Procedure. He also enquired as to whether any member of the public or press wished to film/record the meeting or any part thereof. Four members of the public were present and one indicated that he may take photographs if he was so minded; Councillor J Evans did not give her permission for her photograph to be taken.)

38. SYRIAN REFUGEES CRISIS

The Leader of the Council stated that all local authorities had been contacted by the Home Office with regard to asylum seeker dispersal, to which the Council is duty bound to comply. Much work is needed in response to recent Government policy announcements and, at a county level, the Council is engaging with other local authorities to see what will be required. The Council is also working with East Midlands Councils with regard to strategic migration. Bassetlaw may well receive some Syrian refugees but further clarification is needed with regard to numbers, although they are expected to be low for an authority the size of Bassetlaw. Information will be released to Members and the public when available. He assured everyone that the Council will do the right thing for those fleeing persecution.

39. QUESTION TIME - PUBLIC

Council Procedure Rules were suspended for fifteen minutes to allow questions from the public; there were four members of the public present and one question was asked:

From Wendy Quigley, speaking on behalf of RAG4E (Retford Action Group For Equality) asked if the decision to be taken tonight on the splash pool in Kings’ Park could be deferred as what is being proposed is different to that which was proposed at the consultation events.

The Leader of the Council replied that the report on tonight’s Agenda represents a significant investment in Kings’ Park and the Council has made a political commitment to this investment. There will be no deferment of the report. There has been a successful consultation period and many positive comments were received. There is no final design proposed at this stage and officers are still talking to interested parties, RAG4E included. This will continue, designs will be

finalised, people will be listened to. There was an overwhelming response for such a facility but its design and location is still to be finalised through the tender process. He was disappointed that certain individuals are decrying this positive investment which will be great for Kings' Park, the users of the Park and the people of Retford.

(Three of the four members of the public left the meeting left this meeting at this point.)

40. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

41. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

(a) Members

There were no Declarations of Interest by Members.

(b) Officers

There were no Declarations of Interest by officers.

42. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14TH JULY 2015

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 14th July 2015 be approved.

43. MINUTES FOR ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

RESOLVED that the Minutes for Action and Implementation be received.

44. OUTSTANDING MINUTES LIST

RESOLVED that the Outstanding Minutes List be received.

45. FORWARD PLAN

The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhood Services requested that an additional Key Decision be added to the Forward Plan for the 20th October 2015 meeting in respect of 'Airey Housing – Phase 4'. The Chief Executive also requested that an additional Key Decision be added to the Forward Plan for the 1st December 2015 meeting in respect of 'Devolution Arrangements'.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be received and that additional Key Decisions be added in respect of 'Airey Housing – Phase 4' and 'Devolution Arrangements' for consideration at the 20th October 2015 and 1st December 2015 Cabinet Meetings respectively.

SECTION A – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PUBLIC

Key Decisions

46. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – POLICY, STRATEGY AND COMMUNICATIONS – COUNCILLOR S A GREAVES

(a) Local Government Association Peer Review – Update (Key Decision No. 485)

Members were updated on progress regarding the recommendations from the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review that was completed in October 2014.

Some key messages from the Peer Review team were listed in the report. These led to recommendations, progress of which was detailed in the report.

The Leader reported that the trade unions are working with the Council on Job Evaluation.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

The Peer Review was concluded in October 2014 and much organisational development has taken place since then, not least the new intake of Members from the May 2015 elections. Bassetlaw is constantly appraising its actions and initiatives to maximise the benefit of the Council's resources to the local community.

As well as this culture change and the positive mental attitude that it engenders, the Council has made significant progress with the regeneration of the District, and has established its Transformation Board to prepare for the next big budget reduction exercise which will occur in 2017/18.

However, all the Council's plans are subject to change as the budget situation unfolds. The Council is achieving good levels of growth but the Ministerial decisions, such as the future of the New Homes Bonus and future National Non-Domestic Rates regimes, are vital in terms of providing the resources to underpin the Council's services which make a difference to local people. Councils no longer operate on the straightforward and stable platforms that they used to. The partnership working with the Place Board and the Bassetlaw Public and Third Sector Partnership seeks to complement the Council's work as the Authority has not got the capacity to do everything itself.

RESOLVED that:

1. The progress made on the Local Government Association Peer Review recommendations be noted.
2. Approval be given to release £34,200 from the Job Evaluation Reserve and £18,000 from the Council's 2015/16 Contingency Fund for the Job Evaluation process, as detailed in Paragraph 4(c) of the report.

(b) Quarter 1 Performance 2015/16 (Key Decision No. 509)

Members were presented with the Quarter 1 performance which provides an update on the delivery of the Corporate Plan and the performance of a suite of key performance indicators. The Performance Indicators and Action Exceptions reports were also appended to the report.

The Leader reported that the indicators and format are likely to change in the near future and the new-style report would be presented for Quarter 2.

Each Cabinet Member gave an update on what is going well and what requires additional investment/action within their respective Cabinet Area, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

A Liaison Member raised the issue of the provision of superfast broadband in the rural areas of the District, particularly within his Ward of Tuxford and Trent. The lack of such provision is of particular concern to those small businesses operating in rural locations. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhood Services explained that the guarantee of 95% coverage over a geographical area is for "passing by" and not necessarily access. Many discussions have taken place as this has also impacted on the CCTV coverage in such areas. Wi-fi broadband is being rolled out by the District Council, and despite requests to the County Council for this to be included in the Broadband Delivery UK work, it has not been possible to get agreement on this.

The Cabinet Member for Co-operatives and Corporate Services reported that one parish council within his Ward of Welbeck is using the income from a solar farm to bring broadband to the village.

A suggestion was made to invite relevant officers from Nottinghamshire County Council and also representatives of broadband providers to attend either Cabinet or the Rural Conference to explain the situation to Members and parish representatives.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

In presenting performance reports to Cabinet, it is ensured that portfolio holders take responsibility for delivery of the Corporate Plan 2014-17 and are committed to ensuring the Council is properly managing corporate performance.

RESOLVED that:

1. The contents of the Quarter 1 performance report are noted.
2. Action that is being taken to address areas of performance that are currently off target be deemed to be satisfactory.
3. Officers investigate the potential for relevant officers from Nottinghamshire County Council and also representatives of broadband providers to attend either a future meeting of Cabinet or the Rural Conference to explain the situation in respect of superfast broadband in rural areas to Members and parish representatives.

(c) Children and Young People's Objectives 2016-2019 (Key Decision No. 501)

Members' approval was sought to commence consultation on the development of a new Children and Young People's Plan for the period 2016-2019. Some key proposals were outlined in Appendix 1 of the report.

Councillor S E Farncombe, the Young Person's Ambassador was present and updated Members on progress on current key activities, namely:

- Young Person's Ambassador
- Safeguarding
- Bassetlaw Youth Council
- Worksop and Retford Junior Councils
- Local Democracy Week – 11th to 17th October 2015
- 'Together for Worksop'
- Big Lottery Talent Match

It was noted that assistance is still available for those young people in rural areas to participate in the Youth Council, and also that meetings of the Youth Council will alternate between Retford and Worksop Town Halls. The Worksop and Retford Junior Councils will also include schools in the rural areas.

The Head of Corporate Services added that the Chair of the Council has invited all primary schools to bring their pupils into the Town Halls for a tour and a mock election conducted by the Electoral Services Manager. If this is not viable, the Chair and the Electoral Services Manager will go to the school.

A Liaison Member suggested that contact could be made via the "family" of schools.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Option One - The Children and Young People's Plan for the Council takes account of future strategic priorities and the level of resource available, also recognising the reducing capacity available with the organisation. Seeking linkages with appropriate partners is therefore all the more important and the Plan will assist in that process.

Option Two – The Council has the opportunity to decide not to support the development of the Plan; however, it is in line with the Council's priorities.

RESOLVED that the revised Children and Young People's Plan be approved as the basis for consultation with the final proposals to be presented to Cabinet by March 2016.

(The Leader of the Council thanked Councillor S E Farncombe for her attendance and she left the meeting.)

(d) Proposed Equality Objectives (Key Decision No. 502)

Members' approval was sought to commence consultation on the proposed Equality Objectives for the Council for 2016-2020. The Equality Objectives for 2012-16, together with those proposed for 2016-2020, were appended to the report.

The Council has been liaising with the Bassetlaw Clinical Commissioning Group and the Bassetlaw Community Voluntary Services to develop a joint approach to equalities as the issues and challenges to individuals cut across a wide range of service providers. A joint approach has been developed through an 'Equalities Prospectus' for the District.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Cabinet can choose between supporting, not supporting or amending the proposed Objectives but has a statutory duty to produce and publish its Equality Objectives for the next four years. Given the Council's commitment to these issues within the Corporate Plan, it is proposed that the recommendations be supported.

RESOLVED that approval be given for the commencement of consultation on the proposed Equality Objectives for 2016-2020 and that the outcome be presented to a future meeting of Cabinet for approval of the Objectives.

47. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – FINANCE – COUNCILLOR J EVANS

(a) Budget Monitoring and Capital Programme Update Report to 30th June 2015 (Key Decision No. 505)

Members were updated on:

- The spending position for the period 1st April to 30th June 2015 for the Council's General Fund, Housing Revenue and Capital Programme, including any significant variances from the approved budgets.
- The proposed resourcing of the Capital Programme and the level of Council capital resources available, including capital receipts.
- Treasury Management budget issues.
- The regular quarterly update on performance against the approved Treasury Management Prudential Indicators for the period ending 30th June 2015.

Members' approval was sought for:

- New additions, variations and reprofiling to the existing Capital Programme.
- An increase to the Council's approved Money Market Funds deposit limit.
- To write off uncollectable debts that individually exceeds £25,000.

The report is for the first quarter of the year and current indications are that there will be a budget underspend of (£0.05m) in year for the General Fund and an underspend of (£0.012m) in year for the Housing Revenue Account. However, it is important to note that the report only highlights a problem that may or may not arise, and draws to both officers' and Members' attention that these need to be closely monitored throughout the year.

The continual pressures on local government finances have led to yet another challenging budget for 2015/16. A total of £1.459m was removed from the 2014/15 base budget to produce the 2015/16 budget. The financial management of these budgets by spending officers is crucial. The report is just one element of the robust monthly budget monitoring process that the Council operates. Spending officers are pivotal in this process and are required to recognise and address the financial pressures currently facing the Council and ensure, where possible, that they do not overspend their respective budgets. They will need to put in place actions to address any pressures identified. The financial equation is simple – any overspends in the current year will increase the savings target for all services in future years if the Council is to survive the cuts to public sector funding that the Government is implementing.

The Chief Executive commented that half of the underspent amount is due to the work of the Head of Finance and Property/Section 151 Officer, particularly in respect of the Audit Fee and leisure centre fuel costs.

A Liaison Member enquired as to how the Community Infrastructure Levy receipts are being monitored/managed, and the Head of Regeneration advised that there is currently a part-time officer undertaking this role; however, a job description for a more substantial role is currently being developed.

A Liaison Member asked what is the aggregated return on the money in the Icelandic banks, and the Head of Finance and Property replied that this will probably be 94%; the Council is currently short of £500,000 and dividends are still being received.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

The budget monitoring section of the report provides managers' forecasts and is for information only. There are always some risks that the actual outturn variance could be substantially different from that currently shown (mainly due to the volatility of income) but the report sets out officers' projections and, as such, the financial risks that may occur by 31st March 2016.

The Council has responsibility for delivering its Capital programme on time and not doing so could undermine the achievement of its objectives. The bi-monthly capital monitoring meeting will continue into the future.

There may be changes to the way the Capital Programme is financed as officers review the most appropriate methodology as part of the closedown process for 2015/16.

RESOLVED that:

1. The position with regard to revenue and capital budget monitoring be noted.
2. The 'new approvals funded from capital receipts' to the 2015/16 Capital programme totalling £0.307m, as detailed in Paragraph 3.18 and Appendix 3 of the report, be approved.

3. The 'other variations' to the 2015/16 Capital Programme totalling £1.934m, as detailed in Paragraph 3.18 and Appendix 3 of the report, be approved.
4. The 'reprofiling' to the 2015/16 Capital Programme totalling (£0.580m), as detailed in Paragraph 3.18 and Appendix 3 of the report, be approved.
5. The proposed resourcing of the Capital Programme and the level of the capital receipts currently available to fund any further capital expenditure, as detailed in Paragraphs 3.22 to 3.24 of the report, be noted.
6. The quarterly update on performance against the approved Treasury Management Prudential Indicators for the period ending 30th June 2015 be noted.
7. The weekly investment balances made throughout the first quarter of the financial year be noted in conjunction with the Security, Liquidity and Yield benchmarking data for the Council, as detailed in Appendix 7 of the report.
8. The increase in the monetary limit set on Money Market Funds be approved from £3m to £4m, and this decision be referred to full Council on 24th September 2015 for approval.
9. The single case of uncollectable debt of £27,267.20 in respect of Aurora be approved for write-off.

(b) Business Rates Pooling 2013-2015 (Key Decision No. 524)

Members were informed of the final outturn position on the Nottinghamshire Business Rate Pool as at 31st March 2015 and the proposed distribution of the Pool surplus. Copies of reports from the City of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee held on 24th July 2015 and the Nottinghamshire Finance Officers Association held on 19th June 2015 were appended to the report.

From 1st April 2013, all of the seven Nottinghamshire District Councils joined forces with Nottinghamshire County Council to form a Business Rates Pool. This approach has enabled a greater level of financial resources to be retained within Nottinghamshire as any levy paid on business rate growth is retained locally for economic growth or distribution back to partner authorities. Another benefit from joining the Pool is the assurance against the volatility of business rates. Bassetlaw is due to receive a one-off payment of £0.403m during this financial year which will be utilised to fund ongoing budget pressures.

The Head of Finance and Property explained the benefits of the Pool arrangements and also how 49% of Bassetlaw's business rate income is receivable from only ten hereditaments, and this includes four power stations. Further information was given on: the current appeals by the power stations; property inspections and valuations; the work of the Growth Team to encourage more businesses into the area; and possible future options for redundant energy sites.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

The report is for information only and provides Members with an update on the current position of the Nottinghamshire Business Rate Pool.

Under the Memorandum of Understanding, the Pool is designed to encourage economic growth, and this approach promotes this objective.

RESOLVED that:

1. The outturn for the Nottinghamshire Business Rates Pool for the years 2013/14 and 2014/15 be noted.
2. The decision of the City of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee to retain the entire Pool surplus generated in 2013/14 for use by the Combined Authority be ratified.
3. The decision of the City of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee to retain 50% of the Pool surplus generated in 2014/15 for use by the Combined Authority and distribute the other 50% to Pool members be ratified.

4. The approval of the distribution approach for future financial years be delegated to the Chief Executive.

48. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – NEIGHBOURHOODS – COUNCILLOR
J A LEIGH

(a) Amendment to the Housing Assistance Policy for Empty Homes (Key Decision No. 515)

Members' approval was sought to amend the policy on financial assistance in relation to bringing empty homes back into use.

The amount available for 2015/16 is £54,000, made up of £40,000 for 2015/16 and a £14,000 carry forward from the previous year. The intention was to use this money to provide discretionary repayable loans to owners of long-term empty properties requiring renovation works which owners intend to sell or let on completion of any works. Since 2012, 18 grants of assistance have been made.

A review of the scheme identified that there are areas of the policy that require changing to bring it in line with criteria for other discretionary grant/loan schemes. The amended policy was appended to the report and the key changes were outlined in the report.

None of the grants made to date have been above the revised ceiling of £12,000 so it is not anticipated that revising this amount would have a detrimental impact on the operation of the scheme. However, it is desirable to set such a ceiling to ensure as many properties as possible can benefit from a very finite amount of money.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Option One - To agree the amended Empty Homes Housing Assistance Policy and refer the Policy to full Council for formal approval.

Option Two – To not approve the amendments to the Empty Homes Housing Assistance Policy with the risk that the existing criteria will not enable the assistance to be administered in the most beneficial way going forward.

RESOLVED that the revised Empty Homes Housing Assistance Policy, as appended to the report, be approved and referred to full Council on 24th September 2015 for formal approval.

(b) Bassetlaw District Council's Contributions to Health and Wellbeing (Key Decision No. 516)

Members were updated on the Council's activities and contributions to the Health and Wellbeing agenda and briefed on the Health and Wellbeing Board. Key organisations involved in commissioning services locally and a summary of some key actions that already contribute to health improvement within the District were appended to the report.

The Health and Wellbeing Board participated in a Peer Review in Spring 2015. One of the findings was that the Board should focus its efforts on a reduced number of Health and Wellbeing strategic priorities, and finalise the delivery plan to ensure the Board can easily monitor and demonstrate its successes.

Members' approval was sought for the production and publication of a Health and Wellbeing Plan for the District and guidance for residents. However, it would seem appropriate to wait for the refined outcomes before finalising the Council's Bassetlaw Health and Wellbeing Plan to link with those priorities where the Council has a role. As the BDC Plan will directly support already identified objectives and is based upon ongoing work streams, it would not require further external consultation.

Members discussed smoking, obesity, cycle routes and workplace Health and Wellbeing. The Leader of the Council commented that the Council and A1 Housing already contribute significantly to the Health and Wellbeing of the District's residents.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

The production of a Bassetlaw Health and Wellbeing Plan is not a statutory requirement. However, the Authority has an active role within the Health and Wellbeing Board and on certain Integrated Commissioning Group that sit under the Board.

Option One – To continue as we are and not to identify where our actions contributed to the Health and Wellbeing of residents. There is a risk with this approach inasmuch as that there is not an explicit understanding of the linkages and that in the future opportunities could be missed because the Health and Wellbeing implications of certain actions are not considered.

Option Two – To draft an initial plan that enables the Authority to start to build Health and Wellbeing into existing and future work streams. Also to provide some information for publication to residents that identifies what contribution this Authority is making towards improving the Health and Wellbeing of local residents.

RESOLVED that:

1. The progress on the Council's activities and contributions to the Health and Wellbeing agenda to date be noted.
2. The arrangements in place for Bassetlaw District Council to be represented and participate in the Nottinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board be noted.
3. The production of a Health and Wellbeing Plan for the District be approved and a draft be brought back to a future meeting of Cabinet in February 2016 for approval.

(c) Development of Kings' Park, Retford (Key Decision No. 522)

Members were updated on progress to date on the Kings' Park developments and the options which are currently being explored.

Members' approval was sought for the overall funding identified for the water play facility and previously identified improvements to the bandstand/performance area within Kings' Park, and for the commencement of the full project and progression to inviting tenders, as detailed in the schedule appended to the report.

Members' approval was also sought for authority to be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods to agree and sign off the final designs for the projects, following further community engagement with key Members and interested parties.

The report highlighted some key areas that will need to be considered in relation to the water play facility before the final design and tendering process can be initiated, and some of these options were explained further by the Head of Neighbourhoods and discussed by Members, including:

- The style of the water play facility within the context of a Conservation Area;
- The operation of the proposed kiosk;
- The feasibility of a Changing Places facility; and
- The impact of development upon the Green Flag award.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

Option One – To continue with the project as identified within the report with ongoing consultation with local Ward Members and other interested parties prior to decisions being taken on the final design.

Option Two – To not carry on with either of the projects.

Option Three – To only complete one of the projects.

The provision of both the water splash facility and the performance area have both been agreed historically and consulted upon with the public. The project seeks to bring both of these aspirations to fruition. To carry them out together is cost-effective and will provide for the least impact on the use of the Park whilst improvements and developments are undertaken.

It is possible to provide both a water play facility and a performance area within the budgets identified. This would meet the needs of a far wider sector of the public than focussing all the resource on a water splash facility, as well as fulfilling previous obligations.

Having provided impressions of illustrative designs for the splash park facility at a recent consultation, there is a risk that the final design will be different and therefore not meet public expectation. To not complete one of the projects also carries a significant risk of adverse reaction as both have been previously agreed.

RESOLVED that:

1. The progress to date and the proposed project schedule be noted.
2. The identified funding arrangements for the water play facility and improvements to the performance area within Kings' Park be noted.
3. The commencement of the project, as outlined in the draft delivery plan appended to the report, including progression to the tender process, be approved.
4. Authority be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods to agree and sign off the final designs for the water play project, following engagement with key Members and interested parties.

49. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – REGENERATION – COUNCILLOR J WHITE

(a) Visitor Economy Strategy – Development Plan (Key Decision No. 457)

Members were updated on progress of the Visitor Economy Strategy and approval was sought for a Development Plan for the Strategy, which was detailed in the report.

The three main themes adopted under the Strategy are:

- An annual Festival of Stories
- Development of trails within the District
- Improving infrastructure

The Development Plan considers the operational and practicalities of sourcing suitably skilled writers, playwrights and performers to undertake the live performances as well as the logistical matters of setting up an area for staging, sound and light, etc.

A bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund will be developed and this will focus on the Bassetlaw Museum as a source of educational outreach. Provision of overnight accommodation is a

priority under the Strategy and a series of workshops will be developed to encourage local provision, including information on funding, planning issues, marketing and promotion. The martialling of volunteers will be offered out as a community tender for volunteer organisations, church groups and other community groups. Further event-driven activities will be developed to retain visitors later into the evening – for example ‘Illuminate’, an annual thanksgiving themed event.

Members discussed some of the proposals and made suggestions regarding:

- How American residents and visitors in Bassetlaw can be located and invited to participate.
- Co-ordination with other organisations for joint advertising of events.
- The involvement of the Council with the Compact to celebrate the Mayflower Pilgrims in 2020.
- Encourage American students in Bassetlaw’s twin town of Farmers Branch in Texas to get involved.
- Develop links with drama students at local universities, e.g. Nottingham Trent University.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

The options are clearly outlined in the Development Plan and each element of the festivals and trails are considered on a project plan basis with considered time lines given.

The risks identified are controllable inasmuch that the commissioning times have been considered and factored in, but there are risks in the contracting should cost over-runs occur or that there is a lack of suitably qualified and experienced artists, or that writers and performers do not bid for the work.

These risks can be mitigated by reducing the scale of the festival, delaying delivery of widening the contractual net to include national providers.

Part of the risk management process is to use 2015 as a pilot to ensure that active project learning and feedback is incorporated into the project development planning process.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approves the Development Plan for the Visitor Economy Strategy.

- (b) Commencement of the New Local Plan (including Publication of the Local Development Scheme and Statement of Community Involvement) (Key Decision No. 519)

Members’ approval was sought to:

- Commence the development of a new Local Plan for Bassetlaw.
- Publish the Local Development Scheme as the first formal stage in the development of the new Local Plan.
- Employ one FTE Planning Policy Officer (permanent post) and one FTE Planning Policy Officer (on a fixed term three-year contract) to support the delivery of the Local Plan.

The Local Development Scheme timetable was appended to the report.

The Head of Regeneration explained the rationale behind the New Local Plan and reported that the additional Planning Policy Officer posts would be funded from the Local Development Framework budget and not additional planning development income as stated in the report.

It was also noted that an officer/Member Local Plan discussion group has been established. This is a cross-party non-decision making group which will meet quarterly and on an ad-hoc

basis if there are more pressing matters to be tabled which are likely as the stages of the Plan progress.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

If approval is not given for the development of a new Local Plan, the Council will be unable to set an over-arching strategy for the future growth and development of Bassetlaw. The local authority will be unable to resist ad-hoc planning applications that will not necessarily be in the interest of the wider communities. Neither will the Council be able to drive focused regeneration or renewal of local areas in need of investment or conversely protect those areas of Bassetlaw where continued unconstrained growth will have a detrimental impact on their social and environmental quality.

If the Local Development Scheme is not brought into effect, the Council will not be able to meet the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and we will not be able to keep the public up-to-date on the intended timetable for the development of the Local Plan. Furthermore, the Local Plan cannot be progressed without the publication of this document, thereby leaving the Council in a position of no over-arching local strategy document. It is therefore recommended that its publication is supported.

If approval is not given for the appointment of a permanent Planning Policy Officer and a fixed-term Planning Policy Officer, the development of the new Local Plan, as outlined in the Local Development Scheme, will not be achieved. This will significantly extend the amount of time the Council will be without an up-to-date Development Plan, increasing the time the District will be vulnerable to unplanned developments.

Should approval for the two additional Planning Policy Officers not be granted then the overall cost to the Council will be greater over the forthcoming three years of Plan preparation.

RESOLVED that:

1. The process for the development of a New Local Plan for Bassetlaw be approved.
2. The publication of the Local Development Scheme be endorsed.
3. The intention to consult on an update to the Statement of Community Involvement be noted.
4. The establishment of the Local Plan Discussion Group be noted.
5. The appointment of one FTE Planning Policy Officer on a permanent basis and one FTE Planning Policy Officer on a fixed-term contract of three years, to be funded from the Local Development Framework budget, be approved.

(c) Sherwood Forest Regional Park (Key Decision No. 525)

Members were presented with proposals to establish a Sherwood Forest Regional Park and approval was sought for the objectives of this work.

IN 2008 the Sherwood Forest Regional Park Board was established to develop and co-ordinate shared ambitions for the Park. The current membership of the Board and agreed boundary for the Park were appended to the report, as was the overall Vision and Purpose for the Park, including key benefits and intended outcomes for the next ten years. The Park covers large parts of the geographical area of Bassetlaw, although at present the District Council is not represented on the Board.

The Leader of the Council commented that these proposals are welcomed and would bring many benefits to the District.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

At this stage there are no specific risks. The Council could resolve not to participate in this activity, although this would limit the Authority's ability to work collaboratively on a project with significant long-term potential benefits for the District. It is therefore considered appropriate for the Council to take a more formal role in the development of the Regional Park.

RESOLVED that the Vision and purpose to establish the Sherwood Forest Regional Park be endorsed, including the boundary area, and, in doing so, a formal request be made by Bassetlaw District Council to have a place on the Sherwood Forest Regional Park Board.

Other Decisions

50. REFERRAL(S)

None.

51. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – POLICY, STRATEGY AND COMMUNICATIONS – COUNCILLOR S A GREAVES

(a) Appointment of Honorary Aldermen

Members were presented with two requests for the appointment of Honorary Aldermen and approval was sought to recommend to full Council the consideration of these requests in accordance with the legal process for doing so, which was appended to the report.

The Leader of the Opposition Group added that ex-Councillor Jeff Rickells is the longest serving councillor in the country, having served continuously for 54 years. He has recently received a hand-written letter from David Cameron, Prime Minister, congratulating him on this.

The Leader of the Council felt that the Extraordinary Meeting of Council would best be held immediately prior to the Council AGM in May 2016.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

It is important for the public to recognise the significant time and personal commitments elected Members give to their communities. It is also important that elected Members feel valued for having made significant contributions to their communities. The appointment as an Honorary Alderman provides that opportunity.

RESOLVED that:

1. The proposal for ex-Councillor Griff Wynne to be appointed as Honorary Alderman be approved and ratification of the proposal and the conferring of the honour be undertaken at an Extraordinary Meeting of Council to be arranged.
2. The proposal for ex-Councillor Jeff Rickells to be appointed as Honorary Alderman be approved and ratification of the proposal and the conferring of the honour be undertaken at an Extraordinary Meeting of Council to be arranged.

52. REPORT(S) OF THE CABINET MEMBER – FINANCE – COUNCILLOR J EVANS

(a) Accounting Policies 2015/16

Members were informed of: the requirement for the Council to adopt the new International Financial Reporting Standard 13: Fair Value Measurement, when measuring its financial assets and liabilities for the 2015/16 financial year; and also of the requirement for the Council to adopt

the new measurement basis from CIPFA's Transport Infrastructure Assets Code of Practice for the Council's Highway Network Assets for the 2016/17 financial year.

Members' approval was sought for the adoption of the updated Accounting Policies as appended to the report.

Clarification was also given with regard to the accounting treatment of short-term debtors.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

This is a legal requirement and therefore to do nothing is not an option.

RESOLVED that the revised Accounting Policies for 2015/16, as appended to the report, be approved and referred to full Council on 24th September 2015 for adoption.

(b) Local Authority Mortgage Scheme – Annual Report 2014/15

Members were updated on the final position of the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme as at the end of the 2015/15 financial year.

The Council set up two schemes: a cash-backed scheme with Lloyds Bank and a non cash-backed scheme with Mansfield Building Society. Updates on both these schemes were given within the report, together with the charges to date with Capita Asset Services and a summary of advertising, which was only undertaken at the inception of both schemes. Capital Asset Services has informed all of the local estate agents of the Bassetlaw scheme but further advertising by the Council would be beneficial.

The Head of Finance and Property reported that there have been no defaults on the mortgages to date.

Options, Risks and Reasons for Recommendations

The scheme has already been implemented and therefore no other options exist.

There are a number of risks associated with the scheme, for example defaults, and the Council has given careful consideration to how to manage those risks and also mitigating controls have been put in place. A risk assessment outlining the key risks and potential mitigating controls was circulated as part of the approval process.

RESOLVED that:

1. The annual update on the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme be noted.
2. Approval be given for further advertising to be conducted by the Council's Communications Team, to increase the widespread knowledge of the scheme. The funding for this advertising to be sourced by the Head of Finance and Property.

53. REPORTING MINUTES

None.

SECTION B – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PRIVATE

Key Decisions

None.

Other Decisions

None.

54. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

As there was no other urgent business, the Chair closed the meeting.

(Meeting closed at 9.15pm.)