

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

27 July 2020

PRESENT: - Councillor Waltham MBE in the Chair.

Councillors Hannigan (vice-chair), Marper, Ogg, Poole, Reed, Rose and C Sherwood.

Councillors Ali, Bainbridge, Briggs, Clark, Ellerby, L Foster, Kirk, O'Sullivan, Southern, Wilson, Yeadon also attended the meeting.

Denise Hyde, Simon Green, Becky McIntyre, Helen Manderson, Karen Pavey, Penny Spring, Peter Thorpe, Will Bell, Richard Mell and Tanya Davies attended the meeting.

The meeting was a remote/virtual meeting through Microsoft Teams.

- 1373 **DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND PERSONAL OR PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS** – Councillor Ali declared a personal interest as a business owner in receipt of a grant from the Government (minute 1375 refers).
- 1374 **MINUTES - Resolved** - That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 15 June 2020 having been printed and circulated amongst the members, be taken as read and correctly recorded and be signed by the chair.
- 1375 **COVID19 FINANCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT** – The Director: Governance and Partnerships submitted a report which considered the impact to date of Covid-19 on the Council's in-year and medium term financial plans. The Covid-19 pandemic had required the Council to continue to adapt to meet the needs of people and place and actions taken at a national and local level had impacted on the Council's service delivery models. The medium term financial plan represented an amalgamation of financial and non-financial assumptions, which formed the basis of how much resource the Council expected to have available to invest in its priorities and to ensure it continued to meet local need well.

The report stated that since the COVID19 pandemic and the affect of lockdown nationally and locally over a prolonged period, the Council needed to consider how COVID-19 had impacted on the financial plans. Reflecting the unique nature of the pandemic, the Government had taken unprecedented steps to provide financial support to businesses and individuals through this period administered and supported by the Council. This included granting full business rate relief to retail, leisure, and hospitality properties, providing grant funding to hundreds of thousands of businesses as well as other measures. North Lincolnshire businesses had received £18m extra business rate relief and had been awarded £32m in business grants.

Local Government also received additional grant funding in acknowledgement of the unprecedented financial pressures facing the sector. North Lincolnshire Council had received £11.2m from the £3.7bn national allocation. There had also been sector

specific grants allocated, all of which were considered further in appendix 1 to the report.

Assumptions that supported the Council's medium term financial plans were being re-assessed continuously in light of the financial impact of the pandemic. A level of income was expected to be generated from council tax and business rates, which reflected the local economy pre-Covid. Likewise, the pandemic had enforced a change in service delivery models, which presented a variation on cost expected because of various factors, such as: lost income, increased need and therefore demand.

The Director in her report set out and explained the council's medium term financial plan in appendix 1 'Budget Review 2020/21: COVID19 Financial Impact Assessment'. A scenario analysis had been used to understand how funding levels might change with different assumptions to those that supported the medium term financial plan. However, it was too early in the financial year to draw meaningful conclusions. It was proposed that a fuller update be brought before Cabinet in September, which would incorporate:

- Data covering a longer period, allowing trends to be supported better and conclusions to be made with greater certainty;
- Any new relevant Government policies that had been announced over the summer;
- Economic updates that had been published and announced in the meantime by HM Treasury or the Office for Budget Responsibility, and
- Any other local intelligence that helped inform the council's understanding.

Resolved – (a) That Cabinet notes how the Council's financial plans are being impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, as set out in Appendix 1 of the Director's report; (b) that regular updates throughout the remainder of the financial year be reported to future meetings, and (c) that the Director and her finance team be thanked for their hard work and informative report.

1376 **COVID19 RECOVERY AND RENEW**- The Director: Governance and Partnerships submitted a report which requested Cabinet to approve the 'North Lincolnshire Council Reopen Plan' as set out in an appendix. The plan had been produced as part of the Council's recovery and renewal framework. In the context of COVID-19 'recovery' was an umbrella term used to describe the process of moving through a series of transitions and phases. The Council's approach to recovery and renewal was set in the context of the government's recovery strategy.

The report explained that the Council's response to the COVID-19 outbreak had been managed in accordance with Civil Contingencies Act and Humber Local Resilience Forum (LRF) governance arrangements and local business continuity planning frameworks, which included recovering from emergencies. As the response moved to recovery phase the council continued to work as part of the Humber LRF through the Humber Recovery Co-ordinating Group (RCG), which was led by the four Humber Chief Executives. To ensure multi-agency planning, co-ordination and implementation, the RCG also included Humberside Fire and Rescue, Humberside Police, NHS and representation from the Local Enterprise Partnership.

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The Council's approach was rooted in the values, principles and ambitions of the Council Plan and focused on three key priorities to ensure the Council remained resilient throughout the crisis and sustained through the recovery and renewal:-

- Keeping staff and the public safe and well;
- Protecting vulnerable people, and
- Keeping our communities resilient and local economy protected.

The Director in her report stated that working to the national guidance and the government's 'steps to recovery', a North Lincolnshire Council plan had been prepared and was set out in Appendix a to the report. Plans for restoring functions that had been suspended or operated differently such as registrar and land searches, had been implemented with consideration of new and innovative ways of doing this. The reopening of libraries, hubs and leisure centres were being implemented in the context of a renewal plan for hub development, building upon the community enablement that was a key attribute during the crisis response.

The Council, as an organisation needed to remain resilient and sustainable as it recovered from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in order to continue to meet the needs of residents and strategic ambitions. In this context the council was:

- Continuing the development and transformation of how the council operates as an agile organisation;
- In consultation, developing the right blend of home and office working, virtual governance and democratic decision making;
- Enhancing digital responses for the public and improving public engagement;
- Assessing the impact of Covid-19 on demand services and future service delivery models;
- Maintaining excellent working relationships with partners;
- Accelerating our ambitions for a greener more sustainable environment;
- Working with our regional partners to assess the economic impact of Covid-19, and
- Enhancing data, intelligence and needs assessment to better understand impact in to the future for our residents.

There were also opportunities that supported renewal through national schemes for rebuild and economic bounce back where capital investment could stimulate growth and local prosperity. However the local capacity to delivery would need to be re-assessed against the priorities of the council and ensuring critical services continued to protect the most vulnerable, who were more likely to be impacted on from the effects of the pandemic.

Resolved – That the Plan for reopening as part of the Covid-19 recovery and renew phase attached as an appendix to the report be approved and adopted.

1377 **LITTERING AND ENVIROCRIME ENFORCEMENT PILOT** – The Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director: Commercial submitted a report which set out proposals to commence a pilot with Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) to enforce a range of littering, dog fouling and enviro crime offences within North Lincolnshire. This would involve delegating enforcement powers to allow DMBC to carry out enforcement functions within the North Lincolnshire boundary. An associated revised scheme of consequence based fixed penalty tariffs was also proposed.

A communication strategy would be implemented prior to the pilot commencing to ensure residents, businesses and visitors to North Lincolnshire were aware of the positive benefits of the scheme and to promote pride in our communities, encourage residents' personal environmental responsibilities, and enforce the consequences of non-compliance.

The Deputy Chief Executive's report explained that a number of councils in the region currently engaged front line enforcement staff from the private sector either directly, or via a contractual arrangement with Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC). DMBC already operated the proposed service within their own geographical area and their contract had been procured to enable DMBC to deliver the service across other local authority areas. The private sector provider recruited and managed enforcement staff to undertake visible patrols and enforcement activity. DMBC staff processed the fixed penalty notices and follow up enforcement action through the single justice court system.

It was anticipated that the presence of high visibility enforcement would have a positive impact on levels of cleanliness across North Lincolnshire, and the service could be delivered on a cost neutral basis from fixed penalty notice revenue.

Resolved – (a) That the proposal to enter into a Service Level Agreement with Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) for the delivery of an enforcement pilot relating to littering, dog fouling and other high profile anti-social behaviour offences as set out in the report be approved; (b) that the Head of Waste, Fleet & Public Protection be authorised to complete negotiations with DMBC on the terms and duration of the Service Level Agreement (SLA); (c) that the necessary enforcement powers set out in Schedule 1 of the report be delegated to DMBC for the purposes, and duration, of the enforcement pilot as detailed in the SLA); (d) that the revised fixed penalty tariffs, detailed in both Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 of the report be approved; (e) that the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director: Commercial be authorised to revise the powers delegated to DMBC within the SLA and update tariffs for any new or revised powers during the period of the pilot subject to consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, and (f) that the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director: Commercial be authorised to approve a communication strategy in consultation with the Cabinet Member.

1378 **MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT 2019/20** – The Director: Governance and Partnerships and Director: Children and Community Resilience submitted a joint report presenting a statement setting out the steps that the Council had taken to prevent slavery or human trafficking within its business operations and supply chain. The statement

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appended to the report related to actions and activities undertaken during the financial year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

The Directors in their report explained that the Modern Slavery Act 2015 required commercial organisations to publish an annual modern slavery statement if the criteria below was met:

- is an incorporated or formed ‘body’ or a partnership;
- carries on a business, or part of a business, in the UK;
- supplies goods or services, and
- has an annual turnover of £36 million or more

Councils, as non-commercial organisations, were not required to produce annual statements but a number do so on a voluntary basis as part of their safeguarding and place leadership roles. It was anticipated that the production of a statement would at a future point become mandatory for councils through an amendment to existing legislation.

Recognising the Council’s safeguarding and place leadership role, with wider modern slavery responsibilities, a voluntary statement for the period 2019-20 had been produced to set out the actions and activities that the council had undertaken to help prevent slavery or human trafficking in its business activities and supply chain. The Council Plan set out its ambition, role, priorities, values and outcomes for North Lincolnshire, and included the priority of keeping people safe and well and the council’s role in prioritising the most vulnerable.

The report stated that during the period of the Statement eighty-eight contractors were awarded contracts with a value over £5,000. The council’s procurement processes robustly tested for modern slavery at tender evaluation stage in line with government guidelines. In addition suppliers had provided additional assurance on compliance as part of the council’s contract management requirements. Also the council’s workforce comprised around 3,000 employees and its human resources policies included recruitment processes which adhered to safe recruitment principles and standards. In addition the council has a comprehensive programme of training including safeguarding and modern slavery awareness, which were mandatory for all employees to complete.

Resolved – (a) That the publication of the modern slavery statement 2019-20 be approved, and (b) that steps to invite local organisations to promote their commitment to the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 be endorsed.