

THE "CALL IN" PERIOD FOR THIS SET OF MINUTES ENDS AT 12 NOON ON FRIDAY 13 DECEMBER, 2013. MINUTE NO's 75 (3) AND 81 (1) ARE NOT SUBJECT TO CALL - IN.

CABINET

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT ON THURSDAY 5TH DECEMBER, 2013

PRESENT: Councillor P. Dowd (in the Chair)
Councillors Cummins, Fairclough, Hardy, Maher,
Moncur and Tweed

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Ball, Blackburn, Crabtree, Dorgan,
Dutton, Jones, Keith, McGuire, Papworth and
Robertson.

67. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

68. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

69. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Decision Made:

That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 7 November 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

70. PUBLIC PETITIONS

The Chair reported that three public petitions had been submitted for consideration at the meeting in relation to Minute No. 71 below.

- (1) The Cabinet heard representations from Parish Councillor P. Gill of Aintree Village Parish Council on behalf of a deputation who had submitted a petition containing the signatures of 25 residents of the Borough, which stated:

"We the undersigned, request the opportunity to address the Cabinet on 5 December 2013 regarding Aintree Library.

- (2) The Cabinet heard representations from Mrs G. Bleasdale of the Aintree Action Group on behalf of a deputation who had submitted a petition containing the signatures of 25 residents of the Borough which stated:

“We the undersigned, request the opportunity for Aintree Action Group to address the Cabinet on 5 December 2013 regarding Aintree Library.

- (3) The Cabinet heard representations from Mr G.Winckles of the Friends of Carnegie Library on behalf of a deputation who had submitted a petition containing the signatures of 28 residents of the Borough which stated:

“We the undersigned request that a spokesperson on our behalf be allowed to address the Cabinet on 5 December 2013 concerning the Carnegie Library.

All of the Lead Petitioners expressed concern during their representations, about the outcome of the officer assessment of their proposals under the second gateway process and requested the Cabinet to reject the officer recommendations in the report to be considered under Minute No. 71 below and approve the proposals submitted by the Aintree Library Action Group and the Friends of Carnegie Library.

Decision Made:

That the petitions be noted and taken into account during the consideration of the report submitted under Minute No. 71 below.

Reasons for Decision:

To enable the representations made by the petitioners to be taken into account during the consideration of the report by the Director of Older People.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None

**71. LIBRARY REVIEW - ALTERNATIVE LIBRARY PROPOSALS:
SECOND GATEWAY ASSESSMENTS**

Further to the representations made under Minute No. 70 above and Minute No. 22 of the meeting held on 18 July 2013, the Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Older People which provided details of the second gateway assessments undertaken by Officers on the Community Library proposals submitted by the Aintree Library Action Group (ALAG), Bridge Inn Community Farm and the Friends of Carnegie Library (FOCAL). The report identified the process of assessment together with the advantages and disadvantages associated with each proposal for consideration by the Cabinet.

The report also indicated that the proposal submitted by the Consortium led by Sefton Council for Voluntary Service in respect of Birkdale Library

had been withdrawn by the Consortium as they were considering a number of alternatives; and that no other interested parties had come forward in the timescale set by the Council for the receipt of Community Library proposals.

The Chair referred to the advice previously given to community groups who wish to run library services in locations where closure had previously been agreed by the Council, that the proposals had to be feasible and sustainable, meaning that the proposals would not have recourse to funds from the Council in the medium and long term.

The Head of Health and Wellbeing advised that officers had applied the approved assessment criteria to the proposals submitted by the three community groups and the assessments set out in the report were based on all the information supplied by the groups. He indicated that there was a typographical in the table in paragraph 3.4 of the report and that the total score for FOCAL should read '360' and not '365'. He also indicated that an expression of interest had been received since the publication of the report from the Friends of Birkdale Library but the expiry date for the submission of proposals had expired.

The Head of Health and Wellbeing referred to the basis of each proposal and the advantages and disadvantages of each proposal, set out in the report. He indicated that one of the key concerns with the proposals submitted by ALAG and FOCAL was the financial sustainability of the proposals over the long term. In particular the reliance upon an annual revenue grant from Aintree Parish Council that could not be guaranteed as an on-going commitment for the ALAG proposal. He went on to state that the proposal from FOCAL could not demonstrate financial sustainability, and in order to succeed both proposals required capital investment from the Council. He also indicated that during the period from 13 March to 26 November 2013, officers had held 20 meetings with various community groups, dealt with a large volume of email correspondence and telephone calls. He also indicated that numerous meetings had taken place with trade union representatives and staff on the community library proposals, and the whole process of acting upon the Councils budget decision to close 7 of its libraries, which demonstrated that officers had been actively engaged with the whole the process.

The Chair commented that the various officers on the assessment panel had acted in a professional manner during the process and they had examined each proposal in an objective manner. This had been the first time that the Council had actively sought community proposals for the operation of services following a decision taken by the full Council to close the operation of part of a service.

Members of the Cabinet raised questions on the following issues referred to in the report and officers responded to the Issues as indicated below:

Councillor Moncur enquired about the assessment challenge undertaken by the Chief Executive.

Response:

The Chief Executive indicated that she was conscious that the assessment scores for the proposals submitted by ALAG and FOCAL were close to the required benchmark to progress beyond the second gateway and she had had challenged the scores and rationale applied by the Officer Assessment Panel over a half day meeting and she was comfortable and satisfied with the scope of the assessments and that they had been assessed in an objective manner.

The Chair (Councillor P. Dowd) referred to the capital investment required from the Council for the ALAG and FOCAL proposals and whether this would be feasible.

Response:

The Head of Corporate Commissioning and Neighbourhood Coordination advised that she held open discussions with representatives of the two community groups on the possibility of financial support being awarded to them from the Community Support Fund (CSF), in advance of the conclusion of the officer assessment of their proposals and that no guarantee had been given of any funding from the CSF. No decision could be made on any possible funding from the CSF until the proposals had passed the second gateway.

Councillor Cummins expressed his disappointment that the proposals submitted by ALAG and FOCAL had not passed the officer second gateway assessment and commented that the Cabinet had to make a decision based on the validity and sustainability of the bids. The CSF had been established by the Council to support community initiatives which could be delivered over the long term.

Councillor Hardy referred to the comments made by the Lead Petitioners under Minute No. 70 above, that the assessment process was not clear and had not been explained to them. She sought an assurance that that it had been a clear and robust process.

Response:

The Head of Health and Wellbeing indicated that there had been a delay in the adoption of the assessment criteria but once it had been approved by the Cabinet Member – Children, Schools, Families and Leisure; the details had been published on the Council website and submitted to interested parties. The criteria had been discussed with all of the community groups who had submitted proposals and they had been advised that they must be feasible and sustainable.

Councillor Moncur commented that he was fully aware of the time and effort put into the submission of the proposals by ALAG and FOCAL and it was evident from the comments made by the Lead Petitioners that they were frustrated and disappointed at the outcome of the officer assessments. He indicated that he had personally met representatives from FOCAL on 7 October 2013 and they had not indicated any concerns about the assessment process or any lack of understanding of the process.

He referred to the officer comments in the report about the reliance of ALAG on an annual revenue grant from Aintree Village Parish Council which would be subject to annual review and indicated that the same Parish Council had passed a resolution in April 2011 that it would not fund any initiatives involving Sefton Council or other public bodies, which illustrated the point that funding bodies can change decisions at a later date and there is no guarantee that ALAG can support their proposal in the long term, as indicated in the report.

The Chair in his summary of the discussions, referred once again to the need for the proposals to be feasible and sustainable over the medium to long term, the support and guidance given by officers to community groups during 20 meetings, to the professional and objective assessment of the proposals by officers and the assessment challenge by the Chief Executive.

Decision Made:

That:

- (1) it be noted, that following the scoring assessment undertaken by officers based on the approved assessment criteria, the proposals from Aintree Library Action Group and Friends of Carnegie Library had failed the second gateway and the proposal from Bridge Inn Community Farm had passed the required standard;
- (2) it be noted that officers have sought additional information and clarification from the two Groups where the assessment was below the required score and this had not resulted in any change to the assessment;
- (3) following the consideration of the officer assessment, it be accepted that the proposals submitted by the Aintree Library Action Group and Friends of Carnegie Library had failed the second gateway and are therefore not approved; and that the proposal submitted by the Bridge Inn Community Farm had passed the second gateway and officers be authorised to enter into formal contractual discussions; and
- (4) the Community Groups be thanked for all of their efforts in putting together the Community Library proposals, and for making themselves available to meet with Officers of the Council.

Reasons for Decision:

Following the consideration of the officer assessment, the Cabinet had determined that two proposals had failed the second gateway and one had passed the second gateway.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The Council had previously approved the library closure implementation plan and this was ongoing. The only options to be considered were whether or not the proposals submitted met the approved criteria.

72. EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL TOWN CENTRES AND ECONOMIES WORKING GROUP FINAL REPORT

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Corporate Services which indicated that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) had established the Employment Development and Development of Local Town Centres and Economies Working Group to undertake a review on issues surrounding employment development within the Borough.

The recommendations of the Working Group were set out in the report and the Chair of the Working Group, Councillor McKinley outlined the key conclusions and recommendations of the scrutiny review and responded to questions from Members of the Cabinet. He also indicated that a further report by the Working Group on the development of local Town Centres and economies would be submitted to the Cabinet prior to the end of the current Council Year 2013/14.

Decision Made:

That:

- (1) it be noted that the Employment Development and Development of Local Town Centres and Economies Working Group actively supports and confirms the value of the proposed Member Reference Group for Jobs and Prosperity and requests that update reports on the work of the Member Reference Group are submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services);
- (2) it be noted that the Employment Development and Development of Local Town Centres and Economies Working Group welcomes a holistic, authority-wide high-level strategy/policy that enables all Council assets to be organised in an effective way to contribute to regeneration and reduce the potential for 'silo working', thereby identifying regeneration as a cross-cutting theme across all Council activity, and requests the Director of Built Environment to bring forward a Place-Based Regeneration policy for members to consider;
- (3) Further to (2) above, the Director of Built Environment and the Director of Corporate Services be requested to develop a Social Value Policy, underpinning the exercise of all the Council's powers including procurement, regulation and employment which would

authorise specific obligations to be placed on providers relating to local jobs, skills and supply, and work toward publishing a set of ethical business statements that demonstrate the Council's commitment;

- (4) the Director of Built Environment be requested to include a high-level employment, skills and local supply objective within the Local Plan to provide justification for specific conditions and policies relating to the maximisation of local benefit from proposals for development and change of use;
- (5) the Director of Built Environment be requested to undertake a detailed investigation (with external expert assistance as necessary) on how to embed detailed obligations and operational targets and compliance regimes, proportional to the task, within planning consents and development agreements;
- (6) the Director of Built Environment be requested to work through the Sefton Employment and Skills Partners Group to align all partners' employer engagement to ensure that all businesses across the Borough are given comparable opportunities to achieve our shared Employment, Education and Training objectives;
- (7) That the Council, a representative of Hugh Baird College, Southport College and other Further Education providers within the Borough be invited to update the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) annually on the progress of their proactive work in reducing NEETs in the Borough, including the use of all available evidence to identify NEET hotspots, preparation of intervention targets to reduce numbers in these areas, together with agreed robust systems for monitoring and evaluating the impact of joint interventions; and progress with other prevention/diversion measures including studio schools;
- (8) the Sefton Employment and Skills Partners Group be invited to develop a holistic approach to the education, training and employment needs of young people in transition from school to work, and bring forward a strategy and plan for tackling youth disengagement and long-term youth unemployment;
- (9) the Director of Older People, in consultation with the Director of Built Environment, be requested to advise the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) how Adult Community Learning can help to extend Digital Inclusion to hard-to-reach groups and to maximising opportunities for individuals to be trained up, ready for employment;
- (10) the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT be requested to develop an integrated Strategy for Digital Inclusion;

- (11) it be noted that the Employment Development and Development of Local Town Centres and Economies Working Group recognises the excellent work already being undertaken by the “Family Comes First” Team in Sefton and that an annual report be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) to provide an update on the Team’s progress in supporting Sefton’s families;
- (12) the Sefton Employment and Skills Partners Group be requested to maximise employment opportunities in relation to future and emerging growth sectors such as the SuperPort, Visitor Economy, Knowledge Economy and Low Carbon Economy;
- (13) the Liverpool City Region, Local Enterprise Partnership be requested to customise its employment and skill forecasts to match Sefton’s specific needs and to inform the work of the Sefton Employment and Skills partners;
- (14) it be noted that the Employment Development and Development of Local Town Centres and Economies Working Group commends the excellent work undertaken by Sefton@Work and InvestSefton in attracting new business to Sefton, supporting existing businesses already operating in Sefton and the day-to-day guidance, support and advice available to the residents of Sefton;
- (15) the Director of Built Environment be requested to submit a six-monthly Performance Monitoring report to the Overview and Scrutiny (Regeneration and Environmental Services) Committee, reporting progress made against each of the recommendations set out in the report;
- (16) the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Tourism be requested to develop an action/implementation plan for each of the agreed recommendations, including timescales and milestones for completion; and
- (17) the Head of Corporate Commissioning and Neighbourhood Co-ordination be requested to submit six monthly monitoring reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Performance and Corporate Services) and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Environmental Services) in relation to the impact on Sefton’s Community of the Welfare Reform.

Reasons for Decision:

To enable the implementation of the recommendations set out in the detailed report produced by the Employment Development and Development of Local Town Centres and Economies Working Group.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None

**73. EXTENSION OF PUBLIC HEALTH CONTRACTS AND
PROCUREMENT OF INFECTION CONTROL SERVICE**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Public Health on proposals for the extension of existing Public Health Contracts and for the procurement of the Infection Control Service.

Decision Made:

That:

- (1) approval be given to the waiving of the Contracts Procedure Rules and to the 6 month extension of the Smoking Cessation contract to enable the review to be completed;
- (2) approval be given to the waiving of the Contracts Procedure Rules and to the 12 month extension of the BreastStart Contract to enable the review to be completed;
- (3) approval be given to the waiving of the Contracts Procedure Rules and to the 12 month extension of the NHS Health Check Contracts and the Nicotine Replacement Treatment /varenicline medication to enable the review and procurement process to be completed;
- (4) approval be given to the waiving of the Contracts Procedure Rules and to the three month extension of the Infection Control Contract to enable the procurement process to be completed and the implementation of the revised specification;
- (5) the Director of Public Health be authorised to conduct OJEU Open Procedure tender exercises for the new contract for the Infection Control Service to run for a period of three years, with the option of two further one-year extensions for each service;
- (6) the basis of evaluation of the tenders for the Infection Control Service as set out in the report, be approved;
- (7) the Director of Public Health be authorised to accept the highest scoring tender for the Infection Control Service in accordance with the approved basis of evaluation and to report on the outcome to the Cabinet Member for Older People and Health; and
- (8) the Director of Public Health be given delegated authority to award the Infection Control Service contract on completion of the tender process.

Reasons for Decision:

To enable the existing Public Health Contracts to be reviewed and the procurement of a Infection Control Service.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Public Health officers are reviewing the options for the public health contracts at the current time with legal, procurement and senior officers working to ensure that the extension times have been reduced at much as possible to avoid unsettling providers and service users.

74. WELFARE REFORM UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 27 of the meeting held on 18 July 2013, the Cabinet considered the report of the Welfare Reform Member Reference Group which provided an update on the impact of the implementation of Welfare Reform legislation so far; work that partners and the Council are doing collectively around the mitigation of impact where possible; and the preparatory work for further Welfare Reform legislation impacts.

Decision Made:

That:

- (1) the continuing energy and commitment from partners and within the Council to mitigate the impact wherever possible be noted and encouraged;
- (2) the considerable progress made to date on key Partnership Action Plan themes as set out in Section 2 of the report be noted;
- (3) the update on the Emergency Limited Assistance Scheme (ELAS) as set out in Section 2 of the report be noted;
- (4) the emerging issues and proposed mitigation measures be noted and endorsed; and
- (5) the Cabinet extended its thanks and deep appreciation of the sterling work and commitment of volunteers across the Borough delivering support to those in need.

Reasons for Decision:

To ensure that the Council is fully aware of the emerging impact of Welfare Reform, enable the Council to focus efforts and capacity in the most appropriate ways to try and mitigate the impact of Welfare Reform wherever possible; and to put into place any mitigating actions if possible and work with partners to do so.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The mitigation measures had been developed in partnership with key organisations such as JobCentre Plus, Citizens Advice Bureau, One Vision Housing and the voluntary, community and faith sector. Various options had been discussed and suggested at the vibrant and well attended partner workshops as well as an internal workshop. All of these had been considered for deliverability and viability. The options put forward are those that are considered to have a practical and realistic outcome.

75. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2014/2015, CHANGE TO COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNT FOR UNOCCUPIED PROPERTIES FROM 1ST APRIL 2014 AND UPDATING THE COUNCIL TAX BASE 2014/15

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT which provided an update on the review of the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme and options on whether the scheme should be revised or replaced with another scheme for 2014/15; details of a revised scheme which updates the applicable amounts and personal allowances for non-pensioner claimants; details of the Council Tax technical change discount for unoccupied properties from 1 April 2014; and the proposed updated Council Tax Base for both Sefton Council and for each Parish Area for 2014/15.

The report contained the following annexes:

Annex A: Sefton MBC Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2014/15

Annex B: Council Tax Base Report 2014/15

Decision Made:

That:

- (1) the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT be authorised to publish and consult upon the draft revised Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2014/15, as set out in Annex A of the report, and to submit a report the outcome of the consultation exercise to the Cabinet meeting on 16 January 2014;
- (2) the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT be authorised to consider any minor changes in legislation/guidance in relation to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2014/15, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member – Performance and Corporate Services, and that any significant changes in such legislation/guidance and any further recommendations be reported to the Cabinet meeting on 16 January 2014;

- (3) the Council be recommended to approve:
- (i) the change to the discount for empty and unoccupied properties to take effect from 1 April 2014 as set out in paragraph 4 of the report;
 - (ii) a budget of £150,000 for exceptional hardship payments in 2014/15.
 - (iii) the Tax Base for Sefton Council and for each Parish Area for 2014/15 as set out in Annex B of the report; and
 - (iv) the payment of grants to the parish councils in 2014/15 to compensate them for the cost of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme as set out in Annex B of the report.

Reasons for Decision:

Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme

By law each financial year, the Council must consider whether to revise or replace its Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme. Any revision must be made by 31 January in the preceding financial year to that which it is to take effect.

The 2013/14 local scheme has only been in operation since April 2013 and the objectives of the scheme and its impact continue to be monitored and evaluated. Any decision to revise or replace the scheme would require compliance with statutory provisions in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 2012 (Chapter 17, Schedule 4).

Each year state benefits for working age people are increased by the Government. These increases, because they would result in a higher income for anyone receiving benefits, would subsequently result in a reduction in the amount of means-tested council tax reduction received unless the applicable amounts and personal allowances are also increased. This increase is referred to as uprating and a small revision is required to the existing scheme from 2014/15 and the Council is required by law to publish and consult on this proposed change.

The proposed revisions to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme ensure that those householders on the lowest incomes are not adversely affected by the Government annual uprating of state benefits.

Change to Council Tax Discount for Empty Property

The Council at its meeting held on 28 February 2013 agreed a budget proposal for 2014/15 which requires a change to council tax charges for vacant properties (unoccupied and substantially unfurnished) from the 1 April 2014.

Council Tax Base

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 1992, as amended, the Council is required to set a tax base for both Sefton and for each Parish Area for 2014/15. This can only be achieved once the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and change to council tax discount for vacant properties had been approved.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not to revise the 2013/14 Council Tax Reduction Scheme in line with Department for Work and Pensions annual uprating for state benefits, applicable amounts and personal allowances. This would mean non-pensioner claimants would see a reduction in the amount of means-tested council tax reduction and it would not match the applicable amounts and personal allowances for Housing Benefit calculation.

76. 2013/14 BUDGET UPDATE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Finance and ICT which provided an update of the progress in achievement of the approved savings for 2013 - 2015, and other risks within the 2013/14 budget; and a forecast of the collection rates for Council Tax and Business Rates in 2013/14.

Decision Made:

That:

- (1) the progress to date on the achievement of the approved savings for 2013-2015 be noted;
- (2) it be noted that earmarked reserves would be utilised in 2013/14 should other savings not be achieved, elsewhere in the budget, to bridge the current budget gap;
- (3) the wider budget pressures being experienced in the remainder of the Budget be noted;
- (4) the forecast position on collection rates of Council Tax and Business Rates be noted; and
- (5) approval be given to the delegation of a further £200,000 of the Social Fund, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Children, Schools, Families and Leisure, Cabinet Member - Older People and Health and Cabinet Member - Communities & Environment, to support initiatives enabling resilience and capacity in our communities in the context of the impact of Welfare Reform.

Reasons for Decision:

To ensure that the Cabinet are informed of the latest position on the achievement of savings for the current financial year and to facilitate the achievement of the savings targets for 2014/15; to identify wider budget pressures being experienced elsewhere in the Budget; and to provide an update on the forecast outturn position on collection of Council Tax and Business Rates.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None

77. REVENUE BUDGET 2014/15 AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2015/16 AND 2016/17

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT which provided an update on the latest forecast position on the Revenue Budget for 2014/2015; the latest assumptions contained in the Medium Term Financial Plan 2015/2016 - 2016/2017 and the potential budget gaps for this period.

The Head of Corporate Finance and ICT commented that any changes to the forecast position on the Revenue Budget, arising from the Chancellor of the Exchequers Autumn Statement to be published later that day would be reported to the next meeting of the Cabinet on 16 January 2014.

The Chief Executive indicated that the Council would be faced with some difficult budget saving decisions to make in due course, as it was currently predicted that further savings totalling £54.8m, would have to be agreed for 2015 – 2017 from the Council's controllable budget of £188m.

Decision Made:

That:

- (1) the latest position with regard to the Revenue Budget for 2014/2015 be noted;
- (2) the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) projected assumptions set out in the report be approved;
- (3) it be noted that the potential budget shortfalls within the MTFP are as follows: -

	£m
2015/2016	32.4
2016/2017	<u>22.4</u>
Total	54.8

- (4) the proposed timetable for approving the 2014/2015 Revenue Budget and setting the Council Tax as outlined in section 6 of the report be approved.

Reasons for Decision:

To ensure that the Cabinet was fully aware of the latest Revenue Budget position for 2014/2015 so that early decisions can be made to enable the Council to agree a balanced budget for 2014/2015 and the level of Council Tax before the statutory date of 10 March 2014; and the latest MTFP position so that early decisions can be made to enable the Council to achieve a sustainable financial position.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None

78. THE REECH PROJECT (RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCIES IN HOUSING) - INTERIM CHANGES

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Built Environment on proposals to utilise the use of uncommitted European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) grant funding held by the Helena Partnership for the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiencies in Housing (REECH) Project

Decision Made:

That the use of £1,145,964 of uncommitted ERDF grant by Helena Partnership towards their REECH Phase 3 scheme as set out in the report be endorsed.

Reasons for Decision:

To enable the continued delivery of the REECH Project.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None

79. SOUTHPORT BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Further to Minute No. 101 of the meeting held on 31 January 2013, the Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Built Environment on the proposed Southport Business Improvement District (BID) Manifesto and the action to be taken by the Council on the BID proposals.

The Chair reported that the Southport Area Committee at its meeting held on 4 November 2013 (Minute No. 43) had received a verbal update on the BID Proposals and resolved that the Cabinet be advised that the Southport Area Committee fully supports the proposals for the Southport Business Improvement District.

Decision Made:

That:

- (1) the resolution of the Southport Area Committee be noted;
- (2) the proposals for the Southport Business Improvement District (BID) as set out in the Manifesto (Year 1) be approved;
- (3) approval be given to voting yes in the proposed ballot to create a BID and the Director of Built Environment be authorised to submit a positive vote on behalf of the Council;
- (4) the Chief Executive be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Section 151 Officer, to sign the BID Baseline Agreement in principle on behalf of the Council;
- (5) the Head of Corporate Legal Services be authorised to complete the necessary formal agreements required for the collection of the BID Levy, if a Yes vote is achieved; and
- (6) as the relevant ballot holder, the Electoral Reform Services be authorised to hold the BID ballot.

Reasons for Decision:

To allow the BID ballot to commence and then thereafter, subject to a Yes vote, for the BID company to be established.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None of equivalent value

80. THE ATKINSON - PROCUREMENT PROPOSALS FOR THE FIT OUT OF THE MUSEUM GALLERIES

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Built Environment on the proposed procurement strategy for the appointment of a specialist museum gallery fit out company to design and manage the installation of the fit out of the galleries at The Atkinson, subject to a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Decision Made:

That:

- (1) the Director of Built Environment be authorised to conduct an OJEU Open Procedure tender exercise to appoint a specialist consultant for the fitting out of the Museum Galleries at The Atkinson;

- (2) the basis of the evaluation of the tenders, as set out in paragraphs 2.2 to 2.4 of the report be approved;
- (3) the Director of Built Environment be authorised to accept the highest scoring tender in accordance with the approved basis of evaluation and to submit a report on the outcome to the Cabinet Member for Children, Schools, Families and Leisure;
- (4) the Cabinet Member for Children, Schools, Families and Leisure be authorised to accept the Target Price for the Installation

Reasons for Decision:

To enable the procurement of the appropriate company to design and manage the installation in the Museum galleries. The tender exercise would be required to follow an OJEU Part A Open Procedure. As part of this process, approval was needed for Chief Officer delegated authority to award the contract for the design and establishment of a target cost for the project and for Cabinet Member authority for the delivery of the installation.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

An alternative approach would be to engage a consultant to complete the detailed design. This would then be tendered and a separate contract awarded for the fit out and installation.

Whilst there was some merit in this process, it would add to the timescale involved through the need for two separate tendering processes and necessary approvals. Also it was clear from discussions with museum and gallery directors, that most specialist museum fit out contractors take responsibility for the design process and therefore it was unlikely that a separate tendering process would realise best value.

81. STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Built Environment on proposals for the adoption of a revised Strategic Asset Management Plan.

Decision Made:

That:

- (1) the Council be recommended to adopt the new Strategic Asset Management Plan as set out in Appendix A of the report; and
- (2) it be noted that a further report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet in relation to the adoption of a formal Asset Disposal Policy.

Reasons for Decision:

While there is no statutory requirement to adopt a Strategic Asset Management Plan, it is good practice to do so. This Plan would guide decision making on the sale or retention of assets and it was envisaged that a report seeking approval to the Councils Asset Disposal Policy would be presented to a future Cabinet meeting.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

It is best practice to operate and manage property assets using a formal asset management plan. The Council could choose to select property for disposal using other criteria.

82. THE MERSEY FOREST PLAN

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Built Environment on the revised Mersey Forest Plan, which provided the long term vision for the delivery of work of the Mersey Forest Team and the partnership comprising of seven local authorities, Natural England, the Forestry Commission, and the Environment Agency, as well as other public, private and community sector organisations.

Decision Made:

That the Mersey Forest Plan be approved as Council policy.

Reasons for Decision:

The Council is one of the seven Local Authority Partners who are required to approve the revised Mersey Forest Plan.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

No, the Mersey Forest Plan provided the Mersey Forest, and importantly it's partners and the wider public with a clear direction over the next five years.