

THE "CALL IN" PERIOD FOR THIS SET OF MINUTES ENDS AT 12 NOON ON THURSDAY 24 OCTOBER, 2013. MINUTE NO. 54 (5) IS NOT SUBJECT TO "CALL – IN".

CABINET

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT ON THURSDAY 10TH OCTOBER, 2013

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

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Crabtree, Hands and Sumner

51. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Cummins and Fairclough.

52. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

53. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Decision Made:

That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 12 September 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

54. 2013/14 BUDGET UPDATE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Corporate Finance and ICT which provided details of the progress made on the achievement of the approved budget savings for 2013 – 2015, an update on the collection rates for Council Tax and Business Rates and a financial overview of the 2013/14 Capital Programme.

The Head of Corporate Finance and ICT reported that based on the latest budgetary information available from the Government, it was currently predicted that the Council would need to make further budget savings of £28m for 2015/16 and £22m for 2016/17 and that officers would need to commence a review of potential policy changes, as part of the process of producing budget savings options in advance of the Council Year 2015/16.

The Chief Executive indicated that the Council's two year budget plan for 2013 – 2015, addressed the known budget savings prior to the start of 2015/16 and that it would give officers more time to carefully plan for the implementation of the further budget savings to be made subject to the

approval of the Council. The Leader of the Council (Councillor P. Dowd) and other Members of the Cabinet expressed their concern at the predicted level of further budget savings which would need to be made by the Council and the impact it would have on the delivery of Council services in future years and requested officers to look at the potential implications on the controllable and variable costs in the Council's budget and submit the details to a future meeting of the Cabinet

Decision Made:

That:

- (1) the progress to date on the achievement of the approved budget savings 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, set out in the report;
- (3) the current position on the collection rates of Council Tax and Business Rates be noted;
- (4) following the recent consultation with Parish Councils, the Double Rating saving proposals for 2014/15 should proceed as planned;
- (5) the Council be recommended to give approval to an increase in the REECH Project capital programme expenditure of £5m, to be offset by £5m income; and
- (6) the verbal update on the predicted level of budget savings that would need to be made for 2015/16 and 2016/17 be noted and officers be requested to submit a report on the potential implications on the controllable and variable costs in the Council's budget to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

Reasons for Decision:

To ensure the Cabinet are informed of the latest position on the achievement of budget savings and the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates for the current financial year and provide details of a proposed increase in the REECH Project subject 100% funding.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None

55. FUTURE INVESTMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT AT SOUTHPORT AND BOOTLE GOLF COURSES

The Cabinet considered the report of Director of Street Scene on proposals to carry out soft market testing on the future investment, development and management of the Council-owned golf courses at Southport and Bootle.

Decision Made:

That approval be given to a soft market testing exercise being undertaken to help identify and consider options available for the future development and management of the Council-owned golf courses at Southport and Bootle.

Reasons for Decision:

To enable potential future options for managing and developing Southport and Bootle Golf Courses to be investigated.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None, the purpose of the market testing exercise would be to determine what the potential options are.

56. TENDERING OF ARBORICULTURAL WORKS

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Street Scene on the tendering exercise to be for the provision of arboricultural works on the highway and within Sefton's parks and open spaces, and the proposed tender evaluation process for the award of the contract. During the consideration of the report, Members of the Cabinet queried whether the inflation index referred to in the report should be used in the new contract and officers undertook to examine this matter in more detail prior to the invitation of tenders.

Decision Made:

That:

- (1) the basis of evaluation of the tenders as set out in the report be approved;
- (2) the appropriate officers be requested to review and determine whether annual inflation indexes should be included in any new Council contracts;
- (3) subject to resolution (2) above, the Director of Street Scene be granted delegated powers to award the contract to the lowest priced tender that meets all pre-determined quality evaluation criteria; and

- (4) in the event that the procurement process cannot be completed before the existing contract ends on 28 February 2014, the Contract Procedure Rules be waived and the existing contract be extended by up to 3 months.

Reasons for the Recommendation:

The existing contract is due to expire on 28 February 2014. If the existing contract was not replaced, it would result in arboricultural work having to be undertaken in an adhoc way, outside of a framework contract, which would result in increased costs.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None - Not to replace the existing contract would result in arboricultural work having to be undertaken in an adhoc way, outside of a framework contract, which would result in increased costs; and not to commission any arboricultural works would have serious Health and Safety implications.