

COUNCIL

Thursday, 29 November 2018

PRESENT – The Mayor, Councillors Carson, Cartwright, Cossins, Coultas, Crichlow, Crumbie, Curry, Dixon, Donoghue, Galletley, Harker, Haszeldine, Heslop, C L B Hughes, L Hughes, Johnson, Kane, Kelley, Knowles, Lawton, Lyonette, Marshall, McEwan, Newall, K Nicholson, M Nicholson, Rahman, S Richmond, A J Scott, Mrs H Scott, Storr, C Taylor, J Taylor and Tostevin

APOLOGIES – Councillors Baldwin, Crudass, Mrs Culley, B Jones, Mrs D Jones, Kelly, Lee, Lister, Mills, Nutt, E A Richmond, Wallis and York

ABSENT – Councillors Grundy and Wright

29 MINUTES - TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS COUNCIL HELD ON 27 SEPTEMBER 2018

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Council, held on 27 September 2018.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

30 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

31 SEALING.

Presented – The Register showing the documents which had been sealed since the last meeting of Council.

32 ANNOUNCEMENTS.

There were no announcements made at the meeting.

33 QUESTIONS - TO ANSWER QUESTIONS (WHERE ANY APPROPRIATE NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN FROM):-

(1) THE PUBLIC;

There was one question, with notice, from a member of the public, who received an answer thereon.

(2) MEMBERS TO CABINET/CHAIRS;

There were no questions from Members, where notice had been given, for the Mayor, Members of the Cabinet, or the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees.

(3) MEMBERS TO THE POLICE, CRIME AND VICTIMS' COMMISSIONER FOR DURHAM AND DARLINGTON.

The Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner for Durham and Darlington, addressed Members, and answered questions thereon.

34 COUNCIL REPORTS.

NOTE: As both Items 7 (a) and 7 (b) on the Agenda had previously been considered by Cabinet, The Mayor varied the order of business to enable these reports to be taken at the appropriate time.

(4) POLLING DISTRICT, POLLING PLACE AND POLLING STATION REVIEW 2018

The Managing Director submitted a report to report the outcome of a recent review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations for the Darlington and Sedgefield Parliamentary Constituencies.

The submitted report stated that the Representation of the People Act 1983, as amended by the Registration and Administration Act 2013, placed a duty on all local authorities in England and Wales to undertake and complete a review of all of the Polling Districts and Polling Places in its area, and highlighted that the Review was being undertaken at the earliest opportunity to ensure that the Polling Places and Polling Stations remained fit for purpose ahead of the Local Government Elections in 2019.

The submitted report outlined the work undertaken to publicise the Review, the initial proposals submitted for consultation, the representations received, and the subsequent draft recommendations. The submitted report also addressed the recommendations of the Parliamentary Boundary Review 2018, and the observations of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK following their UK Parliamentary (General) Election Assessment Mission in 2017, and the observations made by Democracy Volunteers at the same election.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the changes proposed to the existing Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations ahead of the Local Elections in May 2019, be noted and approved.
- (b) That the recommendations of the Returning Officer in relation to the Polling Districts and Polling Places that will come into being should the recommendations of the Parliamentary Boundary Review be approved, be endorsed, and that Officers be requested to implement the recommendations accordingly; and
- (c) That the publication of the proposals for Polling Places be authorised.

REASONS

- (a) To comply with the requirements of the Representation of the People Act 1983, as amended by the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013.
- (b) To enable the decisions to be made, publicised and implemented in good time for the elections scheduled for May 2019.

(5) CABINET REPORTS.

- (1) The Cabinet Members each gave a report (previously circulated) on the main areas of work undertaken under their relevant portfolio during the previous cycle of meetings. Cabinet Members answered questions on their portfolios.

(6) INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES - UPDATE AND REQUEST TO INCREASE THE FUND

The Managing Director submitted a report to update Council on progress against the agreed Capital Investment Fund and to seek approval to increase the fund.

The submitted report stated that the Council had previously approved the principle and establishment of an investment fund to be used for innovative investment opportunities beyond the traditional Treasury Management Strategy in order to achieve greater returns given the low returns on investment. The submitted report confirmed that the established fund was being used as envisaged, and included Joint Venture vehicles and economic regeneration initiatives, with returns on joint ventures anticipated at over £4m.

The submitted report presented a request from Cabinet to increase the provision to the Capital Investment Fund from £30m to £50m, in anticipation that the next calling on the fund would be used for a new joint venture at Middleton St. George using the procured Housing Joint Venture agreement.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the Capital Investment Fund be increased to £50m.
- (b) That repaid loans are recycled back into the Investment fund.
- (c) That the operation of the fund is delegated to Cabinet in line with previous Council approval.

REASONS

- (a) To allow the Council to take up opportunities to gain investment returns.
- (b) To allow the investment fund to be established and financed.
- (c) To enable Cabinet to consider detailed proposals many of which will be commercially sensitive.

(7) COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT - SCHEME APPROVAL 2019/20

The Managing Director submitted a report requesting approval of the Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme for 2019/20.

The submitted report stated that Councils are required to set a CTS scheme each year, and as part of that exercise they must consider whether any changes should be made to any existing scheme, and, where changes are made, consider what transitional protection, if any, should apply to anyone affected by those changes. The submitted report outlined the details of the proposed CTS scheme for 2019/20.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the CTS scheme for 2019/20, as appended at Appendix 1 of the submitted report, which is to:-
 - (i) Continue providing up to 100% CTS for care leavers under the age of 25; and
 - (ii) Continue providing up to 80% CTS for all other working aged people, be approved.

REASONS

- (a) The Council is required to publish a local CTS scheme for 2019/20 by 11 March 2019.
- (b) The CTS schemes since 2013/14 have all been implemented successfully without any major challenges.
- (c) The continued application of a reduced entitlement for working aged people is still appropriate, given the current financial position of the Council.

36 SCRUTINY REPORTS - TO CONSIDER SCRUTINY OVERVIEW REPORTS:-

The five Scrutiny Committee Chairs each submitted a report (previously circulated) on the main areas of work undertaken by their relevant Scrutiny Committee during the last cycle of Committee meetings

37 MEMBERSHIP CHANGES - TO CONSIDER ANY MEMBERSHIP CHANGES TO COMMITTEES, SUBSIDIARY BODIES AND OTHER BODIES.

Consideration was given to membership changes of the Committees, Subsidiary Bodies and Other Bodies for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2018/19.

RESOLVED

- (a) That Councillor Crumbie replace Councillor Sue Richmond on the Patrol and Bus Lane Adjudication Service Joint Committee;
- (b) That Councillor Crumbie replace Councillor Sue Richmond on the Combined Fire Authority - Finance and General Purpose Committee;

- (c) That Councillor Storr fill the vacancy on the Police and Crime Panel - Joint Audit Committee;
- (d) That Councillor Storr replace Councillor Crumbie on the YMCA Board;
- (e) That Councillor Coultas replace Councillor Kevin Nicholson on the Efficiency and Resources Scrutiny Committee; and
- (f) That Councillor Kevin Nicholson fill the vacancy for an Independent Member on the Planning Applications Committee.