

# EXECUTIVE

## Committee

13th October 2015

## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Bill Hartnett (Chair), Councillor Greg Chance (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Juliet Brunner, Brandon Clayton, John Fisher (during Minute No.'s 42 to 49), Mark Shurmer, Debbie Taylor and Pat Witherspoon

### Officers:

Derek Allen, Clare Flanagan, Sue Hanley, Kath Manning, Jayne Pickering and Judith Willis

### Committee Officers:

Debbie Parker-Jones

### 40. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Yvonne Smith.

### 41. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 42. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### Work Programme

It was noted that the following reports, which had originally been listed on the Work Programme for consideration at the meeting that evening, had been deferred to either the 15th December 2015 or a later meeting:

- Housing Business Case;
- Fees and Charges;
- Provision of Disabled Car Parking Spaces within Council-Owned Housing Area;
- Reorganisation and Change Policy;
- Update on Medium Term Financial Plan;
- Health and Safety Policy – Contractor Security;
- Contractor Safety Policy; and
- Lone Working Policy.

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Chair

### Report Updates – Energy Efficiency Fund

Officers tabled some updates to this report, for consideration at Agenda Item 6.

#### **43. MINUTES**

##### **RESOLVED that**

**the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 8th September 2015 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

#### **44. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 1st September 2015.

It was noted that there were no recommendations to consider.

##### **RESOLVED that**

**the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 1st September 2015 be received and noted.**

#### **45. CREATION OF A NEW ENERGY EFFICIENCY FUND FOR HOMEOWNERS IN REDDITCH**

The Committee received a report which summarised proposals to use existing resources to launch a new Energy Efficiency Fund to help homeowners in Redditch improve the energy efficiency of their properties, helping them to heat their homes more affordably and reliably and also producing carbon savings.

Officers tabled the following report amendments, all of which were agreed by Members:

- an amendment to recommendation 3 for the scheme to be reviewed six months after its launch;
- addition of a paragraph at 3.8 of the report to read: “The scheme is for homeowners in Redditch. Council tenants should seek help with energy efficiency by contacting staff at their Locality Housing Office.”;
- deletion of the references to assisting with energy efficient light fittings and bulbs contained in the first section of the list of measures at Appendix 1 and in paragraph 3.9 of the report; and

- an addition to the first section of the list of measures in Appendix 1, with reference to the financial support available, that a household financial criterion of £250 would apply towards the costs of works for those households in receipt of qualifying benefits. Those households earning below the average Redditch household income would automatically be making their own financial contribution.

Introducing a financial contribution requirement to the scheme would ensure that the Council's scheme mirrored the approach undertaken within the current Affordable Warmth element of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO), where a minimum £250 contribution was required for broken boilers. Where Redditch residents could benefit from existing ECO funding streams, Act on Energy would help them access such assistance. The Council's energy efficiency scheme would provide support for those households which did not qualify for such funding streams, to prevent them from falling into further difficulty.

Introducing a financial contribution for all households benefitting from the Energy Efficiency Fund to resolve broken boilers should enable the Council to focus on those households which did not qualify for assistance from other schemes. This approach would also maximise the effectiveness of the scheme in terms of the number of households which could be supported.

Officers stressed that the Council was not trying to replace the current energy efficiency options which existed outside of the Council, and that the Fund would only be used where there were no other available options or where people were in crisis. The Head of Community Services would have discretion to consider applications which fell outside of the normal criteria where 'exceptional circumstances' applied. Officers felt that they would learn from the first six months of implementation of the scheme and that a review of the scheme after that stage would therefore be pertinent.

### **RESOLVED that**

- 1) an Energy Efficiency Fund for homeowners in Redditch be launched and delivered between November 2015 and November 2018;**
- 2) authority be delegated to the Head of Community Services to finalise the inclusion of the Energy Efficiency Fund within the existing Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Act on Energy; and**

- 3) **authority be delegated to the Head of Community Services to finalise details of the approved scheme and, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Housing and the Local Environment, to make minor amendments to the scheme and review the scheme six months after it is launched.**

### **RECOMMENDED that**

**the remaining £17k Warmer Worcestershire capital grant funds be transferred to fund the revenue schemes detailed in the report.**

## **46. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION STRATEGY**

Members were asked to endorse the county-wide Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Strategy 2015-17, and to consider how the Council could contribute to its achievement. It was noted that the Executive Committee could resolve on this matter, which was not apparent from the report recommendation.

Officers highlighted the key elements of the Strategy and explained that the CSE Pathway was unique as it allowed for the reporting of non-child specific concerns, for example where there were concerns in relation to particular premises rather than individuals.

Members noted the work being undertaken by the Council as detailed at paragraph 3.12 of the report, and the roles that the Redditch Partnership and North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership and Tasking Group would play in this.

Given the importance of the subject matter and the national issues which had emerged in recent times, Members felt that all councillors should be strongly encouraged to attend safeguarding training as part of their annual training programme. It was noted that a copy of the Strategy had also been placed in the political group rooms for Members' information.

### **RESOLVED that**

**the Worcestershire Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy 2015-2017 and the Council's contribution as outlined in paragraph 3.12 of the report, be endorsed.**

### 47. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2016/17 - 2018/19 - BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS

The Committee considered a report, for recommendation to full Council, which set out the budget assumptions to be used in preparing the detailed 2016/17 budget and provisional budgets for 2017/18 and 2018/19. A typographical error in the report recommendation was noted, which should have referred to the assumptions detailed in paragraph 3.7 and not 3.5 of the report.

Officers highlighted the key aspects of the report and advised that a number of recommendations from the Council's External Auditors, Grant Thornton, would be addressed by ensuring that robust assumptions and a transparent planned approach was undertaken when setting the budget.

Members had previously agreed that the following principles would be the focus of the Medium Term Financial Plan:

- reduce enabling costs;
- identifying waste and removing this from the system and its associated costs; and
- design new systems for delivery to meet customer demand.

Officers clarified that enabling costs covered anybody who did not deliver a front line service to the public, from supervisor level upwards.

Members noted that the budget forecast had been based on a number of assumptions, known levels of expenditure and anticipated levels of resources. Final confirmation of the assumptions would not be known until December, when the Council would receive details of the Provisional Funding Settlement from central government. Officers explained the most significant risks to the budget projections and stated that whilst it was known that the Council would lose £1.5m of government funding over the next 3 years, it was not yet known whether the cuts would be front-loaded.

#### **RECOMMENDED that**

**the revenue assumptions detailed in paragraph 3.7 of the report be incorporated into the budget setting process.**

### 48. MINUTES / REFERRALS - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, EXECUTIVE PANELS ETC.

There were no additional referrals for the Committee to consider.

# EXECUTIVE

Committee

13th October 2015

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## 49. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

It was noted that a Planning Advisory Panel meeting had taken place earlier that evening and that the next meeting was planned for December.

**RESOLVED that**

**the report be noted.**

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and closed at 7.48 pm

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Chair