

SELBY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the proceedings of a meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 28 November 2006, in Committee Room 2, The Civic Centre, Portholme Road, Selby, commencing at 4.00pm.

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Present: Councillor M Crane in the Chair

Councillors: Mrs L Casling, J Crawford, J Mackman (for Mrs G Ivey), D McSherry, C Metcalfe, Mrs W Nichols, I Nutt (for W Norton), B Percival and R Packham

Officials: Chief Executive, Strategic Directors, Accountancy Services Manager, Head of Service – Human Resources, Head of Service – Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Service – Housing Services, Head of Service – Planning and Economic Development, Planning Policy Manager, Senior Planning

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Officer, Senior Planning Officer, Democratic Services Officer

Also in Attendance: Jo Webb, Regional Associate – Yorkshire and the Humber

Public: 2

Press: 0

1301 **Apologies for Absence and Notice of Substitution**

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs Ivey.

Substitute councillors were Councillors J Mackman (for Mrs Ivey) and I Nutt (for W Norton).

1302 **Councillor W Norton**

The Chair paid tribute to Councillor W Norton who passed away suddenly on Wednesday 22 November. Councillors and officers stood for a minute's silence out of respect for Councillor Norton.

1303 **Honorary Alderman C Coultish**

The Chair paid tribute to Honorary Alderman C Coultish who passed away recently and whose funeral had taken place that day.

1304 **Disclosure of Interest**

No disclosures of interest were made.

1305 **Minutes**

Resolved:

That the minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 24 October 2006 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chair.

1306 **Chair's Address to the Policy and Resources Committee**

The Chair made no address.

1307

Selby District Council – Improvement Support

Jo Webb, Regional Associate – Yorkshire and the Humber presented councillors with her report on improvement support provided by the Improvement and Development Agency (IdeA) to the Council.

The report evaluated the impact of the IDeA's work with the Council following the Council's assessment under the CPA regime in 2004.

The Regional Associate – Yorkshire and the Humber praised the positive attitude of both councillors and officers and explained that the Council had made considerable progress in the last two years. She detailed the key areas of that progress and then outlined issues that now needed addressing.

Councillors discussed the progress that had been made and commented on the innovative work that had been done in a number of areas, especially with partnering and shared services.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

1308

Referrals from Other Boards and Committees – Social Board

Councillors considered the referrals below from Social Board which was held on 21 November 2006:

(a) Minute 1259 – Children and Young People's Play Strategy

Councillors were asked to approve the use of £7,000 from the Performance Initiatives budget for the compilation and publication of a Play Strategy required to secure the £200,000 funding which had been ring-fenced for the Council by the Big Lottery Fund.

The Chair of Social Board stressed to councillors the importance of formulating a strong strategy, as other councils had been refused their funding because their strategy had not been considered sufficiently robust.

Recommended:

That £7,000 be used from the Performance Initiatives budget for the compilation and publication of the Play Strategy document required to secure the £200,000 funding.

(b) Minute 1264 - Selby District Council Tenant Participation Strategy 2006 - 2009

Councillors were asked to approve Selby District Council's Tenant Participation Strategy 2006 - 2009.

The Tenant Participation Strategy sets out how the Housing Service Unit, Tenants, Councillors and Council Officers could work together to respond to the Tenant Empowerment agenda by using good practice and guidance on tenant participation.

Recommended:

That the Selby District Council Tenant Participation Strategy 2006 – 2009 be approved.

(c) Minute 1265 - Housing Revenue Account Business Plan

Councillors were asked to approve the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan.

Following the decision by tenants to retain the Council as their landlord in March 2006, a revised Business Plan had been produced in partnership with tenants. The Business Plan outlined the intentions for managing the Council's housing and stock and the level of investment required in the stock.

Recommended:

That the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan be approved.

1309

Performance Indicator Report: April 2006 – October 2006

The Strategic Director updated councillors on performance indicators and on the progress that had been made in 2006/2007 towards the achievement of corporate and statutory Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs).

Councillors discussed the performance indicators relating to complaints and how they are dealt with by the Council. With regards to COM1 (percentage of complainants satisfied with how their complaint has been handled), councillors were informed that the questionnaire sent to complainants was being re-examined in order to provide more relevant data. Officers also informed councillors that the 2006/2007 target for COM2b (percentage of corporate complaints fully responded to within 15 days), was under review.

Councillors discussed performance indicator BV8 and questioned the fact that the Government best quartile figure used for comparative purposes

dated from 2004/2005. The Accountancy Services Manager informed them that the 2005/2006 figures had not yet been published by the Audit Commission, but would be used as the comparative figure as soon as they were available.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

1310

Subsistence Allowance

The Head of Service – Human Resources informed councillors of the need to update the current subsistence, travel and disturbance allowances, together with out-of-pocket expenses and meal charges in line with national rates.

Resolved that:

- (i) The national allowance rates be adopted with effect from 1 December 2006; and**
- (ii) The rates be applied to councillors' allowances with effect from 1 December 2006.**

1311

Disciplinary Policy, Capability Policy and Grievance Procedure

The Head of Service – Human Resources informed councillors that the disciplinary and grievance policies before councillors updated existing policies. The capability policy was a new policy which had been brought in to deal with issues such as work standards and whether an employee was able to carry out tasks as opposed to an employee who wilfully refused to do the job.

Councillors discussed the policies and requested that an amendment be made to the three policies to ensure consistency in references to the Chief Executive and Strategic Director.

Resolved:

That subject to the amendment above, the revised disciplinary policy and grievance procedure be adopted.

Recommended:

That subject to the amendment above, the capability policy be adopted.

1312

North Yorkshire Audit Partnership

The Accountancy Services Manager informed councillors that the current North Yorkshire Audit Partnership agreement would expire in December 2007 and that internal audit provision was statutory.

Councillors discussed options for audit provision and recognised the significant savings that were made by working in partnership.

Resolved:

That, in principle, the continuation of the North Yorkshire Audit Partnership beyond December 2007 be agreed.

1313

Council Tax Base and Classification of Expenditure 2007/08

The Accountancy Services Manager provided councillors with details of the proposed council tax base for 2007/08 as well as information relating to the classification of expenditure.

Resolved that:

- (i) The report be noted**
- (ii) Pursuant to the report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the amounts calculated for the District Council's and the parish councils' tax base for 2007/08 as shown in appendices 1 and 2 of the report be approved; and**
- (iii) All Council expenditure, including Land Drainage Board precepts be treated as general expenses for the purpose of setting the Council Tax.**

1314

Budget Monitoring to 30 September 2006

The Accountancy Services Manager updated councillors on details of major variations between budgeted and actual expenditure for the Committee for the first six months of the 2006/07 financial year.

Resolved that:

- (i) The report be noted; and**
- (ii) The actions of the officers involved be endorsed.**

1315

General Fund Revenue Budget Monitoring to 30 September 2006

The Head of Service - Finance and Central Services submitted a report setting out details of the Council's General Fund Revenue Budget Monitoring as it stood at 30 September 2006.

Councillors discussed a number of issues with regards to Planning and Economic Development and requested that the Head of Service - Planning and Economic Development provide details of expenditure for planning consultancy.

Resolved that:

- i) The forecast outturn position on the Council's General Fund Budget for 2006/07 at 30 September 2006 be acknowledged; and**
- ii) The actions of officers in monitoring the budgets be endorsed.**

1316

General Fund Capital Programme to 30 September 2006

The Head of Service - Finance and Central Services submitted a report setting out details of the Council's General Fund Capital Programme as it stood at 30 September 2006.

Councillor Packham requested that an issue relating to a capital receipt from a land sale be raised in private session.

Resolved:

That the position regarding the Council's General Fund Capital Programme for 2006/07 be noted.

1317

Supplementary Budget Request in respect of Electricity Costs for General Fund Properties

Councillors received the report of the Head of Service – Finance and Central Services that provided details of the forecasted requirement for a supplementary estimate of £17,530 to cover the increased costs in electricity supply.

Councillors discussed the increased costs and the Chair stressed the importance of negotiating the best possible prices for electricity across all council properties.

Officers updated councillors on the work of the Northern Procurement Group

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(NPG) and informed councillors that Selby District Council was working with NPG to secure the most beneficial tariffs available.

Recommended that:

- i) **The supplementary estimate of £17,530 for the increases in electricity costs over and above that allowed for within the 2006/07 budget be approved; and**
- ii) **Any further budget requirement due to price increases in the 2006/07 financial year be dealt with as part of the corporate budget monitoring report.**

Resolved:

That the actions of officers in monitoring the budgets be endorsed.

1318

Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document – Adoption Draft

The Senior Planning Officer updated councillors on the current position of the Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (DCSPD)

The DCSPD has been prepared in accordance with the Selby District Local Development Scheme. Councillors were asked to consider the response to consultation on the DCSPD, to approve the Council's response and to amend the DCSPD prior to initiating formal adoption procedures.

Councillors discussed the threshold of 15 dwellings or more for seeking provision or contributions from developers in respect of community facilities in rural areas. This compared to a threshold for recreational open space of five dwellings. The Chair requested that officers re-examine this issue and look at how it could be incorporated into the Local Development Framework (LDF).

The Chair thanked officers and acknowledged their hard work.

Resolved:

That following consideration of comments received, the draft DCSPD be amended by the Council in accordance with the actions recommended in appendix 1 of the report and the consequential amendments and factual/grammatical errors and updates all of which are identified in appendix 2 of the report.

Recommended:

That officers be authorised to:

- (i) Re-format the presentation of the DCSPD for publication purposes in line with comments set out at paragraphs 6.18 and 6.19 of the report**
- (ii) Prepare a consultation statement; and**
- (iii) Make arrangements to formally publish and adopt the DCSPD in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.**

1319

Sustainability Appraisal of the Draft DCSPD

The Senior Planning Officer presented officers with a report outlining the final amendments to the Sustainability Appraisal report on the DCSPD, following public consultation on the draft DCSPD, and requested approval for the appraisal.

Only two respondents made comments directly relating to the appraisal at the draft consultation stage. Minor changes were made to the appraisal to meet these comments.

Consideration had also been given to whether the amendments, which had been made to the DCSPD itself, had altered the sustainability appraisal on those topic areas. The Senior Planning Officer informed councillors that it had been concluded that the amendments did not fundamentally alter the conclusions drawn at the draft stage regarding the sustainability of the policies.

Recommended:

That the sustainability appraisal of the DCSPD, as amended following the public consultation at the draft DCSPD stage, be approved for publication.

1320

Management of Housing Land Release

The Chair informed councillors that shortly before the committee meeting began, a letter had been received from Cunnane Town Planning in connection with this item.

The Head of Service – Legal and Democratic Services advised councillors that because the letter had been received so late, it might be prudent to

defer discussion on this matter until the full Council meeting on 19 December 2006. This would then allow councillors and officers to fully consider their response to the letter.

Councillors discussed the issue and decided that it would be more appropriate to discuss this matter at a later date.

Recommended:

That the issue surrounding the management of housing land release, with particular regard to the information contained within the letter from Cunnane Town Planners, be deferred to the next meeting of full Council.

1321

North Yorkshire County Council Draft Minerals and Waste Development Framework

The Senior Planning Officer informed councillors that the Minerals and Waste Development Framework (MWDF) was North Yorkshire County Council's (NYCC) policy document which linked directly to the Council's own policies on waste management and collection and the Council's planning policies. When adopted it would form part of the development plan for Selby District.

North Yorkshire County Council were consulting on options relating to the production of their MWDF, with a view to publishing preferred options for consultation later this year.

Councillors discussed in detail the recommendations laid out in the report, with particular regard to the proposed new quarrying areas laid out in the MWDF.

Resolved:

That the following responses be made to NYCC:

- (i) Option 2 of the general strategic waste management options be supported**
- (ii) Option 3 of the strategic locational waste management option be supported**
- (iii) The continuation of the Barnsdale Bar and Darrington waste management sites be supported**
- (iv) Option 2 of the strategic options for aggregate minerals be supported**

- (v) **The extensions to the four existing quarries are acceptable in principle subject to a justifiable need having been proved and normal planning and environmental safeguards.**
- (vi) **The Council strongly objects to the proposal's new quarrying areas and would wish to see them robustly resisted**
- (vii) **In the unlikely event of new areas being required within the timescales of the LDF documents, a comprehensive comparative impact assessment should be made available for consultation identifying all potential county-wide quarrying options in the areas of search. Sites should be selected sequentially working with minimum overall impact first**

1322

Referrals from Other Boards and Committees – Environment Board

Councillors considered the referral below from Environment Board on 23 November 2006:

- (a) Minute 1285 – Commercial Waste Prices 2007/08

Councillors were asked to approve commercial waste prices for 2007/08.

The prices for the Commercial Waste Service for 2007/08 reflected the costs and included the rise in disposal costs along with the increase in contractors' charges.

Recommended:

That the prices for the commercial waste service for 2007/08 be approved.

1323

Private Session

That in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, the meeting be not open to the Press and public during consideration of the following items as there will be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in Section 100(1) of the Act as described in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

1324

Referrals from Other Boards and Committees – Environment Board

Councillors considered the referral below from Environment Board 23 November 2006:

(a) Minute 1288 – Supplementary Estimate

Councillors received a request for a supplementary estimate to cover the costs of procurement of consultancy expertise in relation to environmental issues at the proposed waste management facility at The Maltings, South Milford.

Recommended:

That a supplementary estimate of up to £10,000 to cover the costs of procurement of consultancy expertise in relation to environmental issues at the proposed waste management facility at the Maltings, South Milford be approved.

1325

Issue Raised by Councillor Packham

Under minute 1316, Councillor Packham requested that an issue relating to capital receipt from a land sale be raised in private session. It was not possible to raise the issue under private session, however, as Councillor Packham had to leave the meeting early.

1326

Continuation of Meeting

Councillors were informed that the meeting had been running for three hours.

Resolved:

That the meeting continue for the remaining item.

1327

Civic Centre Condition Survey

The Strategic Director advised councillors on the findings of the Civic Centre condition survey undertaken through NYCC Building Design and Management.

Councillors discussed the report and the work that needed carrying out to the Civic Centre.

Recommended:

That officers identify and seek funding for those repairs which are considered essential to health and safety requirements and which are necessary to be carried out in advance of the Council vacating the building.

The meeting closed at 7:20pm