

MINUTES OF: THE CABINET

Date of Meeting: Tuesday 1st December 2020

**Present: Councillor A Barnes (Chair)
Councillors Hughes, Lythgoe, Oakes, Serridge and Walmsley**

**In Attendance: Mr N Shaw, Chief Executive
Mrs C Burns, Director of Economic Development
Mr A Allen, Director of Communities
Ms C Birtwistle, Head of Legal (Monitoring Officer)
Ms K Spencer, Head of Finance (S151 Officer)
Mr G Darragh, Economic Development Manager
Mrs J Wood, Committee and Member Services Officer
Miss G Ashton, Committee and Member Services Officer**

**Also Present: Councillors Aldred, Haworth, Pendlebury, Morris, Neal and Steen
2 members of public**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

3. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No written questions had been submitted.

6. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT 2020/21 Q1 & Q2

The Portfolio Holder for Resources outlined the report which asked members to note the current adverse variance in the Council's revenue budget and the actions to address this before year end.

In response to questions raised it was noted that:

- Costs relating to the Local Plan were not recoverable.
- Further grants had been requested, extra money required to help out businesses.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet noted the current adverse variance in the Council's revenue budget and the actions to address this before year end.

Reason for Decision:

For the robust monitoring of the General Fund and MTFs which is essential for controlling

risks.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

7. ANNUAL AIR QUALITY REPORT 2020

The Portfolio Holder for Communities outlined the report which asked members to note the content in relation to the Annual Air Quality Report.

In response to questions raised it was noted that:

- The Council was being more proactive with tree planting in the area.
- Clarification was provided on locations of improvement.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet noted the content of the report in relation to the Annual Air Quality Report.

Reason for Decision:

The improvement in air quality is an integral part of the Council's Climate Change Strategy and actions to reduce the Council's carbon footprint will have a subsequent beneficial impact on the quality of the air that we breath.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

8. THE WHITAKER PROGRESS UPDATE AND HERITAGE FUND UPLIFT

The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Economic Development outlined the report which asked members to note the project progress and National Lottery Fund uplift grant application. It also asked members to authorise the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Head of Legal (Monitoring Officer), Head of Finance and Portfolio Holder to enter into a grant funding agreement for the extra Heritage Fund uplift of c. £250k.

In response to a question raised it was noted that:

- Other sources of funding were being explored by the Whitaker. A significant funding bid of £130k had been successful.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet noted the project progress and National Lottery Heritage Fund uplift grant application.
2. Authorised the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Head of Legal (Monitoring Officer), Head of Finance and Portfolio Holder to enter into a grant funding agreement for the extra Heritage Fund uplift of c. £250k.

Reason for Decision:

By securing an uplift in funding from the Heritage Fund, the project will add value back into the scheme and improve visitor facilities in line with best practice and government / public health guidelines.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

9. EMPTY HOMES PROJECT BUDGET

The Leader of the Council outlined the report which asked members to approve a revenue increase to the Empty Homes project budget for 2020/21 of £650k, increasing the in-year

revenue budget to £950k, funded from the transitional budgetary support reserve.

In response to questions raised it was noted that:

- Claims from property owners had increased; costs would be retrieved where possible.
- The Police investigation was ongoing and an update was provided.
- Costs had been incurred when tenants had caused considerable damage to properties.
- Clarification was provided on the total cost of the project so far.
- It was confirmed that robust mechanisms had been put in place to prevent this happening again.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet approved a revenue increase to the Empty Homes project budget for 2020/21 of £650k, increasing the in-year revenue budget to £950k, funded from the transitional budgetary support reserve.

Reason for Decision:

The Council has made a provision of £300k in the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2020/21 for the project. The project team monitor the cost and have projected the future costs of the project, to year end. This totals an anticipated £950k. The Council will work hard to minimise on-going and future costs associated with the project. Whilst it is more able to do this in relation to future discussions related to repairs and rental payments, it is much more restricted in its ability to mitigate costs associated with historic legal claims.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

10. DISPOSAL OF THE FORMER LIBERAL CLUB

The Portfolio Holder for Resources outlined the report which asked members to authorise the disposal of the former Liberal Club (Lord Street, Rawtenstall), terms to be delegated to the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder. To approve the award of the disposal of the former Liberal Club to Bidder 1 and authorise a legal covenant to be placed on the building, terms of which to be delegated to the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

In response to questions raised it was noted that:

- There would be Capital gain from the disposal of the former Liberal Club.
- There had been no further discussion with RTB regarding the development of the property.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet approved the disposal of The Former Liberal Club (Lord Street, Rawtenstall) and the terms were delegated to the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.
2. Cabinet approved the award of the disposal of The Former Liberal Club to Bidder 1.
3. Cabinet authorised a legal covenant be placed on the building, terms of which were delegated to the Director of Economic Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

Reason for Decision:

The Former Liberal Club is an underused asset that will require future Council investment if it remains out of use. A disposal of the asset will provide an opportunity for an underutilised building to be developed and will provide a capital receipt to the council and add benefit to the local area.

**Alternative Options Considered:
None.**

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 7.30pm

_____ CHAIR _____ DATE