

MINUTES OF: THE CABINET

Date of Meeting: Tuesday 19th July 2022

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

**In Attendance: Mr N Shaw, Chief Executive
Mr A Allen, Director of Communities
Ms M Lewis, Director of Economic Development
Ms C Birtwistle, Head of Legal (Monitoring Officer)
Mrs K Spencer, Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer)**

1 press

**Observers on Zoom: Councillor Johnson
1 member of public**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Serridge.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9th February 2022 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. COUNCIL TAX, NON-DOMESTIC RATE & HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENT WRITE-OFFS

The Portfolio Holder for Resources outlined the report, which asked Cabinet to approve write-offs in respect of irrecoverable Non-Domestic Rate debt (NNDR), irrecoverable Council Tax debt, irrecoverable Housing Benefit Overpayments and agree the future schedule for write-offs to Cabinet.

Resolved:

Cabinet approved:

1. The write-off of £26,101.99 in respect of irrecoverable Non-Domestic Rate debt (NNDR). Direct cost to Rossendale BC is £10,440.80.
2. The write-off of £38,495.81 in respect of irrecoverable Council Tax debt. Direct cost to Rossendale BC is £5,281.63.
3. The write-off of £22,732.57 in respect of irrecoverable Housing Benefit Overpayments. Direct cost to Rossendale BC is nil.
4. That write-offs be brought to Cabinet on an annual report going forward.

Reason for Decision:

It is prudent practice to clear any debts from the ledgers, which are now deemed to be irrecoverable.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

7. CUSTOMER SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

The Portfolio Holder for Communities outlined the report, which asked Cabinet to note the result of consultations and agree the Customer Services Improvement Plan and agree to the procurement of a new website and digital improvements through the company Jadu using a procurement framework.

Cabinet members were invited to comment on the report:

- Note residents' concerns about the state of our roads and the Chief Executive is to write to LCC to this end.
- Good idea to transfer relevant calls to LCC but this has its challenges due to LCC telephony system.
- Shift to email contact is a positive move.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet noted the result of consultations and agreed the Customer Services Improvement Plan.
2. Cabinet agreed to the procurement of a new website and digital improvements through the company Jadu using a procurement framework.

Reason for Decision:

The Customer Services Continual Improvement Action Plan is based on extensive customer consultation and will make improvements to our levels of customer service in a short space of time. The council agreed to develop plans for a new website as part of the digital strategy agreed by Council in late 2021. This report provides an outline scope and procurement approach for the website in order to progress the work.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

8. WASTE, RECYCLING AND STREET CLEANSING – CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Portfolio Holder for Environment outlined the report, which asked Cabinet to note the contents of the report as an update on the current performance of the Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing operation and support the continual improvement action plan.

Cabinet members were invited to comment on the report:

- Street cleaning improvement has been pleasing.
- Recruiting to permanent staff rather than using agency has been good to see.
- 150 missed bins have generally been due to access problems, which we look to residents to assist with.
- Better in-cab technology would assist.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet noted the report as an update on the current performance of the Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing operation and supported the continual improvement action plan.

Reason for Decision:

To update members on the work being undertaken to improve services and for Cabinet to agree the priorities in the action plan.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

9. ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LIGHTING WORKS TENDER

The Portfolio Holder for Resources outlined the report, which asked Cabinet to approve the appointment of DES for the annual Christmas lighting contract. In the event that the contract is not accepted for any reason, it is agreed that the next highest scoring bidder will be awarded the contract.

Cabinet members were invited to comment on the report:

- This covers all the borough and we do well.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet approved the appointment of DES for the annual Christmas lighting contract. In the event that the contract is not accepted for any reason, it is agreed that the next highest scoring bidder will be awarded the contract.

Reason for Decision:

To award the contract to the highest scoring bidder to ensure continuity of service for the annual Christmas lighting in the borough.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

10. ANNUAL BUILDING CAPITAL REPAIRS CONTRACT 2022/23

The Portfolio Holder for Resources outlined the report, which asked Cabinet to approve the list of works on the 2022/23 Capital Building Repairs Contract and authorise officers to go out to tender, and to delegate the appointment of the contractor to the Head of People and Policy in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

Cabinet members were invited to comment on the report:

- Advertise the opportunity on the council's social media platform.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet approved the list of works on the 2022/23 Capital Building Repairs Contract and authorised officers to go out to tender.
2. Cabinet delegated the appointment of the contractor to the Head of People and Policy in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

Reason for Decision:

To approve the level of works and tender process for the 2022/23 contract to maintain council owned assets ensuring that the same do not suffer from deterioration with health and safety implications and increased repair cost when finally addressed.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

11. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT Q3 & Q4 2021/22 (INDICATIVE OUTTURN)

The Portfolio Holder for Resources outlined the report, which asked Cabinet to note the contents of the Q3 and Q4 2021/22 financial monitoring reports.

Cabinet members were invited to comment on the report:

- The need to review the budget mid-year.
- Significant impact of fuel costs and cost of living crisis.
- Pay award agreement impact to the MTFs.

Resolved:

1. Cabinet noted the contents of the Q3 and Q4 2021/22 financial monitoring reports.

Reason for Decision:

To note the Q3 monitoring report and the draft outturn position at Q4.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

12. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED:

- That the public and press be excluded from the following items of business under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 since the items involved the likely disclosure of exempt information under Part 1 Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

13. HENRIETTA STREET MODIFICATIONS

The Portfolio Holder for Environment outlined the report. Cabinet members comments on the report.

Resolved:

1. The report was agreed.

Reason for Decision:

To agree the report.

Alternative Options Considered:

None.

The meeting concluded at 7.10pm

_____ CHAIR _____ DATE