

**MINUTES OF: THE CABINET**

**Date of Meeting: Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2013**

**Present: Councillor A Barnes (in the Chair)  
Councillors Jackson, Lamb, MacNae, Marriott and  
Serridge**

**In Attendance: Mrs H Lockwood, Chief Executive  
Mr S Sugarman, Director of Business  
Mr P Seddon, Head of Finance and Property Services  
Mrs J Cook, Committee Officer**

**Also Present: Councillors Ashworth, Essex, Farrington, Hughes, McInnes,  
Morris, Pilling, Proctor and D. Smith**

**2 members of the public  
0 members of the press**

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1 All Cabinet members were present.

**2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2013 be approved as a correct record.

**3. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

3.1 There were no urgent items of business.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

4.1 No declarations of interest were made.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

5.1 A member of the public asked a question regarding the format of the Annual Monitoring Report. The Leader of the Council asked him to leave his details with the Committee Officer at the end of the meeting so that the matter could be investigated. He would be responded to directly.

5.2 Councillor Essex asked a question regarding the minutes of 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2013 with regard to Item 6, resolution number 2. He queried whether the £6,000 for the commissioning of domestic violence provision within Rossendale would be returned to the Council should Lancashire County Council not commission. The Leader of the Council stated that it was anticipated that Rossendale would receive significantly

more than £6,000 of support and the Chief Executive agreed to clarify the wording of the resolution prior to Full Council.

## **6. GRANTS 2014/15**

- 6.1 The Leader of the Council outlined the report which followed on from the report tabled at the October 2013 meeting. The report asked Cabinet to support the allocation of £60,000 for the provision of grants for services to facilitate financial inclusion in Rossendale. The report also outlined the simplified grant allocation procedure and process.
- 6.2 Members were invited to comment on the report and the following comments were made:-
- The key element of partnership working.
  - It was queried whether the report needed to go to Full Council and it was clarified that this would go to Council as part of the Budget Report.
  - Concerns were raised regarding whether there would be a cross-party Grants Group and the Leader of the Council clarified the application process and members' involvement with the Citizen's Advice Bureau.

### **Resolved:**

1. That Cabinet agrees the amended grant allocation process to support the allocation of £60,000 targeted funding to support financial inclusion services in 2014 - 2015, to be reviewed annually.
2. That all future minor amendments to the grants process be delegated to the Director of Customers and Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder

### **Reason for Decision**

To ensure a robust, open and transparent grants application process.

### **Alternative Options Considered**

None

## **7. CHANGES TO COMMUNITIES TEAM FUNCTION**

- 7.1 The Leader of the Council outlined the report which clarified the changes which had taken place within the Communities Team, following the departure of 2 members of staff. Statutory functions had been transferred to Operations and the remaining Locality Managers would be more regeneration focussed.
- 7.2 Members were invited to comment on the report and the following comments were made:-
- It was suggested that contact numbers of the relevant officers be circulated to Councillors and published on the website/noticeboards. The Chief Executive agreed to revise the Lancashire County Council, Police and other agency contacts.

### **Resolved:**

1. That Cabinet notes the structural changes proposed to the Communities and Operations Functions and agrees the continued consultation on changes to work prioritisation.
2. That all future minor amendments to the Parks and Open Spaces service be delegated to the Director of Customers and Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder

**Reason for Decision**

To assist the Council in delivering its Medium Term Financial Strategy.

**Alternative Options Considered**

None.

**8. AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT 2012/13**

- 8.1 The Portfolio Holder for Operational Services and Development Control outlined the report, which was a statutory requirement, and outlined the implementation of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) and the Council's achievements against the same. The Council were required to prove it had a 5 year land supply (+20%) of housing land available for development.
- 8.2 The Portfolio Holder noted that the Council had recently participated in three planning appeals. In two of the cases inspectors agreed that the Council was able to demonstrate a five-year land supply and in the other case it was determined that housing land supply was not relevant to the case.
- 8.3 Members were invited to comment on the report and the following comments were made:-
  - The report was an interesting and robust document which would stand up to challenges in Appeals.
  - It was noted that 74% of new development was being built on previously developed land.

**Resolved:**

That the Authority Monitoring Report 2012/13 is noted.

**Reason for Decision**

To demonstrate the challenge of delivering Core Strategy policies in the current economic climate.

**Alternative Options Considered**

None

**9. COUNCIL TAX LOCAL DISCOUNTS**

- 9.1 The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources outlined the report which noted that the Localism Act allowed Councils to look at previously offered council tax local discounts in respect of second properties and empty homes. The report asked for a

period of consultation to commence in relation to empty properties for the period commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014.

9.2 Members were invited to comment on the report and the following comments were made:

- An opportunity to deal with empty properties in a robust manner, whilst ensuring that circumstances were understood.

**Resolved:**

That Members agree to a period of consultation regarding Council Tax discounts and premiums in relation to empty properties and second homes for the period commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014

**Reason for Decision**

To enable the Council to consider its Council Tax discounts in light of its Medium Term Financial Strategy

**Alternative Options Considered**

None

**10. FINANCIAL MONITORING 2013/14 UPDATE**

10.1 The Portfolio Holder for Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources introduced the report which provided members with an update on the final financial monitoring period of 2013/14 since the last report in October 2013. It was noted that the full financial pack would now only be produced quarterly.

10.2 Members were invited to comment on the report; no comments were made.

**Resolved:**

That the contents of the report are noted.

**Reason for Decision**

To continue robust monitoring of the council's finances.

**Alternative Options Considered**

None

**The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 6.55pm**

\_\_\_\_\_ CHAIR \_\_\_\_\_ DATE