

CABINET**Tuesday, 14th November, 2017**

Present:-

Councillor P Gilby (Chair)

Councillors	T Gilby	Councillors	Huckle
	Bagley		Brunt
	Blank		Serjeant
	A Diouf		
Non Voting Members	Dickinson		J Innes

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

71 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

No declarations of interest were received.

72 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Catt and Ludlow.

73 MINUTES**RESOLVED –**

That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 3 October and 10 October, 2017, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

74 FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan for the four month period 1 December 2017 to 31 March 2018 was reported for information.

***RESOLVED –**

That the Forward Plan be noted.

75 **MINUTES OF THE SHEFFIELD CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY**

Minutes of the meetings of the Sheffield City Region Combined Authority held on 11 September and 18 September, 2017, were reported for information.

The Assistant Cabinet Member, Councillor Dickinson, enquired about the current position of the Council with regard to funding from Sheffield City Region Combined Authority (SCRCA).

Huw Bowen advised the Cabinet that the Council is in a positive position, with all three schemes – Peak Resort, Waterside and Northern Gateway – under contract with SCRCA, and funding secured from the Sheffield City Region Infrastructure Fund (SCRIF).

The Cabinet Member for Town Centres and Visitor Economy asked what more the Council could do to help to secure investment funding for Chesterfield Market in the future.

Huw Bowen advised that, if further SCRIF or D2N2 LEP funding were to be made available, the Council would seriously consider making an application to support investment in Chesterfield Market, but also potentially in other local regeneration schemes.

***RESOLVED –**

That the Minutes be noted.

76 **GENERAL FUND REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT AND UPDATED MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL FORECAST - SECOND QUARTER 2017/18**

The Director of Finance and Resources presented a report outlining the Council's budget position at the end of the second quarter of 2017/18, and the updated medium term financial forecast through 2022/23.

It was reported that a full re-tendering exercise of the Council's insurance arrangements had been undertaken, delivering savings of £94K in the remainder of 2017/18, and £187K in 2018/19.

An agreement had been reached with Kier Facilities Maintenance to reduce Property Repair Fund contributions in relation to properties that are either undergoing refurbishment, or are scheduled to be sold. This exercise had produced savings of £177K in 2017/18, £170K in 2018/19, and £155K in every financial year through 2022/23.

As at 14 November 2017, a total of £171K in capital receipts had been received. It was noted that capital receipts can fluctuate and that perennial work is carried out to maximise these to support the Council's capital programme.

It was also reported that a review of the Council's reserves and provisions had been carried out during 2017, to ensure that each reserve is at the appropriate level to meet planned expenditures.

The Director of Finance and Resources provided an update on the medium term outlook through 2022/23. A surplus of £90K was forecast for 2017/18, however, deficits were projected for each of the remaining years.

The Cabinet was informed that the Council had worked closely with partners across Derbyshire to submit a robust application to take part in the national 100% Business Rates Retention Pilot, planned to commence on 1 April, 2018.

If successful, 100 per cent of the business rate income would be allowed to be retained within the pilot area, and used to invest in the respective local economies and to help improve the financial stability of the 10 local authorities involved in the application. It was agreed that 30 per cent of any additional income would be pooled to support local economic growth.

The proposed budget preparation guidelines and approach to consulting the public on the 2018/19 budget, were reported to the Cabinet.

*** RESOLVED –**

1. That the Council's financial performance in the first half of the 2017/18 financial year, and the updated medium term financial forecasts through 2022/23, be noted.

2. That the proposed use of reserves, as set out within section 6 of the officer's report, and the two new applications to the Budget Risk Reserve, be approved.
3. That the proposed revision of the Financial Strategy to reflect a change in the use of surpluses from the Operational Services Division, be approved.
4. That the position of the Housing Revenue Account budgets be noted.
5. That the proposed budget preparation guidelines and approach to consulting the public on the 2018/19 budget, be approved.

REASON FOR DECISION

To actively manage the Council's finances in the current financial year and forecast forward the emerging budget position to future financial years.

77 WINDING WHEEL CAPITAL PROJECT

The Arts and Venues Manager submitted a report recommending for approval the undertaking of capital renovation work to improve the front-of-house facilities at The Winding Wheel.

It was reported that work had already been undertaken to improve the customer offer and financial performance at both The Winding Wheel and Pomegranate Theatre. As a result, the joint net controllable costs of operating both venues had been reduced by 49 per cent over the past 3 financial years to £345,847.

During 2016/17, a total of 149 performances were held at the Winding Wheel which attracted 37,745 ticketed attendances. In addition, the building was hired privately on 280 days of the year for a variety of functions including conferences, meetings and parties.

The report set out the proposed renovations to the ground floor of The Winding Wheel, including the refurbishment of public bathrooms and the development of a new Foyer Café Bar. Members were advised that the proposed renovations and additions would help to sustain income and

growth amidst increasing competition from new developments in the town centre.

Market analysis had been carried out to support the development proposals for the Foyer Café Bar, which showed that an on-site provision of food and drink would increase revenue share that is currently lost to other cafés and food establishments in the town centre.

The Arts and Venues Manager advised that the potential opportunities for using the Foyer Café Bar for cross-selling would be explored going forward.

*** RESOLVED –**

1. That the proposed work to renovate and upgrade the ground floor of the Winding Wheel, be approved.
2. That the proposed financial arrangement to fund the work through a combination of the Theatres Restoration Fund reserve, and future proceeds from the Theatre Restoration Levy, be approved.

REASON FOR DECISION

To make further progress towards a sustainable financial position for the Venues.

78 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED –

That under Regulation 21(1)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 – as they contained information relating to:

3. information relating to financial and business affairs.

79 **REVIEW OF THE GARDEN MAINTENANCE SERVICE**

The Assistant Director – Housing submitted a report recommending for approval revised qualifying criteria for the Council’s Garden Assistance Scheme (GAS).

It was reported that a total of 143 tenants were registered to receive the GAS as at November 14, 2017, and that the services were charged out at a weekly rate over 48 weeks.

An internal review of the GAS had been carried out in conjunction with a benchmarking study into the different GAS provided by 14 other local authorities. It was found that the majority of the other authorities provided a GAS at nil cost to qualifying disabled tenants. In response, the Housing Service had developed clear eligibility criteria, which were set out in paragraph 3.17 of the officer’s report.

In cases where eligibility may not be met, the Neighbourhoods Manager will have discretion to consider additional evidence provided from a qualified professional, such as a GP or Social Worker, to determine eligibility for the free scheme.

The Assistant Director – Housing informed members that a potential increase in the number of tenants using the GAS had been anticipated and planned for. As at 14 November 2017, the Council had 307 tenants of houses where the tenant or joint tenant(s) were aged over 75, and 394 tenants of houses who had self-identified as having a disability. The Housing Manager informed that a potential increase in the number of tenants using the GAS had been anticipated and planned for.

To account for any increase in demand on the GAS, the Housing Service planned to ask contractors to tender for a core scheme of 150 gardens, with an extra price for additional garden(s) up to a maximum of 300.

*** RESOLVED –**

1. That the results of the Garden Assistance Scheme Satisfaction Survey be noted.
2. That the new qualifying criteria and principles for the revised Garden Assistance Scheme, be approved.

3. That authority is delegated to the Cabinet Member for Homes and Customers and the Housing Manager to keep delivery of the revised Garden Assistance Scheme under active review and management, and to implement corrective actions as necessary to ensure that qualifying tenants receive services that enable them to maintain the garden of their property to the required standard.

REASON FOR DECISION

To work towards meeting the Council Plan priority to reduce inequality and support the vulnerable members of our community.

80 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - RE-ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC

*** RESOLVED –**

That after the consideration of an item containing exempt information, the public be re-admitted to the meeting.

81 CONSIDERATION OF THE SCRUTINY REPORT ON FRIENDS GROUPS

Councillor Caulfield, Scrutiny Project Group Leader, presented the report and recommendations of the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee on Friends Groups.

The recommendations of the Scrutiny Project Group had been considered and approved by the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee on 19 September, 2017 (Minute No. 19, Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee, 2017/18). The Committee's recommendations were now required to be considered by Cabinet in accordance with the Council's Scrutiny Procedure rules. A copy of the Scrutiny Project Group's report on Friends Groups was attached as Appendix A to the Cabinet report.

The issue of how Friends of Groups and Community Groups worked with Council in support of the Council's vision and priorities had been raised as an area for Scrutiny work as part of the new Scrutiny work programming process for 2016/17. It was noted that the review contributed to the Council's vision of "putting our communities first", as well as the Council Plan 2015-19 objective "to increase the quality of public space for which

the Council has responsibility through targeted improvement programmes.”

Councillor Caulfield informed the Cabinet of how the Project Group had carried out the review process, which included; meetings with Cabinet Portfolio Holders and Officers; consultations and discussions with local Friends Groups in-person and online; and analysing the current resources and officer support provided to Friends of Groups by Chesterfield Borough Council and other local authorities.

The Project Group’s recommendations were outlined to the Cabinet. They had been formulated to make certain that the Friends of Groups are adequately and appropriately supported to ensure that they can function effectively and achieve the best possible outcomes for Chesterfield’s parks and open spaces.

Members discussed the recommendations and considered their resource implications to the Council.

Cabinet members expressed their appreciation to Councillor Caulfield and all members of the Scrutiny Project Group for their hard work on this issue, and noted the thoroughness and professionalism of the final report and recommendations.

*** RESOLVED –**

That Cabinet receives with thanks the report and recommendations of the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee and commissions a corporate officer working group to consider the resource implications to the Council of implementing the Committee’s recommendations, and to report this considered position back to the Committee and Cabinet for further review and final decision.

REASONS FOR DECISION

1. To ensure that all Friends of Groups can take on an effective role in the care and management of Chesterfield’s open spaces.
2. To contribute to the delivery of the Chesterfield Borough Council Plan priority “to improve the quality of life for local people”.