



Policy and Resources Committee

Minutes

Tuesday, 22 March 2022 at 18:00

PRESENT:-

Councillor Smith (in the Chair), Councillors Flaxman-Taylor, Grant, P Hammond, Hacon, Myers, Plant, Wainwright, B Walker, Wells Williamson, & A Wright.

Councillor Candon attended as a substitute for Councillor P Carpenter.

Ms S Oxtoby (Chief Executive Officer), Ms C Whatling (Monitoring Officer), Mr J Wedon (Senior Performance & Data Protection Officer), Mr S Best (Regeneration & Funding Manager), Ms L Snow (Finance Manager), Mr S Hubbard (Strategic Planning Manager) & Mrs C Webb (Executive Services Officer).

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P Carpenter.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Williamson declared a personal interest in item 6 in his capacity as a Trustee of the Preservation Trust.

Councillor Wells declared a personal interest in item 6 in his capacity as a Trustee of the Preservation Trust.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on the 8 February 2022 were confirmed.

4 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee received and considered the Forward Plan.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee agree the Forward Plan.

5 OUTSIDE BODY REPORT

The Committee received and considered the report from the Corporate Services Manager.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee note the report.

6 2022-23 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

The Committee received and considered the report from the Senior Performance & Data Protection Officer.

The Senior Performance & Data Protection Officer reported the salient areas of the report to the Committee. The Annual Action Plan 2022-23 documented the projects and activities that would be taken forward by the Council during 2022-23, this builds on the previous year's Action plan and continues the delivery of The Plan 2020 - 2025. The Annual Action Plan also included a suite of Performance Indicators that related to The Plan 2020 - 2025 and on-going service delivery of the Council. This data would be presented to Members quarterly through the various Service Committees.

Councillor Williamson asked for an update on the proposed Heritage Centre as he was concerned regarding the proposed timeline as being deliverable by December 2022 as this might prove to be difficult.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee had reviewed and approved the Annual Action Plan 2022-23.

7 ADOPTION OF NORFOLK GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND RECREATIONAL AVOIDANCE AND MITIGATION STRATEGY

The Committee received and considered the report from the Strategic Planning Manager.

The Strategic Planning Manager reported that the adoption of the Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreation Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy and collection of the new tariff of £185.93 was essential in order to ensure that the Council could discharge its responsibilities under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as highlighted in the report. The strategy ensured a joined-up approach at mitigating impact on designated habitat sites across Norfolk, particularly given the fact that impact was often cross-boundary. It would not be sufficient to continue with implementing the Council's existing Habitat Monitoring and Mitigation Strategy alone, as this did not provide mitigation for the Broads Special Area of Conservation and Broadland Special Protection Area. Not adopting the strategy could present a risk to the legal robustness of planning permissions for new housing and tourist accommodation in the Borough, as the Council would be unable to demonstrate no adverse impacts remained on the designated sites as detailed in the report and appendices. Failure to adopt the strategy might also result in challenges under the Duty to Cooperate on the Council's Local Plan review.

Councillor Grant asked for clarification as to what would happen if the Council was unable to deliver the 42,740 required homes and how this would impact on the Council's financial position in regard to this scheme.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee:-

- (i) Adopt the Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy on behalf of the Council,
- (ii) Approves the collection of developer contributions from 1st April 2022 towards the strategy as a method for mitigating impact on designated habitat sites; and
- (iii) Endorses the Norfolk-wide Statement of Common Ground on the Norfolk Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy.

8 GREAT YARMOUTH AND GORLESTON-ON-SEA TOWN DEAL

The Committee received and considered the report from the Director of Finance and the Regeneration & Funding Manager.

The Chief Executive Officer updated Members on the current status of the Town Deal process and the development of the nine interventions or projects and the Treasury Green Book-Compliant Full Business Cases. Town Deals effectively delegated decision-making within the envelope of funding awards to local processes, with the formally-constituted Town Board, prioritising and developing projects

and the Council's statutory Section 151 Officer signing those off.

The Chief Executive Officer informed the Committee that the Town Board had endorsed substantive drafts of the Full Business Cases on 26 January 2022 and the high level Summary Documents last week that must be submitted to the Government by 24 March 2022 in order to unlock the £20.1m Town Deal award. The capital programme presented as part of the Section 151 Officer's budget report reflected those projects included within the Town Deal programme and, where applicable, the Council's funding for these projects.

The Chairman and the Chief Executive Officer thanked the Regeneration and Funding Manager for all his hard work carried out on the project.

Councillor Plant reiterated that this was a real achievement for the town and that Great Yarmouth was a beacon shining brightly across the county and he sincerely thanked all the officers involved for their sterling work.

Councillor B Walker reported that he was annoyed with the title of the funding application as being Great Yarmouth & Gorleston-on-Sea as Gorleston had not benefitted from the scheme. The Chief Executive Officer reminded Members that the original Town Deal area boundary had been Great Yarmouth only but the Council had asked for the parameters to be widened to include Gorleston & Bradwell.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee:-

(i) Receive this report and note that the capital programme presented as part of the 2022/23 Budget Report reflects projects included in the Town Deal programme and, where applicable, the Council's funding for these projects; and

(ii) Endorse the proposal to submit summary documents to the Government by 24 March 2022 in order to unlock Town Deal funding of up to £20.1 million.

9 2021-22 PERIOD 10 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

This is the general fund 2122 budget monitoring report up to the end of January 2022 which shows a current surplus forecast position of £249k. The budget was set at a £112k deficit so this is an improved position than originally anticipated. The forecast position does not account for any carry forward of underspend requests by Heads of Service, which will be considered and approved by the section 151 officer as part of the yearend outturn process.

Appendices A to C provide the detail analysis of the budget to forecast for the revenue budget with explanations for significant variances provided.

Nearly £16m of business grants have been paid out this financial year, applications are now closed and the final payments should be processed this week. Appendix D provides the capital programme of £48.3m which includes some budgets that span financial years such as the capital spend on the Marina Centre project. The current forecast spend at month 10 is £24.9m with the remaining £23.4m to be carried forward into future years.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman reported that there was no other business being of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration at the meeting.