

EXECUTIVE DECISION NOTICE**CABINET**

A record of the decisions made at the meeting of the Cabinet held on Wednesday, 24 April 2019, at 10.00 a.m.

Present

Councillors

Giles Archibald (Leader and Promoting South Lakeland Portfolio Holder) (Chairman)

Robin Ashcroft	Culture and Leisure Portfolio Holder
Jonathan Brook	Deputy Leader and Housing, People and Innovation Portfolio Holder
Philip Dixon	Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder
Andrew Jarvis	Finance Portfolio Holder
Dyan Jones	Environment Portfolio Holder

Also in attendance at the meeting was Councillor Mark Wilson (Leader of the Labour Group).

Apologies for absence were received from Shadow Executive Members Ben Berry (Shadow Cabinet Leader (Promoting South Lakeland Portfolio)), John Holmes (Shadow Cabinet (Finance Portfolio)) and Janette Jenkinson (Shadow Cabinet (Health and Wellbeing Portfolio)).

Officers

Inge Booth	Senior Committee Services Officer
David Bradley	Principal Housing Standards Officer
Lawrence Conway	Chief Executive
Anthea Lowe	Solicitor to the Council
Claire Read	Financial Services Officer
Fraser Robertson	Senior Communications Officer
Simon Rowley	Director of Customer and Commercial Services
Helen Smith	Finance Lead Specialist (Section 151 Officer)
David Sykes	Director of Strategy, Innovation and Resources

CEX/105 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Leader and Promoting South Lakeland Portfolio Holder referred to Councillor Graham Vincent's recent resignation from the Cabinet and wished to place on record thanks for his service to the Cabinet over many years.

CEX/106 CABINET EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

RESOLVED – That the Chairman be authorised to sign, as a correct record, the Executive Decisions made by Cabinet on 6 February 2019.

CEX/107 DELEGATED EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

RESOLVED – That the Delegated Executive Decisions made by Portfolio Holders or Officers on 14 March 2019 be received.

CEX/108 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED – That it be noted that no declarations of interest were raised.

CEX/109 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUDED ITEMS

RESOLVED – That it be noted that there are no excluded items on the agenda.

CEX/110 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

RESOLVED – That it be noted that no questions, representations, deputations or petitions have been received in respect of this meeting.

CEX/111 FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED – That the contents of the Forward Plan published on 26 March 2019 be noted.

CEX/112 2018/19 FINAL ACCOUNTS REPORT - CARRY FORWARDS AND RE-PROFILING REQUESTS**Summary**

The Finance Portfolio Holder presented a report detailing revenue carry forward requests totalling £0.5m into 2019/20. These were made up of a number of requests as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report and, as all of them were below £100,000, they could be approved by Cabinet. The largest areas related to:-

- £72,300 on the Grange Lido project;
- £55,000 due to implementation delays on Economic Development projects; and
- £65,700 on schemes supported by Homelessness Grant, partly due to the late receipt of grant in the year.

The Budget report for 2019/20, approved on 26 February 2019, had approved the carry-forward of £59,000 on the Tour of Britain Cycle Race and flood risk assessments. These carry-forwards were required to fund expenditure already included in the 2019/20 budgets and were included in the figures set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

The approval of the carry forwards would enable the work that had been planned in 2018/19 to be delivered in 2019/20. Carry forward amounts had been reviewed against the draft service expenditure to ensure that at corporate, directorate and service levels there was sufficient budget to support the requests. This position could change as the Statement of Accounts and year end position were finalised. Any corrections required would be reported back to Cabinet and Council within the out-turn report in July 2019.

Although the carry forward of budgets was an important flexibility within the financial procedure rules, the services identified needed to be delivered as part of meeting the Council Plan. To support this, spend of the carry forward amounts would be reported on as part of the quarterly budget monitoring, throughout 2019/20.

The underlying reasons for carrying budget forward would be reviewed with managers. Where improvements could be made to the method of profiling budgets, these would be fed in to the 2019/20 budget process.

The Finance Portfolio Holder turned to re-profiling of the Capital Programme, advising that variations on spending on the Capital Programme usually reflected changes in the progress of individual schemes. As these schemes spanned a number of years, any variation needed to be reflected in an update to the profiled spending in the Capital Programme.

Appendix 2 to the report showed those Capital Schemes in the 2018/19 Capital Programme where expenditure varied to the approved Capital Programme. To enable these schemes to continue and be completed, it was necessary to vary the Capital Programme in 2019/20 to reflect the variations in phasing of expenditure. The total for re-profiling was £3.144m. The Cabinet had delegated powers to approve these changes in accordance with Para 8.2 of the Financial Procedure Rules.

Although some of the underspend related to factors outside of the Council's control, the Finance Portfolio Holder pointed out that, with high levels of capital expenditure expected over the next few years, processes would continue to be reviewed to minimise any future yearly underspends.

The Finance Portfolio Holder, in closing, thanked officers in the Finance Team for their work.

Reference was made to the previous year when it had been agreed that not all community funding would be put back into reserves and instead used for worthwhile community projects. Attention was drawn to and appreciation expressed with regard to an amount of £5,000 which had been given to Ulverston MIND for mindfulness projects that had proved to be very successful. In addition, £1,000 had been put towards a Year of Youth Opportunity (YOYO) event and it was pointed out how a little seed funding could lead to great things. The Finance Lead Specialist (Section 151 Officer) undertook to provide Members with details on how the remainder of the community funding had been allocated.

The importance of following through on the work carried out by the Leader and Promoting South Lakeland Portfolio Holder and the Environment Portfolio Holder with regard to Climate Change was raised.

Discussion took place on a number of specific revenue carry forward requests.

With regard to the underspend on Local Plans, it was suggested that details regarding the funding available for neighbourhood planning should be publicised which could be of assistance in unlocking additional CIL funding. There was opportunity to move forward to achieve improved levels of infrastructure. The upgrades to town centres and improvements to Wi-Fi in Ulverston were commended. In response, the Deputy Leader and Housing, People and Innovation Portfolio Holder suggested that this area of funding should be highlighted to the Cumbria Association of Local Councils. In response to a further suggestion that the process of producing Neighbourhood Plans needed to be simplified, he pointed out that although there may be opportunities for simplification, this was a statutory process, governed by legislation. The Director of Strategy, Innovation and Resources explained that the process was prescribed by legislation, as Neighbourhood Plans formed part of the Local Plan. However, he undertook to look into the matter.

With regard to Community Leisure, it was raised that following engagement with the community on Grange Lido and the Ulverston Leisure Centre, new demands were coming forward. Reference was made to a recent running event in Ulverston which had upset local residents due to the resulting additional amount of cars and litter in the area. Although the importance of encouraging people regarding their health and wellbeing was acknowledged, it was pointed out that the need for sensible bounds should be drawn to the attention of community groups. New demands led to new needs, for example dropped kerbs, new paving, etc., and it was suggested that a facility be made available to make it clear that the Council listened.

It was suggested that a little more could always be spent on parks and street cleansing, with more attention being paid to town centre hotspots. Concern was expressed in relation to the underspend in this area, particularly when people had been carrying out big litter picks and with regard to the potential to help Britain in Bloom.

The Culture and Leisure Portfolio Holder expressed appreciation for the comments raised and took on board the idea for a forum for suggestions.

The Finance Portfolio Holder, also expressing thanks for the comments, pointed out that the underspend on Street Cleansing was due to a grant having been received only in March, resulting in the need for a carry forward. He explained that the Cabinet was aware of the need for appropriate rigour for processes whilst maintaining sufficient flexibility for the genuinely unexpected. The Finance Lead Specialist (Section 151 Officer) reiterated the fact that the grant for Street Cleansing had been announced in the last week of March, adding that the rest of that budget had been spent in-year.

The Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder undertook to discuss appropriate arrangements for running events with the Council's partners, as this was something that should be encouraged and facilitated.

The Leader and Promoting South Lakeland Portfolio Holder informed Members that the new arrangements for locality working would facilitate collaboration with all councillors to identify areas where work was required. He referred to the point raised earlier, stressing the fact that small amounts of grants could leverage additional funding, informing Members that details of work carried out relative to the Gateway which had led to unlocking of additional funding would be explained in the new Council year. He referred to the comment regarding Climate Change, emphasising that this was a very serious issue which was being addressed by the Council.

Decision

RESOLVED – That the following be approved:-

- (1) the revenue carry forwards as set out at Appendix 1 to the report; and***
- (2) the re-profiling of expenditure and associated budgets for the capital schemes from 2018/19 into 2019/20 as set out at Appendix 2 to the report.***

Reasons for Decision

Approval of the carry forwards and re-profiling will allow the services identified within the appendices to the report to be delivered.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

There are no alternative options presented. Members could decide to not approve some or all of the proposed carry forwards or re-profiling. This would result in the specific scheme not being delivered but would, on the other hand, increase unallocated reserve balances that could be used for other purposes.

CEX/113 CUMBRIA WIDE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR DISABLED ADAPTATIONS

Summary

The Deputy Leader and Housing, People and Innovation Portfolio Holder reported that the Council had a statutory duty to provide Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs). These consisted of adaptations to the homes of disabled and vulnerable people to enable them to live independently. The Council had approved a DFG Policy which also included discretionary grants.

The Council had participated in a Framework Agreement for the past two years with Carlisle, Allerdale and Eden councils, which had provided value for money, high quality adaptations. The Framework allowed speedier adaptations due to the fact that the schedule of work and price had been agreed in advance, and there was no need to obtain two quotes. The client did, however, continue to have the choice to select their preferred contractor or contractors to provide comparable quotes, but this seldom occurred.

The Framework Agreement consisted of five lots for Disabled Adaptations (level access showers, door widening, modular ramps, shower toilet and heating). On behalf of the Cumbria councils, Carlisle City Council would undertake a procurement exercise to select up to six contractors for each lot. The Framework would enable DFG applications to be processed quicker using approved contractors. The existing Framework was due to end in April 2019, hence the need for a new procurement exercise to be undertaken for a further two year period, with the option to extend for a further two years.

It was proposed that, pending completion of the new Framework Agreement, the Authority entered into a short extension of up to six months to the current Agreement in order to enable the delivery of DFG adaptations.

In 2017/18 the Council had undertaken 79 adaptations under the Framework. At least 80 per year were expected over the next two years, although it was pointed out that this figure could be substantially higher, depending on demand.

In closing, the Deputy Leader and Housing, People and Innovation Portfolio Holder thanked the Principal Housing Standards Officer for his ongoing work and for the preparation of the report.

Clarification was sought with regard to the partnership arrangement between the Council and South Lakes Housing and also with regard to the process of applying for Disabled Facilities Grants, some residents having suggested that it was not easy. The Deputy Leader and Housing, People and Innovation Portfolio Holder explained that the practicalities of particular locations meant that it was not always possible to deliver what people hoped for. The Principal Housing Standards Officer explained in detail how the process worked. He also informed Members that he had recently attended meetings with the local Occupational Therapist and South Lakes Housing in order to establish the way forward and so provide clarity for the future.

The Leader and Promoting South Lakeland Portfolio Holder commended this important scheme and thanked those involved. He drew attention to developments which had been made by the Council with regard to the provision of Changing Places Toilets and stressed that the Authority wanted to do all it could to help people who were disabled, adding that any suggestions on how support could be enhanced would be welcomed.

Decision

RESOLVED – That

(1) approval be given for the Council's participation in the Cumbria Wide Agreement for the delivery of specific Disabled Facilities Adaptations; and

(2) the Director of Customer and Commercial Services be delegated authority, in consultation with the Deputy/Monitoring Officer, to negotiate the terms of, and enter into, an extension to the existing framework agreement.

Reasons for Decision

To participate in a new Framework Agreement for two years from 1 May 2019, to be used to enable the delivery of specific Disabled Facilities adaptations across the District (a minimum of 80 per year).

The decision will assist in the Council's Corporate Priority of "Homes to meet needs."

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

The Council could choose to revert to the old system of obtaining a minimum of two quotes for each adaptation. This is not recommended, as applications would take longer to process, may not provide value for money and the service would not meet internal audit standards.

The meeting ended at 10.35 a.m.