



# MINUTES

## Finance and Democracy Committee

<b>Date:</b>	Tuesday, 24 June 2019
<b>Venue:</b>	Town Hall, St Annes.
<b>Committee Members Present:</b>	Councillor Karen Buckley (Chairman) Councillor Vince Settle (Vice-Chairman)  Councillors Peter Anthony, Peter Collins, Sue Fazackerley, Linda Nulty, Liz Oades, David O'Rourke, Richard Redcliffe, Elaine Silverwood, John Singleton JP, Michael Withers.
<b>Other Councillors Present:</b>	Alan Clayton
<b>Officers Present:</b>	Allan Oldfield, Paul O'Donoghue, Andrew Loynd, Katharine McDonnell
<b>Other Attendees:</b>	Two members of the public were present

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the committee.

### Public Platform

There were no speakers on this occasion.

#### 1. Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded that any disclosable pecuniary interests should be declared as required by the Localism Act 2011 and any personal or prejudicial interests should be declared as required by the Council's Code of Conduct for Members.

Councillor Singleton declared a personal interest in agenda item 9, Fully Funded Addition to Capital Programme – Staining Bus Service, as he was a Staining Parish Councillor.

#### 2. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the Finance and Democracy Committee meeting held on 18 March 2019 as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

#### 3. Substitute Members

The following substitutions were reported under Council procedure rule 23 (c):

Councillor Sue Fazackerley substituted for Councillor Ellie Gaunt.

Decision Items

4. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) – General Revenue Fund, Capital Programme & Treasury Management Outturn Position for 2018/19

Paul O'Donoghue, Chief Financial Officer, presented the MTFS Outturn position, advising that on 5 March 2019 the Council set its budget for 2019/20 and also set a revised budget for 2018/19.

Mr O'Donoghue provided a detailed summary of the revenue outturn position, the capital programme outturn and the Treasury Management annual report.

In regards to the revenue outturn position, which was summarised in Table 1 of the report, it showed a net favourable revenue variance, before slippage requests, of £789k.

Mr O'Donoghue advised that it was recommended that of that total underspend, £17k was to be moved to the EU Exit Reserve, £530k into the Capital Investment Reserve and the remaining £242k was for slippage items. He referred the committee to Appendix C for a full breakdown of those slippage items.

A detailed summary was then provided of the outturn position of the capital programme. Mr O'Donoghue advised that the approved expenditure budget had been £17.577m whereas the actual outturn was £15.087m, providing a net underspend of £2.490m.

He advised that after adjusting for slippage of £2.479m, which was itemised within the report, the overall outturn position for 2018/19 was an in-year favourable variance of £11k.

Mr O'Donoghue concluded his presentation with a summary of the treasury management outturn position. He explained this was the day to day management of cash balances, the report included prudential indicators, which had been fully complied with. He concluded by advising that the council had external borrowing of £1m, which was due to be repaid by December 2019, at which point the Council would be debt free.

In response to questions, Mr O'Donoghue advised that an internal audit review of ICT resilience and recovery had been undertaken and an action plan and report were currently being compiled as a result. He also advised that there were costs involved with the delayed disposal of the Public Offices site, but officers were working diligently to finalise the deal as soon as possible.

Without further debate, it was RESOLVED to

1. Approve the General Fund Revenue Outturn position as summarised in table 1 of the report;
2. Approve the revenue slippage items as set out in paragraph 2.5 and Appendix C of the report;
3. Approve the transfers to earmarked reserves as set out in paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6 and as summarised in table 1 of the report;
4. Approve the Capital Outturn position, including financing, as set out in sections 6 to 9 of the report;
5. Approve the capital slippage items as set out in Appendix F of the report; and
6. Approve the Treasury Management Annual Report as set out in sections 10 to 12 and the actual Prudential Indicators set out in Appendix F of the report.

5. Purchase of Land Adjacent to Squires Gate Station

Allan Oldfield, Chief Executive reported that the Council had been asked to assist with the creation of an accessible route to Squires Gate Station platform. It had been agreed that the cost of constructing such access would be met by a developer contribution from Persimmon Homes. However the developer did not own the land. Fylde Council had agreed Heads of Terms to purchase a small parcel of land to enable the proposed access to be completed and it was proposed to grant a long lease to Network Rail to ensure that future maintenance would not funded by the residents of Fylde.

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In response to questions, Mr Andrew Loynd, Technical Support Manager, advised that the land owner claimed ownership for 60 years but had never registered the land with Land Registry so the Council was waiting for the completion of some statutory documents.

He also advised that under the terms of the lease to Network Rail, only a peppercorn rent would be chargeable as no income would be generated from the use of the land.

Following debate, the committee proposed that officers request Network Rail to take the costs of the land purchase and legal fees.

It was RESOLVED

1. That officers approach Network Rail with a request that Network Rail fund, or contribute to funding of, the purchase of the land and the associated legal fees in the first instance;
2. If 1. above is unsuccessful, to approve the purchase of approximately 35.6 square metres of land adjacent to Squires Gate Station for the sum of £3,000 plus payment of the vendor's legal costs up to £2,400 i.e. to a total cost of no more than £5,400, in the absence of recouping any of those costs;
3. To approve an addition to the Council's Capital Programme for 2019/20 in the sum of £5,400 to be met from the Capital Investment Reserve for the purchase of the land adjacent to Squires Gate Station as described above;
4. To approve expenditure in the maximum sum of £5,400 for the purchase of the land adjacent to Squires Gate Station as described above; and
5. To approve the granting of a long ground lease of this land, once purchased, to Network Rail to include the transference of responsibility for management and maintenance of the land.

## 6. Webcasting

Allan Oldfield, Chief Executive advised that the technology to live webcast Council meetings was installed as part of Phase 6 of the Accommodation Project refurbishment works of the Town Hall. A subsidiary of Blackpool Council provide the technical know-how to facilitate the mixing of the images for live broadcast, on a rolling six-monthly contract. He advised that live webcasting provided another avenue to engage with the wider public in the work of the Council, and for those who are unable to attend, but have an interest, feel involved in the process of decision making. It also allowed attendees in the Chamber, seated in the public gallery, feel included in the meeting.

Mr Oldfield provided an overview of the viewing figures and the costs involved.

In response to questions, Mr Oldfield advised that a request was made to record planning meetings because they are held in the day, they are lengthy, covering issues that are sensitive and / or have greater public interest, the recordings were principally used to ensure that decisions had been correctly recorded by officers.

The committee debated the issue of broadcasting the planning meetings, and agreed that those members who were also Planning Committee members would approach the Chairman in the first instance to informally discuss webcasting the meetings in future.

With no further debate, it was RESOLVED

1. That the current arrangements for Blackpool Council to film Council meetings be continued on a rolling six month basis, with a member of the Governance Team working alongside the Blackpool Council team with a view to developing in-house expertise to film Council meetings in the first instance, with the potential to widen out the facility to other meetings; and
2. That an updated report be brought forward in early 2020 to report progress.

## 7. Appointment to Outside Bodies/Working Groups

The Chairman presented a report regarding the appointment to Outside Bodies and Working groups, within the remit of the Finance and Democracy Committee. He explained that each year full Council appoints members to outside bodies for the forthcoming municipal year.

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The committee debated each of the working groups and concluded that the Transformation Strategy and Accommodation Working Groups were no longer required. A number of councillors expressed concern that the Budget Working Group did not have any opposition members involved, even as observers. Following the debate, an amendment was moved to include a member of the opposition on the Budget Working Group, this amendment was voted upon and lost.

It was therefore RESOLVED to

1. recommend nominations to the outside bodies listed for consideration by council

Blackpool Airport and Hillhouse Enterprise Zone Project Board	Chairman of Finance and Democracy
Fylde Community Project Fund	The Mayor
North West Employers Organisation	Chairman of Finance and Democracy (Councillor Vince Settle as named substitute)
North West of England & the Isle of Man Reserve Forces & Cadets Association	Councillor Ed Nash

2. confirm the establishment of the working group listed which will meet as and when required

Budget Working Group	Councillors Fazackerley, Buckley, Little, Aitken, Fiddler, Redcliffe, Small, Settle and Singleton
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(Councillors Collins, Nulty, Oades and Silverwood asked for their votes against this resolution to be recorded)

3. confirm that working groups listed were now disbanded as the work had concluded

Accommodation Working Group
The Transformation Strategy

## 8. Fully Funded Addition to Capital Programme – Kirkham and Wesham Station

Allan Oldfield presented a report regarding Kirkham and Wesham Station. It was reported that officers had worked with Network Rail, Northern Rail and Lancashire County Council in order to examine whether there was potential to provide park and ride facilities at Kirkham and Wesham Railway Station. The next phase in the work would be to commission an Options and Design Report in order to progress the project to the next stage and Members were requested to authorise the use of these funds for that purpose.

The matter had already been considered by the Planning Committee on 12 June 2019.

The committee welcomed the progress in this much needed project.

It was RESOLVED

1. To approve of a fully-funded increase to the Capital Programme in the sum of £15,000 for 2019/20 for the Kirkham and Wesham Station Car Parking Options and Design Report, to be met in full from S106 developer contributions for delivery of improvements at the railway station currently held by the Council for this purpose; and
2. To authorise the proposed expenditure in respect of the GRIP 3 Options and Design Report in the total sum of £15,000 as detailed within this report.

## 9. Fully Funded Addition to Capital Programme – Staining Bus Service

Allan Oldfield presented a report addressing the matter of payment of a developer contribution (generated from the development at Baines Farm, Staining in relation to application 09/0505) in the total sum of £13,200 to

Staining Parish Council, to provide a once weekly return service from Staining to Poulton on market day (Monday) for two years.

The Operational Management Committee had considered the matter at its meeting held on 20th June 2019.

Some members of the committee commented that the bus would be travelling to Poulton instead of Kirkham. It was explained that the bus would be replacing a discontinued service which had previously travelled to Poulton.

It was RESOLVED to approve a fully-funded addition to the Capital Programme in 2019/20 in the sum of £13,200, to be met from section 106 monies received from the development at Baines Farm, the monies to be paid to Staining Parish Council to fund a bus service between Staining and Poulton-le-Fylde.

#### Information Items

The following information items were received and noted by the committee.

#### 10. Local Elections

The Committee received information regarding the recharging of election fees from parish councils following the local elections. It was advised that an update report would come to a future meeting of the committee, with feedback regarding the process of recharging.

#### 11. Community Projects Fund

The committee received an update of the operation of the fund for the period 2018/19.

The committee discussed the merits of the fund, and suggested that more be done to publicise the fund. It was also suggested that a showcase event could be held of successful bids and the resulting projects.

#### 12. Year-End Performance 2018/19

The committee received details of the key performance outcomes for the financial yearend 2018/19.

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