

The Executive – 18 October 2023

Minutes of the meeting of **The Executive** held on **18 October 2023** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr J R F Mason

Cllr J E Cripps
Cllr A H Eves
Cllr Mrs J R Gooding
Cllr M Hoy
Cllr J E Newport

Cllr L J Newport
Cllr C M Stanley
Cllr A L Williams
Cllr Mrs V A Wilson

NON MEMBERS ATTENDING

Cllr D S Efde
Cllr Mrs J E McPherson
Cllr J N Gooding

OFFICERS PRESENT

S Summers	- Strategic Director
P Barnes	- Director of Assets and Investment
C Mayhew	- Acting Joint Director of People & Governance
S Worthington	- Acting Service Manager, Democratic Services, RDC & BBC
V Meanwell	- Democratic Services Officer

208 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

209 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr M Hoy declared a non registrable interest by virtue of being part of the Cost of Living working group and attending one meeting of three. Cllr A L Williams declared a non registrable interest for Item 7 by virtue of being a trustee of RRAVS.

210 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The Proper Officer reported that, pursuant to Executive Procedure Rules 3.1, the following Member questions had been received:-

(1) Agenda Item 3: Minutes – 21 September 2023 – Minute No. 182 – CCTV in Rayleigh High Street

From Cllr D S Efde to the Executive Lead Member for Communities and Health, Cllr L J Newport:-

“With recommendation two being agreed at the executive on the 21st of September 2023. I would like to know what consultation if any was sent to

Rochford Parish Council, explaining the new options and recommendations of which recommendation two states that the installation and monitoring costs, would all be met by RDC in perpetuity?”

Cllr L J Newport responded as follows: -

When the Community Safety Fund was first introduced Rochford Parish Council advised that they were not interested in applying for a grant for installing CCTV. I'm not aware of any formal consultation or engagement that has been undertaken with Rochford Parish Council however they could still make an approach to Rochford District Council if they so wished.

Cllr D S Efde asked a supplementary question:-

‘Would the same offer be extended to Rochford Parish Council, as the offer at the time was different to what is in recommendation 2?’

Cllr L J Newport advised that she would provide a response outside the meeting.

(2) Agenda Item 7: Voluntary Sector Grants Cross Party Members’ Panel Decision

From Cllr Mrs D S Belton to the Executive Lead Member for Leisure, Tourism & Wellbeing, Cllr Mrs J R Gooding:-

The Chairman, Cllr J R F Mason read the question in the absence of Cllr Mrs D S Belton.

“In June of this year, I was one member of a group of 8 asked to participate in scoring the voluntary grant applications. Whilst I am happy that this decision has now come to the Executive, I would like to ask the Lead Member what has caused the 4 month delay in this report coming forward?”

Cllr Mrs J R Gooding responded as follows:-

“Thank you for your question. You are correct in that the group met in June this year to review and agree the Voluntary Sector Grants. The successful grants have been paid and there was a delay in advising the unsuccessful applicants as Officers were looking for alternative funding. In terms of the report to Executive unfortunately, due to lack of resources resulting in Officer's oversight the report to the Executive to formally agree the grants has only been made tonight”

(3) Agenda Item 9: Cost of Living (CoL) Payments

From Cllr Mrs J E McPherson to the Executive Lead Member for Leisure, Tourism & Wellbeing, Cllr Mrs J R Gooding:-

“What is the Executive’s rationale for deferring this report again, and thereby delaying providing the cost of living support to those members of our communities who are really struggling every day to make ends meet?”

Cllr Mrs J R Gooding responded as follows: -

“Thank you for your question. At the Executive Meeting on the 21st September Members were advised by Officers that as yet no criteria had been set and there was no process in place to allocate grant funding and if this was to be pursued it would require some thought. On that basis a Motion was subsequently moved that the item be deferred to the next meeting of the Executive. However given the situation with staff resources I believe we need to prioritise this to meet residents needs sooner rather than later and I will be proposing a new motion when the item is considered”.

Cllr Mrs J E McPherson asked a supplementary question:-

“As the recommendation is for deferral, should the Executive follow that, what is Plan B if key staff absences continue, bearing in mind the need for support is now; how much longer will residents have to wait for support”?

The Strategic Director responded as follows:-

“In terms of the deferral recommendation we will have to wait and see what the Members decide on the recommendation. In terms of staffing, we would look to strengthen staffing so we are not in the same situation going forwards”.

211 VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS CROSS PARTY MEMBERS’ PANEL DECISION

The Executive considered the report of the Executive Lead Member for Leisure, Tourism & Wellbeing providing an update on the work undertaken within the district for the 2023/24 voluntary grants process.

Cllr Mrs J R Gooding advised the Executive that the supporting papers went to the Executive on 12 April 2023 and not 13 January 2023, as stated in the report.

In response to a Member question Cllr Mrs J R Gooding advised that in future the report would come to The Executive in good time.

In response to a further Member question Cllr Mrs J R Gooding advised that she was unaware of whether the unsuccessful grant applicants had been able to gain further grant funding from an alternative source and would seek to gain clarity and report this to the Executive.

212 CHRISTMAS PARKING SUSPENSION

The Executive considered the report of the Executive Lead Member for Public Spaces & Assets in respect of suspending car parking charges on the

Saturdays during December prior to Christmas.

In response to a Member question the Director of Assets and Investment advised that the Council would be looking at alternatives to the suspension of parking charges for the four weeks in December for next year; however, changes now for this year could result in costs being incurred with the suppliers. There would be a forum held with local businesses to look at alternatives.

Cllr C M Stanley moved a motion to amend the recommendation that the 23rd December be replaced with 31st December. There was, however, no seconder for this amendment.

A Member asked whether in future it would be possible to explore how successful it was to remove these parking charges and that clarification be provided around the amount of loss in revenue.

In response, the Director of Assets and Investment advised that the open forum with local businesses would look to start in January.

Cllr Mrs V A Wilson moved a motion, seconded by Cllr AH Eves, that car parking charges in all Council car parks are suspended on the Saturdays during December prior to Christmas. The dates are 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd December.

(This was unanimously agreed.)

Resolved

That car parking charges in all Council car parks are suspended on the Saturdays during December prior to Christmas. The dates are 2nd, 9th, 16th, and 23rd December. (DAI)

213 COST OF LIVING (CoL) PAYMENTS

(Note: Cllr A L Williams declared a non-registrable interest in this item by virtue of being a trustee of RRAVS and confirmed that he would not vote on this item of business.)

The Executive considered the report of the Executive Lead Member for Leisure, Tourism & Wellbeing on the Cost of Living Payments.

Cllr Mrs J R Gooding proposed a new motion that authority be delegated to the Lead Member for Leisure, Tourism and Wellbeing and the Director of Communities & Health to commission a provider through a Service Level Agreement to provide a grant of £7000 for roadshows to assist residents to access support to help them with the cost of living. The Service Level

Agreement to include conditions including locations, performance measures and a review of outcomes.

In response to a Member question the Strategic Director advised that the report had previously been deferred due to there not being criteria in place to run a grant application process. Based on the fact that there was a need for residents to have this money and support as early as possible a high-level options appraisal was completed which included both the Council running a grants application process, or an alternative run by another provider, or to provide funding to a provider who already completes this type of work who we could request, with conditions, to undertake this work. The option Cllr Mrs J R Gooding proposed is based on the most beneficial, efficient, and effective way of getting support to residents.

In response to a Member question Cllr Mrs J R Gooding advised that the service level agreement that would be put in place would provide information on how many roadshows would be delivered and where they would take place. The £7,000 was not direct funding to families but for the cost of running the roadshows and any additional services.

In response to a further Member question the Strategic Director advised that the aim was for the agreement to be drafted and agreed with the provider within the next two weeks.

Cllr J R F Mason moved a motion, seconded by Cllr M Hoy, that the appended report be deferred to the Executive on 16 November 2023 due to key staff absences and this was lost on a show of hands.

(0 Members voted in favour, 9 against and 0 abstained)

Cllr Mrs J R Gooding moved a motion, seconded by Cllr M Hoy, that authority is delegated to the Lead Member for Leisure, Tourism and Well-Being and the Director of Communities & Health to commission a provider through a Service Level Agreement to provide a grant of £7000 for roadshows to assist residents to access support to help them with the cost of living. The Service Level Agreement to include conditions including locations, performance measures and a review of outcomes.

This was approved unanimously.

Resolved

That authority is delegated to the Lead Member for Leisure, Tourism and Well-Being and the Director of Communities & Health to commission a provider through a Service Level Agreement to provide a grant of £7000 for roadshows to assist residents to access support to help them with the cost of living. The Service Level Agreement to include conditions including locations, performance measures and a review of outcomes. (DCH)

The Leader extended his thanks to Members and officers for bringing forward the report in good time.

The meeting closed at 8.19 pm.

Chairman

Date

If you would like these minutes in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.