

## COUNCIL MEETING – 19 APRIL 2016

### REPORT OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

15 March 2016

Present: Councillors Bailey (Chairman), L Lawman (Vice-Chairman), Henley (7.10pm), Simmons and Skittrall

Also present: Mrs L Elliott (Head of Finance), Mr T Furber (Project Accountant), Mr M Watkins (Chief Internal Auditor, CW Audit Services), Mr J Cornett (Director, KMPG) and Miss K Denton (Principal Corporate Support Manager)

(Councillors Griffiths and G Lawman attended as observers)

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

**RESOLVED** to note that apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bell and Francis.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

**RESOLVED** to note that in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the council's code of conduct and the council's constitution, the under-mentioned councillors declared an interest in the following items:

Councillor	Minute	Report Title	Reason
L Lawman	4	External Audit Plan for 2015-16 Accounts	Personal – husband, Councillor G Lawman, is a Wellingborough Homes Board member.
L Lawman	8	Accounting Policies Update	Personal – husband, Councillor G Lawman, is a Wellingborough Homes Board member.

#### 3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2015 be confirmed and signed.

#### 4. EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN FOR 2015-16 ACCOUNTS

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received to inform members how KPMG would deliver their audit work for the council. The chairman invited Mr Cornett of KPMG, the council's external auditors, to present the report.

Mr Cornett advised that there were three standard risks for the council, each of which was mandatory for all of KPMG's clients in the coming year. These consisted of:

- Accounting for the negative capital financing requirement;
- Management override of controls; and
- Fraudulent revenue recognition.

Mr Cornett explained that KPMG were currently considering the council's intentions for the negative capital finance requirement in comparison to how other authorities had managed similar matters and it was hoped to conclude this prior to the preparation of the council's accounts.

Mr Cornett referred to the Value for Money (VFM) work to be undertaken, the guidelines of which are published by the National Audit Office. He explained that the audit was to review the council's arrangements for delivering VFM rather than reviewing whether the council was actually delivering VFM.

He continued to inform the committee of a reduction of £16,000 in the audit fee for 2015-16 and that this had been set by Public Sector Audit Appointments.

Members sought clarification on the negative capital finance requirement. The Head of Finance explained that this dated back to the transfer of properties to Wellingborough Homes in 2007 and involved an amount of £9million. This was also at a time of change in accounting methods and included the write off of debt, the council's entitlement to a grant and the reflection of this within the council's balance sheets.

The Project Accountant advised that the intention was to use the £9million as a reserve for capital projects and demonstrating it in this manner would provide transparency within the council's accounts. The anomaly had been identified around two years ago and had been included in reports to members since then, whilst carrying out research in to if and how it could be spent.

The Chairman thanked Mr Cornett for attending the meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the External Audit Plan for 2015-16 be accepted.

## **5. CERTIFICATION OF CLAIMS AND RETURNS– ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received to inform members of the certification of claims and returns for 2014-15.

The report appended the Certification of Claims and Returns – Annual Report 2014-15 from the council's external auditor, KPMG. Having completed their work a small number of errors had been identified resulting in an overall adjustment to the claim of £9. It was noted that this was an excellent outcome for the council.

Councillor Henley suggested that a letter be sent to the staff thanking them for their level of performance in this regard.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the Certification of Claims and Returns for 2014-15 be accepted.
- (ii) a letter of thanks and appreciation from the Audit Committee and the Head of Finance be sent to the staff involved in this matter.

**6. STRATEGIC INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN – APRIL 2016 TO MARCH 2019**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received to inform members about work due to be carried out over the next three years.

The chairman invited the Chief Internal Auditor to present the report. The Chief Internal Auditor explained that it was a requirement to provide a three-year risk focussed evolving plan, produced in consultation with the Senior Management Team of the council, delivering 232 days of audit in the coming year.

He also referred to Appendix 1 to the report which provided a summary level of the proposed plan for the year. He informed the committee that the plan is intended to enable a balanced audit opinion that would assist in the preparation of the council's Annual Governance Statement.

Members questioned the planned work outline for Procurement and Choice Based Lettings as no rationale was identified in the Appendix. The Chief Internal Auditor advised he would provide an updated and complete version of the plan.

Councillor Henley enquired of the requirement to work on capital accounting both in the current year and the coming year as well as the community grants. Mrs Elliott explained that the work on capital accounting would focus on different elements in each year and that community grants would now be referred to as community funding.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the Chief Internal Auditor would provide an updated and complete version of the plan to members of the committee; and
- (ii) the Strategic Internal Audit Plan for April 2016 to March 2019 be approved.

**7. PROGRESS REPORT ON INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITY FOR 2015-16**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received to inform members about the work carried out by the internal audit service for the first eleven months of the 2015-16 financial year, to the end of February 2016.

The Chairman invited the Chief Internal Auditor to present the report who provided an overview of the reports completed during the year and their level of assurance. He highlighted the ten reports that had achieved a significant level of assurance and the two that had achieved a moderate level of assurance.

The Chief Internal Auditor explained that the Housing Renewals (Disabled Facilities Grants) audit had identified some strong operational practices, with improvements having already been made. Further enhancement was required around budget management and forecasting. The Head of Finance advised that the system for managing the grants was complex in that it involved multiple organisations and systems and that the fundamental need was to improve the collaboration between them. She explained that the council had little control over the referrals it received but was working with colleagues throughout the county to improve the procurement regime and ensure value for money.

The Chief Internal Auditor referred to the ICT audit on incident management and explained that this had been requested following the accidental loss of a telephone line between Wellingborough and Kettering councils, which supports the operation of the council's financial system. ICT had undertaken their own investigation and audit had been asked to review and assess the wider controls and procedures that had since been put in place.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted and that sufficient progress was being made against the agreed internal audit plan for 2015-16.

## **8. 2015-16 FINAL ACCOUNTS – ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received to inform members about the revised accounting policies intended for adoption in completing the 2015-16 Statement of Accounts.

The Head of Finance advised that the policy had been updated in a bid to improve efficiency when closing the council's accounts, in order to achieve the accelerated deadlines required in the coming years. She stated that there were a few additions to the policy and no deletions.

The Head of Finance informed the committee of a change in accruing for debtors and that the de minimis level had been increased from £100 to £10,000 for individual items. She explained that anything below £10,000 made no material difference to the accounts.

**RESOLVED** that the revised 2015-16 Accounting Policies be approved.

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 8.30pm.

## COUNCIL MEETING – 19 APRIL 2016

### REPORT OF THE SERVICES COMMITTEE

21 March 2016

Present: Councillors Carr (chairman), Anslow, Beirne, Ekins, Emerson, Gough, Griffiths, G Lawman, Maguire, Patel and Scanlon.

Also present: Mrs B Gamble, Head of Resources, Mr C Culling, Assistant Principal Housing Officer, Mrs V Phillipson, Principal Planning Policy and Regeneration Manager, Mrs A Wilcox, Principal Environmental Health Manager, Mr Q Allen, Sports Development Officer and Mrs C A Mundy, Democratic Services Officer.

(Councillor Bell was also in attendance as an observer.)

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

**RESOLVED** to note that apologies for absence were received from Councillors Harrington, Skittrall, Stevenson and Watts.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

**RESOLVED** to note that in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the council's code of conduct and the council's constitution, the under-mentioned councillors declared an interest in the following items:

<b>Name of councillor</b>	<b>Minute no.</b>	<b>Report title</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Beirne	9	Waste Issues	Personal & prejudicial – step-father and mother are on Wollaston parish council and step-father is the chairman.

#### 3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 DECEMBER 2015

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Services Committee held on 7 December 2015 be confirmed and signed.

#### 4. NEW MARKET LAYOUT PROPOSALS

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received in relation to the new layout for the market recommended by the external consultant 'Market Place Europe'; proposing a a phased approach for implementation of such new layout.

**RESOLVED** that it be noted that this report had been withdrawn from the agenda.

## **5. MARKET RIGHTS POLICY**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received in relation to the adoption of the Market Rights Policy which was appended to the report.

A six week consultation had been held between 21 December 2015 and 5 February 2016, in regard to the Market Rights Policy. No comments had been received.

**R1 RECOMMENDED** that the Market Rights Policy as appended to be report be adopted.

## **6. EQUALITY OBJECTIVE 2016-2020**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Resources was received to seek approval to the publication of the council's Equality Objective 2016-2020; 'to continue to promote equality through the provision of services that are fair and accessible to all', and to approve the appended action plan.

Some members considered that the objective did not address the council's statutory duty, and was neither robust nor challenging enough in itself. It was acknowledged that, whilst the targets in the action plan were specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound, the objective failed to refer sufficiently to the action plan objectives and targets. Other members believed that the borough was diverse and inclusive and that officers addressed the issues of all groups in the community and that the objective - together with action plan - was clear and appropriate.

The Head of Resources advised members that more detailed information was published annually to demonstrate how the council's services have met, and will continue to meet, equalities objectives and action plans. She assured members that the objective was intended to be the starting point for demonstrating that the council had due regard to its equality duty, with the detail being incorporated into the action plan.

Councillor Emerson proposed an amendment to the recommendation at 4(a) as follows:

"to adopt the equality objective for 2016-20 to 'continue to promote equality through the provision of services that are fair and accessible to all' and to adopt the equalities objectives as set out in the equalities action plan".

This amendment was seconded by Councillor Anslow.

On being put to the vote there were four votes in favour and six against and the chairman declared the amendment lost.

The chairman then put the motion to the committee and this was declared carried with six votes in favour, one against and three abstentions.

**R2 RECOMMENDED** that:

- (i) the Equality Objective for 2016-2020 'to continue to promote equality through the provision of services that are fair and accessible to all' be adopted and that the under-pinning action plan be approved;
- (ii) delegation be given to the Head of Resources to maintain and update the action plan.

**7. FOOD SAFETY AND HEALTH AND SAFETY ENFORCEMENT SERVICE PLANS**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received in relation to the service plans for food safety and health and safety enforcement for the period 2016-17.

Appended to the report were the two service plans.

Members thanked officers for their continuing excellent work in both these areas.

**R3 RECOMMENDED** that the food safety enforcement service plan 2016-17 be adopted;

**RESOLVED** that the health and safety enforcement service plan 2016-17 be adopted.

**8. PROVISION OF 3<sup>RD</sup> GENERATION SPORTS PITCH AND UPGRADE OF TENNIS/NETBALL COURTS**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received in relation to the submission of a capital bid for a new 3<sup>rd</sup> generation (3G) football pitch and upgrade to tennis/netball courts at Redwell Leisure Centre.

A request was being made for the submission of a capital scheme for a new 3G surface to be provided at the current second pitch at Redwell Leisure Centre, along with the installation of flood lighting and flexible lines to accommodate a variety of different uses. Funding was also sought for an upgrade to the existing tennis/netball court to include a new porous tarmac surface and replacement fencing.

The report explained that a 3G pitch is a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation astro turf football or rugby pitch where the pile (artificial grass blades) is supported by a thin base layer of sand and an infill of rubber crumb. It is designed to offer play quality

that replicates natural turf, whilst increasing the level of use and is the current recommended surface for high quality Football Association approved pitches. Wellingborough was the only borough in the county without this facility.

Investigations of other sites including educational establishments had found them to be unsuitable. The Football Association considered that Redwell Leisure Centre was a suitable site to accommodate such facility.

Some members raised concern about Redwell Leisure Centre being the best option for the siting of this facility and asked if consideration had been given to alternative locations in the surrounding villages.

The Sports Development Officer clarified that any funding from the FA needed match funding and that sites needed to be owned by the borough council if a funding bid was to be sought.

Members were also concerned that the pitch would be for football use only, but were assured that this would not be the case as other sports such as rugby could be played on this surface. There were some sports such as hockey that were not compatible with this sort of surface.

Concern was expressed about whether there was sufficient car parking at the site, whether there would be light pollution and how this would affect local residents. Comments were also made about the size of the pitch and the effect this would have on the current cricket pitch as well as accessibility to the leisure centre.

It was agreed that the tennis/netball courts needed to be improved and that this would be of benefit to those in the borough. Netball was proving to be popular with a large team already using Redwell Leisure Centre on a Thursday evening.

Other members fully supported this proposal considering that Redwell Leisure Centre was a good place to site the pitch, and that all the issues mentioned would be resolved during the planning stages and through the capital working group. They felt that this would be a very good facility for the borough and that as this was council owned land this should be put forward for capital funding.

A lengthy debate ensued in relation to sports provision in general and this proposal in particular.

Councillor Ekins suggested an amendment to the recommendation as follows:

“that a capital bid be submitted to support the installation of a new 3G multiple sports pitch and that further investigations be carried out to find a more suitable location”. This did not find a seconder.

(Councillor Ekins left the meeting at 8pm due to a prior engagement.)

Councillor Maguire also proposed an amendment as follows:

“that a working party be established to ascertain the best location within the borough for the siting of a 3G pitch.”

A further amendment was proposed by Councillor Lawman as follows:

“that the committee be invited to recommend to Resources Committee the submission of a capital bid to support the installation of a new 3G sports pitch, and for a bid for floodlights and tennis/netball court upgrades at Redwell Leisure Centre”.

Councillor Maguire reiterated the need for a working group but The Head of Resources clarified that as this was to be put forward for a capital bid there was already a capital working party where further discussion could take place. With this assurance Councillor Maguire withdrew his amendment and seconded Councillor Lawman’s amendment.

The chairman put Councillor Lawman’s proposed amendment to the vote.

This was declared carried with four votes in favour, three against and one abstention.

This then became the substantive motion and was put to the vote and declared carried.

**RESOLVED** to recommend to resources committee the submission of a capital bid to support the installation of a new 3G sports pitch, and for a bid for floodlights and tennis/netball court upgrades at Redwell Leisure Centre.

## **9. WASTE ISSUES – WOLLASTON HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE**

The annexed circulated report of the Chief Executive was received to seek a decision in relation to the future of Wollaston Household Waste Recycling Centre, (HWRC) and to seek a capital finance bid in relation to replacement waste bins.

(Councillor Beirne left the meeting during discussion on this item having declared an interest.)

The report detailed the operation of the Wollaston HWRC over the last 12 months. It was noted that this facility had previously been provided by the county council and it was anticipated that by the end of the financial year the gross cost was around £90,000 with the income from recycling being less than £5,000. The service is valued by local people particularly those in Wollaston who wish it to continue. Wollaston Parish Council had made an offer to contribute £5,000 per annum to the cost of keeping the centre open and £10,000 has been offered from Wellingborough Norse. It was possible that other parish council’s may feel that they could also contribute.

The report proposed that the existing temporary arrangement be continued for a further six months to allow for further discussions with parish councils about possible contributions.

There was a requirement for additional waste bins to be purchased to replace stolen, lost or damaged bins and to provide for the increasing number of new property completions. A capital bid of £15,000 was proposed pending further discussion by the waste collection working group.

Members considered that the recycling centre was well used by villages in the surrounding area and raised concern that closure would result in more fly-tipping. Members also asked about the cost of purchase of wheelie bins for new properties as they thought this cost would be met by developers. The Principal Planning Policy and Regeneration Manager clarified that this was no longer the case and that the council had to pay for bins for any new properties built if an existing historical arrangement was not already in place.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the waste collection working group be convened to consider strategic matters in relation to waste collection;
- (ii) It be recommended to resources committee that the Wollaston Household Waste Recycling Centre be operated for a further six months at an approximate cost of £45,000 to be funded from reserves;
- (iii) It be recommended to resources committee that a capital bid of £15,000 be agreed to enable the purchase of additional waste receptacles in the short term.

(Councillor Beirne returned to the meeting.)

#### **10. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT BUDGET 2016/17**

**RESOLVED** to note that the report and appendices relating to this item had been withdrawn from the agenda.

#### **11. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item in accordance with Section 100A(4) to the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information of the descriptions shown in schedule 12A to the Act:

<b>Minute No.</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Paragraph of Schedule 12A</b>
12	Urgent action taken – shared cost of disabled adaptations between the disabled facilities grant budget and registered providers.	E1 and 2

**12. URGENT ACTION TAKEN – SHARED COST OF DISABLED ADAPTION BETWEEN THE DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT BUDGET AND REGISTERED PROVIDERS**

The annexed circulated exempt report of the Head of Planning and Local Development was received in relation to urgent action taken to share the cost of adapting a Wellingborough Homes property to accommodate a disabled child being discharged from hospital.

**RESOLVED** that the urgent action taken be noted to share the cost, with Wellingborough Homes, of the work required to adapt a property up to a maximum of £9,000 from the Disabled Facilities Grant budget.

Chairman

The meeting concluded at 9pm.



## COUNCIL MEETING – 19 APRIL 2016

### REPORT OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

23 March 2016

Present: Councillors Bell (chairman), Griffiths (vice-chairman), Carr, Emerson, Francis, Hallam, Harrington, Henley, Partridge-Underwood, Scarborough and Ward.

Also present: Mr J T Campbell, Chief Executive, Mrs L Elliott, Head of Finance, Mrs B Gamble, Head of Resources, Mr B Gallyot, Wellingborough Norse, Miss S Lyons, Monitoring Officer/Solicitor District Law, Mr R Watson, Business Rates Manager and Mrs C A Mundy, Democratic Services Officer.

(Councillor Graves and G Lawman attended as observers.)

#### 1. APOLOGIES

**RESOLVED** to note an apology for absence was received from Councillor Allebone.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

**RESOLVED** to note that in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the council's code of conduct and the council's constitution, the following declaration was made.

Councillor	Min. no.	Report Title	Reason
Emerson	11	Fees and charges update 2016-17	Personal – Treasurer of Wellingborough Twinning Association which regularly uses Swanspool Pavilion and on occasion the Tithe Barn.

#### 3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3 FEBRUARY 2016

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Resources Committee held on 3 February 2016, be confirmed and signed.

#### 4. IRRECOVERABLE COUNCIL TAX, HOUSING BENEFIT OVERPAYMENTS, NON-DOMESTIC RATES AND SUNDRY DEBTORS

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received to request write off of irrecoverable debts.

Following a number of questions and concerns from members the Business Rates Manager explained the council's process for collecting debts.

The debts listed below had been thoroughly pursued via officer visits, the use of specialist tracing/collection agencies, and action taken through the magistrates' court or county court and were deemed as irrecoverable. Should further information come forward the debt could be reclaimed regardless of it having been written off.

Council tax (no. 42)	£14,296.66
Housing benefit overpayments (no. 19)	£2,224.47
Non-domestic rates (no.4)	£5,168.46
Sundry debt (no. 7)	£2,333.00

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The write off of £17,420.78 irrecoverable non-domestic rates be noted;
- (ii) It be noted that the amount of £24,022.59 had been written off under the delegated power of the Section 151 officer.

## **5. NORSE BUSINESS PLAN 2016-17**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received in relation to the annual business plan for Wellingborough Norse Ltd for 2016-17.

The annual business plan had been agreed by the Wellingborough Norse Board and was appended to the report.

Mr Gallyot of Wellingborough Norse attended the meeting to explain the business plan and answer questions from members.

The company's objective was to achieve business growth in any area of service provision in which it was involved. The current economic environment was difficult to compete in and Wellingborough Norse had decided to concentrate on establishing a solid structure on which to base future competitive growth. It had been successful in securing trade waste contracts and ad-hoc building cleaning works. It had also been proactive in marketing its services, including leading on an initiative on Finedon Road Industrial Estate that showcased the service provided by the partnership.

It had also embarked on an aggressive campaign for growth in both commercial and local authority contracts; it had been shortlisted for four major contracts and was awaiting the outcome of these. It was also seeking to increase the commercial side of the business from grounds maintenance to facilities management.

Members asked Mr Gallyot a number of questions in relation to the following:

- Whether Wellingborough Norse would continue to use glyphosate weed killer. Mr Gallyot confirmed that this was not a banned substance in the UK, it was a superior product, widely used, there was no alternative that worked as well and there was no intention to discontinue its use.

- Members also commented on the use of weed killer rather than hand strimming which, in their opinion, would be preferential. Mr Gallyot confirmed that weed killing was only used twice a year and, where possible, strimming was carried out, dependent on the area in question.
- Concern over the issue of fly-tipping generally and particularly on the verges and unsightly rubbish on the A45. Mr Gallyot explained that due to the difficulties with the need to close the A45 during a clean up, it was only cleared twice a year at the cost of £60,000, although initiatives were being investigated to improve the cost and frequency. Fly-tipping was an ongoing and continuing problem.
- Congratulations were extended by members to Wellingborough Norse for the estate action programme which had resulted in a positive impact on people's lives in various parts of the borough. There were ongoing issues in Victoria Ward which Wellingborough Norse was aware of, and there was an educational programme taking place.

Members thanked Mr Gallyot for his attendance and asked that the thanks of the committee be extended to all at Wellingborough Norse for their continuing hard work.

**RESOLVED** that approval be given to the Wellingborough Norse Annual Business Plan 2016-17.

## **6. WASTE ISSUES**

The Head of Resources addressed the meeting and referred to the recommendation made at the services committee on 21 March 2016 in relation to the Wollaston Household Recycling Centre remaining open for a further six months, and a capital bid to purchase additional waste receptacles.

A number of parishes wished the centre to remain open and Wollaston Parish Council had agreed to make a contribution towards the cost of running the centre. Other parish councils would be approached to see if they wished to also make a similar contribution.

The report to services committee had also agreed that the member working group be convened to discuss various strategic matters in relation to waste collection.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The Wollaston Household Recycling Centre be operated for a further six months at an approximate cost of £45,000 to be funded from reserves;
- (ii) a capital bid of £15,000 be agreed to enable the purchase of additional waste receptacles in the short term.

## **7. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT**

**RESOLVED** to note that this report had been withdrawn from the services committee agenda and also from this agenda.

## **8. FINANCIAL MONITORING AND POSITION STATEMENT 2015-16**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received in relation to the monitoring position for revenue expenditure, estimated as at 31 January 2016.

The report detailed the net revenue budget along with the monitoring thereof.

Analysis of the spending position indicated that the use of reserves had increased by an additional £10,000 to that reported in December and now stood at an additional £60,000 over the current budget to achieve a balanced position. Further details were shown in the report.

**RESOLVED** that the position on the revenue monitoring be noted along with the reasons for the variances reported.

## **9. CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received in relation to the capital programme monitoring to 31 January 2016.

The report detailed the revised capital budget for 2015-16 as being £8.524m.

Reference was made in the report to the photovoltaic panels scheme and High Street/ Church Street demolition works.

The report also detailed the capital programme movements for 2015-16, with particular reference to the purchase of additional land at the crematorium, Swanspool Allotments, and a detailed request for scheme budget re-profiling, as well as new projects and updates.

The Head of Finance referred to item 7.4 in relation to market improvements and informed the committee that the capital bid had been withdrawn. A revenue budget supplementary estimate of £2520 was requested to replace the capital bid for the removal of 14 Market Stalls in Pebble lane. This was agreed.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the projection outturn and anticipated variances as at 31 January 2016 be noted;
- (ii) the external funding be noted;
- (iii) the analysis of the 2015-16 capital programme budget at 31 January 2016 be noted;

- (iv) the scheme re-profiling as outlined in the report be approved;
- (v) the inclusion of the new projects and updates, identified in the report, into the 2016-17 capital programme be approved;
- (vi) approval be given to a partial use of the crematorium contingency budget of £38,000 to fund the purchase of additional land adjacent to the crematorium;
- (vii) approval be given to the change of use request as detailed within the report.

## **10. CAPITAL STRATEGY FOR THE MEDIUM TERM**

The annexed report of the Head of Finance was received in relation to the capital strategy for the medium term, together with a list of all agreed capital schemes.

The proposed capital strategy and the capital programme for 2016-17 onwards were appended to the report.

Members raised a number of issues in relation to the strategy to which the Head of Finance and Chief Executive responded.

**R1 RECOMMENDED** that the capital strategy be agreed.

## **11. FEES AND CHARGES UPDATE 2016-17**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received to provide members with updates to the fees and charges schedule and to also seek clarification regarding the terms and conditions for the hire of halls.

The fees and charges update was appended to the report.

Members discussed the terms and conditions with reference to cancellation, after payment, resulting in forfeit of the full fee unless the hall could be re-booked, in which case a charge of 25% would be made.

Changes to the terms and conditions would enable the Heads of Service to agree variations dependent on circumstances. Members considered that the words 'exceptional circumstances' be added to the recommendation.

**R2 RECOMMENDED that:**

- (i) the fees and charges schedule be approved;
- (ii) approval be given to the Heads of Service having delegated authority to agree variations to the hire of halls terms and conditions in exceptional circumstances.

## **12. RESERVES POLICY**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received in relation to the current position with regard to revenue reserves and capital reserves, along with a review of the reserves policy.

Appended to the report were the current levels of revenue reserves at 31 March 2015 and predicted year end reserves to 31 March 2016.

The reserves policy was also appended.

### **R3 RECOMMENDED that:**

- (i) the current reserves position be noted;
- (ii) the reserves policy be agreed.

## **13. RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Resources was received in relation to the council's key risks and managed mitigations.

Appended to the report was the corporate risk register.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

## **14. PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2016-17**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received in relation to current indicators and treasury management strategy.

The treasury management strategy statement, including minimum revenue provision policy statement and annual investment strategy, was appended to the report.

### **R4 RECOMMENDED that:**

- (i) approval be given to the treasury management policy statement;
- (ii) approval be given to the prudential and treasury Indicators;
- (iii) the annual investment strategy be approved.

## **15. EFFICIENCY AND PERFORMANCE PLANNING AND KEY PRIORITY OUTCOMES FOR THE MEDIUM TERM**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received in relation to the appended efficiency strategy. The report also outlined the associated key priority outcomes and corporate performance indicators recommended for

adoption in developing the efficiency action plan and to inform any further corporate planning requirements.

The report explained how an agreement to an efficiency strategy and action plan would enable the council to take advantage of the opportunity for a four year funding agreement along with the flexible use of capital receipts.

An efficiency and action plan was needed to address the financial challenges and deliver cost effective and efficient services. Initially it was necessary to refresh the council's key priority outcomes. Suggestions were detailed in the report following members' comments and views, indicated at a previous workshop, on the direction of travel that they wished to see in the next four years.

Members discussed the report in detail and considered that more work was required on the key priority outcomes and the corporate business plan that had expired in 2014. Comments were also passed on the action plan.

The Head of Resources and Chief Executive responded to the comments made, informing members that this report had been a starting point that further work and discussions could take place in relation to the key priority outcomes and the corporate performance indicators.

Members considered the comments and agreed to approve the efficiency strategy but to defer a decision on the key priority outcomes and corporate performance indicators until there had been further discussions.

**RESOLVED** that the efficiency strategy be approved.

## **16. CREMATORIUM UPDATE**

The annexed circulated report of the Head of Finance was received in relation to the progress of the project build of the crematorium and on operational matters relating to the governance of Wellingborough Bereavement Services Ltd.

A wholly owned local authority trading company had been created to deliver the bereavement services provided at the crematorium. The company was called Wellingborough Bereavement Services Ltd with the current directors being Mrs Bridget Gamble, Head of Resources and Miss Julie Thomas, Head of Planning and Local Development.

A crematorium manager has been appointed and would take up the position in late May 2016. It was anticipated that the crematorium would open in July 2016, with open days and an official opening in advance of that.

It was also proposed that two members be nominated as directors. One nomination would be from the administration and one representing the opposition, and be made at annual council in May 2016. The Head of Finance

could also be appointed to the board, once issues relating to potential conflict of interest had been resolved.

Governance arrangements would be finalised following the appointment of the board, but would be similar to those in place at Wellingborough Norse.

It was also proposed that the trading name for the new crematorium be Nene Valley Crematorium.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (i) the crematorium update be noted;
- (ii) approval be given to the proposed governance arrangements to be put in place for Wellingborough Bereavement Services Ltd.;
- (iii) the trading name for the crematorium be Nene Valley Crematorium.

Chairman

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.