

**GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET MEETING**

**Tuesday, 23 March 2021**

**PRESENT:** Councillor M Gannon

Councillors: C Donovan, J Adams, M Brain, A Douglas,  
L Green, G Haley, J McElroy, M McNestry and B Oliphant

Also in attendance: Councillors R Beadle and JC Wallace

**C108 MINUTES**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 23 February 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**C109 TREASURY POLICY STATEMENT AND TREASURY STRATEGY 2021/22 TO 2025/26**

Consideration has been given to recommending the Council to approve the Treasury Policy Statement and Treasury Strategy for 2021/22 to 2025/26.

RESOLVED - That the Council be recommended to approve the Treasury Policy Statement and the Treasury Strategy as set out in appendices 2 and 3 to the report.

The above decision has been made to ensure that the Council fully complies with the requirements of good financial practice in Treasury Management.

**C110 LOCALISM ACT 2011 - PAY ACCOUNTABILITY PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2021-22**

Consideration has been given to recommending the Council to approve a revised Pay Policy Statement for 2020/21.

RESOLVED - (i) That the Council be recommended to approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2021/22 as set out in appendix 2 to the report.

(ii) That it be noted as none of the relevant pay awards have been agreed at the time of publication of the report, the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance, under his delegated powers within Schedule 2, Part 1, Section 2 (14) of the Council's constitution will apply any national agreements and further update the policy as required, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Strategic Director, Resources and Digital and if more significant changes to the Pay Policy are proposed as a result of the various pay awards

or otherwise, a further report will be brought to Cabinet for consideration.

The above decisions have been made to comply with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011.

**C111 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2021/22**

Consideration has been given to the proposed calendar of meetings for 2021/22.

- RESOLVED - That the Council be recommended to:
- (i) Approve the calendar of meetings 2021/22.
  - (ii) Agree that, as far as possible, meetings should not be held during school holidays.
  - (iii) Authorise the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance, following consultation with the appropriate Chairs, to make any necessary amendments to the calendar of meetings.

The above decisions have been made to assist in the preparation of the Cabinet's schedule of decisions and to allow councillors and officers to plan commitments in their diaries.

**C112 RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION - NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK AND NATIONAL MODEL DESIGN CODE**

Consideration has been given to a response to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code.

- RESOLVED - That the response to the MHCLG's consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code as set out in appendix 2 to the report be approved.

The above decision has been made to enable the Council to contribute a response to the consultation.

**C113 RENT ARREARS FOR FORMER TENANTS & SUNDRY ACCOUNT DEBTS – TRANSFER OF UNCOLLECTABLE AMOUNTS**

Consideration has been given to transfer out of the Council's accounts individual debts in excess of £500 relating to former tenant rent arrears and sundry account debts orders where all possible recovery action has been taken and the balances are now considered uncollectable.

- RESOLVED - (i) That the transfer of balances on 204 former tenant accounts, amounting to £232,350 be approved.

- (ii) That the action taken under delegated powers to transfer out of Council's accounts the amounts deemed uncollectable be noted.

The above decisions have been made to ensure effective management of the Council's resources as any further pursuit of these arrears is unlikely to result in significant sums being recovered and would be more effectively used to recover new debt.

#### C114 **MISCELLANEOUS INCOME - TRANSFER OF UNCOLLECTABLE AMOUNTS**

Consideration has been given to the transfer out of the Council's Accounts outstanding balances in excess of £500 from miscellaneous income accounts and Housing Benefits overpayments where all possible recovery action has been taken and the balances are now considered to be uncollectable.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the transfer of balances on 210 sundry debtor accounts, amounting to £240,403.69 and 84 Housing Benefits overpayment invoices totalling £203,309.39 be approved.
  - (ii) That the action taken under delegated powers to transfer out of the Council's accounts the identified amounts that are deemed uncollectable be noted.

The above decisions have been made for the following reasons:

- (A) To ensure the effective management of the Council's resources.
- (B) To ensure that the Council Accounts accurately reflect the correct financial position.

#### C115 **GATESHEAD HEALTH & CARE SYSTEM ALLIANCE AGREEMENT**

Consideration has been given to an Alliance Agreement for the Gateshead Health & Care System with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

- RESOLVED -
- That the Alliance Agreement for the Gateshead Health & Care System with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 as set out in the report be approved.

The above decision has been made for the following reasons:

- (A) To build upon the existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in place since 2019.
- (B) To make the most of the good relationships that have been developed at Place over a long period.
- (C) To provide a framework that the Gateshead system can use in preparation for future changes to the health and care

landscape.

**C116 PETITIONS SCHEDULE**

Consideration has been given to an update on petitions submitted to the Council and the action taken on them.

RESOLVED - That the petitions received and the action taken on them as set out in appendix 2 to the report be noted.

The above decision has been made to inform the Cabinet of the progress of the petitions.

**C117 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED - That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining business in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

**C118 PUBLIC SECTOR DECARBONISATION SCHEME - GRANT 2**

Consideration has been given to:

- a) the action under delegated powers to accept grants totalling the amount set out in the report from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme;
- b) the proposal to seek approval to accept further grants for schemes currently on the Salix (The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) funding agent) contingency list;
- c) the proposal to procure suppliers to design and install the various energy saving measures required; and
- d) the results of the works carried out using the Low Carbon Skills Fund £0.1m grant.

RESOLVED - (i) That the action taken by the Strategic Director, Economy, Innovation and Growth in accordance with Part 3, Schedule 5 of the Council's constitution – General Delegations to Managers, Part 2, Paragraph 4(e), in accepting the grant offer of the amount set out in the report, from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme for the schemes listed in the report be noted.

(ii) That the Strategic Director, Economy, Innovation and Growth, following consultation with the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance (or his delegate), be authorised to approve the compliant procurement route for the heat and power connections as set out in the report.

(iii) That the Strategic Director, Economy, Innovation and Growth, following consultation with the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance (or his delegate), be authorised to accept a further offer of grant funding for energy efficiency work at Blaydon Business Centre, from the Salix

contingency list, should that be forthcoming.

- (iv) That further reports be submitted to Cabinet on other bids to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme should they be forthcoming from the Salix contingency list.

The above decisions have been made for the following reasons:

- (A) To support the Council's Thrive agenda.
- (B) To support the Council's Climate Emergency and targets of net zero emissions by 2030.

C119

### **SUPPLIER RELIEF CLAIM FOR GATESHEAD ENERGY COMPANY**

Consideration has been given to the proposal to grant supplier relief in accordance with the Government's Procurement Policy Note (PPN 02/20 Supplier Relief due to COVID-19) and PPN 04/20 (Recovery and Transition from COVID-19) to Gateshead Energy Company (GEC) under its Concession Contract for the operation of Gateshead District Energy Scheme.

The alternative options to that being recommended, but which were discounted, included not to award supplier relief, deferring a proportion of the concession charge, providing a lower amount of supplier relief or providing a loan.

RESOLVED - That the provision of supplier relief of the amount set out in the report to Gateshead Energy Company, for the period of 1 April – 31 October 2020 be approved.

The above decision has been made for the following reasons:

- (A) To support the Gateshead Energy Company to be able to continue to run and operate the Gateshead District Energy Scheme for the benefit of the Borough and reduce the financial risk arising from the COVID-19 outbreak to Gateshead Energy Company.
- (B) To act in accordance with the Government's Procurement Policy Note (PPN 02/20 Supplier Relief due to COVID-19) and PPN 04/20 (Recovery and Transition from COVID-19).

C120

### **REVIEW OF PRINT POINT**

Consideration has been given to the outcome of consultation with employees and Trade Unions on proposals made following a review of Print Point and to the revised proposal to suspend this service for a period of 12 months.

The alternative options to that being recommended, but which were discounted, included continuing to subsidise the service and restructure or outsourcing the service as a going concern.

RESOLVED - (i) That the proposal to suspend the Print Point Service for a

period of 12 months as set out in the report be approved.

- (ii) That the temporary redeployment of the four Pint Point employees as set out in the report be approved.
- (iii) That a further report be submitted to Cabinet on the outcome of an assessment of the Council's future demand for print, to be carried out throughout 2021/22 as set out in the report, with a recommendation as to how those needs can best be met, consistent with the Council's policy priorities.

The above decisions have been made for the following reasons:

- (A) Implementation of the approved Council Budget 2020/21.
- (B) To ensure the Council is able to provide efficient and effective print services in line with its priorities for Gateshead including the Digital Strategy and Climate Change ambition.
- (C) To enable the Council to focus resources on the delivery of services that make Gateshead a place where everyone can Thrive.

C121

## **REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL MUSIC SERVICE**

Consideration has been given to proposals to restructure the Schools Music Service provision and staffing structure in response to changing needs from schools, to ensure the Music Service is sustainable and future-proofed for changes in funding, whilst delivering the priorities of the National Plan for Music Education to provide high quality music education to all children.

The alternative options to that being recommended, but which were discounted, included retaining the existing structure or increasing the number of staff on permanent contracts.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the proposal to restructure the Schools Music Service as set out in the report be approved.
  - (ii) That the commencement of a redundancy consultation exercise with the existing workforce and engagement with school governing bodies to agree alternative arrangements for individual and small group tuition be approved.

The above decisions have been made for the following reasons:

- (A) To ensure the Council can provide an effective and efficient high-quality music service that offers value for money.
- (B) To ensure that music service offer is designed to be inclusive and offers fair access to all communities in the borough so making Gateshead a place where everyone can Thrive.

Copies of all reports and appendices referred to in these minutes are available online and in the minute file. Please note access restrictions apply for exempt business as defined by the Access to Information Act.

The decisions referred to in these minutes will come into force and be implemented after the expiry of 3 working days after the publication date of the minutes identified below unless the matters are 'called in'.

Publication date: 25 March 2021

**Chair.....**