

## Overview & Scrutiny Committee

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Minutes of a meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Review of Cabinet Agenda** held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich on **Tuesday 3 April 2018** at **10.00 am** when there were present:

Mr D G Harrison – Chairman

Mr A D Adams	Mr J J Emsell	Mr V Ray-Mortlock
Mrs C H Bannock	Mr R F Grady	Mrs K A Vincent
Mr D Buck	Mrs L H Hemsall	Mr D C Ward
Mrs J K Copplestone	Mr G K Nurden	

Mr M Snowling also attended the meeting for its duration.

Also in attendance were the Head of Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer, Head of Corporate Resources, HR and Customer Services Manager, Private Sector Housing Manager, Overview and Scrutiny Research Officer and the Committee Officer (JO).

### 161 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER PROCEDURAL RULE NO 8

Officer	Minute No & Heading	Nature of Interest
Head of Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer	165 - Pay Policy Statement: Annual Review 166 - Performance Related Pay 2018	Personal Interest, on behalf of all staff present as beneficiaries of the pay scheme

### 162 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Everett and Mr Peck.

### 163 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

*Minute no: 160 – Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme*

A Member advised the meeting that the Highway and Major Projects Manager at Norfolk County Council had confirmed that he would be willing to attend a meeting of the Committee to discuss the proposed Western Link to the Northern Distributor Road and other highway issues. A date for the presentation would be arranged in due course.

### 164 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised the meeting that Stacy Cosham, the Overview and Scrutiny Research Officer, was leaving the Council to take up a post at another local authority. Members thanked Stacy for her hard work in supporting the Committee over many years and wished her good luck for the future.

### CABINET REPORTS

#### 165 PAY POLICY STATEMENT: ANNUAL REVIEW

The report provided the Annual Review of the Council's Pay Policy Statement, as required under the Localism Act 2011. The Policy set out the Council's position relating to the remuneration for Chief Officers, as well as the approach on pay for the financial year 2018/19. The Pay Policy Statement had been consulted upon with union and non-union staff representatives.

As part of the budget setting process for 2018/19, a two percent annual increase in the salary budget had been modelled as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

The major change to the Statement was the removal of references to public sector exit payments, which had been included in the 2017/18 Statement in preparation for their introduction during 2017, but had still not yet been put in place.

Other amendments included changing the minimum salary level for local grades 13 and 12 to the National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage respectively.

It was confirmed that aligning HR policies and staff terms and conditions was being looked at as part of the Collaboration Feasibility Study with South Norfolk Council. However, there was no intention to align the Pay Policies of both authorities at this stage.

#### RECOMMENDED TO CABINET

Option (1)

to **RECOMMEND** to Council:

to approve the Pay Policy Statement, as set out in the report.

### 166 PERFORMANCE RELATED PAY 2018

The report outlined a request for the Cabinet to determine the percentage value Standard Merit Unit (SMU) for the purposes of the Performance Related Pay (PRP) award in 2018. The report also confirmed the two percent cost of living increase to pay grades and salaries that had been already implemented with effect from 1 April 2018.

Members were advised that the Council had operated a PRP scheme linked to an objectives-based appraisal system for many years and the scheme had proved successful in recruiting and retaining high performing staff throughout the period.

Cabinet had agreed a Medium Term Financial Plan for the Council from 2016/17, which included a two percent annual growth in salary budgets for both cost of living and PRP awards during the lifetime of the Plan.

There was now a requirement for Cabinet to determine the value of the SMU for 2018, in recognition of the fact that the two per cent allocation for pay increases in 2018 would be fully committed. Based on current staffing and a prediction of individual performance assessments derived from previous years, one per cent of the payroll budget (equivalent to £76,500) would be sufficient to fund an SMU of 1.33 percent.

Staffside had been invited to comment on the proposed PRP award for 2018 and it was expected that a representative from Unison would be making a representation to Cabinet on the award.

Members noted that 93.3 percent of male staff and 89.2 percent of female staff received a PRP award, but that overall a higher proportion of females (64 percent) received the more financially advantageous PRP assessments compared with 22 percent of males.

In response to a query, it was confirmed that Broadland's and South Norfolk Council's pay structure was being explored as part of the Collaboration Feasibility Study.

#### **RECOMMENDED TO CABINET**

that the value of a Standard Merit Unit for 2018 be set at 1.33 percent, to be met from the general fund reserve.

### 167 DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT PROCEDURE

The report sought Cabinet's views on some proposed options for the use of additional external funding to support vulnerable residents in Broadland.

The Council was responsible for the delivery of mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs). The contribution received by the Council to fund DFGs through the Better Care Fund had recently risen and last year was £766,000. The Council was committed to spending this sum, which would be close to full capacity of demand. Moreover, it was likely that next year's DFG allocation could increase by up to nine percent. The Council had also received £74,395 of additional resource for DFGs or other initiatives to be spent in the current financial year. In the light of this level of funding it was proposed that a number of options be considered to help residents in the district with health difficulties beyond the scope of the mandatory DFG procedure.

The proposals for utilising the additional funding were:

- To continue a previous Heating System Project to allow the upgrade of heating systems at residential properties to continue using a tightened health and financial criteria.
- The introduction of an architect fee grant to a maximum of £4,500 for complex cases where structural works were required.
- A top up grant or loan of up to £15,000 where works were required to adapt the property beyond the current DFG cap of £30,000.
- To increase the Handyperson+ current low level adaption grant to £750.
- A 'Get You Home Grant' of up to £1,000 to pay for essential maintenance works at residents' properties identified through the District Direct Service and other hospital referral routes.

Members considered that loans rather than grants were preferable for works to adapt homes beyond the £30,000 DFG cap. It was confirmed that loans would be held in perpetuity against a property and would be payable when the property was sold.

The Committee expressed concern about the possible costs of architect drawings and proposed that they be set at no more than ten percent of the required structural works and up to a total of £4,500.

It was confirmed that the Council facilitated the financing of DFGs and did not recommend or enter into contracts with builders. The Home Improvement Agency was the body that provided additional support, advice and information to allow vulnerable residents to stay in their own homes.

**RECOMMENDED TO CABINET**

Options (1, 2 as amended, 3 (ii), 4, 5, 6)

- (1) to continue the current heating system service including the current fast tracked means test procedure using Energy Company Obligation flexible criteria. The minimum health requirement would relate to a disabling condition as diagnosed by a health professional or the receipt of attendance allowance to represent the care eligibility element. Replacement would be available for all non-condensing boilers and those condensing boilers identified beyond reasonable repair. Other systems such as those using inefficient electric heaters could also be replaced;
- (2) to provide an Architect Fee Grant of up to 10 percent of the total works, with an upper limit of £4,500, for adaptations that involve structural works and thus require detailed drawing beyond the schedule process initiated by the Council's Technical Officers;
- (3) to provide financial assistance where the current cap of £30,000 will not cover the required adaption works through a top up loan without interest of up to £15,000;
- (4) to increase the Handyperson+ current low level adaption grant to £750;
- (5) to provide "A Get You Home Grant" of up to £1,000 to pay for essential maintenance works and or essential capital purchases at residents' properties identified through the District Direct Service and other hospital referral routes;
- (6) to subject all new services to availability of funds in the relevant financial year and for a monitoring procedure to be initiated by the Private Sector Housing Manager in consultation with the Head of Service and Portfolio Holder for Communities and Housing.

*The meeting closed at 11.02 am*