

Resources Working Party

held at Ryedale House, Malton
on Thursday 18 December 2008

Present

Councillors Wainwright (in the Chair), Aslett, Mrs Cowling and Knaggs

In attendance

T Anderson, Mrs L Carter, P Cresswell, G Housden, Mrs M Jackson, P Long, J Rudd and Miss L Sandall

Mr R Williams, Headmaster, and Mr D Fotheringham - Representing Malton School

Minutes

RWP.106 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Keal and Legard

RWP.107 **Minutes**

The minutes of a meeting of the Resources Working Party held on 5 November 2008 were submitted (previously circulated).

It was noted that at the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on 4 December 2008, the above minutes had been endorsed subject to the tenth paragraph of the preamble of Minute No. RWP.103 - Capital Bids - being amended to read, "Councillor Knaggs reported that the A64 improvement scheme (£2.5m) could only be funded by eliminating other major schemes or by borrowing. It was therefore suggested that the bid be retained as a currently unfunded bid."

Resolved

That, subject to the above amendment, the minutes of a meeting of the Resources Working Party held on 5 November 2008 as submitted be endorsed.

RWP.108 **Urgent Business**

The Chairman reported that there were no items that he considered should be dealt with at the meeting as a matter of urgency by virtue of Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

RWP.109 **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

RWP.110 **Public Use Proposals for Malton School Sports Centre**

The Chairman welcomed Mr Rob Williams, Headmaster of Malton School, and Mr David Fotheringham, agent acting on behalf of Malton School, to the meeting.

The Corporate Director (s151) reminded the Working Party that the Council had agreed to provide a grant of £1.5m towards the development of a dry sports centre at Malton School.

Mr Williams reported that a Management Group had been established and had met on a four to six weekly basis. An agreed aim of the Group was to avoid complications relating to the joint use agreement.

A tender brief had been drawn-up and a full tendering process undertaken, the closing date for which was the 12 December 2008. Mr Williams reported that three tenders had been received and the evaluation process was underway. In addition, joint use schedules had been drawn-up in respect of the four-court sports hall and the astro turf pitch, details of which were circulated at the meeting for consideration. The proposals included Malton School use, primary school use, clubs and community use and pay and play. Mr Williams reported that meetings had taken place with Community Leisure Limited regarding the use of the astro turf pitch.

Mr Williams reported that the suggested agreement would provide for 27 hours per week of pay & play priority usage of the sports centre and 4 hours per week of the astro turf pitch. It provided for 10 hours per week of league usage for the astro turf pitch, and enabled FA league clubs to play competitive matches on the full size pitch on Saturday afternoons and throughout the day on Sundays. It provided two 2-hour sessions per week of primary school use of the sports centre (this could be vired between the sports centre and the astro-turf pitch as required). It also allowed for extended school usage of both facilities - this could be Youth Service, Cadet Forces, Scouts/Guides, Duke of Edinburgh or other partner schools or organisations. During school holidays, whilst there may be bookings during the weekdays for summer schools and extended school events, it was envisaged that there would be increased community usage, particularly for pay & play. One term-time Saturday per year was to be put aside for a school organised sports festival.

Following the presentation Mr Williams answered Members questions relating to operational aspects of the sports centre. Mr Williams reported that he was not in a position to report on the situation regarding income and expenditure, this would be subject of a further report to a future meeting. The Corporate Director (s151) reported that a report was to be submitted to the next meeting of Council on 15 January 2009.

Mr Williams then reported on the results of the tender process and displayed plans of the schemes submitted by the two preferred tenderers, including the issues raised with County Highways. The Head of Economy & Housing reported that he would wish to pursue with County Highways their position with regard to highways.

Mr Williams circulated a financial analysis for the Working Party's information and reported that based on the current estimates there was a projected shortfall of some £74k. Mr Williams sought the Working Party's view on the Council's commitment in relation to the provision of a climbing wall, the estimated cost of which was some £50k. A steer was sought on the Council's position.

Working Party Members expressed the view that the Council was not a guarantor for the scheme and that as with all capital schemes it was anticipated that there would be variances and over-runs in respect of projected costs. The Council had agreed financial support of up to £1.5m and the Working Party expressed the view that this sum should not be exceeded. With regard to the provision of a climbing wall it was suggested that, in order to give a strategic view, more information should be provided on climbing wall provisions elsewhere in the District. In addition, Members of the Working Party urged the school to seek contributions from other funding sources rather than delete the climbing wall from its scheme.

RWP.111 **Efficiency Savings**

The Corporate Director (s151) submitted a report the purpose of which was to outline proposals for efficiency to enable the Council to set a balanced budget for 2009/10.

Members were reminded that at its meeting held on 2 October 2008, the Policy & Resources Committee had considered a report on the budget strategy for 2009/10.

The Medium Term Revenue Budget forecast as provided to Members on the 25 February 2008 highlighted the projected financial position for 2009/10. Within those projections was a provision that efficiency gains and other savings were required, totalling £522,000, to balance the 2009/10 budget. This figure had taken into account reductions in the Authority's grant income and was based on a Council Tax increase of 4%.

The achievement of these savings would also assist the Council in meeting the government 'unofficial' efficiency target of 3% per annum over three years. This equated to an annual target for Ryedale of between £280,000 - £300,000.

The Heads of Service and Corporate Management Team had considered proposals to balance the budget. Inevitably, with the savings target being some 7% of the Council's net budget, ensuring all proposals were classified as eligible efficiency savings had not been possible at this stage. Work was ongoing to identify additional deliverable options.

Annex A to the report detailed the savings identified by Officers, the savings fell within the following categories:

- Income generation - £51,000
- Good Housekeeping - £275,000
- Service reductions - £60,000
- Total Savings - £386,000

Savings still to be identified - £136,000

Resolved

That the report, the savings proposals and the impact on the Council in delivering its Corporate Plan be noted.