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Chairman: Councillor D.J. Lloyd
Vice-Chairman: Councillor K. Girling

Members of the Committee:

Councillor D. Batey
Councillor M. Cope
Councillor Mrs R. Crowe
Councillor Mrs G.E. Dawn
Councillor G.P. Handley

Councillor P. Peacock*
Councillor A.C. Roberts
Councillor F. Taylor
Councillor T. Wendels
Councillor Mrs Y. Woodhead

Substitutes

Councillor Mrs K. Arnold
Councillor Mrs M. Dobson
Councillor P.C. Duncan
Councillor N. Mison
Councillor B. Wells

AGENDA

MEETING: Economic Development Committee

DATE: Wednesday, 23 November at 6.00pm

VENUE: Room G21, Kelham Hall

**You are hereby requested to attend the above Meeting to be held at the time/place
and on the date mentioned above for the purpose of transacting the
business on the Agenda as overleaf.**

If you have any queries please contact Helen Brandham on 01636 655248.

AGENDA

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None	

NEWARK & SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE** held on Wednesday, 14 September 2016 in Room G21, Kelham Hall at 6.00pm

PRESENT: Councillor D.J. Lloyd (Chairman)
 Councillor K. Girling (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: R.V. Blaney (ex-officio), Mrs R. Crowe, G.P. Handley,
 P. Peacock, A.C. Roberts, F. Taylor and T. Wendels.

78. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: D. Bates, M.G. Cope, Mrs G.E. Dawn and Mrs Y. Woodhead. Councillor Mrs K. Arnold was to act as substitute for Councillor Batey but also submitted her apologies.

79. DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS AND AS TO THE PARTY WHIP

NOTED: that no Member or Officer declared any interest pursuant to any statutory requirement in any matter discussed or voted upon at the meeting.

80. DECLARATION OF ANY INTENTION TO RECORD THE MEETING

NOTED: that an audio recording was to be made of the meeting by the Council.

81. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 15 JUNE 2016

AGREED (unanimously) that the Minutes of the meetings held on 15 June 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

82. MATTERS ARISING

Minute No. 71 – Car Parking

A Member of the Committee queried as to the latest position in relation to the introduction of cashless parking in all Council car parks in Newark. It was noted that at the previous meeting it had been agreed that cashless parking would be with effect from 1 September 2016 but to-date it had not been introduced. In response, Members were advised that its introduction was imminent.

In relation to the issues of parking at Pelham Street, Members were informed that a meeting had taken place with residents and consultation had been undertaken with Nottinghamshire County Council. A letter was to be sent to the residents setting out the facts in relation to the matter.

83. PRESENTATION IN RELATION TO NEWARK CASTLE, VICAR WATER AND SCONCE & DEVON PARKS

The Committee received a joint presentation by the Business Manager – Parks & Amenities and the Castle Warden – Projects Officer in relation to the Council's parks: Devon; Sconce; Vicar Water; and Sherwood Heath and also Newark Castle.

The presentation contained information as to the ongoing work at the parks and the events that had been held throughout the year which had been well attended by the local communities.

A Member of the Committee congratulated the Officers stating how well kept and run they were. He commented that the Sconce itself appeared to be underutilised and whether more could be done to promote it. The Business Manager advised that the augmented reality application directed the user to the sconce itself but that he was open to suggestions and ideas as to how this might be enhanced further.

In relation to the Castle, the Castle Warden advised that over half of the comments on trip advisor were of a positive nature and that lessons had been learnt from negative reviews. She advised that if a poor comment was left she would respond by informing the author as to other attractions either within the immediate vicinity of the Castle itself or within Newark. She also gave information as to the tours available at the Castle and often this resulted in a further response which was positive.

It was noted that the King John Exhibition had attracted some 1800 visitors but that the space it had been held in appeared to be a little restrictive. The Castle Warden advised that there had been a steady flow of visitors and that the number at any one time had been managed by keeping some on the lower floor until those on the upper floor had descended. Leaflets and an application for smart phones had been produced and developed for those unable to gain access due to a disability. Also a tour of the Castle dungeons had been filmed which was available to view.

In response to whether there was any indication that Castle visitors went on to visit the National Civil War Centre, the Castle Warden advised that she would estimate that approximately 75% did visit either that same day or at a later date. She also advised that when the new visitor hub had opened all the staff that worked at the Castle went on the tour in order for them to promote or answer any questions with a degree of certainty and actual personal experience.

Members noted that the notice boards and signage, specifically at the Castle and Vicars Water were poor and in need of some maintenance. The Business Manager acknowledged that the condition of the boards and signs required attention and advised that there was a programme of replacement due to commence in 2017.

AGREED (unanimously) that the presentation be noted and the Officers thanked for their attendance.

84. PLANNING PROCESS IN RELATION TO THE ADOPTION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Planning Policy in relation to the adoption of an advisory note for Developer Contributions and Planning Obligations Supplementary Guidance (SPD) which highlighted to developers the latest position in relation to Public Open Space adoption.

The report provided Members with background information as to the importance of securing sustainable development of new housing schemes which provided good design and the integration of appropriate greenspace. In order to achieve this, the District Council required developers to provide public open space on site in line with Policy DM3 of the Allocations & Development Management DPD and the Developer Contributions & Planning Obligations SPD.

It was acknowledged that the rules and regulations in relation to the payment of Section 106 monies was very complicated and a Member queried whether the District Council had a responsibility to a developer to ensure that such monies were not ‘fritted away’ by a Town or Parish Council who had taken on responsibility for the maintenance of the public open space. Another Member commented that this was not real devolution to Town or Parish Councils and that if a management company was awarded the contract for the maintenance of the open space it would be likely that they would need to be prompted to carry out their duties and responsibilities.

In response, the Business Manager advised that the District Council must ensure that any contract with a management company was set up to allow the residents a degree of influence with the company. He also advised that it was the developer’s decision on who to hand over the maintenance of the open space to and not that of the District Council. He further noted that this would be focussed on larger settlements where the Town or Parish Councils would be more likely to be able to make an offer to maintain the open space.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the report be noted; and
- (b) Appendix A be adopted as an Advisory Note to accompany the Developer Contributions and Planning Obligations SPD for the purposes of determining planning applications.

85. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Planning Policy which sought to inform Members as to the progress of the various elements of the Local Development Framework (LDF), including the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contained within the Local Development Scheme (LDS) timetable.

The report set out the progress of each element of the Plan Review, these being: Plan Review: Preferred Approach (Strategy); Preferred Approach (Settlements and Sites); Preferred Approach (Town Centre and Retail; and CIL (Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule).

It was noted that some Parish Councils had not been aware of the consultation events in relation to the Preferred Approach (Strategy) but that further consultation would be carried out in October.

AGREED (unanimously) that the report be noted.

86. HAWTONVILLE COMMUNITY CENTRE UPDATE

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Strategic Housing which sought to update Members on the future use of Hawtonville Community Centre further to completion of the Hawtonville Neighbourhood Study and the Centre’s identification as a key ‘place’ option.

The report set out the Committees previous considerations and decisions in relation to the use of the Centre and provided the latest position in relation the Newark & Sherwood Play Support Group and their funding application together with information on the wider context of the Centre e.g. Hawtonville Open Spaces Project; and the Community Development Worker.

Some Members of the Committee commented that the building was out of date and despite residents stating their desire to keep the building they did not actually use it. It was one Member’s view that the Hawtonville estate was well served without the need to keep this building, adding that he would rather see it demolished with the ensuing land being used for the development of much needed social housing.

It was noted that work was ongoing with existing organisations and that this required little officer resource. Whilst acknowledging the continued works, a Member stated that there would be a point in time when it was considered that despite the residents desire to retain the building, the Council should investigate what other purpose the land could be used for.

Members of the Committee had differing views on how to progress the matter, with one Member favouring the Council’s continued promotion of the building for use by a community organisation with others noting the change in peoples’ habits that had led to the decreased usage of the building.

It was noted that the bid by the Newark & Sherwood Play Support Group for funding had failed. In response to whether alternative funding existed, the Business Manager advised that there were other opportunities but it was all reliant on the bidding process.

A Member of the Committee referred to the survey that had been carried out by Positive Funding some 3 to 4 years previously at a cost of approximately £300k, the results of which had found that the Hawtonville Estate was well served. The Member added that there was no need for another survey as more than one had been carried out in the past at a financial cost to the Council.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the report be noted; and

- (b) The proposals as set out in paragraph 6.1 to the report be agreed subject to the addition of:
 - (c) an investigation be held into the option for the potential redevelopment of the site for housing.

87. NEWARK CASTLE GATEHOUSE TOWER PROJECT

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Parks & Amenities which sought to advise Members of the progress on the project to carry out major improvements to the Gatehouse Tower at Newark Castle and which sought approval for a resubmittal of the Stage 1 Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) application.

Paragraph 2.2 of the report set out the background to the current position and that a Stage 1 bid had been submitted to the HLF in November 2015 with a subsequent rejection letter being received in April 2016. However, the letter had indicated that the rejection had been down to the lack of available funds together with advice on how the Council's bid could be strengthened should the Council decide to re-submit it.

A Member of the Committee sought clarification on the costs involved with re-submission of an enhanced Stage 1 bid stating that the costs appeared to be high for 18 months of work. It was noted that the timetable was set by the HLF and a successful bid would reap many benefits for the Castle and its visitors. Members agreed that they would wish to see more unified approach to the promotion of the Castle and the NCWC in Newark e.g. dual ticketing so visitors attended both attractions. The Business Manager advised that this was very much on the agenda moving forward as the HLF had insisted on the approach.

The Chief Executive advised that the first submission of the bid to the HLF and its subsequent refusal had been reviewed but that the proposed amended bid and associated costs and potential income streams had yet to be reviewed by the Corporate Management Team.

Whilst acknowledging the comments of the Chief Executive, a Member stated that the proposal to put a roof on part of the Castle would contribute to savings against the constant repairs carried out at present and improve the sustainability of the building. The Business Manager confirmed that that would be the case and that the HLF would be asked to contribute to the repairs to other projects e.g. the Gatehouse. The success of the bid would provide the Council with the opportunity to carry out a significant phase of works.

A Member commented that he would wish to see a delay in the re-submission of Phase 1 until more definite costs were known. He added that the Business Plan for the NCWC had failed and that the number of visitors was not that as initially anticipated which had led to additional monies being put into the attraction and that was something he would not wish to see happen with the Newark Castle Gatehouse Tower Project.

Another Member reiterated the previous comments in relation to the reduction in the repairs bill should the roofing works be carried out, adding that if the HLF had indicated their interest in the project then the Business Plan required finessing.

AGREED (by 7 votes for with 1 against) that:

- (a) the re-submission of a Stage 1 Heritage Lottery Fund bid towards improvements to the Gatehouse at Newark Castle be approved;
- (b) the increase in project costs and the increase in the Council's Phase 1 contribution be supported and the potential Phase 2 contribution be noted and recommended to the Policy & Finance Committee; and
- (c) following the submission of Phase 1, more work be undertaken to ascertain the throughput and income and to have a view to aligning the heritage attractions into a single entity in Newark.

88. ECONOMIC GROWTH UPDATE

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Economic Growth which sought to update Members on the current and planned activities within the Economic Growth Business Unit.

The report set out the three main objectives of the Economic Growth Strategy that had been agreed on 26 March 2014 and provided details of the proposals for each of the projects within Inward Investment and Business Growth.

In relation to paragraph 3.4.1 – Fork Lift Truck (FLT) and Low Level Order Pickers training Members were informed that work was carried out with Ambitions Personnel who undertook a great deal of recruitment for FLT drivers. A great detail of work was also being undertaken at the Ollerton outreach and the pilot minibus service assisted people in getting to their place of work.

In relation to the HGV Pilot it was noted that the HGV work academy open day was poorly attended and an alternative provided was being sought.

Paragraph 3.4.4 provided details of the Future First Expo 2017 which was to take place at the Newark Showground in May 2017 and would provide attendees with a broader range of information than the previously held Jobs Fair.

AGREED (unanimously) that the activities undertaken within the Economic Growth Team be endorsed.

89. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

AGREED (unanimously) that under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 4 of Schedule 12A of the Act and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

90. PROPOSED SUPPORT FOR LOCAL BUSINESS

The Committee considered the exempt report presented by the Business Manager – Economic Growth in relation to the request for support for a local business.

(Summary provided in accordance with 100C(2) of the Local Government Act 1972.)

The meeting closed at 8.05pm

Chairman

COUNCIL'S DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18 - 2021/22

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the progress to date on the budget for 2017/18 and future years.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 At the meeting of Policy & Finance Committee on 22 September 2016, Members considered the preliminary report on the 2017/18 Budget and agreed the overall strategy including the appropriate basis on which the budget should be developed, including salaries, wages, general inflation, debt charges etc.
- 2.2 Also at this meeting, Policy & Finance Committee agreed the timetable for consideration of the 2017/18 budget provisions. The budget timetable is dictated by the corporate timetable for Policy & Finance and operational Committees. The essential deadline is that the Council is able to set the level of Council Tax for 2017/2018 at its meeting on 9 March 2017. Working back from this date a timetable has been drawn up and is attached at **Appendix C**. This timetable enables sufficient time for the budget proposals to be considered by operational Committees and Policy & Finance Committee and also sufficient time for the work to be completed within the Financial Services section and Business Units.
- 2.3 The Council has agreed policies on Budgeting and Council Tax, Reserves and Provisions, Budget Principles, a Charging Policy and Value for Money Strategy which set out the approach to be taken to the budget process. These policies and principles were reviewed and updated by Policy & Finance Committee in September 2016. The Charging Policy is included at **Appendix D**. **It should be noted that Policy & Finance Committee agreed that all charges should be rounded to the nearest 5p with effect from 1 April 2017.**

3.0 Introduction

3.1 Financial Environment

- 3.1.1 As part of the 2016/17 Local Government Finance Settlement the Government offered Council's the ability to take up a 4 year funding settlement to 2019/20 to provide funding certainty and stability to enable more proactive planning of service delivery and support strategic collaboration with local partners. Councils who accept this offer were required to produce an efficiency plan by 14 October. The Council's Efficiency Plan can be found on the Council's web site <http://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/budgets/> - details were submitted to CLG prior to the deadline. It should be noted however, that for this Council, the certainty of funding only applies to Revenue Support Grant and Rural Services Delivery Grant, which in 2019/20 will only amount to £113k. In practice, the final determination of the local government finance settlement for any given year cannot be made until calculations are completed taking account of the business rates multiplier, which is based on the September RPI figure.

- 3.1.2 However, the result of the EU Referendum has added much more uncertainty to future local government finance settlements. Alongside this a change to leadership of central government including ministers responsible for local government and housing injects a further element of uncertainty. It is expected that the Chancellor will announce a reset of national finances in the Autumn Statement. Until this is published we do not know if there will be any impact on local government funding, but would forecast a reduction. It is not known if the offer of a four year settlement might be withdrawn.
- 3.1.3 Changes have also been proposed to Business Rates with local government being able to retain 100% of business rate income by 2019/20. A consultation to consider how this might work closed on 26 September 2016, alongside a consultation on needs and how these might be assessed. Government proposals suggest that the 80%/20% tier split currently in favour of billing authorities could be reversed, with the majority of funding going to upper tier authorities to support new responsibilities that will be devolved. Although it is possible that a system of damping will be put in place, this could lead to a funding reduction – central government will still set the level of need and the quantum of business rates income to be retained by individual authorities.
- 3.1.4 It is not known whether the change to 100% Business Rate Retention in 2019/20 will replace the reset that was due to take place in that year. Any reset could potentially rebase all growth achieved since 2013/14 and move this into the baseline. Currently £450k of income from business rates growth is included in the budget for 2019/20. If either the 100% rate retention or a reset removes this growth as extra income, this will lead to a shortfall in the budget for 2019/20 and subsequent years.
- 3.1.5 To add further uncertainty, there is a business rate revaluation coming into effect in April 2017. Revaluations lead to an increase in the number of appeals, and these would begin to be paid out in 2018. Currently the District Council bears 40% of the risk of successful appeals – our current provision for this is £3.5m, and this will need to increase in the 2016/17 year end process to cover further appeals already in the system. The increase to the provision comes from business rates income in year. Once 100% retention takes effect, our share of the risk will be in line with the tier split, which again is not known at this time.
- 3.1.6 Until the draft Local Government Finance Settlement is announced in December, all figures for Government Grant are based on internal estimates. Reductions in Government grant are expected to continue. The current estimates in the approved Medium Term Financial Plan are:

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	£	£	£	£	£
Formula Grant	1,776,670	1,048,590	592,370	82,780	0

However, due to the uncertainties set out above these figures are all subject to change depending on government announcements over the next few months.

- 3.1.7 Under the current business rates retention scheme introduced in April 2013, Councils are able to keep a proportion of the business rates revenue as well as a proportion of the growth that is generated in their area. The estimated amounts for retained business rates, excluding growth in the area, are shown in the table below:

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Retained Business Rates	3,365,800	3,432,000	3,533,250	3,646,180	3,714,820	3,789,116

However, it should be noted that the uncertainties detailed above could lead to all of these figures changing.

- 3.1.8 Members will be aware that the level of Council Tax was increased by 1.94% in 2016/17. This followed a Council Tax freeze over a number of years. The Government ceased Council Tax freeze grants after 2015/16 and it is assumed that these will not be announced in the future.
- 3.1.9 The position with regard to general inflation remains complex. The latest (September 2016) CPI figure for inflation shows an annual increase of 1.0%. The Bank of England forecast is for CPI inflation to remain around 2% by the end of 2016/17.
- 3.1.10 One of the major areas of the budget affected by inflation is the cost of salaries and wages. In the Chancellor's summer budget in July 2015, it was announced that public sector pay increases would be restricted to 1% per annum for the next 4 years. The medium term financial plan already included a 1% increase for pay, increments and other salary costs for each financial year. It should be noted, however, that the budget also announced an intention to introduce a National Living Wage. This will impact on the Council's budget and it will be necessary to assess the position on this as further details are announced.

4.0 Budget Pressures

- 4.1 There will undoubtedly be budget pressures in certain areas of the budget that will lead to unavoidable increases in the budget in specific areas. The Council's budget has become more reliant on income and so may on occasions be vulnerable to reductions in the level of income, and would also potentially be vulnerable to a rise in inflation or interest rates.
- 4.2 The Council will also have to consider demand management in areas such as homelessness, community safety and supporting people and potentially in the following areas where budget pressures are likely to arise:
- Welfare reform
 - Increased house building in the District gives pressure on services such as refuse collection
 - The triennial revaluation of the pension fund which is likely to impact on the lump sum paid annually
- 4.3 Although there has been a clear focus on the need to deliver savings, the Council has also set priorities to develop services in certain areas. This has been through a combination of the development of facilities and assets and identifying funds for the delivery of specific policies.
- 4.4 With respect to assets, the Council has developed a National Civil War Centre and the new Newark Sports & Fitness Centre, and is in the process of building new shared headquarters in Newark town centre. The sale of Kelham Hall has been agreed. These are included in the Medium Term Financial Plan and efficiencies in the running costs of these assets against the current asset base have been identified that will support budgets in future years.

5.0 Budget Strategy

- 5.1 Whilst there is always a need to improve efficiency and review existing budgets, the Council's budget gap in future years was already significant without the uncertainties detailed above and should principally be addressed through strategic measures. Savings from leisure commissioning (Active4Today), devolution and collaboration and savings following the move to the new offices and associated working practices have already been built into the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 5.2 The uncertainties detailed above lead to the necessity to identify significant savings potentially for 2018/19 and for future years.
- 5.3 Each year an efficiency review is undertaken to consider the potential for budget savings and for additional income to be incorporated into the budget. This review identifies sustainable savings that can continue to be delivered in future years. For 2015/16 savings of £340,000 were identified and are in the process of being delivered for 2016/17.
- 5.4 Capital financing is regularly reviewed to ensure that borrowing is not undertaken unless it is necessary. The latest review has shown that no borrowing is necessary for the current approved general fund capital programme. This includes the relocation of the Council's headquarters and the vehicle replacement programme. It should be noted that any borrowing will add approximately £60,000 per year to the revenue budget for every £1million borrowed.
- 5.5 It will not be possible to finalise funding in the budget strategy until government announcements on future funding levels are published later in the year. Members are asked to approve the budget strategy as set out in this report, subject to future announcements.

6.0 Draft Revenue Budget Proposals

- 6.1 Business Managers and service budget officers have been working with officers from Financial Services to determine a first draft general fund budget and medium term financial plan. The budgets have been prepared in line with the strategy agreed by Policy & Finance Committee on 22 September 2016.
- 6.2 A summary of the figures to date for the Economic Development Committee is shown at **Appendix A** to this report. It should, however, be clearly understood that the figures shown are first draft only and that a substantial amount of work has yet to be completed before any conclusions can be drawn. The figures also exclude recharges for central services and all Capital charges. The subjective summary is shown in **Appendix B**.
- 6.3 As per committee requests detailed budgets for each service at Cost centre and subjective level is available on the Extranet along with Performance monitoring to Period 6.
- 6.4 It should be noted that this shows only the budget for services falling within the remit of the Economic Development Committee, but overall, across all services and taking account of 'below the line' costs and income, it is still necessary to find savings for 2017/18 and future years. When the overall budget is considered by the Policy & Finance Committee on 1 December it may refer budgets back where it feels that additional savings need to be made. The Policy & Finance Committee have instructed that the functional Committees be requested to look at opportunities for savings in 2017/18, and also any investment potentials which would increase and support revenue income levels, in order to reduce the projected burdens in future years.

- 6.5 The current draft budget shows an increase in 2017/18 with budgets remaining fairly constant throughout the remainder of the medium term financial plan. This is at a time when the Council is facing reducing government grants and other financial pressures. It is important that the Committee continues to scrutinise and review its budget in order to achieve additional savings in future years.
- 6.6 Direct service expenditure net of capital charges and internal central services recharges currently shows an overall increase of £77,210 against 2016/17 budget. This figure assumes a 1% increase in salary and wages costs overall in 2017/18 and future years. An average of 2% inflation on expenditure and income, as approved by the Policy & Finance Committee at its meeting on 22 September 2016 is included; however budget officers and business managers have been instructed to look for additional savings so that the new budget comes in at or below the 2016/17 budget.
- 6.7 Staffing costs account for approximately 51% of the overall gross service budget within Economic Development (58% across the whole of the council excluding housing benefits) and significant budget savings cannot be achieved without affecting staffing levels.
- 6.8 Major variances between 2016/17 and 2017/18 are shown below:

Cost Centre Level

The budget for Heritage, Culture & Visitors (HERITAGE, CULTURE & VISITORS) has increased by £116,240 in 2017-18 when compared with 2016/17. This does somewhat mask the real issue though. The HERITAGE, CULTURE & VISITORS budget included within the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) had an upward trajectory year on year for the level of income it would generate. After reviewing current income levels, footfall, spend per visitor the budget manager has sought to reduce the income targets previously agreed. This has resulted in an overall increase in net costs of running the HERITAGE, CULTURE & VISITORS against the MTFP agreed in 2016/17 by £200k in 2017/18, £280k in 2018/19 and peaking at £318k in 2019/20.

The budgets for Sherwood TIC and Southwell TIC have been merged with the Promotion of Tourism budget, the collective budget has reduced by £11,120 from 2016/17 budget to 2017/18 proposed as a result.

The budget for Growth and support in 2017/18 has seen a reduction of £38,290 in contrast with 2016/17 budget. The saving has been achieved through the arrangements with Building control.

The building control Fee Earning cost centre/service has now been transferred to SKDC. The £120,840 represents the management fee payable to SKDC for running the service.

The Development Management budget has increased by £43,030, this is purely as a result of the incremental costs of salaries and the knock on effect on National Insurance and Pensions.

The Newark Business Innovation centre costs have been reduced by £23,270, this is to reflect the recent improvements at the centre and increase in occupancy levels.

The reduction in costs for Economic Growth of £57,370 is due to the budget in 16/17 been inflated as a result of one off increases of £62,000 for Inward investment marketing (£15,000) and Employment and skills (£47,000). This is not a true budget savings in terms of the MTFP.

The reduction in Newark Lorry Park costs of £86,120 are as a result of the increased income through the Lorry Park, the levels of income are dependent on the expansion securing the level of spaces currently available.

Subjective Level

Salaries and Wages budgets have reduced by £182,980 in 2017/18 when compared with 2016/17 budgets. This is due mainly to the transfer of the Building control services to SKDC, this represents a reduction in staff budget of £156,820, this is not a saving though as it IS replaced with a management fee to SKDC. Other reductions in staff cost where at Southwell and Sherwood TIC totalling £43,940, again this is not a saving though, the budget has been transferred to Promotion of Tourism contractual services allocation.

This has also lead to a reduction in pension costs, again this is not a saving to NDSC just a realignment to management fee and contractual services allocation.

National insurance budgets have increased across the board, even though the Salary and wages budget have reduced. The reason being that employers no longer enjoy a reduction in national insurance contributions for staff within NSDC pension scheme.

The Majority of reductions in budget across non pay expenditure are as a direct result of the Building control services transferring to SKDC. The only other major factor is due to the changes in regard to how the Newark Business Innovation Centre is managed. Previously there have been quarterly Management fees payable totalling £347,490 in year, this expenditure budget has now been removed, along with income quarterly recharges totalling £341,890, these have been removed and replaced by a single line for each year showing a surplus of £18,200 (hence a slight saving on the budget overall).

In respect to the income reduction the major changes are due to the Building control services transferring to SKDC. The other major factors is the fore-mentioned changes at the Newark Business Innovation centre replacing income line of £341,890 with one net income line of £18,200. The other major change is the reduction in income budgets proposed within Heritage Culture and Visitors, this accounts for a reduction in income of £149,910 when contrasted with 2016-17 budget (this figure is significantly higher when contrasted with MTFP figures).

7.0 Revenue Budget Bids 2017/18

7.1 As stated above, Members will be aware that the Council is likely to face severe budgetary challenges over the next four years. It is anticipated that significant savings will need to be identified in the later years of the Medium Term Financial Plan. As other pressures impact on Local Government spending it is anticipated that further cuts may be forced on to Local Government. Consequently, it is not possible for revenue growth bids to be incorporated into the budget for 2017/18 or following years.

- 7.2 At the meeting on 22 September 2016 Policy & Finance Committee agreed that spending committees should scrutinise their budgets to look for opportunities for further savings and for spend to save schemes where additional expenditure in the short term will bring increased revenue income in the future.

8.0 Increases in Fees and Charges

- 8.1 Members will be aware that a review of charges is considered as part of the budget process each year. With this in mind it is proposed that a **guideline** figure for increases to fees and charges should be set at a minimum of 2% for each year of the medium term financial plan. In preparing income budgets officers should have regard to this guidance and the level of RPI at the time the charges are set. Each type of income should be considered on its own merits and there should be comparative assessment with other local authorities and service providers in the area before final approval of fees and charges by Council. It is important for income levels to be considered **net** of VAT where appropriate, i.e. to consider the level of income ultimately received by the Council. Business Managers have been instructed to work with relevant Committee Members prior to making proposals on future levels of fees and charges.
- 8.2 It is important that fees and charges are considered within the framework set out in the Corporate Charging Policy that is included at **Appendix D**. **It should be noted that Policy & Finance Committee agreed that all charges should be rounded to the nearest 5p with effect from 1 April 2017.**
- 8.3 Proposals for increases in fees and charges will be brought to the next meeting of the Economic Development Committee on 18 January 2017 for consideration and recommendation to Policy & Finance Committee on 23 February 2017 and Council on 9 March 2017.

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1 The figures at this stage in the budget process require a considerable amount of work before they are recommended to Policy & Finance Committee on 23 February 2017.
- 9.2 It is important that the Committee continues to scrutinise and review its budget in order to achieve additional savings in future years at a time when the Council is facing reducing government grants and other financial pressures.

10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- (a) the Committee undertakes a review of fees and charges accordance with the Corporate Charging Policy and;**
- (b) the current draft Committee budget be incorporated into the overall service budget to be reported to Policy & Finance Committee at its meeting on 1 December 2016; and**

- (c) the Business Manager and Chief Financial Officer – Financial Services, continues to formulate budget proposals for formal consideration at the Economic Development Committee meeting on 18th January 2017 for recommendation to Policy & Finance Committee on 23rd February 2017.**

Reason for Recommendations

To ensure that the preliminary figures for the budget are considered by Policy & Finance Committee and that final budget proposals for 2017/18 to 2021/22 are submitted to the Economic Development Committee on 18 January 2017 for recommendation to Policy & Finance Committee on 23 February 2017.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Nicky Lovely on extension 5317 or Amanda Wasilewski on extension 5738.

Nicky Lovely
Business Manager and Chief Financial Officer – Financial Services

BUDGET SUMMARY

Appendix A

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CODE	DESCRIPTION	2016/17 INITIAL BUDGET	2017/18 INITIAL BUDGET	MORE/ (LESS)	2018/19 INITIAL BUDGET	2019/20 INITIAL BUDGET	2020/21 INITIAL BUDGET	2021/22 INITIAL BUDGET
A10105	NEWARK CASTLE/CASTLE GROUNDS	43,160	44,790	1,630	45,400	45,990	46,600	47,240
A10108	RESOURCE CENTRE. MUSEUMS	24,680	22,740	(1,940)	23,100	23,480	23,840	24,220
A10109	HERITAGE, CULTURE & VISITORS	407,430	523,670	116,240	543,510	560,600	567,470	574,420
A10813	LAND CHARGES	(82,000)	(51,340)	30,660	(52,660)	(54,000)	(55,400)	(56,820)
A11314	LINCOLN ROAD SPORTS HALL	16,730	15,770	(960)	15,960	16,200	16,440	16,690
A11331	PARKS AND PLAYING FIELDS	25,880	27,510	1,630	28,050	29,930	30,620	36,390
A11334	PRIVATE ESTATES	12,290	17,050	4,760	22,400	22,850	23,330	24,890
A11335	CLOSED CHURCHYARDS	4,650	4,900	250	4,950	4,990	5,040	5,090
A11336	VICAR WATER PARK	53,980	62,740	8,760	63,070	63,430	63,770	64,120
A11337	COMMUNITY FACILITIES MGMT	43,850	45,210	1,360	45,830	46,440	47,070	47,700
A11338	SCONCE & DEVON PARK	74,700	72,550	(2,150)	73,320	74,100	74,910	75,650
A11570	SOUTHWELL TIC	6,900	0	(6,900)	0	0	0	0
A11571	SHERWOOD TIC	49,200	0	(49,200)	0	0	0	0
A11573	PROMOTION OF TOURISM	54,000	98,980	44,980	98,980	98,980	98,980	98,980
A11574	SHERWOOD YOUTH HOSTEL	(15,000)	(19,000)	(4,000)	(19,000)	(19,000)	(19,000)	(19,000)
A11601	GROWTH TECHNICAL SUPPORT	186,170	147,880	(38,290)	149,560	151,280	152,950	154,690
A11603	BUILDING CONTROL FEE EARNING	(55,560)	0	55,560	0	0	0	0
A11604	DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT	(153,920)	(110,890)	43,030	(97,490)	(89,110)	(80,690)	(72,150)
A11605	PLANNING POLICY	236,850	262,200	25,350	254,920	258,290	260,560	263,420
A11606	BUILDING CONTROL	85,100	120,840	35,740	112,870	105,930	105,930	105,930
A11610	LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK	52,020	53,060	1,040	54,120	55,200	56,300	57,430
A11611	COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY	28,820	33,310	4,490	34,350	35,320	36,040	36,760
A11702	ENVIRONMENTAL SCHEMES	26,250	25,930	(320)	26,110	26,300	26,490	26,700
A11810	NEWARK BUSINESS INNOVATION CEN	53,680	30,410	(23,270)	31,380	32,360	33,380	34,420
A11813	SUTTON ON TRENT WORKSHOPS	(31,800)	(32,970)	(1,170)	(32,960)	(32,950)	(32,940)	(32,930)
A11814	BLIDWORTH WORKSHOPS	(42,130)	(42,650)	(520)	(42,640)	(42,620)	(42,610)	(42,600)
A11815	BOUGHTON WORKSHOPS	(34,120)	(38,420)	(4,300)	(38,400)	(38,370)	(38,350)	(38,340)
A11816	CHURCH FARM WORKSHOPS	(19,830)	(20,000)	(170)	(19,990)	(19,990)	(19,980)	(19,980)
A11817	BILSTHORPE WORKSHOPS	(35,270)	(37,320)	(2,050)	(37,310)	(37,300)	(37,290)	(37,280)
A11818	BURMA ROAD WORKSHOPS	(14,480)	(14,070)	410	(14,060)	(14,050)	(14,040)	(14,030)
A11820	BLIDWORTH INDUSTRIAL PARK	1,120	920	(200)	920	920	920	920
A11821	CLIPSTONE WORKSHOPS	(31,800)	(32,060)	(260)	(32,040)	(32,030)	(32,020)	(32,000)
A11822	BOUGHTON ADVANCE FACTORY	(37,030)	(36,040)	990	(36,030)	(36,020)	(36,010)	(36,000)
A11823	CLIPSTONE ADVANCED FACTORIES	(36,010)	(35,940)	70	(35,920)	(35,890)	(35,880)	(35,860)
A11824	SHERWOOD FOREST CRAFT CENTRE	(19,200)	(19,890)	(690)	(19,830)	(19,760)	(19,710)	(19,660)
A11826	CLIPSTONE HOLDING CENTRE	(12,530)	(14,690)	(2,160)	(14,680)	(14,670)	(14,660)	(14,650)
A11828	BLIDWORTH ADVANCE FACTORIES	(34,180)	(35,300)	(1,120)	(35,280)	(35,250)	(35,230)	(35,210)
A11829	KEEPERS COTTAGE	(6,820)	(1,780)	5,040	0	0	0	0
A11830	20 BALDERTONGATE	4,850	0	(4,850)	0	0	0	0
A11851	ECONOMIC GROWTH	312,080	254,710	(57,370)	256,470	258,250	260,010	261,810
A12001	CAR PARKS & MARKETS ADMIN	102,570	104,860	2,290	106,980	109,150	111,320	113,500
A12011	SURFACE CAR PARKS NEWARK	(619,280)	(622,170)	(2,890)	(620,010)	(617,820)	(615,600)	(613,330)
A12012	SURFACE CAR PARKS SOUTHWELL	6,890	0	(6,890)	0	0	0	0
A12014	NEWARK LORRY PARK	(151,060)	(237,180)	(86,120)	(235,750)	(234,300)	(232,810)	(231,300)
A12019	SURFACE CAR PARK OLLERTON	9,560	7,380	(2,180)	7,460	7,540	7,620	7,700
A12211	RIVERSIDE ARENA MARKET	(10,000)	(10,000)	0	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)
A12213	SOUTHWELL OPEN MARKET	1,250	0	(1,250)	0	0	0	0
A12401	OTHER PROPERTIES & WSHOP VIODS	26,580	31,450	4,870	31,460	31,460	31,470	31,470
A12506	GROWTH INVESTMENT FUND	67,000	67,000	0	67,000	67,000	67,000	67,000
A15002	CREW LANE DEPOT	(16,880)	(17,390)	(510)	(17,370)	(17,360)	(17,350)	(17,340)
A15023	GROUNDNS MAINTENANCE	231,730	221,520	(10,210)	226,450	233,720	238,690	243,850
	TOTAL	791,070	868,280	77,210	913,200	959,220	997,180	1,042,510

BUDGET SUMMARY

Appendix B

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUBJECTIVE SUMMARY

CODE	DESCRIPTION	2016/17 INITIAL BUDGET	2017/18 INITIAL BUDGET	More (Less)	2018/19 INITIAL BUDGET	2019/20 INITIAL BUDGET	2020/21 INITIAL BUDGET	2021/22 INITIAL BUDGET
111	SALARIES AND WAGES	2,303,670	2,120,690	(182,980)	2,140,220	2,161,840	2,183,460	2,205,400
113	NATIONAL INSURANCE	153,180	189,320	36,140	192,830	195,260	197,690	200,150
114	SUPERANNUATION	266,820	238,360	(28,460)	240,590	243,020	245,470	247,950
	EMPLOYEE SUB TOTAL	2,723,670	2,548,370	(175,300)	2,573,640	2,600,120	2,626,620	2,653,500
211	REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE	114,490	112,670	(1,820)	111,960	112,840	113,740	114,660
212	ENERGY COSTS	148,460	128,720	(19,740)	128,310	129,900	131,540	133,210
213	RENT	166,380	124,490	(41,890)	124,600	124,720	124,840	124,960
214	RATES	118,350	108,190	(10,160)	109,610	111,050	112,510	114,000
215	WATER SERVICES	26,930	21,180	(5,750)	21,410	21,640	21,870	22,110
216	FIXTURES AND FITTING	200	0	(200)	0	0	0	0
217	CLEANING AND DOMESTIC	1,150	1,170	20	1,170	1,170	1,170	1,170
219	CONTRIBUTION TO FUNDS	199,850	182,920	(16,930)	183,220	183,520	183,830	184,140
311	TRANSPORT	76,480	72,990	(3,490)	74,380	78,030	79,530	81,000
313	CONTRACT HIRE OP LEASE	350	0	(350)	0	0	0	0
315	CAR ALLOWANCES	34,120	18,350	(15,770)	18,590	18,840	19,070	19,330
316	INSURANCE	11,620	11,110	(510)	11,300	11,610	11,830	12,030
411	EQUIPMENT AND FURNITURE	17,490	16,080	(1,410)	16,180	16,280	16,380	16,480
412	MATERIALS	19,600	19,300	(300)	19,580	19,910	20,260	20,620
421	INTERNAL	77,040	59,030	(18,010)	59,030	59,030	59,030	59,030
431	CLOTHING AND UNIFORMS	7,830	6,790	(1,040)	6,890	6,990	7,090	7,190
441	GENERAL OFFICE EXPENSES	192,810	162,460	(30,350)	162,600	162,740	162,880	163,020
451	CONTRACTUAL	346,690	476,690	130,000	471,030	468,310	471,560	475,440
452	OTHER SERVICES	244,760	256,210	11,450	265,240	267,410	269,610	271,870
453	LEASING PREMIUMS	347,490	0	(347,490)	0	0	0	0
461	COMMUNICATIONS AND COMPUT	67,800	53,240	(14,560)	53,610	53,970	54,340	54,720
471	STAFF	10,160	9,000	(1,160)	9,050	9,110	9,170	9,230
481	GRANTS	10,000	10,000	0	0	0	0	0
482	SUBSCRIPTIONS	8,230	5,540	(2,690)	5,610	5,680	5,750	5,830
491	INSURANCE	71,640	82,540	10,900	84,500	86,750	88,330	90,010
492	CONTRIBS TO FUNDS AND PROVISN	70,910	23,990	(46,920)	24,070	24,150	24,230	24,310
493	OTHER	602,440	517,050	(85,390)	529,880	540,730	541,590	542,470
497	DISCOUNTS	8,360	11,360	3,000	10,160	8,960	7,730	6,490
	RUNNING EXPENSES SUB TOTAL	3,001,630	2,491,070	(510,560)	2,501,980	2,523,340	2,537,880	2,553,320
922	Contributions From Other Las	(112,930)	(115,490)	(2,560)	(115,490)	(115,490)	(115,490)	(115,490)
924	Parish Council Contributions	(8,570)	0	8,570	0	0	0	0
928	Recharge Non Gf Accounts	(254,260)	(204,770)	49,490	(200,200)	(199,210)	(199,430)	(193,500)
931	Sales	(465,740)	(325,110)	140,630	(325,110)	(325,110)	(325,110)	(325,110)
932	Fees And Charges	(2,955,820)	(2,558,770)	397,050	(2,561,430)	(2,564,140)	(2,566,910)	(2,569,730)
933	Rents	(898,680)	(649,530)	249,150	(642,700)	(642,800)	(642,890)	(642,990)
938	Fees And Charges	(78,430)	(166,520)	(88,090)	(166,520)	(166,520)	(166,520)	(166,520)
939	Other Receipts	(139,190)	(150,970)	(11,780)	(150,970)	(150,970)	(150,970)	(150,970)
961	Revenue Appropriation Adjust	(20,610)	0	20,610	0	0	0	0
	INCOME SUB TOTAL	(4,934,230)	(4,171,160)	763,070	(4,162,420)	(4,164,240)	(4,167,320)	(4,164,310)
	COMMITTEE TOTAL	791,070	868,280	77,210	913,200	959,220	997,180	1,042,510

APPENDIX C

2017/18 REVENUE BUDGET TIMETABLE				
Action	Base Budget & General Principles of Budget	Draft Budget	Draft Final Budget	Final Budget Approval & Council Tax Setting
Base budget & general principles of budget	Policy & Finance 22 September 2016			
Support services – agree basis for charging		9 September 2016		
Working papers issued to budget officers		22 July 2016		
First draft of treasury estimates based on capital programme reported to September Policy & Finance Committee		7 October 2016		
Draft budgets complete – no support services allocated		30 September 2016		
Budgets uploaded onto eFinancials		5 – 7 October 2016		
Coordination & review of first draft budget and reports prepared		10 – 14 October 2016		
First draft budget presented		Homes & Communities 7 November 2016 (papers 06/10/16 – possibly table on 12/10/16) Leisure & Environment 15 November 2016 (26/10/16) Economic Development 23 November 2016 (papers 26/10/16)		

		Policy & Finance 1 December 2016 (papers 09/11/16)	Policy & Finance 1 December 2016 (papers 09/11/16)	
Final treasury estimates completed based on capital performance reported to December Policy & Finance			30 December 2016	
Support services allocated and uploaded to efinancials				
Final committee budgets approved for consideration by Policy & Finance Committee on 23 rd February 2017			Homes & Communities 16 January 2017 (papers 14/12/16) Economic Development 18 January 2017 (papers 14/12/16) Leisure & Environment 24 January 2017 (papers 30/12/16) Policy & Finance 26 January 2017 (papers 04/01/17)	
Housing Revenue Account budget and rent setting report				Policy & Finance 26 January 2017 to refer to Council for approval on 14 February 2017 (papers 04/01/17)
Council Tax Discounts Scheme determined				Council 13 December 2016

Council Tax Base 2017/18				Officer Decision – determined between 1 December 2016 and 31 January 2017
Revenue budget setting				Policy & Finance 23 February 2017 (papers 01/02/17)
Parish Council Precept information received			(up to) 28 February 2017	
Council Tax setting				Council 9 March 2017 (papers 01/03/17)

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

CORPORATE CHARGING POLICY

Revised: July 2016

Date of next revision: July 2017

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- 2. Purpose of the Policy**
- 3. Processes and Frequencies for Reviewing Charges**
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- 6. Calculation of Charges**
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1. **Introduction**

This Policy applies to external fees and charges other than those prescribed by the government. It provides a guide to internal charging arrangements but is subject to CIPFA's 'Best Value Accounting Code of Practice' and has regard to the Audit Commission's publication "*Positively Charged*".

It is not intended to apply to the disposal of Council assets, rents, internal charges or rechargeable works, nor will it apply where charges are governed by statutory regulation or guidance.

The Policy does apply if we have discretion, but not if there is a prescribed fixed charge.

Over the period of the Medium Term Financial Plan services will align their charges and processes with this policy.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the other related Council policies and strategies, including Financial Regulations, Equalities Policy, VFM Strategy, Corporate Plan.

If after reading this Code you require further guidance or clarification, or you are not sure how best to comply with the Policy then please contact your Business Manager or the Director of Resources.

2. **Purpose of the Policy**

To establish a policy within which fee and charge levels will support the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Corporate Plan; and,

To encourage a consistent approach to the setting and reviewing of charges for services provided by Newark and Sherwood District Council by:

- specifying the processes and frequencies for reviewing existing charging levels or introducing new charges for areas of the council's work for which charges could in principle be set;
- providing guidance on the factors that need to be taken into consideration when charges are reviewed on an annual basis;
- establishing parameters for calculating different levels of charges;
- recommending the criteria for applying concessions or discounted charges on a consistent council wide basis;
- requiring more active use of market intelligence relating to different services.

3. **Processes and Frequencies for Reviewing Charges**

The following arrangements for reviewing charges will be applied throughout all areas of the Council where charges for services already exist or could in principle be set:

- all discretionary charges will be considered and approved by Council as part of the Budget and Council Tax setting process in March of each year.

- a major review of each business unit's charging strategy will take place at least once every three years to ensure consistency with the council's priorities, policy framework, service aims, market sensitivity, customer preferences, and income generation needs, and the justification for any subsidy that the council as a whole makes to the service.
- annual reviews will be carried out for all of these services as part of the budget process, and shall have regard for the budget strategy approved in September each year.
- where fees are not to be increased or are proposed to be increased below inflation, this must be reported to CMT by the budget officer clearly stating the financial implications and budget shortfall before the deadline for completion of the revenue budget.
- these formal reviews will be overseen by the appropriate Director.
- where decisions on fees and charges, including any concessions or discounts, are taken outside the budget process approved by CMT and Policy and Finance Committee, any proposals must have due regard to the Medium Term Financial Plan.

4. Factors Relevant to the Annual Review of Charges

Annual reviews of charges will consider the following factors:

- a. inflationary pressures generally and input costs specific to the service;
- b. any statutory framework relating to the service
- c. the actual or potential impact of any competition in terms of price or quality;
- d. trends in user demand and the forecast effect of price changes;
- e. equality and access to services;
- f. customer survey results;
- g. benchmarking results;
- h. council wide and service budget targets;
- i. cost structure implications arising from developments such as investments made in the service;
- j. consistency with other charges;
- k. alternative charging structures that could be more effective;
- l. validity of continuing any concessions;
- m. proposals for targeted promotions during the year, and evaluation of any that took place in the previous year;
- n. where less than the full cost is being recovered (including nil charges), the justification for the decision is reviewed and documented to ensure that this decision remains valid and that significant income is not being lost.

5. Processes for Setting Charges for New Sources of Income

All Business Managers should explore new business opportunities with a view to generating additional income.

All guidance in this Policy must be considered when setting new fees and charges.

A business plan must be prepared.

Any potential new income streams will need to be approved by CMT and Policy and Finance Committee.

The setting of the fees and charges must be made in accordance with the current VAT regulations.

The proposed billing and recovery administrative process must be agreed with the S151 officer prior to the charges being implemented.

A central record will be maintained by the relevant Business Manager of any decisions made not to charge for a service where a charge could be made.

6. Calculation of Charges

Charges will apply to all users, and will be set at a level to maximise take-up and income targets and wherever possible covering or exceeding the full cost of providing the service in question.

It is the responsibility of the Business Manager to ensure that the proposals comply with the appropriate legal framework and any legal restrictions. Advice should be taken from the Council's Legal section before any proposal is finalised.

This calculation of full cost should be based on the direct cost of service provision including staff, supplies and services, equipment, premise costs. Overheads and capital asset depreciation charges should be included but consideration may be given to a less than full cost recovery of these elements where inclusion would distort competition.

Where less than the full cost is being recovered, the justification for the decision must be documented and retained by the appropriate Business Manager and clearly state the financial implications and budget shortfall.

All fees and charges must be calculated in accordance with the current V.A.T. regulations.

7. Concessionary Charges

In some circumstances the Council will offer subsidies to all users or concessions to specific user groups where this is consistent with achieving its priorities.

Entitlement to concessionary charges must have regard to equalities legislation and is designed to reduce barriers to participation arising from:

- Age;
- Level of income;
- Family circumstances;
- Health
- Educational circumstances.

Concessions will not apply to retail sales from shops or cafes.

Concessionary charges may also be made available to organisations whose purpose is to assist the Council in meeting specific objectives in its priorities and policy framework, or which contribute to the aims of key local partnerships in which the Council has a leading role.

Concessionary charges should not normally apply to peak times or in situations that would result in the loss of income from customers paying standard charges. Neither would they normally be available to organisations that are based outside of the Council's area other than on a reciprocal basis.

Only one concession can be applied to the standard charge at any given time.

Services wishing to adopt a concessionary charging scheme must demonstrate the scheme is practicable in terms of assessment, collection and evidencing for audit purposes.

8. Discounts

For certain services it will be normal practice to set promotional discounts, Frequent User discounts or group Discounts.

Promotional discounts are defined as short-term charges that are targeted to increase take-up or awareness of the services that are available.

Frequent User discounts are to be used only for commercial reasons such as generating customer loyalty where alternative provision from competitors exists, and where market analysis shows a real risk of reduced income if they are not offered.

Group discounts are to be used to encourage take up by organisations able to block book and Family discounts to encourage parents and children's take up.

Discounts can be applied to both the standard charge and the concessionary charge.

Discounts can only be applied where the Service has received prior approval of the principle to apply a discount to the charge for this service.

9. The Use of Market Intelligence

All managers of discretionary services for which a charge is made should take steps to identify competitors offering similar or related services, and make use of comprehensive and dynamic market intelligence in evaluating:

- their charging strategy;
- the range of services provided;
- the quality of services provided;
- their cost structure.

All managers of services for which a charge is made should consult with customers, relevant partners and stakeholders on the range, quality and cost of services provided prior to the triennial review.

Consultation should also take place with potential customers and target groups to determine improvements needed to encourage participation at least every five years.

Comprehensive and accurate usage statistics will be maintained for all services and at all facilities where charges are made, to enable analysis of usage, justification of any subsidy given by the Council, and accurate forecasting of the effect of price changes on usage.

Benchmarking should be undertaken at least annually regularly with other Councils in the local area and with relevant national groupings of authorities, to ensure that charges are at comparable levels and that significant differences are understood and justified.

10. Further Guidance

Charges should be payable in advance wherever possible or collected by direct debit or through the corporate income system.

All fees/charges must be reported annually to the Financial Services Business Unit as part of the budget process for publishing in the annual budget book.

All fees/charges must be published on the Councils website.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek delegated authority for making comments on future Neighbourhood Plans within the district.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In addition to the recently made Southwell Neighbourhood Plan, another six parishes have designated areas and are at various stages in the production of their plans. Three of these: Fernwood, Thurgarton and Farnsfield are at, or approaching, pre-submission consultation stage after which their plans will be submitted to this Council for examination.
- 2.2 This Council needs to consider and submit its own comments on draft plans to the parish as part of the pre-submission consultation. Following submission we need to carry out a further public consultation, appoint an independent examiner and submit the plan and all consultation responses, including our own, for examination.

3.0 Proposal

- 3.1 Given the number of Neighbourhood Plans we know are likely to be submitted over forthcoming months and with the potential for more to come forward, it will be difficult to report and gain approval for each stage through the committee system to ensure their timely progression. It is therefore proposed that where plans are substantially in accordance with national and local policy, Officers are authorised to make comments at both the pre-submission stage and the post submission stage, to be submitted for independent examination. Comments will be agreed with the Chairman of Local Development Framework Task Group, Chairman and Vice Chairman of Economic Development Committee and the local ward member(s). Where there is significant conflict with national or local policy, the Council's response will be reported to the next available Economic Development Committee for approval.
- 3.2 The consideration and appointment of an independent examiner can be time consuming and so it is proposed that Officers continue to arrange this in conjunction with the relevant Parish Council whilst the post submission consultation is being carried out.
- 3.3 When the independent examiners report and recommendations are received, they will be presented to Full Council to consider and approve the next steps. It is hoped that in most cases this will be a recommendation to proceed to referendum with or without modification, but could be a recommendation not to proceed further if the examiner considers the plan does not meet the basic conditions.

4.0 Equalities Implications

- 4.1 None identified.

5.0 Impact on Budget/Policy Framework

5.1 No budgetary impacts identified. The proposal will enable the Council to continue to fulfil its duties in assisting communities with the production of Neighbourhood Plans.

6.0 Comments of Director

6.1 Nil.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- a) the contents of the report be noted; and
- b) Committee approve the delegated authority proposals as set out in paragraph 3.1 of the report.

Reason for Recommendations

To allow the District Council to facilitate the production of Neighbourhood Plans without undue delay.

Background Papers

Nil.

For further information please contact Richard Exton on Ext 5859.

Kirsty Cole
Deputy Chief Executive

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE PRE-DEVELOPMENT FUND (NPDF)

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Members about bids submitted to the Nottinghamshire Pre-Development Fund on behalf of Newark & Sherwood District Council.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 A number of funding streams including the Local Growth Fund and European Funds are available to contribute to major investment schemes in transport infrastructure, economic development and regeneration. Discussions within the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee have identified that it would be easier to secure funding if potential projects were at a more advanced stage when bidding rounds were opened. Project proposals need to be more advanced, for example, by having robust business cases, technical surveys, design work and economic viability assessments.

However, many proposals have not undertaken the necessary pre-development work to ensure that good quality and well-justified projects are submitted.

It is against this background that the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee has established a fund drawn from surpluses in the Business Rates Pool to support the pre-development work of economic projects across the County with a specific focus on feasibility studies and business case development. It is envisaged that this will:

- Enable the development of the Nottinghamshire economy by unlocking and speeding-up the delivery of potential projects by enabling them to be fully and properly scoped and developed;
- Give Nottinghamshire projects a competitive advantage in seeking external funding, thereby increasing funding levered into the county; and
- Aid the development of a portfolio of well-developed projects across the county.

The Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee has committed up to £1,000,000 from the Business Rates Pool for this work. However, an additional amount will be brought forward to support projects which require feasibility studies and/or business case development designed to revitalise town and service centres. This is to be drawn from a separately agreed allocation of £500,000 from the wider Business Rates Pool and such applications will be facilitated through this same process. This approach will ultimately support robust capital projects to come forward via the “Unlocking Growth in N2 Town Centres” project, submitted via the D2N2 LEP Growth Deal for support via the Local Growth Fund and currently under consideration by the Government.

2.2 Eligibility Criteria

The NPDF offers revenue funding only and is aimed at delivering eligible activities within the county area of Nottinghamshire (not including Nottingham City). Proposals which will take place outside the county's administrative area will not be eligible. Only the seven district councils and the county council can access the fund as the Business Rates Pool surplus aims to support councils in their roles in economic growth and regeneration.

Revenue funding will be provided for pre-project development work for programmes and projects that will contribute and positively impact on at least one of the following N2 priority themes:

Eligible pre-development activity will:

- Help inform future project development, develop the business cases and evidence potential viability, support funding applications, and inform implementation;
- Help to speed up implementation of future projects in order to ensure economic development benefits are realised at a faster rate;
- Aid the delivery of current, and preparation of future, Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and Local Authority Strategic Plan(s) covering Nottinghamshire;
- Lever in significant future investment and / or deliver tangible economic benefits to the local authorities through Council Tax or NNDR receipts – i.e. ultimately further enhance the business rates pool

Examples of the types of pre-development work that may be funded:

- Feasibility studies including options appraisal
- Economic impact studies
- Viability assessments
- Business planning for projects where the feasibility has been proven, or where there is significant political leadership and buy-in
- Financial planning including funding development proposals for projects where the feasibility has been proven
- Design and architectural proposals
- Masterplans
- Strategic flood risk assessments in the vicinity of strategic sites with employment development potential

All pre-development activity supported will need to have economic end objectives (i.e. economic growth or promote employment, training etc.). Indicative examples of projects with economic end objectives include the following:

- Bringing redundant buildings back into use
- Business / innovation centres
- Strategic site / town centre master planning
- Green infrastructure where this can be shown to have an economic impact
- Connectivity projects demonstrating tangible economic benefits
- Training provision which is targeted at community needs and where there are no viable alternatives in a locality

- Creation of additional community amenities or facilities such as community centres where there are no viable alternatives in a locality
- Childcare facilities and resource centres which facilitate or encourage employment and/or provide facilities for training where there are no viable alternatives in a locality
- Projects which facilitate the growth of N2 priority themes / sectors
- Other projects designed to stimulate economic growth.

3.0 Proposals

3.1 At least 13 projects have been submitted that impact on Newark & Sherwood (some being county-wide) that were successful at stage 1 of the process and have now progressed to a full application. It is hoped that the outcome as to which bids are successful will be known by end November 2016, although the process is oversubscribed. Decisions about which projects will be supported will be made by the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Economic Prosperity Committee for larger projects with smaller scale projects delegated to the Chief Executives.

4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 Any feasibility studies undertaken will meet or exceed our Equalities obligations.

5.0 Impact on Budget/Policy Framework

5.1 No additional financial contribution is required from NSDC to fund these studies. There is an officer time implication in managing the bidding, tendering, study and evaluation stages.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the contents of the report be noted.

Reason for Recommendation

To update Members on the NPDF process and bids submitted

Background Papers

NPDF Summary EOI Summary document

For further information please contact Julie Reader-Sullivan on Ext 5258

Andy Statham
Director - Communities