

# MINUTES OF SPECIAL EXPENSES SCHEME TASK GROUP

11 JUNE 2019

## PRESENT:

**Members of the Group:** Councillors Gillias, Leigh Hunt, McQueen, Mistry, Mrs O'Rourke, Pacey-Day, Picker and Roodhouse

**Officers:** Mannie Ketley (Head of Corporate Resources), Jon Illingworth (Financial Services Manager), Lynsey Parkinson (Corporate Accountant) and Veronika Beckova (Democratic Services Officer)

## 1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

**RESOLVED THAT** – Councillor Leigh Hunt be appointed Chair of the Task Group for the 2019/20 municipal year.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Gillias declared a general non-pecuniary interest by virtue of being a parish councillor and Rugby Borough Council's Parish Champion.

## 3. SCENE SETTING FOR THE REVIEW WITH THE FINANCIAL SERVICES MANAGER AND CORPORATE ACCOUNTANT

Prior to the meeting, the task group received the following documents as part of the agenda:

- Briefing paper (Agenda Item 4)
- Report considered by Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 April 2019 providing background for the Review of the Special Expenses Scheme (Appendix A), the one-page strategy (Appendix 1) and the Rugby Borough Council Ward and Parish Map (Appendix 2)
- Presentation (Appendix B) given to Brooke Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 April 2019 as part of the proposed review report

The Head of Corporate Resources, the Financial Services Manager and the Corporate Accountant attended the meeting to set the scene for the review and answer questions.

### Scene Setting

The task group received a presentation from the Corporate Accountant. The presentation provided an introduction to Special Expenses. A copy of the presentation was circulated as part of the agenda in advance of the meeting.

A folder providing further background information on Special Expenses was available to view at the meeting. The Chair requested for the folder to be circulated to members of the task group by email and in a paper form where requested.

The task group highlighted the importance of fully understanding what services are provided and paid for by parishes in their parish area. As an action, the task group requested for a questionnaire to be produced by officers and circulated to all parish councils as soon as possible after the inaugural meeting. A draft list of questions was circulated and agreed at the meeting.

The 'Band D precept – Parish v Urban Area' graph forming a part of the presentation was missing a few parish areas due to formatting issues. An updated version of the chart will be circulated as part of the pack.

#### Programme of work and dates of future meetings

The following programme of work was agreed by the task group:

#### **Meeting 2 – Wednesday 3 July 2019**

The task group will consider:

- information provided in the Special Expenses folder; and
- whether a questionnaire for councillors should form a part of the consultation process – if the task group agrees that such questionnaire will benefit the review, appropriate questions need to be formulated.

It is anticipated that the task group will also receive a breakdown of the grass cutting budget and a list of parish precepts for 2019/20 as requested at the inaugural meeting. Due to the final accounts audit taking place in early July, this may need to be deferred to the meeting on 24 July 2019.

#### **Meeting 3 – Wednesday 24 July 2019**

The task group will consider responses received from consultees.

#### **Meeting 4 – Wednesday 4 September 2019**

The task group will agree review outcomes and draft recommendations.

#### **Meeting 5 – Tuesday 17 September 2019**

The task group will consider the review report prior to submission for approval to Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24 October 2019 and Cabinet on 4 November 2019.

All meetings will commence at 6pm.

**CHAIR**