
POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Monday 7 December 2015 between 7.30pm and 9.04pm.

Councillors present:

Ann Shaw OBE (Chairman)

Matthew Bedford (Vice-Chairman) (Resources and Shared Services)

Sara Bedford (Health)

Chris Lloyd (Leisure, Community and Wellbeing)

Ralph Sangster

David Sansom

Kemal Butt

Phil Brading

Stephen Cox

Andrew Scarth (substitute for Cllr Roger Seabourne)

Stephen Giles-Medhurst (Economic Development, Sustainability and Transport)

Martin Trevett

Ty Harris

Paula Hiscocks

Heather Kenison

Angela Killick

Officers Present:

Steven Halls, Chief Executive

Geof Muggerridge, Director of Community and Environmental Services

Joanne Wagstaffe, Director of Finance

Nigel Pollard, Acting Head of Finance

Rebecca Emmett, Head of Regulatory Services

Anne Morgan, Solicitor to the Council

Alan Head, Head of Major Projects

Alison Page, Chief Environmental Services Manager

Sarah Haythorpe, Principal Committee Manager

PR58/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Roger Seabourne.

PR59/15 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2015 and the Extraordinary meetings held on 13 October 2015 and 2 November 2015 were agreed by the Committee and were signed by the Chairman.

PR60/15 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman ruled that the following items, which had not been available for five clear days before the meeting were of sufficient urgency to be considered by the Committee for the reasons indicated:

Item 5 – Garden Waste Charging

To enable the charges to be considered as part of the budget setting process.

PR61/15 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Chief Executive declared a pecuniary interest in the Part II agenda item 1 and left the meeting during the consideration of this item.

All Committee Members declared a personal interest in agenda item 5 as they all received a garden waste collection free of charge.

PR62/15 GREEN WASTE CHARGING

The Committee considered a report on the results of the Green Waste consultation and Officers recommendations.

Councillor Phil Brading moved, seconded by Councillor Ralph Sangster, an amendment to the recommendation that the report be noted and that the decision be deferred until the budgetary position was available to include details on the Government grant settlement with a further report to be brought back to the January meeting to include details on the following points raised by the Committee:

- Could the staffing needs be reconsidered;
- What were other Councils in England charging for their green waste collection and what were their take up rates; could we compare similar type authorities to us;
- What would the Council's take up be and how would the charges be calculated;
- Why was there an 18 month wait to implementation (Harrow Council had made a decision in June for implementation in March)
- What concessions would be made for residents on benefits?
- 76% of respondents would be happy to pay £35 for their collections. This was higher than the responses received from residents in South Oxhey;
- For flats, how would the Housing Association manage this?
- What were other Councils return rates for the garden waste bins versus the take up?
- What was the cost to implement and would it become cheaper year on year?
- What would the frequency of the collections be?
- What would be the implications of charging for green waste with regard to flytipping?

In response to the question on staffing, Officers advised that this was the maximum number of staff required for the project. The staffing implications would depend on the ICT CRM system.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 35 (B), Mr Hall spoke against the proposal to charge for garden waste but preferred this option to losing the service.

On being put to the Committee the amendment was declared CARRIED the voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and that the decision be deferred until the budgetary position was available to include details on the Government grant settlement with a further report to be brought back to the January meeting with responses to the points raised by the Committee.

PR63/15 STRATEGIC, SERVICE AND FINANCIAL PLANNING 2016-2019

The Committee was asked to comment on the Strategic Plan, the Committee's service plans, and the growth bids to support them for the three years commencing on 1 April 2016.

Councillor Matthew Bedford moved the recommendations in the report, seconded by Councillor Ralph Sangster, but with an amendment that the PIDs/growth bids be considered as part of the budget setting process in February.

On being put to the Committee the amended motion was declared CARRIED the voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED:

- 1) Noted the draft Strategic Plan attached as Appendix 1 to the report; and
- 2) Noted the Committee service plans and that the growth bids in the report attached at Appendices 2 and 3 but that consideration of the PIDs/growth bids be deferred until the budget setting process in February.

PR64/15 EXEMPTION FROM CONTRACTS PROCEDURE RULES (CPR) – FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (FMS)

Councillor Matthew Bedford, duly seconded, moved the recommendation that Members note that an exemption to the CPR was approved by the Director of Finance under the exceptional circumstances provision as permitted by the Council's Constitution.

RESOLVED:

That the action taken be noted.

PR65/15 RIGHT TO BUILD INITIATIVE AND THE RIGHT TO BUILD REGISTER

The report requested approval for the format of the Right to Build Register.

Councillor Martin Trevett, duly seconded, moved the recommendations as outlined in Section 8 of the report.

On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED the voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED:

- approved the application form for registering an interest in a custom and self-build property/project (Appendix 1) for immediate use;
- agreed that the web site is updated to include details about the Right to Build Register;
- agreed that the Register is managed by the Economic & Sustainable Development Service until such a time further legislation/regulations are issued at which time the management of the register will be reviewed (1).

RECOMMEND:

That the changes to the Constitution set out in Appendix 2 be approved.

PR66/15 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2016/2017

The Committee considered the draft Calendar of meetings for 2016/2017.

Members made the following observations:

The dates of the Policy and Resources Committee, General Public Services and Community Safety Committee and Full Council be reconsidered for December.

The date for the Croxley Green Local Area Forum in the summer be brought forward.

That Officers reconsider the dates of the meetings scheduled during the Party Conferences in September/October.

RECOMMEND:

- 1) That Officers make the above amendments to the draft Calendar of Meetings for 2016/17; and
- 2) That the draft Calendar of Meetings be circulated to Members for agreement before approval at Full Council in February.

PR67/15 PARKING SERVICE CHARGING AND INCOME

The report set out options for bridging the gap between income and expenditure for the Council's parking service following the request made at the September Service Review Working Party.

Councillor Martin Trevett, seconded by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst proposed the following amendment to the recommendations:

1. The Sustainable Development, Planning and Transport Committee be asked to take steps to reduce the current parking services deficit by 50% during the next financial year, and work towards the elimination of the deficit in 2017/18 financial year;
2. That the Committee take into account that in order to retain the viability of our local shopping centres, the Council's policy of two hour free shopper parking be retained, and that in any revised programme is considered in the light of relevant local circumstances;

3. That a working Group be set up comprising 3 Liberal Democrats, 2 Conservative and 1 Labour Member, to report with recommendations to the Sustainable Development, Planning and Transport Committee.

On being put to the Committee the amended motion was declared CARRIED the voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED:

1. The Sustainable Development, Planning and Transport Committee be asked to take steps to reduce the current parking services deficit by 50% during the next financial year, and work towards the elimination of the deficit in 2017/18 financial year;
2. That the Committee take into account that in order to retain the viability of our local shopping centres, the Council's policy of two hour free shopper parking be retained, and that in any revised programme is considered in the light of relevant local circumstances; and
3. That a working Group be set up comprising 3 Liberal Democrats, 2 Conservative and 1 Labour Member, to report with recommendations to the Sustainable Development, Planning and Transport Committee.

PR68/15 MEMBER TRAINING

Members received a report responding to the questions raised at the July meeting.

Members made the following comments:

There were three different types of training 1) New Member training 2) specialist training and 3) general training on the remits and work of the Committees.

It was requested that a report be provided to the next meeting to include details on specific training for each individual committee with a programme of training for the next year. One Member proposed that the report also include a matrix for each individual Member on the training they had completed.

RESOLVED:

That subject to the points raised above that a further report be provided to the January meeting.

PR69/15 ICT UPDATE

This report provided Members with an update on ICT.

Councillor Matthew Bedford moved, duly seconded, the recommendation that the report be noted.

RESOLVED:

Noted the progress on the Exit Plan and IT Transition.

PR70/15 REVIEW OF STRATEGIC RISKS

This report gave details on the progress against the Risk Treatment Plans for the Strategic Risks identified in the Strategic Plan 2015-18.

Councillor Matthew Bedford, duly seconded, moved the recommendations in the report but with an amendment that an additional risk be added in relation to staffing resilience and how the Council could mitigate that risk as the staffing was becoming increasingly stretched.

RESOLVED:

That the review of the Strategic Risk Register be approved with the amendments to the Risk Assessment and Treatment Plans but that an additional risk be added in relation to staff resilience and how the Council could mitigate that risk.

PR71/15 BUDGET MONITORING – MONTH 6 (SEPTEMBER)

The purpose of this report was to seek agreement to the process whereby the Council will determine its three year medium strategic plan for 2016-2019, the related service plans, and the allocation of financial resources to achieve them.

Councillor Matthew Bedford proposed, duly seconded, the recommendations in the report.

On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED the voting being 9 For, 0 Against and 7 Abstentions.

RECOMMEND:

To Council:

That the following revenue budget variations be approved and incorporated into the three-year medium-term financial plan:-

Revenue	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £
Overspend/(Underspend) at P6	192,650	195,850	195,850

That the following capital budget variations be approved and incorporated into the three-year medium-term financial plan:-

Capital	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £
Increase/(Decrease) in Expenditure at P6	(17,388)	17,388	0

PR72/15 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered their work programme.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be noted.

PR73/15 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Committee considered the remaining item in private and passed the following resolution:-

“that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under paragraphs 1 and 3 Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act. It has been decided by the Council that in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.”

PR74/15 CHIEF EXECUTIVE PAY AWARD 2014/16

The Chief Executive left the meeting during the consideration of this item.

The Committee noted the nationally agreed pay awards for employees on National Joint Council (NJC) and those on Joint National Council (JNC) terms and to approve an equivalent pay award for the Chief Executive, to ensure parity.

Councillor Ann Shaw, seconded by Councillor Phil Brading, moved the recommendations as follows:

- noted the NJC and JNC salary settlements;
- endorsed a 2% pay award for the Chief Executive post, applicable 1 January 2015 and covering the period up to 31 March 2016;
- that public access to the decision be immediate; and
- that public access to the report be immediate.

On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED the voting being 9 For, 2 Against and 5 Abstentions.

RESOLVED:

- 1) noted the NJC and JNC salary settlements;
- 2) endorsed a 2% pay award for the Chief Executive post, applicable 1 January 2015 and covering the period up to 31 March 2016;
- 3) that public access to the decision be immediate; and
- 4) that public access to the report be immediate.

PR75/15 SOUTH OXHEY INTIATIVE

The Committee received a report on the financial implications of the South Oxhey Initiative for the Council. A revised financial table had been provided to Members on the interest paid for borrowing during the scheme construction.

Councillor Matthew Bedford moved the recommendations in the report with an additional recommendation that a report be brought back to the Committee in January following the outcome of the Local Government settlement on the New Homes Bonus and to revisit the assumptions regarding the interest income.

Officers would also take into consideration the fluctuating interest rates and the finance options available.

RESOLVED:

That a report be brought back to the Committee in January following the outcome of the Local Government settlement on the New Homes Bonus and to revisit the assumptions regarding the interest income;

RECOMMEND:

That Policy & Resources Committee recommend to Council that:

- 1) Council approves the financing of the South Oxhey scheme;
- 2) Members note the impact on the revenue funding;
- 3) Council approves the current estimated residual land value of £3.2m to be invested in revenue-generating opportunities;
- 4) Council notes that this investment, together with the increase in council tax revenue generated by the scheme and the additional surplus generated through the LEP funding will ensure that the majority of the loss in revenue generated by the scheme is recovered;
- 5) Public access to the decisions be immediate; and
- 6) Public access to the report be denied until the development agreement is signed.