
POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Monday 25 January 2016 between 7.30pm and 9.22pm.

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
Diana Barber (substitute for Cllr Kemal Butt)	David Sansom
Phil Brading (Public Services)	
Stephen Cox	Roger Seabourne (Community Safety)
Stephen Giles-Medhurst (Economic Development, Sustainability and Transport)	Martin Trevett (Housing, Planning and Strategic Schemes)
Ty Harris	
Paula Hiscocks	
Heather Kenison	
Angela Killick	

Also in attendance: Councillors Alison Scarth, Andrew Scarth and Len Tippen.

Officers Present:

- Steven Halls, Chief Executive
- Geof Muggerridge, Director of Community and Environmental Services
- Joanne Wagstaffe, Director of Finance
- Bob Watson, Head of Finance
- Rebecca Emmett, Head of Regulatory Services
- Renato Messere, Head of Economic and Sustainable Development
- Alan Head, Head of Major Projects
- Alison Page, Chief Environmental Services Manager
- Sarah Haythorpe, Principal Committee Manager

PR76/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Kemal Butt.

PR77/15 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 December were agreed by the Committee and were signed by the Chairman.

PR78/15 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 8 (Review of Garage Rents); Item 10 (Update on the Work Hub Project); Items 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 (Financial Planning 2016-2019, Financial Planning – Revenue Services, Financial Planning Capital Investment Programme, Treasury Management and Financial Planning Recommendations;

To enable the charges to be considered as part of the budget setting process and to ensure the negotiations could progress.

PR79/15 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None received.

PR80/15 CHARGING FOR GREEN WASTE

The Committee considered a report on charging residents to continue with the existing garden waste collection service.

Councillor Phil Brading moved, duly seconded, the recommendation with regard to the financial implications in 2016/17 for the budget setting process along with the commencement for the charging of the service which would then be delegated to the Director of Community and Environmental Services in consultation with the Lead Member; and that a letter be sent out on the second brown bins.

Members raised issues on whether the Council were obliged to provide certain tonnages to fulfil the County Council's disposal obligations and also on the Alternative Financial Model (AFM). It was advised that TRDC's disposal contract had no minimum tonnages and therefore there would be no financial penalties. The AFM was based on the overall household waste arising and therefore any decrease in garden waste should increase the payment, via this mechanism.

It would not be possible at present for residents to make the payments by Direct Debit as there was no system available. The direct debit service would be provided through Sundry Debtors but the new system would not be ready in time. Initially a credit/debit card payment would need to be taken for the first year and then direct debit payments would commence from the second year.

In excess of 50% of Local Authorities were now charging for the collection of green waste or planning to introduce charging shortly

Members wished to see consideration of whether there should be concessions for those in receipt of benefits. With regard to offering discounts to people on benefits, they should only be provided where there was information on the Council system, i.e. they were Council administered benefits. It was agreed not to recommend a reduction for those who presently have smaller bins and wish to keep them. Consideration of whether to offer incentives for those wishing to pay by direct debit in due course was also requested.

On being put to the Committee the Motion was declared CARRIED the voting being 14 For, 0 Against and 2 Abstentions.

RESOLVED:

- (1) Noted the details within the report and requested Council consider the financial implications in the 2016/17 budget setting process along with the commencement for the charging of the service which would then be delegated to the Director of Community and Environmental Services in consultation with the Lead Member;
- (2) Agreed a letter be sent to those who currently pay for a second brown bin to go out in March, once the budget had been approved by Council.

PR81/15 BEACON LIGHTING EVENT TO COMMEMORATE THE QUEEN'S 90TH BIRTHDAY – 21 APRIL 2016

The Committee was asked to consider whether the Council should hold a Beacon Lighting event to commemorate the Queen's 90th Birthday on 21 April 2016. It was noted that the Bedmond Village Group and Chorleywood Parish Council were interested in holding an event and Members felt they should be encouraged. They realised there would be no financial assistance from the Council and they would have to organise the event and pay all the costs themselves.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That no beacon-lighting event be organised by the Council;
- (2) That other organisations in the District be encouraged to organise an event but that no financial or resource support would be provided by the Council;
- (3) That no beacon-lighting event be held by the Council but agreed to send a letter from the Group Leaders on behalf of the Council to Her Majesty the Queen congratulating her on her 90th Birthday.

PR82/15 HERTFORDSHIRE BUILDING CONTROL PROJECT BUSINESS PLAN

The report summarised the Business Plan and work to date that had been produced for the Hertfordshire Building Control project. The project was a joint venture between seven District Councils in Hertfordshire.

Councillor Martin Trevett moved, duly seconded, the recommendations in the report on the nominated company Director and that further decisions for the project be delegated to the DCES in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, Planning and Strategic Schemes.

In response to a question on the nominated company Director for TRDC, it was noted this had to a named person.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Members agree to appoint the Chief Executive, Steven Halls, as the nominated company Director for TRDC and apply the usual indemnity for such appointments.
- (2) That Members agree to delegate further decisions for the project to the Director of Community and Environmental Services in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, Planning and Strategic Schemes.

PR83/15 REVIEW OF GARAGE RENTS

The report provided a review of the current weekly rent rates being charged for the Council's garage stock.

Councillor Ann Shaw moved an amendment, duly seconded, that the rent on the garages which required major structural work did not receive a rent increase until the condition of the garages had been brought up to standard.

Councillor Roger Seabourne moved a further amendment, duly seconded, that the rent for the garages in Sarratt be increased to £18 plus VAT.

One Member was unhappy about withdrawing payment by cash and making it Direct Debit only. He could not support this recommendation. Another Member raised concern regarding the increased cost to rent a garage in Sarratt without further investigation.

On being put to the Committee the recommendation in the report to adjust the charges in line with section 2.7 was agreed subject to the rent on the garages which required structural work not receiving an increase until they had been brought up to standard was CARRIED the voting being 14 For, 1 Against and 1 Abstention.

On being put to the Committee the motion that the weekly rent for the garages in Sarratt be increased to £18 plus VAT was CARRIED the voting being 14 For, 1 Against and 1 Abstention.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst moved, duly seconded, that the areas of land surrounding the garages which were regularly used for parking by residents be explored by the Parking Working Group for future charging as parking areas. On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED the voting being 14 For, 1 Against and 1 Abstention.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the proposed amendments to the garage rent charges be agreed and that they be adjusted in line with the proposal detailed in section 2.7 subject to the weekly rent for the garages in Sarratt being increased to £18 plus VAT and that garages with major structural damage their rent to remain unchanged until the work had been completed to bring them up to standard.
- (2) That the areas of land surrounding the garages which were regularly used for parking by residents to be explored by the Parking Working Group for future charging as parking areas.

PR84/15 SOUTH OXHEY INITIATIVE

This report summarised and sought approval for the updated SO Initiative Project Plan (PP), specifically the Part I contents. The PP followed the parameters set out in the SO Initiative Project Initiation Document (PID) that was approved by the Executive Committee in March 2014.

Concern was raised that an internal audit report had not been presented to the Committee for consideration. It was noted that the Audit Committee had

received notification that an internal audit on the project had been undertaken and completed.

A Member raised concern regarding the setting up of a Project Board outside of the Policy and Resources Committee. The Project Board should be for Officers only and should not have Members on it. A number of comments were made on the Project Board including: day to day decisions on the project would be delayed without a Project Board, the Board should or should not have delegated powers, it should only have minor decisions delegated to it; decisions should continue to be made by the Policy and Resources Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor Matthew Bedford and, duly seconded, that

1. Any decision on the setting up of the Project Board and Community Board be deferred to the March meeting when more details on the decisions the Project Board and Community Board could take, compared with the decisions reserved to Policy and Resources Committee, could be provided.
2. The 3 Group Leaders to meet with the Chief Executive to discuss the details before the next meeting.
3. Consideration be given to the Project Board comprising 2 Liberal Democrats, 2 Conservative and 1 Labour Member.

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

Members were asked to agree the proposed staff structure and to note the programmes and communication plan as drafted. Upon being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED the voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED:

The Committee approves the updated Part I components of the Project Plan and specifically:-

- Does not agree the establishment of a Project Board, but awaits further details at the March meeting;
- Does not agree to the establishment of a Community Board, but awaits further details at the March meeting;
- Agreed the proposed staff structure; and
- Noted the programmes and communications plan as drafted.

PR85/15 UPDATE ON THE WORK HUB PROJECT

The report provided an update on the Work Hub, a project to create a shared work space for entrepreneurs, freelancers and homeworkers from Rickmansworth and the surrounding area. It sets out details of the proposal from 'Wimbletech', a Community Interest Company, to run and manage the Hub.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst moved, duly seconded, the recommendations in the report. It was asked if the use of the cellar in Basing House could be utilised as part of the project and it was noted that it would not be suitable. It was noted that the success of Wimbletech was in part due to the efforts of the founder of the company, but ultimately it would be dependent on following the established tried and tested model.

On being put to the Committee the proposals were declared CARRIED the voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED:

- Noted the contents of this report and the Wimbletech proposal;
- Agreed in principle that that the Council move forward to the next stages with Wimbletech in developing a suitable leasing arrangement and contract, defining the rental and income arrangements and agreeing a defined set of outputs, with a view to having a viable project in place by April 2016; and
- Agreed that details of the final proposal be reported back to the Sustainable Development, Planning and Transport Committee on 10 March 2016.

PR86/15 TRANSFER OF ASSETS FRAMEWORK

At the last joint meeting on Monday 5 October 2015 of this Council and representatives from the Parish Councils, the latter renewed their request for this Council to consider whether it might transfer assets to a third party such as a parish council or community group. Following the meeting, Cabinet requested a framework for considering whether and how to transfer assets to a third party.

The Localism Act 2011 introduced the Community Rights to Bid and Challenge (the Right to Bid having become effective in October 2012). Whilst the new Act does not set out any new legislation governing transfers to community and voluntary organisations, the principles of the Act encourage Councils to consider the transfer of Community Assets and other services to other organisations. This report deals just with assets and offers for discussion a potential framework.

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

RESOLVED:

That the proposals in Paragraph 2.5 be agreed.

PR87/15 FIXED PENALTY NOTICES

The Committee were asked to set the fee for Fixed Penalty Notices for Breach of Community Protection Notices and to agree the authorised persons for the purposes of issuing a fixed penalty notice under the Public Space Protection Order.

RECOMMEND:

- (1) That the amount demanded on a Fixed Penalty Notice for a breach of a Community Protection Notice should be £100 and £75 for early payment.
- (2) That the amount demanded on a Fixed Penalty Notice for a breach of a Public Spaces Protection Order should be £75 and £50 for early payment.
- (3) That the following be authorised persons to issue a fixed penalty notice under Section 68 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and the Council's scheme of delegation be amended accordingly:

Environmental Enforcement Manager, Three Rivers District Council
All Environmental Enforcement Officers, Three Rivers District Council

All Park Rangers and any Senior Park Rangers, Three Rivers District Council
All Play Rangers, Three Rivers District Council
Animal Control Enforcement Officer, Three Rivers District Council
Senior Ranger, Croxley Green Parish Council
Ranger, Croxley Green Parish Council

- (4) And that the Chief Executive be delegated to add authorised persons as required and to amend the Scheme of Delegation as necessary.

PR88/15 FINANCIAL PLANNING 2016-19 – INTRODUCTION

This report is an introduction to the four agenda items that follow.

RESOLVED:

That the report be deferred to the Council meeting on 23 February 2016.

PR89/15 FINANCIAL PLANNING 2016-19 – REVENUE SERVICES

The purpose of this report was to enable the Policy and Resources Committee to recommend to the Council the medium term revenue budgets.

RESOLVED:

That the report be deferred to the Council meeting on 23 February 2016.

PR90/15 FINANCIAL PLANNING CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

The purpose of this report was to enable the Policy and Resources Committee to recommend to the Council its capital investment programme.

RESOLVED:

That the report be deferred to the Council meeting on 23 February 2016.

PR91/15 TREASURY MANAGEMENT

The purpose of this report was to enable the Policy and Resources Committee to recommend to Council its Treasury Management Strategy Statement.

RESOLVED:

That the report be deferred to the Council meeting on 23 February 2016.

PR92/15 FINANCIAL PLANNING – RECOMMENDATIONS

This report enabled the Committee to make its recommendations on the Council's Revenue and Capital budgets and Treasury Management Strategy for the period 2016-19 (medium term) to Council on 23 February 2016.

RESOLVED:

That the report be deferred to the Council meeting on 23 February 2016.

PR93/15 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered their work programme.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be agreed.

PR94/15 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.”

PR95/15 APPLICATION FOR WRITE-OFFS WITHIN REVENUES

The purpose of this report was for Members to consider agreeing to write-off individual 'Revenues' debts of £3,000.00 or more where there are no means to recover outstanding debts.

Councillor Matthew Bedford moved, duly seconded, the recommendations in the report. On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED the voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED:

That the debt detailed in appendices 2 to 5 be written off

That public access to the report is denied indefinitely.

That public access to the decision be immediate.

PR96/15 SOUTH OXHEY INITIATIVE

This report summarises the updated SO Initiative Project Plan (PP), specifically the Part II contents. The PP follows the parameters set out in the SO Initiative Project Initiation Document (PID) that was approved by Executive Committee in March 2014.

The report also included recommendations in relation to financing of the South Oxhey project and the funding which may be available for the purchase of further affordable housing

Councillor Matthew Bedford moved, duly seconded the recommendations in the report. On being put to the Committee the recommendations were declared CARRIED the voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED:

- (1) The Committee agrees the updated Part II components of the Project Plan, being appendices A, B and C and notes appendix D.

That Council agree:

- (2) that the South Oxhey Project is funded through the use of Council cash investments and that this is included in the 2016/17 budget proposals and the Medium Term financial plan and is funded by using the Council's own cash resources;
- (3) that £1.5M of Commuted Sums is used to purchase additional affordable housing in the scheme at a later stage;
- (4) that public access to the report be denied until the project was completed.
- (5) that public access to the decision be immediate.

PR97/15 HERTFORDSHIRE BUILDING CONTROL PROJECT BUSINESS PLAN

The Committee were asked to consider the Business Plan.

RESOLVED:

1. that Members agree to continue with the project based on the current financial information and updated Business Plan in Appendix A.
2. that public access to the business plan (Appendix A) be denied until the company is incorporated.
3. that public access the decision be immediate.

PR98/15 LAND REAR OF 78 HIGH STREET, ABBOTS LANGLEY

The matter related to the negotiation of considerations for:

- I. The lifting of a restrictive covenant that states the land to the rear of 78 High Street it is only to be used as garden land, and
- II. The allowing of a right of way across TRDC land in order for the developer, services and future residents to access The Development.

Councillor Sara Bedford moved, duly seconded, the recommendations with the following amendments:

Payment should be received in advance; all deliveries to be completed before the shops open in the morning and the bollards to be placed on the payment along the length of the access road with details to be delegated to DCES in

consultation with the Chairman and Ward Members. The final wording to be provided by the Chief Executive/DCES for circulation to Members.

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

RESOLVED:

- (1) That Members accepted the negotiated figures of £40,000 for each of i and ii a total of £80,000 consideration, with the money to be paid in advance rather than deferred until the first property is sold;
- (2) That all necessary legal agreements be drawn up to protect the Council's interests;
- (3) That a licence agreement is drawn up between TRDC & the developer relating to the access way to protect TRDC whilst the development is underway to include restricting deliveries and the provision of bollards by the developer at his expense and separate to the £80,000 consideration.
- (4) That the developer be liable for specific pedestrian safety works;
- (5) That all costs in relation to the recommendations are borne by the developer;
- (6) That construction activities at the site must begin within six months of this date;
- (7) That public access to the report be denied until the removal of the covenant and access agreed and negotiations have been completed;
and
- (8) That public access to the decision be immediate.