

# **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

## **DRAFT MINUTES**

Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on 23 January 2017 between 7.30pm and 9.20pm.

Councillors present:

Sara Bedford (Chairman)	Matthew Bedford (Resources and Shared Services)
Phil Brading (Vice-Chairman) (Public Services)	Chris Lloyd (Leisure, Community and Wellbeing)
Rupert Barnes	Ralph Sangster
Kemal Butt	David Sansom
Stephen Cox	Alison Scarth (Health)
Paula Hiscocks	Roger Seabourne (Community Safety)
Ty Harris	Martin Trevett (Planning, Transport and Strategic Schemes)
Stephen Giles-Medhurst (Economic Development, Sustainability and Transport)	
Alex Hayward	

Officers Present:

- Steven Halls, Chief Executive
- Geof Muggeridge, Director of Community and Environmental Services
- Joanne Wagstaffe, Director of Finance
- Bob Watson, Head of Finance
- Kimberley Rowley, Head of Regulatory Services
- Andy Stovold, Head of Community Partnerships
- Jude Green, Head of Revenues and Benefits
- Sarah Haythorpe, Principal Committee Manager

### **PR82/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

### **PR83/16 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2016 were agreed by the Committee and were signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendment: the date at the top of the minutes being changed to 5 December 2016.

### **PR84/16 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS**

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

Item 5 – Report on Parking Service Charging and Income – to enable the Council to continue its ongoing budgetary control.

**PR85/16 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None.

**PR86/16 REPORT ON PARKING SERVICE CHARGING AND INCOME**

The report set out some further options and recommendations for bridging the gap between income and expenditure for the Council's parking services following the initial request made at the December 2015 Policy and Resources Committee and the Council's budget-setting meeting on 23 February 2016.

Following a proposal by Management Board on 10 January 2017 to seek further income generating opportunities from the parking service (off street parking), this paper also details further options to achieve this.

The Head of Regulatory Services reported an amendment to the report at Paragraph 1.2 amendment was advised to the Committee was follows:

“Following a proposal by Management Board on 10 January 2017 to seek further income generating opportunities from the parking service (off-street parking ), this paper also details further options to achieve this to enhance the parking service and related services (i.e. additional enforcement).

Councillor Martin Trevett circulated a revised set of recommendations for consideration and moved these recommendations to the Committee, seconded by Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst.

Members made the following comments:

- Why was the focus on Rickmansworth and not District wide?
- Abbots Langley did not have a railway station and currently there were no on street parking restrictions. It would cost a significant amount of money and additional enforcement to have on street parking restrictions to enable displacement parking to be managed.
- Shopper parking was important for the future vitality of the shopping areas in the District.
- There should be at least 1 hour free parking and then a charge of 50p for the next hour. There should be 2 hours no return restriction.
- If attending a show a Watersmeet you could pay £1 for parking for 3-4 hours as a concession.
- Free parking between 6pm and 8am or 9am in Rickmansworth to encourage people to visit Rickmansworth in the evening.
- Ensure appropriate consultation on introduction of any charges including the Chamber of Commerce.
- To investigate further the potential for season ticket parking across the District.
- The 10 minutes 'grace' period for parking is specified in The Deregulation Act 2015.
- All shopping centre areas to be considered for appropriate parking charging.

The Chairman of the Committee advised that the detail of the parking charges would be for the Sustainable, Development, Planning and Transport Committee to agree.

Members noted that just having changes to the parking enforcement service would not reduce the budget deficit.

On being put to the Committee the amended recommendations were declared CARRIED the voting being 14 For, 1 Against and 1 Abstention.

RESOLVED:

1. That the remit of the Parking Services Working Party be widened to include income generating opportunities from off street parking to provide an enhanced parking service and eliminate the deficit.
2. That a decision on any change to the free parking time and the possibility of any charging for short term off street parking in Rickmansworth form part of the budget making process.
3. That a review of business permit criteria be undertaken, and an investigation of demand for the associated costs of increased numbers of business permits, e.g. at the Rose Garden car park Rickmansworth, together with other types of permit types such as commuter season tickets in Rickmansworth.
4. To undertake a trial of 15 season tickets/commuter permits at £500 each in the Ferry car park Chorleywood, to be reviewed after six months, with further phased releases if demand exists, together with a review of the wider use of the car park.
5. To undertake a quarterly review of the long term P&D £4 tariff with monitoring commencing in February 2017-01-14
6. Officers further investigate the introduction of long term parking charges in the Community Way car park in Croxley Green as part of the area wide review of parking being undertaken as part of the Parking Programme 2016/17 and proceed with appropriate charging if considered appropriate.
7. To pursue opportunities for the introduction of further on street long term P&D at appropriate locations across the District.
8. Officers further consider the use of Causeway House car park Abbots Langley once they have received further usage data currently being commissioned by the traffic engineer.
9. In principle agreement be made that future consideration is given to charging for long stay P&D parking in South Oxhey and implemented accordingly.
10. That the PWSP continue to report to the SDHT Committee on progress, but the implementation of the above recommendations be delegated to the DCES in consultation with the Lead Member and relevant Ward Councillors.

**PR87/16 STRATEGIC SERVICES REVIEW WORKING PARTY AND SOUTH OXHEY SCRUTINY PANEL**

This report recommended the dissolution of the Strategic Services Review Working Party and the timing of the South Oxhey Scrutiny Panel.

A Member advised that the Panel had been set up following the Internal Auditors recommendations and that this Committee should not be the judge and jury on the project. Were the Committee now being asked to modify the recommendations from the Internal Auditors?

The Officer Board had been set up as part of the recommendations from the Internal Auditor. The Community Board met to discuss the day to day running of the project.

The monthly meetings of the Scrutiny Panel had now reduced to every two months along with the Project Board meetings. Now the Compulsory Purchase Public Inquiry had taken place there was less for the Panel to scrutinise.

On being put to the Committee the recommendations in the report were agreed the voting being unanimous.

RESOLVED:

- (1) To agree the discontinuation for the present of the Strategic Services Review Working Party.
- (2) For Policy and Resources Committee to undertake the scrutiny of the South Oxhey Initiative, as long as a P&R Committee falls within three weeks of a Project Board meeting; if an interval of more than three weeks is due, then the Scrutiny Panel be planned in advance to take place by the end of the three weeks.

#### **PR88/16 FINANCIAL PLANNING 2017-2020 - INTRODUCTION**

This report provided an introduction to the four agenda items that followed.

The Lead Member for Resources and Shared Services advised that the Reports at agenda item 8 and 9 would be presented to Council as part of the budget setting next month.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

#### **PR89/16 FINANCIAL PLANNING – REVENUE SERVICES**

The purpose of this report was to enable the Committee to recommend to Council the service levels and outputs it wishes to see in the medium to long-term and the associated revenue budget. This budget is a component part of the 2017/18 Council Tax calculations.

Members noted that the business rates pool was to be dissolved as detailed in Paragraph 6.5.1 of the report. In the medium term financial plan it showed growth of £350,000 this year and £500,000 in future years.

With regard to the prudent level of balances the Council should have, the Director of Finance advised this was £2m but in 2019/20 balances were projected to be around £1.4m to £1.5m. In order to ensure the balances remained at £2m money could be transferred from the economic impact fund.

In response to a question with regard to the new homes being built or which had been built in the Leavesden ward, the properties required to pay Council Tax was based on what was projected in the Local Plan.

RECOMMEND:

That the report be noted.

**PR90/16 FINANCIAL PLANNING CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME**

The purpose of this report was to enable the Committee to recommend to the Council its capital investment programme, in the light of the available funding.

RECOMMEND:

That the report be noted.

**PR91/16 TREASURY MANAGEMENT**

The purpose of this report is to enable the Committee to recommend to Council its Treasury Management Strategy for 2017/18 and 2019/20.

Investments and property investments going forward to provide a better return in the future. With regard to the other bodies the Council were working with this included any other public body.

RECOMMEND

That the report be noted.

**PR92/16 FINANCIAL PLANNING – RECOMMENDATIONS**

This report enables the Committee to make its recommendations on the financial plans to the Council on 21 February 2017.

The Committee agreed to defer these recommendations for discussion and agreement at the Council meeting on 21 February 2017.

RECOMMEND:

That the item be referred to Council on 21 February 2017 for discussion and agreement.

**PR93/16 PROJECT INITIATION DOCUMENTS (PIDS) 2017/18**

This report enables the Committee to comment to Council on the PIDs (Project Initiation Documents) for the three years commencing on 1 April 2017.

The PIDs, often know as Growth Bids would normally be an attachment to the Strategic, Service and Financial Planning 2017-2020 report, which was part of the Policy and Resources Committee agenda on the 5 December 2016. At that time, given the number of agenda items, the Committee requested the PIDs return to them in January 2017.

Members discussed the PIDs as follows:

CCTV PID – no questions raised.

Customer Contact Programme – no questions raised.

Batchworth Lake Access Improvements PID – details to be provided on the annual revenue costs which stated would be reduced significantly. Officers to advise on the work that needs to be done and why there had been no work completed over the last 10 years.

Blue Green Algae Control at the Aquadrome PID – £50k capital but there would need be an annual revenue cost of £21k.

Watersmeet replacement of boilers project PID – the cost of the replacement boilers had already been raised as being high.

Street Enforcement Project PID no questions raised.

Schemes Arising from Recommendations from Parking Services Member Working Group 2016/18 PID – no questions raised.

Procurement of Civil Parking Enforcement Service PID – no questions raised.

Housing Benefit Processing Improvements PID – Noted it was not a statutory requirement, was a request of CEO to improve performance at Three Rivers only to be able to deal with new claims in 5 days and change of circumstances in 5 days. At end of December figures for new claims was at 17 days and change of circumstances at 10 days. The cost of the purchase of the laptops was too high at £8k. Could details be provided on the number of staff in the shared service. 40p per text was quite high.

**RECOMMEND:**

That the service growth bids attached at Appendix 1 be noted and that Council be asked to consider and agree the bids.

**PR94/16 DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF APPEAL – RICKMANSWORTH SPORTS CLUB**

All businesses were required to pay National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR), however organisations that are registered as Charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC) automatically receive 80% mandatory rate relief. The Council can award up to an additional 20% 'top up' to the mandatory relief or in cases of not for profit organisations up to 100% discretionary rate relief.

There was no automatic right for Charities or CASC organisations to receive the 20% discretionary rate relief organisations must meet the criteria set out in our policy.

The Club had advised they would not be able to pay the £5,700 and had asked if tax relief could be provided for further year until they had gained charitable status.

The Club currently had only £4k in the bank.

Officers had been in contact with the Club who had advised that due to the structure of the club they had not been able to apply for CASC status.

Councillor Matthew Bedford moved, seconded by Councillor Chris Lloyd, to not uphold the appeal.

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

RESOLVED:

To not uphold the appeal.

**PR95/16 DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF APPEAL – BURY LAKE YOUNG MARINERS**

All businesses were required to pay National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR), however organisations that are registered as Charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC) automatically receive 80% mandatory rate relief. The Council can award up to an additional 20% 'top up' to the mandatory relief or in cases of not for profit organisations up to 100% discretionary rate relief.

There was no automatic right for Charities or CASC organisations to receive the 20% discretionary rate relief organisations must meet the criteria set out in our policy.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 35 (B), Mr Russell spoke against the recommendation to not uphold the appeal.

Members raised concern with regard to Mr Russell's comment that they had not received notification in March 2015 with regard to the changes in the policy.

Councillor Roger Seabourne moved, seconded by Councillor Sara Bedford, that the appeal be deferred to allow Officers to provide clarification on when Bury Lake Young Mariners were notified of the change in policy and confirmation that a letter had been sent.

RESOLVED:

That the appeal be deferred to the next meeting.

**PR96/16 WORK PROGRAMME**

To agree the Committee's work programme.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be agreed.

CHAIRMAN