

Update from Portfolio Holder to the Finance & Resources Advisory Committee – 3 June 2014

The Chairman and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources welcomed new Members of the Committee. In the forthcoming year Cllr Scholey would focus on matters of IT, Facilities and Property and Cllr. Firth would have a particular role in the possible formation of a Council trading company and its structure. The Council had recently hired E C Harris to advise on the experience of other local authorities' trading companies. Together all three Councillors would consider property acquisitions and sales matters. For those parcels of land identified for possible disposal and presented to the Committee on 26 March 2014, consultants had since been asked to consider options for utilisation or disposal.

The Chairman was thankful that since 2009 his proposals for a slimmer Council had mostly been adopted as had his proposal for Deputy Portfolio Holders and for shorter, informal meetings between the Cabinet and senior Officers. The number of projects the Council was considering had been reduced from 20 to 10 and together these projects would help reduce the Council's dependence on grants from central government. It was hoped that, subject to approval, construction of a decked Buckhurst 2 car park could begin in January 2015.

Update from Portfolio Holder to the Finance & Resources Advisory Committee – 2 September 2014

The Chairman, and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources, updated the Committee on his work since the previous meeting of the Advisory Committee listed below:

- The planning application for the Buckhurst 2 car park proposal had been submitted and was due to be considered at the Development Control Committee on 6 November 2014. If approved the funding proposal would be brought to this committee on 11 November 2014.
- Dependant on any decision as to the use of land at Timberden Farm at Cabinet on 11 September 2014, it was planned to sell the land in lots.
- Meeting Point had been given notice to quit by 30 September 2014. No offers had been made for the building under the community right to buy scheme. Consideration was being given to applying for outline planning permission for retail offices on the ground floor and residential above in order to enhance the resaleable value.
- He had recently taken a Portfolio Holder decision to endorse the leasehold acquisition of the car park in London Road, Sevenoaks, adjacent to the new Marks & Spencer's store for operation of the pay and display car park. In response to a question he advised that the Council would be liable for any repairs under the lease, and the projected income was deemed sufficient
- The Statement of Accounts would be considered by the Audit Committee on 9 September 2014, he had sat in on the Committee's working group who had been reviewing the 2013/14 Draft Statement of Accounts.
- The main contractor and electrical consultants had been appointed for the new generator which would hopefully be installed within the next 6 months. The old generator would be put to use at Dunbrik.