

IMPROVEMENT & INNOVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2020 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllr. Bayley (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Abraham, Andrews, Bayley, Esler, Eyre, Hogarth, Maskell and Waterton

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Clayton, McGregor and Nelson

29. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee held on 28 November 2019, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

30. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

31. Actions from previous meeting

There were none.

32. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder, and Chairman, reported that the first two properties at the Burlington Mews site were under offer.

33. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

34. Corporate Peer Challenge

The Head of Transformation & Strategy presented the report which outlined that Corporate Peer Challenges were provided by the Local Government Association (LGA) as a tool for improvement. The Council had agreed that its next Corporate Peer Challenge would take place in September this year. Core components of the Corporate Peer Challenge included understanding of the local place, leadership of place, organisational leadership and governance, financial planning and viability, and capacity to deliver.

The Peer Challenge team would consist of four colleagues from local government, including a Member Peer, Chief Executive Peer, and a Peer Challenge Manager from the LGA.

Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee - 27 February 2020

Members were advised that there would be flexibility to allow the peer challenge to focus on particular priorities and ambitions which were important locally. They were also advised that they would receive further information as the Peer Challenge team would like to speak with Members during their visit.

In response to queries, Members were advised that the Council would do a self-assessment process before the Peer Challenge would begin. This would allow the Peer Challenge team to have a starting point to work with. Members were also advised that the Peer Challenge gives insight to individuals within the Peer Challenge team.

Resolved: That the proposal to undertake a Corporate Peer Challenge in September this year, be noted.

35. Economic Development Strategy Delivery Plan Monitoring

The Economic Development Officer presented the report updating Members on the delivery of the 2018-2021 Economic Development Strategy. Work on the strategy began in January 2019. The strategy was designed to have the flexibility to adapt to economic changes and needs of business customers. The performance targets were 86% green, 14% amber and 0% red.

In response to queries, Members were advised officers regularly attended networking events to discuss business needs and how the Council could provide support. Members were also advised that Swanley's good transport links, enhanced by the renovation of Swanley Station, would allow a workhub to be set up in Swanley without any issues with parking.

The Chairman highlighted the success of the Gateway Gatwick Group (Appendix A, 3.2a), which aimed to encourage tourism in West Kent, and the Sevenoaks support internship programme (Appendix A, 4.1b), which encouraged growth of skills and employability for young people with special educational needs. Members were advised that there were plans to continue working with the Gateway Gatwick Group and to encourage local authorities to set up a similar support internship programme.

Resolved: That the progress of the Economic Development Strategy delivery plan to date, be noted.

36. Work plan

The work plan was noted.

37. White Oak Leisure Centre: New Build and operator procurement

The Chief Officer People & Places presented the report which set out the proposed construction of the new leisure centre, the demolition of the existing White Oak Leisure centre, and the appointment of an operator for the new centre. The report set out the facility mix and detailed costings and funding sources. Planning permission had been granted on 13 February 2020. The construction of the new leisure centre and demolition of existing leisure centre cost, together with fees and charges, was due to be £20m.

Improvement & Innovation Advisory Committee - 27 February 2020

The Chief Officer People & Places advised Members of the proposed design of the new leisure centre, which included a Tag Active zone, multi-purpose rooms, a pool, a café, soft play area and parking provision for 144 vehicles and two coach spaces. There was focus on making the building as flexible as possible in its use. The new leisure centre was due to open in November 2021.

The preferred operator was Sport and Leisure Management (SLM). If the contract would be approved, then the net payment to the Council would be £507,248 a year on average. The preferred operator had shown interest in embedding themselves in the local community early on in the process. The Chief Officer People & Places advised that there would be 38 full time equivalent members of staff working for SLM which provide good operator resilience.

Members were advised that there were risks related to construction with Alliance Leisure Services Ltd (ALS) as well as risks outside their responsibility. These included utilities issues, prolonged extreme weather conditions, planning conditions imposed, changes to national building regulation, and unexpected ground conditions.

In response to queries regarding the new floor at Orchards Academy sports hall, Members were advised that the manufacturer had checked the new floor was suitable for sports currently using the hall, such as roller hockey.

In response to questions on timetabling, Members were advised that the operator would ask existing clubs what their needs would be and what times would be suitable. Timetables would be decided long before the opening of the leisure centre. The communication between the operator and clubs would be overseen by the Community Projects and Funding Officer.

Following concerns over the popularity of the facilities provided, such as Tag Active zone, it was emphasised to Members that the building was designed to be flexible and would therefore adapt based on demand of facilities.

In response to a query on financial variation in the contract, Members were advised that there would be a monthly payment tied into the contract. If any income would be above what was predicted, the cost would be split between the Council and the operator.

Resolved: That the following comments on recommendations a) to e) as set out within the report, be passed to Cabinet

- a) That it be ensured that
 - i) the new floor in the Orchard Academy sports hall be able to accommodate sports such as roller hockey and netball; and
 - ii) early discussions take place with existing clubs during the redevelopment process

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.42 PM

CHAIRMAN