

POLICY & PERFORMANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2015 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllr. Miss Stack (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Abraham, Clark, Eyre, Krogdahl, Maskell, McGregor, Mrs. Morris, Parkin, and Thornton

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Kelly

Cllrs. Grint were also present.

CHANGE IN AGENDA ITEM ORDER

With the agreement of the Committee the Chairman put agenda item 9 before the update from the Portfolio Holder.

20. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2015, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

21. Declarations of Interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

22. Actions from previous meeting

There were none.

23. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

24. Property Disposal Update

The Head of Economic Development and Property presented the report which sought approval to the disposal of surplus property assets at Shacklands Road, Badgers Mount. Disposal of surplus and underperforming assets will generate capital receipts that can be reinvested in higher performing assets in accordance with the Council's approved Property Investment Strategy.

The Committee was addressed by a local Member who explained that the woodland provided noise and pollution screening for the residents of Badgers Mount. He expressed

Policy & Performance Advisory Committee - 26 November 2015

concerned that the ancient woodland would not be protected if it was sold to neighbouring properties and the value of the land was more important to the residents of Badgers Mount. He hoped discussions between the Council and the Parish Council could take place.

Members discussed measures that were being proposed to protect the trees including a restrictive covenant and Tree Preservation Orders (TPO). The Head of Economic Development and Property advised that if a TPO was breached it was possible that a fine per tree affected could be applied.

Members considered whether discussions should be entered into with Badgers Mount Parish Council for a period of 6 months to see whether they would be interested in purchasing the land. It was noted by Members that similar discussion had taken place with Westerham Town Council regarding land in Crockham Hill.

The Chairman moved that it be recommended to Cabinet that the Council enter into discussions with Badgers Mount Parish Council for a period of 6 months for the disposal of the surplus land at Shacklands Road and authorises the Head of Economic Development and Property to agree detailed Heads of Terms.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that the Council enter into discussions with Badgers Mount Parish Council for a period of 6 months for the disposal of surplus land at Shacklands Road, Badgers Mount and authorises the Head of Economic Development and Property to agree detailed Heads of Terms.

25. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Chairman and Portfolio Holder for Policy & Performance updated the Committee that the work on the website was progressing and showed Members example pages from the new website. The new website was user friendly and by registering for log on details it would personalise resident's experience. Members were also advised that the Head of Economic Development would be leaving the Council in January and the Chairman expressed his thanks for the work undertaken.

26. Budget: Review of service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)

The Chief Finance Officer advised that the report before the Committee was the second stage of the budget process and would be presented to all Advisory Committees. The first stage had been the 'Financial Prospects and Budget Strategy' report which had been reported to Cabinet on 17 September 2015. The purpose of this report was to ensure that all Members of the Advisory Committees had a role to play in the governance of the Council and the budget decision making process and to make suggestions to Cabinet on growth and savings ideas for the services within their terms of reference.

Policy & Performance Advisory Committee - 26 November 2015

The main message was that this should be a significant step towards the Council becoming financially self-sufficient. The 10-year budget at Appendix F to the report, included no Revenue Support Grant (RSG) from 2016/17 and no New Homes Bonus (NHB) from 2019/20. In practice it was likely that some funding would still be received from these sources in the near future but the amounts were unknown. The Financial Prospects report had recommended that any amounts that were received were placed into the Financial Plan Reserve which could be used to support the 10-year budget by funding invest to save initiatives and support for the Property Investment Strategy (PIS). Using the funding for these purposes would result in additional year on year income that was not impacted by Government decisions.

Members had agreed the last 10-year budget in February and the changes that had been made since then included:

- Rolling the 10-year budget on for one year and updating base figures.
- Removing reliance on RSG
- Reducing the Council Tax increase assumption to 2% for all years
- Reducing fees and charges inflation to 2.5% for all years
- Reducing pay award inflation to 1% for 4 years
- Including income from PIS for the first time of £500k from 16/17, £700k from 18/19, £800k from 23/24
- Savings of £500k in 16/17 and then £100k pa for all future years

The current list of growth and savings proposals was £52,000 short of the £500,000 target (if all of the proposals were accepted), and Members were therefore being asked for further suggestions for growth and savings ideas. He further reminded Members that £5.3m had been saved from 2011/12 to 2016/17 (113 items) and there had been over £10m of savings since 2005/06.

Members reviewed Appendix D which contained the growth and savings proposals put forward by the Portfolio Holders and Chief Officers, and the Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs) in Appendix E and E(a).

Members considered whether there was anything they wanted taken forward as potential growth or savings suggestions.

Members discussed the positives and negatives of paperless meetings. The Chairman advised that more work would need to be carried out on current systems before paperless would be compulsory for Members.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That

- a) the growth and savings proposals identified in Appendix D to the report applicable to the Advisory Committee (SCIA 1 – Economic Development &

Policy & Performance Advisory Committee - 26 November 2015

Property: staffing establishment levels made permanent, SCIA 13 – Increased print income and SCIA 20 – Pay costs savings) be recommended to Cabinet;

b) Cabinet investigate meetings of the Council being paperless.

27. Local Government Devolution

The Chairman presented a report which provided the background to, and a brief summary of, the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill, outlining the current progress nationally and suggesting that the Council considered engaging with Government over what could be achieved locally as it achieved a self-sufficient budget position. The Chairman advised that it was hoped that Sevenoaks District Council would lead the way being self sufficient with other District Council's following and to focus on income that could be budgeted for.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

28. Swanley Regeneration

The Chairman presented a report which sought approval of the demolition of redundant premises at the Former Swanley Working Men's Club, 18 High Street, 27 to 37 High Street and Bevan Place Car Park, Swanley. Development of the sites would generate income and capital receipts that can be reinvested. High quality development would serve the needs of the town and improve an important area of the town, thus supporting the Council's Economic Development strategy. It would also result in higher performing assets in accordance with the Council's approved Property Investment Strategy. Members were advised that the properties in their current state were being vandalised and that it was a hard site to keep secure.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that the demolition of redundant premises at the Former Swanley Working Men's Club, 18 High Street, 27 to 37 High Street and Bevan Place Car Park, Swanley be approved, subject to a detailed appraisal of the VAT implications.

29. Work Plan

It was agreed to invite Jadu, who were producing the Council's website to the March meeting if the new website was not live prior to the meeting.

Policy & Performance Advisory Committee - 26 November 2015

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.55 PM

CHAIRMAN