

POLICY & PERFORMANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2016 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllr. Miss Stack (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Abraham, Clark, Eyre, Kelly, Krogdahl, Maskell, Mrs. Morris, Parkin, Miss. Stack and Thornton

An apology for absence was received from Cllr. McGregor

30. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2015, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

31. Declarations of Interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

32. Actions from previous meeting

There were none.

33. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Chairman and Portfolio Holder for Policy & Performance advised the Committee of various meetings he had attended with contractors concerning various developments. He also reported that the Swanley and Hextable drop in sessions for the Swanley Masterplan had been well attended. More work was to happen in schools in order to engage the younger community in the proposals.

34. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

35. Residents Survey 2015

The Communications Manager gave a [presentation](#) on, and presented a report which, set out the results of the 2015 Residents' Survey carried out from 24 October to 2 November 2015 by an independent research company on behalf of the Council. The purpose of the survey was to evaluate the level of satisfaction with the Council and its services, the effectiveness of the Council's communications activities and to establish where local people obtain information about the Council. The data was collected by way of a telephone survey of 201 Sevenoaks District residents, who collectively formed a broadly representative sample of the District population.

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The research had been conducted under the Code of Practice of the UK Market Research Society, which meant that all of the answers residents gave remained strictly confidential and anonymous. Satisfaction with the Council stood at 79%, 59% of residents thought the Council provided Value for Money, and 70% said they were well informed about Council services. In all cases the scores were significantly higher than the national benchmark.. In Shape magazine continued to be the communication that was most seen by residents in the 6 months prior to the survey and overall satisfaction with In Shape magazine was high with 85% of respondents agreeing it provides good value for money,.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the results of the 2015 Residents Survey, be noted.

36. Communications Strategy

The Head of Transformation & Strategy presented a report which asked Members to consider and comment on the current strategy and proposed work plan that would support officers to deliver the aims and objectives set out in the strategy.

The Council's Communication Strategy had been reviewed in recent years, with significant support from a Members Working Group, to reflect the changing priorities for the Council and had been improved to clearly reflect the purpose of all communications activity for the Council and set a clear framework for the remit of the Communications team. The work plan would reflect the significant projects the Council would undertake during the next year and highlight work required within Council services to ensure strong communications with customers.

Members asked some questions concerning the work plan. There was some discussion on advertising and sponsorship. At the moment no 'off brand' advertisers were used in InShape. Sponsorship was a difficult area and as things moved forward it would be a future discussion for Members to explore. Rather than creating email lists for newsletters, it was hoped the new website could be used to offer customers a more personalised experience.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That Cabinet be recommended to adopt the Communications Strategy.

37. Swanley Local Office

The Corporate Customer Services & Delivery Manager presented a report which sought Members approval for the District Council to seek to continue the partnership agreement which had existed for fourteen years between Sevenoaks District Council and Swanley Town Council for the operation of services through a local office in Swanley – 'Swanley

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Link.’ The current agreement was due to expire on 31 March 2016, and approval was sought to renew the agreement to end on 31 March 2018.

In response to questions the Corporate Customer Services & Delivery Manager advised that the Council’s branding was not currently visible and that clear and permanent branding would form part of the contract discussions. The previous two contracts had been 3 and 5 years long, it was felt a 2 year contract helped focus delivery and gave more negotiating ability and opportunity to revise standards. The benefits of the Allpay system were discussed.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty. It was further noted that if the facility were removed there could be a detrimental impact to customers.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet to approve the renewal of the provision of a Local Office service for a further 2 years with Swanley Town Council based on the current terms and value.

38. Transparency and website update

Members considered a report which provided an update on progress with the delivery of a new council website as well as the work the Council had planned to improve the way in which it published the range of data required under the Local Government Transparency Code.

The Corporate Customer Services & Delivery Manager showed Members the latest mock up of the new Council website, and advised that work was currently underway to review content and reduce the number of pages. The Head of Transformation & Strategy advised Members of the proposal to have a second site – a new data website – that would improve the Council’s current approach to transparency. This site would be developed over the summer and would bear no additional costs, being met from existing budgets.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the progress made in the delivery of a new Council website be noted.

39. Work Plan

The work plan was noted.

40. Swanley Regeneration

The Regeneration Advisor presented the report which reminded Members that Cabinet had approved the demolition of the former Working Men’s Club at 18 High Street

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Swanley, the former Bank at 16 High Street Swanley and the vacant shop units and accommodation above them at 27 – 37 High Street Swanley, subject to further investigation into the possible VAT and CIL implications of developing the site. The report informed Members about the VAT and CIL implications, and the planning implications for 27-37 High Street Swanley of it being listed as an Asset of Community Value. The report also sought consent to proceed with the demolition process at the former Working Men's Club at 18 High Street, the former bank (CAB centre) at 16 High Street and the disposal of the temporary building currently on the Bevan Place site.

It was moved by the Chairman and

Resolved: That, under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Appendices B to the report, on the ground that likely disclosure of exempt information was involved as defined by paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) as identified in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

Members discussed the confidential appendix.

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

- a) the CIL and VAT implications of developing land at 16 – 18 High Street be noted, and the demolition of both buildings (The former Working Men's Club and former CAB building) at the earliest opportunity, be approved, noting that the demolition works had already been procured and the contractor was ready to mobilise;
- b) the revised costings for the demolition, contained in Appendix B to the report, and the fact that the previous contractor remained the best value for money, be noted; and
- c) the demolition of the former Working Men's Club and CAB building be approved, and the fact that this was subject to a Prior Approval Notification, be noted.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.31 PM

CHAIRMAN