

RENEWAL AND RECREATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 28 January 2014

Present:

Councillor Ian F. Payne (Chairman)

Councillors Kathy Bance MBE, Nicky Dykes, John Ince,
Paul Lynch, David McBride, Alexa Michael, Sarah Phillips
and Michael Turner

Also Present:

Councillor Peter Morgan

53 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Julian Benington and Michael Tickner.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Nicky Dykes, Peter Morgan and Sarah Phillips.

54 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Payne declared a personal interest in Item 9 (Town Centre Management Update Report – January 2014) and Item 10 (Town Centres Development Programme Update) as he was:-

- Manager of the Bexleyheath Business Improvement District (BID);
- a member of the British BIDS;
- an Advisory Board Member of the Association of Town and City Managers; and
- an Executive Member of The Salvation Army Bromley, within site G of the Area Action Plan.

55 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

56 QUESTIONS FOR THE RENEWAL AND RECREATION PORTFOLIO HOLDER

No questions were received.

57 QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAIRMAN OF RENEWAL AND RECREATION PDS COMMITTEE

No questions were received.

58 MINUTES OF THE RENEWAL AND RECREATION PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 26 NOVEMBER 2013

Page 6, Minute 42

The first sentence was amended to read:-

'A meeting with officers from Biggin Hill Airport would take place on Friday 29 November 2013 to discuss proposals for the development of a Heritage Centre at the Airport.'

Page 7, Minute 42,

The first paragraph was amended to read:-

'A meeting of the Housing Strategy Group would take place on Thursday 28 November 2013.'

RESOLVED that subject to the amendments outlined above, the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2013 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

59 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND UPDATES

Report CSD14006

A report concerning the Council's Strategic Housing Framework would be considered by Members of the Executive at a meeting to be held on 2 April 2014.

Lamp columns in Kent, Surrey and Sussex Roads, West Wickham had been replaced with standard posts. The Council do not install heritage lighting in any area of the Borough, including conservation areas due to the additional cost.

TfL are sympathetic to the proposal that suitable replacement lamp columns be installed along High Street, West Wickham.

Members noted the position with regard to matters arising from previous meetings.

**60 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF RENEWAL AND RECREATION
PORTFOLIO REPORTS**

60A BUDGET MONITORING

Report FSD14005

Members considered the latest budget monitoring position for 2013/14 based on expenditure and activity levels up to 30 November 2013. The total portfolio budget showed a projected underspend of £99k.

Consideration was also given to the level of expenditure and progress achieved in regard to the implementation of the Renewal and Recreation projects within the Member Priority Initiatives.

With regard to the early warning outlined at paragraph 5.7 on page 22, the Chief Planner reported that notice of a claim for compensation had not yet been received. Officers were informed prior to the Development Control meeting on 7 January 2014 that if the application to fell the tree was refused, the applicant would launch an appeal. However, as the appeals process was considerably lengthy, it may be some time before the Council heard anything further.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to:-

- 1) endorse the latest 2013/14 budget projection for the Renewal and Recreation Portfolio;**
- 2) note the progress of the implementation of the Renewal and Recreation projects within the Member Priority Initiatives.**

60B CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - 2ND QUARTER 2013/14

Report CSD14015

On 20 November 2013, the Executive received the 2nd quarterly capital monitoring report 2013/14 and agreed a revised Capital programme for the four year period 2013/14 to 2016/17. This report highlighted the changes agreed by the Executive in respect of the Capital Programme for the Renewal and Recreation Portfolio.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to confirm the changes agreed by the Executive in November.

60C LAND AT SNAG LANE, CUDHAM - PROPOSED ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION

Report DRR/14/012

Members considered the making of an Article 4 Direction to remove certain classes of permitted development from an area of land between Cudham Lane North and Snag Lane. The land had recently been purchased by a development company and there was concern that it would be sub-divided into small plots which would undermine the open character and visual amenities of the area due to indiscriminate development including fencing, structures, temporary uses of land and stationing of caravans.

The Chief Planner outlined the report and clarified the significance of Article 4 Directions. He advised that the expediency of issuing an Article 4 Direction should be considered and that there was a risk of compensation becoming payable at a future stage.

As a Member of the Development Control Committee, Councillor Michael had supported the issue of an Article 4 Direction with immediate effect as the land was potentially vulnerable and she considered that certain developments would change the current nature of the site. An Article 4 Direction safeguarded against such concerns.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to authorise an Article 4 Direction on land between Cudham Lane and Snag Lane to remove permitted development rights for the following classes of development:-

- (i) erection or construction of gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure (Class A of Part 2);**
- (ii) formation, laying out and construction of means of access (Class B of part 2);**
- (iii) provision of temporary buildings, etc (Class A of Part 4);**
- (iv) temporary uses of land for any purpose for not more than 28 days per year (Class B of part 4);**
- (v) use of land as a caravan site (Class A of Part 5).**

60D ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION - STATION SQUARE, PETTS WOOD

Report DRR/14/011

Members were asked to consider making a non-immediate Article 4 Direction to restrict specific permitted development rights for commercial frontages and forecourts in Station Square, Petts Wood in order to preserve the character of

the Station Square Conservation Area, by allowing the Council to consider each proposal on its merits.

The Chief Planner outlined the report and clarified the significance of Article 4 Directions. He advised that the expediency of issuing an Article 4 Direction should be considered and that there was a risk of compensation becoming payable at a future stage.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to authorise a non-immediate (12 month) Article 4 Direction withdrawing permitted development rights in Station Square, Petts Wood, Conservation Area in respect of the following Parts of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended);-

- (i) Part 2, Class A: The erection, construction, maintenance, improvement or alteration of a gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure; and**
- (ii) Part 4, Class B: Temporary uses and moveable structures associated with such uses.**

60E CHANGE OF USE FROM OFFICES TO RESIDENTIAL IN PARTS OF BROMLEY TOWN CENTRE - PROPOSED NON-IMMEDIATE ARTICLE 4 DIRECTION

Report DRR/14/013

In order to avoid harmful impacts upon economic development, Members considered the making of a non-immediate Article 4 Direction to withdraw the permitted development right of change of use from office to residential from the Business Improvement Areas, (as shown in the Area Action Plan) and nearby areas within a short distance of Bromley North and South.

The Chief Planner outlined the report and clarified the significance of Article 4 Directions. He advised that the expediency of issuing an Article 4 Direction should be considered and that there was a risk of compensation becoming payable at a future stage.

Councillor Michael commented that as the Council was committed to regenerating town centres, it made sense to make prime sites available for office land. The Article 4 Direction would not prohibit change however, an application would need to be submitted for consideration by Members on its own merits.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to authorise the making of a non-immediate Article 4 Direction on the basis that it is expedient to restrict the Change of Use from offices to Residential in parts of Bromley Town Centre.

60F BECKENHAM CONSERVATION AREAS

Report DRR14/014

At a meeting of the Development Control Committee held on 21 November 2013, Members recommended that authorisation be sought to proceed with a consultation on the proposed creation of a Beckenham High Street Conservation Area as shown in Appendix 2 of the report.

A map outlining the area concerned was circulated to Members.

The Chief Planner briefly outlined the report commenting that the consultation exercise would allow local people to put their views forward.

The Chairman stated that potentially, smaller individual conservation areas could be added at a future date.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder authorise consultation on a Beckenham High Street Conservation Area (as shown in Appendix 2) as a minimum.

61 DRAFT 2014/15 BUDGET

Report FSD14006

Members considered a draft 2014/15 Budget for the Renewal and Recreation Portfolio incorporating cost pressures and initial draft budget saving options as reported to the Executive on 15 January 2014.

The Executive requested individual PDS Committees to consider the initial proposals outlined in the report, including the additional savings options and asked for Member comments to be reported to the February meeting of the Executive.

Referring to the reduction in posts across the Planning Division (page 107), the Chief Planner explained that these were the same posts included in the previous annual budget report. The balance of incoming work and staff was regularly monitored and the vacant posts were utilised on a temporary basis when extra staff were required.

Councillors Bance and Michael raised concerns regarding the review of the library service (page 107) including the reduction in opening hours. Reducing opening hours would not encourage the use of libraries and the Borough could end up with an inferior service.

The Assistant Director, Leisure and Culture reported that a new set of opening hours would be introduced as a result of a monitoring exercise currently being undertaken of the hour by hour useage of libraries. He explained that a reduction in opening hours would make libraries easier to staff. It was

important that libraries remained open however, in order for this to happen, it was necessary for all aspects of the service to be reviewed. New technology would be introduced in the near future. A detailed report would be submitted for Member consideration when available.

It was anticipated that the new library in Penge would open in June 2014.

Councillor McBride referred to management of Leisure Services (page 107) and asked if the review was likely to cause problems with the standards of Leisure Services. Members were informed that at present there was one vacant post and one officer had recently resigned. The Council would be responding less to grant applicants and would scale down large corporate activities. No further work would be undertaken on the WW1 commemorations.

Councillor Ince enquired how the significant increase in the cost of freedom passes would impact on residents. The Assistant Director, Leisure and Culture did not have this information to hand and agreed to update Members via e-mail. The Executive Director of Environment and Community Services reported that Executive members continue to try to negotiate costs down.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the financial forecast for 2015/16 to 2017/18 be noted;**
- (2) Members' comments on the initial draft savings options proposed by the Executive for 2014/15 be noted;**
- (3) the initial draft 2014/15 budget be used as a basis for setting the 2014/15 budget; and**
- (4) Members' comments on the initial draft 2014/15 Budget be provided to the February meeting of the Executive.**

**62 RENEWAL AND RECREATION BUSINESS PLAN 2013/14
MONITORING REPORT FOR QUARTER 3**

Report DRR14/008

Members considered the Renewal and Recreation Business Plan 2013/14 monitoring Report for Quarter 3.

The report outlined progress made towards the delivery of actions agreed in the Plan and identified actions as priorities for delivery in Quarter 3.

The existing contract for Christmas lights in Bromley, Orpington and Penge was in its final year of operation. A detailed report would be submitted to the next meeting of the R&R PDS Committee on 1 April 2014.

Discussion took place on the criteria adopted for designating RAG status. A number of items were assigned as green despite no particular action or result being recorded.

Councillor Michael referred to the future management and operation of the Cotmandene Community Resource Centre and the Mottingham Community and Learning Shop and asked if the centres would close if no suitable operator was identified. Members were informed that at the last R&R PDS meeting, it was reported that funding for both centres would continue for 2014/15 so this was no longer a budget issue. Councillor Michael stated that this should have been reflected in the business plan for the current meeting. Councillor Ince commented that as the continuation of funding only related to 2014/15, the centres would need to be considered as vulnerable in later years.

Referring to the environmental monitoring visits on page 119, Councillor Bance reported that she had constantly attempted to get environmental issues resolved without success. In this respect, the RAG status should be amber and she considered the plan should be written with more openness.

In relation to Pro-Active Bromley (page 127), it was reported that £20k had been obtained for funding a capacity building officer. A larger bid of £300k had been submitted to fund sports over the next three years.

Commenting on the 'red' status for determination of planning applications (page 125), the Chief Planner stated that the number of incoming major and minor applications fluctuated from quarter to quarter. The percentage of major applications for the current quarter were slightly higher than the previous quarter. Incoming minor applications had recently increased with 80% being determined in December 2013 and 75% in January 2014.

The remedial actions taken to increase the number of applications determined were gradually taking effect. Although the new system of each application being dealt with by one case officer still applied, some officers had to be taken off this task to deal with problems which had arisen in regard to telephone enquiries etc. This issue should balance itself out over time.

Councillor McBride said it would be useful to have sight of the number of applications dealt with in each quarter as opposed to just percentage figures. The Chairman suggested that a column be included to show the amount of work undertaken. The Chief Planner reported that 18 major, 140 minor and 593 other matters had been dealt with during the last quarter. He also reported that income levels were also being monitored as a major concern. The current income received was £200k ahead of expectations.

Councillor Bance suggested that enforcement statistics be included in the report so Members could see what action had been pursued and undertaken. Members were informed that compared with other boroughs, Bromley was the

most active in regard to enforcement action. Staffing levels had been reviewed and a good ratio existed between officers and the number of notices issued.

Councillor Michael requested further information on the work being undertaken with Bromley College to launch and market a project to support young unemployed residents into sustainable employment (page 130). As no clear outcome was reported, Councillor Michael considered the RAG status should be amber. The Assistant Director, Leisure and Culture stated that a report would be submitted to the Executive and Resources Committee on 5 February 2014 with the recommendation that the relationship between the Council and the College in regard to the scheme be discontinued. At the time the current Business Plan was drafted, the College had achieved sufficient progress to warrant a green status however, since that time the College has reported that it could not go through with particular aspects of the contract.

It was suggested that a Member Working Group be established to look at how the budget could be handled and how Members could become involved in getting youngsters into work. Councillor Dykes suggested that Members take into consideration what was happening elsewhere in the Borough.

It was reported that the ongoing strategic work with Registered Providers to minimise affordable stock disposals (page 133) would not affect tenants' right to buy. Kerry O'Driscoll, Head of Housing Development and Strategy would be invited to update Members at the next R&R PDS meeting on 1 April 2014.

The Chairman asked Members to send him their ideas on what they believe should be included in a new action column in future Business Plan reports.

RESOLVED that the progress made towards the delivery of actions agreed in the Renewal and Recreation Business Plan 2013/14 for Quarter 3 as described in the Monitoring Report be noted.

63 TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT UPDATE REPORT - JANUARY 2014

Report DRR14/007

Members received an update on activities undertaken by the Council's Town Centre Management and Business Support Team since November 2013. The report also summarised priorities to the end of March 2014.

Members joined the Chairman in congratulating Alison Stammers, Chair of the Chislehurst Town Team on winning the Mary Portas' High Street Champion of the Year Award. The Chairman acknowledged the great work undertaken by Ms Stammers.

Councillor McBride commented on the increase in vacant units in Orpington Town Centre. It had been anticipated that the block paving laid in 2010 would lead the way to establishing a more vibrant town centre however, this proved

not to be the case. The Head of Town Centre Management and Business Support reported that the number of empty units specified in the report included those within The Walnuts which had come under new ownership over the last two months. He believed the new BID would make a considerable difference for the Town Centre over the next 2-3 years. One of the BID's aims was to improve the environment, promote the town to shoppers and visitors and to promote inward investment which will ultimately reduce the level of vacancies.

The Business Support Programme was funded by the Mayor of London. A monitoring exercise was currently being carried out to measure the positive impacts of the support including whether businesses were employing more people. The results of this monitoring would be made available to Councillors at a future meeting of the R&R PDS.

In regard to Bromley North Village, Councillor Turner referred to the possibility of pavement dining in East Street however, this was unlikely to happen unless the area was pedestrianised and although the lamp columns were elegant and looked good, they only generated minimal light. Councillor Morgan reported that a survey had been undertaken which had revealed that most traders wanted the traffic in East Street to remain. Councillor Morgan confirmed that no buses travelled through the street and he suggested that other traffic could be discouraged with the erection of "access only" signs. The Head of Town Centre Management and Business Support suggested the street could be temporarily pedestrianised at certain times for planned events to take place.

The Head of Town Centre Management and Business Support agreed to look further into a previously reported issue concerning resurfacing of pavements in Croydon Road, Penge.

It was reported that consultation was currently being undertaken with local people in regard to the improvement of the shopping parade at Clockhouse and other parades as part of the Local Parades Improvement Initiative. Details would be reported back to Members when available.

RESOLVED that the key developments and activities within the Town Centre Management and Business Support Team be noted.

64 TOWN CENTRES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

Report DRR14/009

Members considered the progress achieved in delivering the Town Centres Development Programme and were asked to agree that the Beckenham Town Centre Working Party be reconvened to provide design oversight and strategic guidance during the initial scheme design stage for Beckenham Town Centre.

Councillor Ince requested an update on the current position in regard to The Walnuts. He was informed that continuation of work depended on obtaining pre-lets for the planned restaurants. It was anticipated that this would be completed by Spring following which continuation of the works would begin.

It was reported that Site B: Tweedy Road (page 151) had a long planning history, including a recent appeal refusal decision. The specified figure of 70 residential units in the AAP was for guidance only. This site was located within a Conservation Area and any forthcoming residential scheme for the site would be subject to consideration by the Development Control Committee.

The Chairman asked for an update on the works being undertaken by Thames Water in Bromley North Village. Members were informed that work had commenced on 13 January 2014 and were currently running to schedule with pipe replacement commencing shortly. Conways would begin their work as soon as Thames Water had finished theirs and it was anticipated that TWU programmed work would be completed by May 2014, although High Street North would be open to traffic within three months.

Councillor Dykes reported the concerns of traders who were feeling the impact of the works being undertaken. The Head of Renewal stated that the Conways contract was managed on a weekly basis and payment was not made until the work had been carried out, so this was an incentive for them to finish the works as soon as possible. The number of work gangs used was maximised as much as possible. The Head of Renewal agreed to circulate a detailed programme of works to Members.

The Head of Renewal agreed to look into the matter of replacement water pipes in Penge High Street where the road had previously collapsed.

Councillor Bance requested an update on the former Anerley Town Hall. Members were informed that this was a Council-owned building which was beginning to fall away at the front. Costs quoted in tenders received for carrying out works to the building had all been substantially higher than expected. Discussions on options for the building were being carried out.

Members agreed that the Beckenham Town Centre Member Working Party be reconvened to provide oversight and strategic guidance during the initial Beckenham Town Centre Step 1 scheme bid. It was suggested that as previously, Councillor Tickner take up the position of Chairman.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) progress on the delivery of the Town Centres Development Programme be noted;**

- (2) **the Beckenham Town Centre Member Working Party be reconvened as a task and finish group to provide design oversight and strategic guidance during the initial scheme design stage of Beckenham Town Centre.**

65 DEVELOPMENT OF THE RENEWAL AND RECREATION PDS COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME (JANUARY-APRIL 2014)

Report CSD14007

Members considered the Committee's work programme for January-April 2014.

Councillor Michael asked if a follow-up report on Bromley MyTime would be submitted in the near future. Members were informed that information requested from MyTime had not yet been received however, the Council were currently involved in discussions with them and as soon as relevant issues were resolved, a report would be submitted for consideration. Mr Price, Executive Director would be retiring in June 2014.

It was reported that one contract with MyTime had been extended for a further five years in exchange for a 100% reduction in grant. The contract was due to end in 2024.

RESOLVED that the work programme for the period January-April 2014 be agreed.

66 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE RENEWAL AND RECREATION PDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 NOVEMBER 2013

RESOLVED that the Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2013 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

The meeting ended at 8.30 pm

Chairman