

**EXECUTIVE AND RESOURCES
POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 5 June 2014

Present:

Councillor Eric Bosshard (Chairman)
Councillor Will Harmer (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Nicholas Bennett J.P., Peter Fookes,
Ellie Harmer, William Huntington-Thresher, David Livett,
Kate Lymer, Russell Mellor, Keith Onslow, Tony Owen,
Ian F. Payne, Neil Reddin FCCA, Pauline Tunncliffe and
Angela Wilkins

Also Present:

Councillor Graham Arthur, Councillor Robert Evans and
Councillor Stephen Wells

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF
SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors William Huntington-Thresher and Russell Mellor.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Keith Onslow declared an interest in agenda item 13a (Renewal of Casualty Insurance Policies) as he had previously worked for Zurich Municipal and he now worked part time for the Royal Borough of Greenwich on insurance matters.

Councillor Nicholas Bennett declared an interest in agenda item 8a (Bromley Youth Employment Project) as he would soon be a member of the Bromley College Governing Body.

**3 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE
PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING**

No questions had been received.

**4 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE AND RESOURCES PDS
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 27th MARCH 2014
(EXCLUDING EXEMPT ITEMS)**

The Committee requested that the updates from PDS Chairmen be appended to their minutes in future.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 27th March 2014 (excluding exempt information) be confirmed.

5 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS
Report CSD14083

The Committee noted matters arising from previous meetings.

6 FORWARD PLAN OF KEY AND PRIVATE EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Committee noted the Forward Plan of Key and Private Executive Decisions as published on 13th May 2014, and requested further details of the proposed report to the Executive on 16th July 2014 about Community Links Bromley.

7 QUESTIONS TO THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS ATTENDING THE MEETING

No questions had been received.

8 RESOURCES PORTFOLIO - PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

The Committee considered the following reports for pre-decision scrutiny where the Resources Portfolio Holder was minded to take a decision.

8.1 Bromley Youth Employment Project

At its meeting on 5th February 2014 the Committee had received an update on the performance of the contract with Bromley College of Further and Higher Education to deliver the Bromley Youth Employment Project. The Committee had recommended, and the Resources Portfolio Holder had subsequently agreed, that the contract should be terminated, the resources reallocated and that a Task and Finish Group led by Bromley Education Business Partnership (BEBP) should undertake an options appraisal. The BEBP had been set up to help young people find out more about the world of work and had an experienced and informed team with an excellent record of delivering learning opportunities with employers.(Further information is available at <http://www.bromleyebp.org.uk/> .)

The Committee had set up a Member Working Group to oversee the work of the Task and Finish Group. This had met twice and its conclusions had been incorporated into the final proposals before the Committee. An additional sheet setting out the proposed governance arrangements, including monitoring and reporting arrangements to PDS Committees, a project board, the BEBP Steering Group and the Education Care and Health Services Departmental Management Team (EC&HS DMT), was tabled.

In response to questions, officers confirmed that the target of creating 100 employment opportunities would include a range of jobs, internships and apprenticeships, and there would be a package of support to ensure that these placements were of good quality and sustainable. It was considered that this was a realistic target based on experience in other boroughs and the expertise in the BEBP, which was very well respected in this field and would ensure that bureaucracy was minimised for employers. The project would also leave a legacy in terms of improved relationships with a range of businesses. The target cohort was those who, with some support and guidance, could move into employment or apprenticeships.

Members commented that the project would be competing against a very effective national apprenticeship scheme, as Bromley College had been, and that the new proposals transferred the risk back to the Council without the incentive of the penalties in the contract. It was also noted that the number of young Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) claimants had fallen and the employment situation in the borough had improved, although it was pointed out that not all the suitable young people would be claiming JSA.

The Committee concluded that reporting and monitoring arrangements needed to be tightened to ensure that delivery was effective, leading to good quality contracted employment, with the Project Board meeting more frequently than every three months, and more regular oversight from the EC&HS DMT. The Committee also commented that reports should be made to this Committee and would not need to include Education PDS Committee, unless there were very specific education issues. The Committee asked that officers strengthen the proposals, discuss these with the Resources Portfolio Holder and report to the next meeting.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and a further report be submitted to the Committee's next meeting addressing the committee's concerns about monitoring and delivery.

8.2 TREASURY MANAGEMENT - ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

Report FSD14040

The Committee considered a report summarising treasury management activity during the March quarter and including the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2013/14, which was required to be reported to full Council. The report also contained an update on the Council's investment with Heritable Bank. Investments as at March 2014 totalled £247.4m (excluding the balance of the Heritable investment) and there was no outstanding external borrowing.

Councillor David Livett commented that the Council was not achieving its target returns and needed to be more active in managing its funds and challenging unnecessary constraints. He also questioned why it was necessary to have two advisors. Other Members were sympathetic to his comments. The Director of Finance responded that he was not comfortable

with returns of less than 1%, but that the Council had to follow guidance that emphasised security, liquidity and yield in that order. There was also a shortage of eligible counterparties to invest with. The Director commented that he was open to suggestions and agreed to meet with Councillor Livett to discuss these matters more fully.

RESOLVED that

(1) The Treasury Management Annual Report for 2013/14 and the actual prudential indicators be noted and referred to full Council.

(2) The options for Treasury Management be considered and discussed by Councillor Livett and the Director of Finance and a further report be made to a future meeting.

9 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXECUTIVE REPORTS

(6) Provisional Final Accounts

Report FSD14032

The report summarised the 2013/14 provisional outturn as well as the potential implications for the Council's financial position in 2014/15. The report showed an overall net reduction in balances of £1.2m (before carry forwards from 2012/13.)

The Queen's Speech contained some proposals that would have an impact on local government finances, including a Care Bill and transfer of responsibility for local land searches, which currently provide income, to the Land Registry.

The Committee requested a report updating them on the performance of invest to save projects.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported, and a report be submitted on the performance of invest to save projects.

(7) Capital Programme Outturn 2013/14

Report FSD14042

The report set out the final outturn on capital expenditure and receipts for 2013/14. Capital expenditure amounted to £25.2m compared to the final approved budget of £33.6m. £5.4m of this was due to delays in completing the acquisition of High Street properties, and £3m was mainly due to slippage on capital schemes. A review would be carried out in July to re-prioritise any dormant schemes.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(8) Economic Development and Investment Fund
Report DRR14/055

The report provided an update on the Council's Economic Development and Investment Fund and recommended the allocation of an additional £13.792k from general reserves. Individual proposals would still need specific approval from Members.

The Chairman of the Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee commented that he was dissatisfied with the process as his Committee had not had examined some of the proposed development opportunities listed in the report, and he requested a report on Site G for their next meeting. Councillor Will Harmer added that Bromley Town ward councillors had also not been consulted on some of the town centre development sites listed before they were made public. The Committee requested better consultation with PDS Committees and ward councillors.

Some members commented that there appeared to be a degree of confusion between the different objectives of development and investment within the same fund; officers confirmed that the individual opportunities could be either or both, but all would need individual approval from Members.

The Local Plan report to the Executive in February 2013 had identified three main growth areas in the borough at Biggin Hill, the Cray Business Corridor and Bromley Town Centre, but it was too early for more detailed priorities to be finalised. Members commented that other areas should not be forgotten, such as the Kangley Bridge Industrial Area, Elmers End and the Klinger site, and the Council should be working with the neighbouring local authorities. The Director of Finance reported that from 2015/16 the New Homes Bonus would be top-sliced into the Local Enterprise Partnership, which would require regional working across South East London, but it would be important to ensure that Bromley received a fair share of the resources available.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(9) Invest to Save Schemes – Adult Social Care – Outcome of Investment
Report CS14064

The report provided an update on the adult social care and day opportunity invest to save projects. The Executive was requested to note the return of £352k to the Council's central contingency, agree the carry forward of £488,920 to 2014/15 in order to complete the adult social care invest to save projects and confirm the allocation of £264,390 invest to save funding for the reconfiguration of day opportunities for older people.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(10) Gateway Review – Learning Disability Supported Living Schemes
Report CS14040

It was proposed that five learning disability supported living schemes and contracts accommodating 32 people that would all end on 10th January 2015 would be grouped together for tendering. Officers confirmed that in this case the economies of scale were genuine and achievable.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(11) Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards – Funding Request
Report CS14039

The report set out the implications of a recent Supreme Court judgement relating to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards. The judgement had increased the volume of applications for Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards with substantial financial implications for all Councils, and the Executive was asked to approve the drawdown of Local Reform and Community Voices Grant to meet the new legal requirements. There were expected to be further developments in the national situation and Department for Health guidance. The Committee asked for further details of the customer impact and the projected annual costs to be circulated.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

10 WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15
Report CSD14082

The Committee received a report setting out its work programme for 2014/15, and the Chairman appealed for Members to let him have suggestions of issues that needed to be scrutinised.

Councillor Will Harmer proposed that the New Technology Working Group be re-convened, and stated that he would seek additional members.

Councillor Tony Owen suggested drawing together information on member's skills; information on this had been collected by Democratic Services as part of the initial reception of members following the election. He also appealed to PDS Chairmen to consider individual budgets in their areas rather just focus on the big spending issues brought before members for decision.

RESOLVED that

(1) The work programme for 2014/15 be noted.

(2) The New Technology Working Group be re-established under the Chairmanship of Councillor Will Harmer.

11 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006, AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

RESOLVED that the Press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business referred to below as it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the Press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

**The following summaries
refer to matters
involving exempt information**

12 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27TH MARCH 2014

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 27th March 2014 were confirmed.

13 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXEMPT RESOURCES PORTFOLIO HOLDER REPORTS

The Committee scrutinised the following proposed decisions of the Resources Portfolio Holder.

13.1 RENEWAL OF CASUALTY INSURANCE POLICIES
Report FSD14039

The Committee considered proposals for the renewal of the Council's casualty insurance policies.

13.2 LEASE OF AIRSPACE AT OAK LODGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Committee considered a request for the authority to authorise a lease at Oak Lodge Primary School, but did not support the proposal.

13.3 CHELSFIELD RECREATION GROUND

This report was withdrawn.

14 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXEMPT EXECUTIVE REPORTS

The Committee scrutinised three reports on the part 2 agenda for the Executive's meeting on 10th June 2014, concerning awards of contract for tenancy support services for homeless people and for young people and the purchase of a property for educational purposes.

Executive and Resources Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee
5 June 2014

The Meeting ended at 9.24 pm

Chairman