

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

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 14 May 2015

Present:

Councillor Simon Fawthrop (Chairman)
Councillor Stephen Wells (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Nicholas Bennett J.P., William Huntington-
Thresher, Ellie Harmer, Tony Owen, Ian F. Payne,
David Livett, Keith Onslow, Angela Wilkins, Ian Dunn and
Alexa Michael

Also Present:

Councillor Graham Arthur and Councillor Stephen Carr

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

Apologies for absence were reported from Councillors Judi Ellis and Russell Mellor. Apologies had also been received from Councillor Nicky Dykes.

142 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ian Payne declared in relation to item 9 on the Executive's agenda (Release of Government Funding and Procurement Strategy to Support the Step Up to Social Work Programme) that his daughter worked as a child safety social worker for the Council.

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

No questions had been received.

**144 MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE AND RESOURCES PDS
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12TH MARCH 2015
(EXCLUDING EXEMPT ITEMS)**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12th March 2015 (excluding exempt information) be confirmed.

145 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS
Report CSD15056

The Committee received an update on matters arising from previous meetings. The following matters were discussed –

- The comments made at the last meeting about utilising the talents and experience of Members would be addressed in the coming months.
- There were concerns that committee reports were often too long and “wordy” and sometimes failed to highlight key points. It was suggested that report writing and report formats could be addressed by the Constitution Improvement Working Group.
- Members were concerned that the report on the extension of the banking contract had been presented to Members at a stage when it was too late for them to scrutinise or influence the decision. It was confirmed that extracts from the Contracts Register were still considered by individual PDS Committees before a corporate version was presented to this Committee. A Member commented that training for Members on scrutinising contracts would be useful.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

146 FORWARD PLAN OF KEY AND PRIVATE EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Committee considered the Forward Plan of Key and Private Executive decisions published on 21st April 2015. Members commented on the number of reports slipping from Executive agendas.

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

No questions had been received.

148 RESOURCES PORTFOLIO - PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

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

148.1 Former Penge Public Toilets, High Street, Penge
Report DRR15/043

The Committee considered a report recommending that the former public toilets at Penge High Street should be declared surplus and the building advertised for sale on the open market. Members were advised that the property had been listed as an asset of community value, giving community groups six weeks to make a bid; if any group advised that it wished to bid there would be a six month moratorium during which the property could not be sold. It was confirmed that additional bids would not trigger further six month periods. Councillor Wilkins advised that ward members were aware of someone interested in using the building for community use, and this would

be welcomed. Other members were concerned that potential buyers would waste time on planning applications for unsuitable proposals.

RESOLVED that the Resources Portfolio Holder be recommended to agree that the former public toilets at Penge High Street be declared surplus to Council requirements and that authority be given for the marketing of the building or its demolition if it is not possible to find a purchaser.

148.2 The Walnuts, Orpington - Proposed Alterations
Report DRR15/041

The head-leaseholder had requested the Council's consent as freeholder of the Walnuts Shopping Centre to the addition of an extra floor at Walnuts House as part of its development of a hotel. This consent could not be unreasonably withheld or delayed. It was also necessary to make some minor changes to the terms of the lease.

RESOLVED that the Resources Portfolio Holder be recommended to agree the grant of a license to allow the alteration of the property to enable the development of a hotel.

148.3 Land Adjoining 111 Eldred Drive, Orpington
Report DRR15/042

It was proposed to declare two areas of land, totalling 100 square metres, surplus to Council requirements to enable their sale to the developer of adjoining land. It was confirmed that the land would have no value to anyone else.

Members noted that, until it was sold, the Council had a duty to maintain the land. Officers were undertaking a study to accurately identify all such small parcels of land in the Council's ownership and had met with Affinity Sutton, as most of the land was on their estates. Disposing of these small plots would reduce maintenance costs.

RESOLVED that the Resources Portfolio Holder be recommended to declare the two plots of land adjoining 111 Eldred Drive surplus to Council requirements and authorise their sale.

149 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXECUTIVE REPORTS
Report CSD15057

The Committee considered the following reports on the part 1 agenda for the meeting of the Executive on 20th May 2015.

(6) Basic Need Programme
Report ED15501

The Executive was requested to approve appraisals for new schemes at a number of schools across the borough, including the Beacon House scheme, and to agree changes to the procurement strategy for the Basic Need Programme to address present volatility in market conditions.

A Member asked how specific the estimates were, as a number of schemes at different schools appeared to be for exactly the same amount. It was explained that these figures were a broad allocation of capital funds and that the developments would be procured using modular build processes through the Lewisham framework, so at this stage it should be expected that many of the amounts would be the same.

A Member asked whether there might be other section 106 money available for these or other schemes. It was noted that some education S.106 money was site specific, but some was more generally available. The Committee received regular reports on the use of section 106 money.

Members commented that it did not appear to be prudent to advertise, in a public report, the standard 10% contingency allowed for all such schemes. Officers undertook to clarify this for the future.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(7) Annual Report from Executive Working Party on Child Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting

The Committee noted the annual report from the Executive Working Party on Child Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(8) Adoption Update and Grant Draw-down
Report CS14127

The report provided an update on use of non-ring-fenced adoption reform grant and sought approval for the draw-down of £280,400 in 2015/16. Members noted that this was £8k more than had been sought in a previous report in October 2014.

Members noted that there had been a national increase in Special Guardianship Orders, at least partly following a series of court judgements, and suggested that the report on this issue to the Child Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting Working Group should be referred to Care Services PDS Committee for consideration.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported, but in addition the Executive be recommended to contact the Secretary of State to see whether more could be done to assist local authorities and reduce judicial intervention.

(9) Release of Government Funding and Procurement Strategy to Support the Step Up to Social Work Programme
Report CS14142

The Executive was requested to approve the release of ring fenced funding for 2015/16 and 2016/17 for cohort 4 of the Step up to Social Work programme and to agree the procurement strategy to deliver cohort 4. The Chairman noted that only one student had withdrawn from the third cohort of thirty two students.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(10) Gateway Review of Substance Misuse Services
Report CS14134

The Executive had previously considered two reports on tendering for substance misuse services and had requested further information and a policy review. The report had also been considered at an earlier stage by Care Services PDS Committee, which had supported the recommendations.

It was confirmed that these were statutory services which the Council was required to provide, although some Members questioned the level of service. Some Members questioned whether the waiver should be granted to extend the Share Care contract until December 2015, but the Committee was informed that this would allow it to be aligned with other contracts.

Members were concerned that there was not enough information available on the effectiveness of these programmes and how the proposed expenditure would actually lead to the outcomes that were sought. Members expressed concern that there was not an officer available to answer some of their points, and commented that more action should be taken with the Police to address the issues of drug-dealing.

RESOLVED that the Executive be informed that the Committee does not support the expenditure without further information to substantiate how the money will achieve the outcomes expected.

(11) Long Term Care of Older People – Extra Care Housing Supply and Demand – Further Report

The Committee was informed in part 2 of the meeting why the report was not yet available.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

(12) Local Development Scheme 2015-16

Report DRR15/021

The Executive was requested to agree the Local Development Scheme. The report had already been considered and supported by Development Control Committee on 24th March 2015.

RESOLVED that the recommendations be supported.

150 UPDATES FROM PDS CHAIRMEN

Report CSD15058

The Chairman announced that he had asked PDS chairman to produce a much shorter update of key points in future of about half a page only. It was agreed that this should be higher on the agenda and included with matters arising in future.

151 WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

Report CSD15059

The Committee considered the first draft of its work programme for 2015/16. This was based on regular reports and Members considered which issues they needed to prioritise for the coming year, as well as continuing to hold the Executive to account and scrutinise executive decisions. A Member suggested looking at the Council's IT systems, channel-shift and refreshing the Building a Better Bromley strategy; other Members commented that looking at housing benefit would be more helpful to Bromley residents and that the Committee should work with the Executive to establish the priority areas where it could contribute most effectively. The Chairman stated that it was important for Members to be more involved in procurement, and proposed looking at the Council's key contract terms and also at the use of consultants.

Scrutiny sessions with the Leader, Resources Portfolio Holder and Chief Executive would be arranged for the coming year.

The Chairman suggested that it should be possible to receive less frequent reports on the Bromley Youth Employment project now that it was well under way.

**152 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**

153 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12TH MARCH 2015

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 12th March 2015 were confirmed.

154 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXEMPT RESOURCES PORTFOLIO HOLDER REPORTS

The Committee scrutinised the following proposed decision by the Resources Portfolio Holder.

154.1 Norman Park Lodge, Hook Farm Road, Bromley

The Committee considered three options for the future of Norman Park Lodge and made a recommendation to the Resources Portfolio Holder.

155 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXEMPT EXECUTIVE REPORTS

The Committee scrutinised a report on the management contract for the Churchill Theatre.

The Meeting ended at 8.30pm

Chairman