

RENEWAL AND RECREATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 26 January 2017

Present:

Councillor Michael Rutherford (Chairman)
Councillor Julian Benington (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Vanessa Allen, Douglas Auld, David Jefferys,
Alexa Michael, Michael Tickner and Stephen Wells

Andrew Wolckenhaar, Bromley Youth Council

Also Present:

Councillor Will Harmer and Councillor William Huntington-Thresher

41 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Peter Morgan and Councillor Peter Dean.

42 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The standard declarations of Members were noted as previously reported at the R&R PDS meeting held on 5 July 2016.

Councillor Rutherford declared a personal interest in Item 9 as a Member of the Bromley Bid Advisory Board. He also declared an interest in Item 13 as he was an England Athletics athlete.

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

43a QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAIRMAN OF RENEWAL AND RECREATION PDS COMMITTEE

No questions were received.

43b QUESTIONS FOR THE RENEWAL AND RECREATION PORTFOLIO HOLDER

No questions were received.

**45 MINUTES OF THE RENEWAL AND RECREATION PDS
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2016**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2016 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

46 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND UPDATES

The Assistant Director, Leisure and Culture reported that work in regard to the recovery of consultancy costs from London Biggin Hill Airport was still on-going.

Information on Planning enforcement and planning regulations for illuminated advertisement boards was tabled.

All actions for matters arising from previous meetings had been completed.

RESOLVED that the matters arising from previous meetings be noted.

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

47a CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - 2ND QUARTER 2016/17

Report FSD17014

On 30 November 2016, the Executive received the 2nd quarterly capital monitoring report for 2016/17 and agreed a revised Capital Programme for the four year period 2016/17 to 2019/20.

Members also considered changes agreed by the Executive in respect of the Capital Programme for the Renewal and Recreation Portfolio.

The Chairman was pleased to note the satisfactory budget position for the R&R Portfolio.

RESOLVED that the Leader of the Council be recommended to confirm the changes agreed by the Executive on 30 November 2016.

48 DRAFT 2017/18 BUDGET

Report FSD17013

This report outlined the Portfolio Holder's Draft 2017/18 Budget incorporating the full year effect of savings agreed as part of the 2016/17 Council Tax report and any further savings approved during the year which had resulted in considerable reductions in the Council's medium term 'budget gap'. Members were requested to consider the initial draft budget savings proposed and identify any further action that might be taken to reduce cost pressures facing the Council over the next four years.

The Executive had requested each PDS Committee to consider the proposed initial draft budget savings and cost pressures for their Portfolio and for comments to be submitted to the next meeting of the Executive.

Members noted there were still outstanding issues and areas of uncertainty. Any further updates would be included in the 2016/17 Council Tax report to the next meeting of the Executive.

Referring to paragraph 3.26 (page 30), the Assistant Director, Leisure and Culture, reported the New Homes Bonus Top Slice monies had been removed as it was part of a two year funding stream which had now come to an end. The Chief Planner confirmed the monies from this had been given to local enterprise partnerships.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the update on the financial forecast for 2017/18 to 2020/21 be noted;**
- (2) the initial draft 2017/18 Budget be used as a basis for setting the 2017/18 Budget;**
- (3) Member comments on the proposed initial draft budget savings and costs pressures for the Renewal and Recreation Portfolio be reported to the February meeting of the Executive.**

49 CONTRACTS REGISTER UPDATE 2016/17

Report DRR17/003

Consideration was given to the current status of all contracts for the Renewal and Recreation Portfolio with a whole life value greater than £50k.

With regard to the delivery of the New Homes Bonus and High Street Fund Enterprise Support Programme in Orpington, it was reported that this contract had been extended to October 2017 and a reduction of £20k in the overall value of the contract had been agreed. This £20k would be invested around the Masterplan for Orpington. As this was generally a re-phasing of a contract, the RAG status should not be seen as red.

The Chairman sought further information concerning the new Town Centre Development Advice contract with Montagu Evans (paragraph 3.4, page 41). He stated that whilst Montagu Evans carried out excellent work for the Council, they also worked with developers on appeals against the Authority and asked what was done to prevent them from using information obtained from the Council to assist private developers. The Assistant Director, Leisure and Culture reported it was the general presumption that contractors would operate in the Council's best interest at all times and bring any potential conflict to officers' attention. The Chairman referred to this presumption as a

'Chinese Wall' and suggested that this be applied to all future contracts not just with Montagu Evans.

Tenders for the library service were due back by 15 February 2017 following which, a special meeting of the R&R PDS Committee would be convened to scrutinise responses. It was anticipated that the new contract would begin in September 2017.

RESOLVED that the contract summary for Renewal and Recreation be noted.

50 UPDATE ON BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (BIDS) IN THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

Report DRR17/004

Members considered an update on the operation and success of the two existing Business Improvements Districts (BIDs) in the London Borough of Bromley together with a summary of progress to date on the development of further BIDs in the borough.

The Chairman welcomed Sharon Baldwin (BID Manager, Orpington) and Frances Forrest (BID Manager, Bromley) to the meeting.

Ms Baldwin informed the Committee that a Business Event would take place on 16 February 2017 to which all Members were invited. The BID worked hard to ensure Orpington was recognised as a major town centre and emphasised the need to market the town to residents and businesses. The retail industry was a fast-moving environment and flexibility was needed around what could be offered to the business community.

The Orpington BID was currently in its fifth and final year and a renewal ballot would be initiated in the autumn, culminating in a ballot completing on 2 November 2017.

A regular magazine was published and circulated to 15,000 people and a second magazine was being established for businesses. The BID website had approximately 5,000 subscribers and accumulated around 20,000 'hits'. There was some involvement with developers and the BID had written newsletters for their tenants. They had also signed up with the Local Data Company to monitor vacancy rates (which had decreased in the last three years) and installed footfall cameras in the area which showed figures had increased.

Following discussions with the Borough Commander the BID obtained a voluntary agreement to maintain a town centre police force of eight officers with whom they had a good working relationship.

Work had been undertaken on access, parking, free parking and the provision of loading bays, the main focus being supply to fee-paying businesses. The BID was, however, conscious that a stronger strategy was required.

All 350 members of the BID were treated equally.

Ms Forrest reported on the success of the erection of a big screen in Bromley Town Centre during Wimbledon fortnight. Other successful projects included a food festival involving the production of a booklet setting out names and addresses of Bromley restaurants and holding 'taster' menus for the public; the erection of Christmas lights and managing the Christmas parade. A closed website had been created for Bromley businesses to share confidential information about persistent offenders (shop lifting, anti-social behaviour etc) and meetings had taken place with licensees which focussed mainly on safety issues and awareness.

Although a cleaning regime had been undertaken recently, there was a pressing need for the removal of chewing gum from the town centre.

There had been a small increase in footfall to Bromley, however Members should bear in mind that the Bromley BID had not been operating as long as the Orpington BID.

In response to questions from Councillor Tickner, Ms Baldwin reported the recently erected cameras in Orpington only counted footfall and were not used for any other purpose. In regard to safety, the BID worked with the Council's CCTV contractor and took part in regular police briefings which focussed on preventative measures. Alleyways were always a major cause for concern. A legal high shop which also caused concern had now been closed.

There were on-going issues in relation to parking and the BID worked towards acquiring space when it was needed. There were many parking spaces available in Orpington and the Walnuts car park (574 spaces) was never full. More advertising was needed to make people aware of these parking facilities.

In response to Councillor Tickner's concern about the continued increase in restaurants and coffee shops, Ms Baldwin considered the hospitality business was growing so there was a tendency to provide what people wanted.

The Nugent Retail Park in neighbouring St Mary Cray was not seen as competition to Orpington Town Centre and was embraced by the BID Team.

Ms Forrest reported the Bromley BID would apply for Purple Flag status which, if successful, would designate Bromley Town Centre as a diverse and safe place to be at night. Emphasis was placed on public safety when coming into and leaving Bromley.

The Orpington BID had assisted in getting work experience people into business although this was quite a task to undertake. They had also assisted

with apprenticeships and helped mothers return to work. They had worked closely with the catering college, who helped at the food festival in October and would assist in the opening of a wine bar in March. They were currently attempting to set up a scheme whereby if employees do not turn up to work, that business would be able to use a stand-in from the college.

Ms Baldwin agreed to send Members figures relating to the increased Orpington footfall.

A fee of approximately £20k per annum was paid as contribution towards the cost of the eight-strong town centre police team.

Councillor Michael was pleased to note the provision of public toilet facilities in Orpington and emphasised the need for the same to be provided in Bromley. Ms Forrest acknowledged the need for such facilities. Ms Forrest reported that work was currently being undertaken to provide an easy to read map informing the public where to find essentials in the town centre such as toilets and defibrillators etc.

It was reported that graffiti was gradually increasing and should be tackled. Graffiti on bus stops would be reported to TfL who would then deal with the clean-up. Ms Forrest highlighted the importance of generating income to tackle cleaning issues which were beyond the remit of the Council's cleaning regime.

It was acknowledged that neighbouring BIDs needed to co-operate and work with each other to achieve successful BIDs in town centres.

One in three levy payers turned up to vote for the BID in Bromley. Ms Forrest believed the reason for this was because people did not think it would actually happen however, she expected to see an increase in votes in future years. She reported that it was normal for turn-out to be lower on first ballot – but for the level of engagement to be higher for renewals.

The Chairman thanked Ms Baldwin and Ms Forrest for attending the meeting and wished Ms Baldwin the best of luck with the Orpington re-ballot at the end of the year.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**51 PROPOSED PUBLIC REALM PROJECT AND MARKET
REORGANISATION FOR BROMLEY HIGH STREET**

This Item was withdrawn from the agenda.

52 BROMLEY NORTH VILLAGE FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Report DRR17/008

As set out in the Bromley Town Centre Area Action Plan, Public Realm improvements to Bromley North Village had been a key part of the improvement programme for Bromley Town Centre.

This report outlined the results of a two year post-scheme evaluation which focussed on assessing the impact of the improvements on businesses and town users, particularly bus users.

The Chairman welcomed this good news report.

The Project Planning Officer reported the repositioning of the Market Square bus stop had been widely accepted by the public and had not impacted on the town centre. There had been an increase in footfall since the stop was moved and there was no clear support to move the bus stop back to its original position. Repositioning of the bus stop would impact on all the other stops in the vicinity.

The Head of Renewal reported that comparisons were being made with other town centres in relation to providing car parking spaces. Options to expand car parks by adding additional floors was also being looked into. The outcomes from widening the A21 and the repairs to junctions would be reported back to Members.

Members were informed that as a result of the works, business owners in Bromley North now felt part of Bromley Town Centre and the increase in footfall showed that integration was actually occurring.

RESOLVED that the results of the evaluation report and the outcomes of the delivered public realm improvements to Bromley North Village be noted.

53 TOWN CENTRES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

Report DRR17/007

Members considered the progress achieved in delivering the Town Centres Development and Growth Programme.

In regard to the removal of BT telephone boxes from Penge Town Centre, the Head of Renewal reported that negotiations had taken place with BT for the removal of three boxes at a cost of £6k.

Councillor Michael considered the proposal to install six directional signs around Penge to be a little excessive and suggested three would be sufficient. The Head of Renewal informed Members that the proposal was based on a London-wide initiative which had proved successful elsewhere.

Six signs was considered to be the optimum needed to create an identity for Penge.

A Listed Building Consent application for the Shortlands War Memorial would be submitted in 7-10 days' time. The timetable for all works remained unchanged.

Councillor Wells commended all officers involved in the two day promotional consultation event held on 20th and 21st January 2017 with regard to the Beckenham Town Centre Public Realm Improvements. The event was well attended and hugely successful.

RESOLVED the progress achieved on the delivery of the Town Centres Development and Growth Programme be noted.

54 NORMAN PARK ATHLETICS TRACK - FUTURE PROPOSALS

Report DRR17/106

Members considered a proposed option by Blackheath and Bromley Harriers Athletic Club (BBHAC) to take over the management and operation of the Norman Park Athletics Track from the Council based on a 125 year full repairing and insuring lease at a peppercorn rent based on the draft Heads of Terms (attached to the report as Appendix B).

Councillor Auld noted the eventual saving of £37k per annum to the Council, should the proposals be approved by the Executive and the subsequent planning applications be successful.

Members strongly supported the proposals set out in the report.

RESOLVED that Members' comments on the proposals submitted by Blackheath and Bromley Harriers Athletic Club be presented to the meeting of the Executive to be held on 8 February 2017.

55 PLANNING APPEALS - COSTS 2015/2016

Report DRR17/012

This report provided an update on the award of costs from planning appeals made in the financial year 2015/16 together with an update on cost claims paid in 2015/16 arising from planning appeals made in previous years totalling £65.8k.

The Chief Planner reported that only 28 applications for appeal costs were submitted during the last year equating to just 1% of the 3,200 decisions made. In the majority of cases the Council lost appeals due to the lack of evidence provided.

Councillor Auld was pleased to see a decrease in the costs paid by the Council (from £90.3k in 2013/14 to £64/65k in the following years). The Chief Planner reported that the Council was due to make an award of £60k as a result of the Conquest House appeal.

Councillor Michael was disappointed to note that lack of evidence and inadequate reasons was the main cause of lost appeals. She emphasised the need for Chairmen of Planning Committees and officers to ensure refusal reasons were given in full at the time of refusing applications.

The Chief Planner confirmed that an Inspector's decision would consider the reasons for refusal in relation to planning policy and material planning considerations together with the related evidence provided by the Council including the harm caused by the proposal. A decision would not simply be based on the fact that an application had been recommended for approval when it was refused at Committee. If Members were unsure of appropriate refusal grounds or needed further information around impact etc, they were reminded that an application could be deferred to gather further evidence. It was agreed that if an application was proposed to be refused, the Chairman should seek reasons for that refusal before the decision was made.

Concern was raised about Planning Committee minutes which did not contain a full record of discussion at Committee.

It was reported that developers employ numerous professionals to strengthen their appeal. The Authority typically employed suitable Counsel for larger planning appeals.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

56 PLANNING APPEALS MONITORING REPORT (APRIL 2015 TO MARCH 2016)

Report DRR17/011

Members considered an update on planning appeals received and decided for the year 2015/16.

It was noted that the Council performed close to the national average and fared well in regard to fast track and written representations at appeal. The Chief Planner acknowledged that the Council must be well represented on all counts.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

57 BECKENHAM TOWN CENTRE WORKING GROUP - TERMS OF REFERENCE

Report CSD17014

Members were requested to consider the Beckenham Town Centre Working Group's revised Terms of Reference. Also, as requested by the Chairman of the BTCWG, a copy of the draft Minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2017 was submitted for Member comments.

Councillor Tickner wanted to progress with siting the Purple Flag at Beckenham Junction Train Station and was currently seeking approval for this.

Councillor Tickner also referred to the idea of a design competition for the Beckenham Green canopy which he, Councillor Collins and Councillor Dunn supported. The Head of Renewal confirmed there was no current contract for the erection of a canopy and that he would explore options and discuss a proposed design with the Town Team. Councillor Wells suspected many young architects would be interested in such a competition but stated the winning design would need to provide adequate shelter.

RESOLVED that:-

- 1) the BTCWG's revised Terms of Reference be agreed; and**
- 2) the draft Minutes of the BTCWG meeting held on 12 January 2017, be noted; and**
- 3) the proposed competition for a canopy design be approved.**

58 RENEWAL AND RECREATION PDS COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME (APRIL 2017)

Report CSD17023

Members reviewed the Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee Work Programme for the final meeting of the Municipal Year in April 2017.

It was agreed that a special meeting of the Committee be held on 7 March 2017 to consider a report on the Proposed Public Realm Project and Market Reorganisation for Bromley High Street. Following this meeting, the Public Realm report would be submitted to the Executive and Resources PDS Committee meeting on 15 March, followed by the Executive on 22 March 2017.

The Assistant Director, Leisure and Culture apologised for the delay in the production of this report (which was withdrawn from this evening's meeting). Essential detailed costs and programming information was not yet available and should be included for consideration.

A special meeting of the Committee would also be scheduled to consider the latest round of tendering for community-run libraries.

Further information around the Biggin Hill Airport Plan was expected in the next few weeks. A discussion with the Leader would take place in regard to conditions on noise, disturbance etc. This would not require consideration by the PDS Committee.

A Masterplan by the Aviation College in relation to funding was currently being progressed and would be available later in the year.

RESOLVED that the Renewal and Recreation PDS Work Programme be noted.

59 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 listed below as it was 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.

60 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE RENEWAL AND RECREATION PDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2016

RESOLVED that the Exempt minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2016 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

61 SITE G: SELECTION OF A PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT PARTNER

Report DRR17/009

Members were updated on the current position in regard to the selection of a preferred development partner for the site known as Opportunity Site G in the Bromley Town Centre Area Action Plan.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and Member comments be submitted to the Executive for consideration.

The meeting ended at 9.10 pm

Chairman

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