

RENEWAL AND RECREATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 27 March 2018

Present:

Councillor Michael Rutherford (Chairman)
Councillor Julian Benington (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Vanessa Allen, Nicholas Bennett J.P.,
Robert Evans, Alexa Michael, Sarah Phillips, Teresa Te
and Michael Tickner

Also Present:

Councillor Hannah Gray and Councillor Peter Morgan

56 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Douglas Auld;
Councillor Robert Evans attended as substitute.

57 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Agenda Item 8 – West Wickham Leisure Centre and Library Redevelopment:
Councillor Bennett declared a non-pecuniary interest as he was a member of
the Mytime Board.

Agenda Item 10 – Norman Park Athletics Track: Councillor Michael Rutherford
declared a non-pecuniary interest as he was an Athletics England athlete.

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

No questions were received.

59 MINUTES OF THE RENEWAL AND RECREATION PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 24 JANUARY 2018

It was noted that Councillor Michael Tickner had sent an apology for the
meeting and Councillor Alan Collins attended as substitute.

**RESOLVED that subject to the above amendment, the Minutes of the
meeting held on 24 January 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct
record.**

60 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND UPDATES

Referring to Item 51 of the previous Minutes – Private Sector Tall Buildings Update - Councillor Bennett reported he had not been provided with the update requested in regard to progress made in contacting the owners of two buildings re. cladding and safety.

The Chief Planner confirmed an update was circulated to the Chairman and Vice Chairman. Since that time, a further risk with one of the buildings had been identified and interim measures put in place. Officers were waiting for an updated report from the persons responsible in regard to a permanent solution. The Portfolio Holder stated the building in question had no sprinkler system but did have fire escapes and two people were employed to monitor the building at all times. The building consisted of 9 or 10 floors of residential units. The person responsible for the building was taking serious measures to find a permanent solution as soon as possible.

The Chief Planner confirmed the Council was not responsible for the building as it was a privately owned property.

Bob Neil MP had been informed of the situation and an update would be submitted to the next meeting of the PDS Committee.

RESOLVED that the matters arising from previous meetings be noted.

61 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF RENEWAL AND RECREATION PORTFOLIO REPORTS

61a BUDGET MONITORING 2017/18

Report FSD18033

An update was provided on the latest budget monitoring position for 2017/18 for the Renewal and Recreation Portfolio based on expenditure and activity levels up to 31 December 2017. This showed a projected underspend of £272k for the total portfolio budget.

Councillor Tickner referred to TfL's withdrawal of road maintenance funds and asked what impact this would have on town centre improvements. The Head of Renewal reported that Highways officers were currently in discussions with TfL for £250k to be put back as it had already been allocated to the Beckenham scheme. However, there was an existing contingency which had so far not been drawn down. An update on the outcome of the discussions with TfL would be reported back to the Committee.

Councillor Bennett moved that in-house legal advice be sought on this matter and an update reported to Members within the next two weeks. The motion was seconded by Councillor Michael. A further update would be reported at the next PDS meeting.

RESOLVED that:-

- 1) **the Portfolio Holder be recommended to endorse the latest 2017/18 budget projection for the Renewal and Recreation Portfolio; and**
- 2) **in-house legal advice be sought on the withdrawal of funds by TfL and for Members to be updated within the next two weeks.**

61b CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - 3RD QUARTER 2017/18 AND CAPITAL STRATEGY 2018 TO 2022

Report FSD18028

On 7 February 2018, the Executive received a report summarising the current position on capital expenditure and receipts following the 3rd quarter of 2017/18 and presenting for approval the new capital schemes in the annual review process.

Members of this Committee considered changes agreed by the Executive in respect of the Capital Programme for the Renewal and Recreation Portfolio for the five year period 2017/18 to 2021/22.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to confirm the changes agreed by the Executive on 7 February 2018.

62 ASSET RECOVERY INCENTIVISATION SCHEME (ARIS)

Report ES18017

This report provided details of a Proceeds of Crime Investigation which had resulted in an award of monies to the local authority and Members were requested to consider the release of those funds.

The Chief Planner reported that the property involved in the investigation was in Maple Road, Penge.

The Director of Regeneration was unable to give any details on what happened to the tenants who occupied the building as all work had been carried out by Environmental Services. Having discussed this with the Leader and the Chief Executive, he was hopeful that an Environment officer would attend the Executive meeting on 28 March when this report would again be considered. He agreed to raise the issue with the Executive Director of Environment and Community Services or arrange for an update to be circulated to Members. The Chairman sought assurances that the Council (in particular, the Housing Team), was engaged with those who were displaced by the closure of the illegal property.

Councillor Michael advised that the report had already been considered by the Public Protection and Safety PDS Committee and as a result, a further report

regarding the duties of landlords to their tenants would be submitted at a future meeting.

Councillor Bennett requested further legislative details be available at the meeting of the Executive together with an update on what happened with the landlord.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and Members' comments be provided to the Executive for consideration.

63 WEST WICKHAM LEISURE CENTRE AND LIBRARY REDEVELOPMENT

Report DRR 08/081

Members considered an opportunity to redevelop the West Wickham Leisure Centre and Library sites, which would generate funding for new replacement leisure and library facilities on the existing Leisure site by the inclusion of a residential development.

The Manager, Strategy Property, outlined the report and advised that the next stage, following consideration of the report by the Executive, was to look at the procurement exercise to be undertaken and the design scheme to be submitted for public consultation.

Councillor Bennett reported that he and his fellow Ward Members were delighted with this proposal and no objections had been put forward by the West Wickham Residents' Association. He suggested attempts be made for the shopping parade improvements to be implemented at the same time as this scheme.

The Director of Regeneration confirmed the current library would remain in operation until the new build was completed. Following a number of meetings with Mytime, the Director advised Members that Mytime were exploring options for a temporary swimming pool in the event that West Wickham would be closed for redevelopment. Discussions were taking place with MyTime for leaflets to be produced informing staff and members of the public about the scheme and what would happen moving forward.

Referring to the residential element of the scheme, Councillor Allen wanted to see a commitment by the developer to affordable housing. It was reported that a viability assessment would need to be undertaken in this regard.

Concern was raised about the lack of fitness facilities whilst development was taking place. Members were advised that communications to the public would be issued as and when necessary and alternative operators would be sought.

It was suggested the public be informed that whilst the size of the current pool at West Wickham did not meet the accepted international standard, the redeveloped pool would.

As with the joint library and pool at Biggin Hill, GLL had a 10 year contract and would have a duty to operate the library at West Wickham and an operator for the new leisure facility would be identified.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and Members' comments be provided to the Executive for consideration.

64 LIBRARY CONTRACT - PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Report DRR18/008

This report updated Members on the performance of the Library Service Contract following the award of contract to Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL) on 1 November 2017.

Mr Steve Hannen, GLL's Head of Service, attended the meeting and delivered an update on the outcome of the transition of the Library Service to GLL. The transfer had proceeded well since its commencement and a solid relationship and understanding of the client base had been established.

Several customers complained about not receiving 'returns reminder' e-mails during works undertaken to improve the main computer systems. As a result, overdue fees for that time period were waived. All computer systems were now fully restored and operating efficiently.

As a Library user, Councillor Michael noticed no change in the service provided and no comments had been received from residents in her Ward.

Mr Hannen informed Members that whilst GLL would welcome an increase in opening hours, at present the service was operated on a like-for-like basis.

A total of 134 TUPE staff transferred from the Council to GLL, all of whom had coped remarkably well. They showed a willingness to learn and embraced all challenges brought about by the service transition.

It was the responsibility of the Principal Client, Libraries, to collect monthly reports on KPIs and to ensure that these were met. Financial penalties would be payable in the event they were not. A review of the service would be submitted to the Committee on a bi-annual basis.

Mr Hannen reported no issues with Biggin Hill Library but agreed to report back on a problem reported by Councillor Bennington in regard to the RFID machines not operating properly.

Changes to the Central Library entrance were welcomed by Members. It was reported that discussions were taking place on further improvements to the Theatre entrance and the library.

Looking forward, Mr Hannen informed Members that the programme of refurbishment had been undertaken and repair work and maintenance completed. Further improvement options would be discussed and carried out where appropriate.

Members agreed a further report on progress, together with fact-based KPIs should be submitted on a bi-annual basis.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

65 NORMAN PARK ATHLETICS TRACK - UPDATE REPORT

Report DRR18/007

Members were provided with an update on proposals presented by Blackheath and Bromley Harriers Athletic Club (BBHAC) for them to take over the management and operation of the Norman Park Athletics Track from the Council based on a 125 year full maintenance, repair and insurance lease.

The report also sought approval for the allocation of £300k from Section 106 contributions received by way of the Kent County Cricket Club development, to undertake the landlord improvement works required at the athletics track.

A planning application for works to the athletics track would be submitted by 6 April 2018. All monies payable would come from Blackheath Harriers with no cost to the tax payer. Sport England raised no objections to the scheme. It was confirmed that the £2m funding for the scheme would come from land owned by Blackheath Harriers which had been sold.

Members were supportive of the scheme.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and Members' comments be provided to the Executive for consideration.

66 TOWN CENTRES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

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

Councillor Hannah Gray gave a presentation in regard to the provision of Full Fibre broadband. Whilst businesses in Darwin and Cray Valley Wards benefitted from ultra-fast connectivity, the remainder of the Borough was sadly lacking. The industry standard of at least 300mbs should be achieved.

An application to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport would be submitted for the provision of funding to boost broadband connectivity in the Borough.

Some years ago, Bromley had invested in trunking which was not used to its full capacity. Should the bid for funding be successful, an extension of the

existing trunking would provide the Borough with greater and faster connectivity between a network of public buildings across the borough, including GP surgeries and the capacity to provide gigabit broadband services for many local businesses and residents.

Councillor Te suggested the option of using Hyper Optic, a company capable of providing broadband speeds of 1 gigabyte.

Members agreed it was vitally important to provide the Borough with a good connectivity service and doing so would be a legitimate use of resources.

Councillor Bennington reported connectivity had improved in Downe since the introduction of fibre optic to the area.

It was suggested that experts be employed to establish the true nature of connectivity in the Borough.

A further report on this subject would be submitted to a future meeting of the PDS Committee.

Councillor Tickner reported complaints had been received about the laying of tiles and bricks at the Beckenham Green works. He also advised that two-directional traffic would soon be reintroduced between Bromley Road and Thornton's Corner on completion of the work being undertaken. The Head of Renewal agreed to look into any issues raised and report back to Members.

Work on the Orpington Regeneration Strategy was commissioned in conjunction with the Orpington BID. A report on the recommendations for a strategic approach for Orpington would be presented to future meetings of the PDS and Executive Committees.

Councillor Bennett proposed that a working group be set up by the Committee in the new Council year to drive improvement in West Wickham and to consider proposals for a Business Improvement District. The Director of Regeneration confirmed that proposals for a West Wickham BID would be considered following the establishment of the Beckenham and Penge BID. The work of the previous Town Centre Management officer had been redistributed between remaining officers as, due to financial issues, the vacancy could not be filled at the present time.

A review of the concept design for the Beckenham Green canopy was ongoing and would be reported to Members at the next meeting.

The Victoria Cross commemorative ceremony for Private Herbert George Columbine, VC, MGC was held at Penge War Memorial on 22 March and was a well-attended and emotional event.

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

67 TOWN PLANNING PRE APPLICATION ADVICE - FEES AND SERVICE

Report DRR00000

This report suggested changes to the pre-application advice service and changes to the fee structure in order to improve the flexibility of the service and encourage its use in accordance with government policy in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Councillor Tickner was opposed to charging for the service and considered the Council should remain impartial. The Chief Planner advised that whilst the National Planning Framework encouraged advice to be given, the current levels of charging discouraged some people from using the service.

Councillor Michael maintained that officers were experts in their field and were, therefore, in a position to give good practical advice.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to agree the proposed changes and updated fee structure for the planning pre-application advice service.

68 NATIONAL INCREASE IN PLANNING APPLICATION FEES

Report DRR0000

The increase in nationally set planning application fees was expected to generate an additional income of £30k in 2017/18 and £240k per annum from 2018/19.

Member agreement was therefore sought for the drawdown of the additional income from Central Contingency to spend on improving planning services as set out in the report.

The Chief Planner referred to national policy which stated that the first revision of a previously refused application for development of the same character or description, on the same site and by the same applicant would be exempt from charge provided it was submitted within 12 months following refusal of the original application.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and Members' comments be provided to the Executive for consideration.

69 RENEWAL AND RECREATION PDS COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME (JUNE 2018-MARCH 2019)

Report CSD18062

The Committee's work programme for the period June 2018-March 2019 was considered.

The following reports were requested:-

- Broadband connectivity update – new municipal year
- Review of Libraries and GLL – September 2018
- Member visit to Crystal Palace Park to be arranged for Summer 2018
- Review of Portfolio Plan – June 2018 (four year plan to be submitted annually)

RESOLVED that, subject to the additions and amendments outlined above, the Renewal and Recreation PDS work programme for the period June 2018-March 2019 be noted.

70 CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

Members considered the Chairman's annual Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee report for the year 2017/18. This was previously provided to the Executive and Resources PDS Committee on 21 March 2018 and would subsequently be considered at a meeting of Full Council on 9 April 2018.

Members agreed this was a good summary of the Committee's activity.

RESOLVED that the Chairman's Annual Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee report for the year 2017/18 be approved.

As this was the final meeting of the Municipal Year, the Chairman thanked Members and officers for their continued support throughout the year.

71 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.

**PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF RENEWAL AND RECREATION
PORTFOLIO PART 2 (EXEMPT) REPORTS**

72 VARIATION TO WORKS CONTRACT

Report DRR18/013

Approval was sought for the variation of a works contract to undertake work outlined in the report.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to approve the variation of the works contract as outlined in the report.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS - PART 2 (EXEMPT)

73 INVESTMENT OF ENDOWMENT FUND

Report DRR18/012

Members considered and commented on the report as requested.

RESOLVED that Members' comments be provided to the Executive for consideration.

74 OPPORTUNITY SITE G DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT UPDATE

Report DRR18/1016

Members considered confidential information on the Opportunity Site G Development Agreement in relation to pre-condition approval.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and Members' comments provided to the Executive for consideration.

The meeting ended at 9.05 pm.

Chairman