

RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 18 September 2018

Present:

Councillor Michael Rutherford (Chairman)
Councillor Suraj Sharma (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Yvonne Bear, Julian Benington, Josh King,
Angela Page and Gary Stevens

Sheldon Allen, Bromley Youth Council

Also Present:

Councillors Hannah Gray, William Huntington-Thresher
and Peter Morgan

25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Aisha Cuthbert and Dave Wibberley.

26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Benington's standard declaration for the Municipal year as a Trustee of the Biggin Hill Memorial Museum was noted.

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

27a QUESTIONS FOR THE RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO HOLDER

No questions were received.

27b QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAIRMAN OF RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PDS COMMITTEE

No questions were received.

28 MINUTES OF THE RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 26 JUNE 2018

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

29 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND UPDATES

Visiting Member Councillor Hannah Gray gave an update in regard to the provision of Full Fibre broadband.

The first stage of the project involved an examination of the Council owned CCTV trunking network to establish its suitability for carrying full fibre commercial cables and to ascertain its commercial value. The Council had appointed a Consultant, Regional Network Solutions who were looking at existing provision and the potential of the Council owned network from a commercial perspective and whether such an approach could provide full fibre broadband to the majority of Bromley residents and Businesses.

The Director of Regeneration stated that, if timed correctly, the Council could gain a commercial advantage from the emerging market of start-up companies who were looking to expand into the Bromley area. Virgin and BT were looking to upgrade their provision so the Council needed to consider this in addition to the opportunities offered by its own infrastructure.

A further detailed report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee on completion of the consultancy work.

Minute 12 – 26.06.18 – Renewal, Recreation and Housing Portfolio Plan

The information requested in regard to economic development relating to footfall in town centres was e-mailed to Members on 11 September 2018.

All actions for matters arising from previous meetings were therefore completed.

RESOLVED to note that all actions arising from previous meetings had been completed.

30 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO REPORTS

30a CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - 1ST QUARTER 2018/19

Report FSD18072

On 11 July 2018, the Executive received the 1st quarterly capital monitoring report for 2018/19 and agreed a revised Capital Programme for the four year period 2018/19 to 2021/22.

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

Councillor Sharma requested to see a breakdown of the Consultancy Fee Bid for the West Wickham leisure/library development. The Director of Regeneration

informed Members that a report would be considered by the Commissioning Board on 24 September which would then allow for the appointment of the multi-disciplinary consultancy team. The PDS Committee would be in a position to scrutinise the project prior to the submission of the planning application before a final decision was taken by Executive Members.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to confirm the changes agreed by the Executive on 11 July 2018.

31 RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO PLAN

Report DRR18/051

Members considered a report which summarised the aims and objectives of the Renewal, Recreation and Housing portfolio for 2018/19. The report also provided an update on progress at the end of the 1st quarter.

The Director of Housing reported that the definition of affordable housing comprised two elements, namely:-

- Intermediate eg: shared ownership, London Living Rent; and
- London affordable rent – rent which was subsidised for people on lower incomes.

The department worked with a range of partners and were currently exploring joint ventures and acquiring sites for development. The York Rise modular site was undergoing a tender evaluation assessment and it was anticipated that approximately 35 units could be provided. The Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing confirmed several other plots of land were being assessed with joint partners. Various means of acquiring sites were being considered including compulsory purchase orders or buying privately.

A further report would be submitted to the PDS meeting in March 2019.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and Members' comments be provided to the Portfolio Holder.

32 REFERENCE FROM EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS PDS COMMITTEE: BROMLEY PRIVATE SECTOR LEASING SCHEME AND COUNCIL OWNED TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION MANAGEMENT SERVICES - CONTRACT EXTENSION

Report CSD18142

This report was previously scrutinised by the Executive, Resources and Contracts PDS Committee on 5th September 2018. At that meeting, Members recommended

the Executive delay its decision to allow for scrutiny by the Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee on 18th September.

In this regard, Members of the RR&H PDS Committee considered Bromley's formal contract for the procurement and management of private sector leased properties and the management of Council owned temporary accommodation (TA) which formed an important part of the Council's temporary accommodation portfolio.

As the contract was due to expire on 31 March 2019, permission was sought for a two year extension, as provided for within the contract itself.

The Executive Director, ECHS provided an overview of the key aspects to be considered by the RR&H PDS Committee, namely:-

- Homelessness Strategy updates;
- Housing Strategy updates including contractual commissioning issues, renewal and KPIs;
- updates on the implementation of new housing; and
- interaction with libraries concerning children in care, care leavers, disabled children and their families and older people.

He requested permission to give a presentation at a future meeting to highlight the work undertaken in regard to housing and to take Members through the Departmental and Portfolio Plan. The Chairman agreed to the request.

The Director of Housing advised Members that Bromley's Housing Strategy was currently in the process of being developed. It was anticipated to be completed by the end of the year.

Referring to recommendation 2.3 on page 67 of the report, it was reported that Orchard and Shipman were contracted to find private landlords and to lease and manage properties on behalf of the Council. Rent was paid by the Council to landlords via Orchard and Shipman. The £1m paid to Orchard and Shipman for the management service was considered to be a very competitive fee.

Mears property purchased scheme now had 365 properties in the pipeline of which 143 were completed and let. By the end of the financial year, approximately 400 units should be available. At the present time, officers were assessing the viability of providing a further 300 units. If this was deemed viable, a report would be submitted for scrutiny by the RR&H PDS Committee.

Of the total number of people currently living in TA, 79% were family groups (primarily single parents aged 20-45 with children). The remaining 21% were single people.

At a time when demand for TA had increased, Members were concerned with the decrease in available property. They were informed that due to the high risks involved with the introduction of benefit capping, housing associations had withdrawn properties and moved on to private renting. The reasons for the increase in demand were attributed to relationship breakdowns, eviction by family and friends or the inability to rent privately.

The Executive Director, ECHS, emphasised the urgent need to increase the supply of TA. Until this was achieved, the Council would be unable to meet its targets.

The Chairman expressed his dissatisfaction that the report had not been scrutinised by the PDS Committee prior to a decision being made. He advised that the decision taken by the Executive was subject to call-in by Members. The Executive Director, ECHS, confirmed that future reports would be scheduled on the Forward Plan to meet the timetable for RR&H PDS meetings.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

33 PROVISION OF LIBRARY SERVICES - CONTRACT PERFORMANCE REPORT

Report DRR18/043

Members considered an update on the Provision of Library Services contract with Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL) over the first six months of operation. The value of the contract over a ten year period was £40,739,536.

The report also provided Members with a review of the performance of the Contractor since the commencement of the contract on 1 November 2017.

The Council's Principal Client Officer reported that the transfer of the Library Service ten months ago had proceeded well. Whilst shadow monitoring had taken place during the first six months of the contract, full monitoring was now being undertaken. GLL had maintained standards and was delivering significant savings to the Council.

Mr Steve Hannen, GLL's Head of Service, attended the meeting. He was satisfied with progress to date and he was pleased to report that the specified Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were being met. Full library services and programmes were maintained during the recent industrial action and GLL continued to ensure residents were not impacted by this action. An increase in the uptake of library services was noted.

Initially there were some IT difficulties but these were resolved following a complete overhaul and upgrade to the system together with staff training. The majority of subsequent issues were caused by external influences ie. power surges and outages.

The requirements for the Stock Purchasing Plan were being met and Mr Hannen agreed to circulate further details and figures to Members.

Whilst there was a natural ebb and flow in regard to turnover of staff, essential vacancies were given priority.

KPIs were audited via the complaints system and officers visited libraries to check that they were operating properly. Statistical data was also gathered via GLL's management system.

As a result of the Customer Service Survey, GLL had taken the issue of toilet cleanliness very seriously. Spot checks were regularly undertaken and reported back to management. Proposals to provide toilet facilities at Bromley Central Library were being considered.

Members were pleased to note that the transfer of the Library Service had proceeded smoothly.

GLL's ideas for developing and improving services included:-

- refresh painting;
- new furniture;
- investment in children's libraries with the introduction of soft play areas;
- ICT improvements to enhance customer service i.e. self-service equipment and access to e-books;
- targeting non-library users; and
- the introduction of annual regional/national literature events.

In the longer term, GLL would welcome the opportunity to work with other departments within the Council, in particular education and public health sections.

GLL currently worked in partnership with Children's Services, Royal Borough of Greenwich, to provide activities within a library setting and operated an explorer programme specialising in child obesity.

Reading lists were provided for GP's to hand out to patients, giving them the option to visit the library to research their particular conditions.

The Director of Regeneration informed Members that the contract for shared use facilities at the Biggin Hill Library and Leisure Centre was the responsibility of Bromley Mytime; GLL sub-leased the library provision. In regard to the redevelopment of Chislehurst Library, GLL would operate the temporary library in the car park and take over full operation when development was complete. It was anticipated that a planning application for Chislehurst Library would be submitted on completion of the Legal Development Agreement.

The Learning Shop in St Paul's Cray was situated in close proximity to the Library and whilst some services were offered by both establishments, it did not cause any conflict. GLL were in a position to assist in reviewing the service.

Mr Hannen reported that GLL had a good understanding of the need for children with reading difficulties. The provision of more SEN sessions was under consideration to enhance learning through soft play activities and adventure learning programmes. By making game boxes available for use in libraries and hosting competitions followed by a homework club, this may encourage young people to attend.

A supplementary document detailing KPIs for the months of May, June and July was circulated to Members. The Chairman requested that similar information be included in future reports to the Committee.

RESOLVED that the report be noted, in particular, the performance of the service provider in the first six months of the contract.

34 BROMLEY TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM: CANOPIES AND SHOPS UPDATE

Report DRR18/053

Members considered the detailed designs and costing for the remaining elements of the Bromley Town Centre improvements scheme namely, the two commercial units/shops and mirrored canopies.

Approval was sought for an additional £1.615m to be allocated from the Growth Fund to the Bromley High Street Improvement capital scheme, thereby increasing the scheme's overall budget to £5.075m.

It was proposed in the report that approval of any minor amendments to the design of the commercial units/shops and mirrored canopies be delegated to the Director of Regeneration and the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing.

Authority was also sought to submit a planning application(s) for the commercial units/shops and the mirrored canopies.

A sample of the polished steel to be used for the mirrored canopies was circulated to Members. The Chairman raised concerns regarding the increased cost of the mirrored canopies. Members questioned the overall cost of the canopies and the cost plan supporting the estimated costings. The Head of Renewal explained the background to the design development of the canopies and how they represented an ambitious and transformational element of the whole improvement scheme and formed an integral part of the design. They were to be the centre piece of the street garden providing a focal point for the commercial units and raised planters, in addition to providing a multi-functional space for activities. It was acknowledged that the cost per square metre for the mirrored canopies was expensive. However, this reflected the bespoke nature of the mirrored canopies design and quality of the

selected materials. The cost plan had been prepared by the Council's TFM Term Contractor and was based on established industry methodology. It was acknowledged that construction costs could be driven down through a competitive tender process.

Whilst acknowledging the design concept would improve the high street, the Chairman could not recommend spending £1.2m on canopies. Members agreed with the Chairman and suggested this part of the design proposal be reconsidered. Members agreed to recommend the Portfolio Holder's suggestion that a maximum budget of £800k should be set for this element of the improvement scheme.

The Committee supported the implementation of the commercial units and recommended that a percentage of the rental income achieved above 8% should be allocated to support the maintenance and enhanced cleaning of the pedestrianised High Street.

In regard to recommendation 2.5 (page 119), a motion to exclude the planning application for the mirrored canopies fell by a vote of 2-3.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and comments be provided to Members of the Executive.

Taking the PDS Members' views into account, the recommendations for the Executive were as follows:-

- 2.2 Approve the detailed design and implementation costs for the two commercial units/shops.**
- 2.3 Approve the addition of £415k to the Bromley High Street Improvement capital scheme funded from the Growth Fund, thereby increasing the overall budget for the scheme to £3.875.**
- 2.4 Delegate to the Director of Regeneration and the Portfolio Holder for Renewal and Recreation approval of any minor amendments to the design of the commercial units/shops.**
- 2.5 Seek authority to submit a planning application(s) for the commercial units/shops and the mirrored canopies.**
- 2.6 Recommend to the Executive that any income above an 8% return from two retail units be ring-fenced for street maintenance and cleansing in Bromley Town Centre.**
- 2.7 Recommend that the detailed design and implementation costs of the two proposed canopies be capped at the original budget figure of £800,000.**

35 TOWN CENTRES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE REPORT

Report DRR18/052

Members were updated on progress achieved in delivering the Town Centres Development and Growth Programme.

In particular, attention was given to the New Homes Bonus allocation for which funding was set aside to produce a Framework Plan for Orpington town centre to inform decisions about future investment and development.

In regard to this, the Head of Renewal reported that discussions had taken place with Orpington 1st BID and Orpington College about the desire to take forward improvement works. The report at Appendix 1, outlined potential opportunities and work for the future.

Visiting Ward Member Councillor William Huntington-Thresher was concerned with the timescale for achieving objectives, considering the Bid Ballot was completed nine months previously. He emphasised the importance of any redevelopment of Orpington having the desired effect of attracting new multiple mid to high range retailers.

The provision of accommodation in the area to meet housing targets was also a challenge. Various development sites for residential and retail use had been identified in the area and whilst the town would benefit greatly from this, it was also vital to retain the vibrancy of the Town Centre.

Councillor Huntington-Thresher urged the Committee to endorse the recommendations to form the initial work programme for the emerging Framework Plan. He also requested that the necessary next steps to produce a supplementary planning document be undertaken in a more timely fashion.

It was reported that the Berkeley Homes development on the former Police Station site was nearing completion. Whilst Orpington College's lease expired in March 2018, they were still in situ. It was recommended in the report that the Council should engage with the College to understand their position and future space requirements in the town centre.

It was important for the town centre to retain as much retail space as possible in order to maintain a balance between retail and food and beverage use. However, should units remain vacant for a reasonable length of time, then change of use to food and beverage would generally be acceptable.

To assist in moving the plan forward, one Member suggested a Working Party be established to include members from Orpington 1st BID, Orpington College and traders. The Head of Renewal agreed to consider the suggestion.

Councillor Huntington-Thresher emphasised the need for a consultation to ascertain the views of current landlords and to attract developers to provide mixed residential/retail use on identified sites.

The Head of Renewal agreed to circulate a timetable for the Plan going forward.

Consultations were currently taking place on options for the Day Centre (set out on page 157 of the report).

Turning to Site A – Bromley North Station, Members were informed that two separate planning applications had recently been considered and refused by the Planning Committee. The Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing moved (and Members agreed), that a Masterplan for the site be formulated and the process for development be undertaken as soon as possible.

A Funding Bid for improvements to road safety and pedestrian use in the Shortlands area would need to be submitted by the end of November 2018. Prior to this, a report would be considered by various PDS Committees. The Chairman advised he would discuss this matter with the relevant PDS Chairmen on the best way to scrutinise the report.

RESOLVED that:-

- 1 the progress achieved in delivering the Town Centres Development and Growth Programme be noted;**
 - 2 the findings of the Orpington Town Centre Stage 1 Report be noted and the recommendations arising from the report to form the initial work programme for the emerging Framework Plan be endorsed; and**
 - 3 a Masterplan for Site A – Bromley North Station, be formulated and the process for development of the site be undertaken as soon as possible.**
- 36 RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PDS COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME (NOVEMBER 2018-MARCH 2019)**

Report CSD18139

Members considered the Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Work Programme for the period November 2018 to March 2019.

The following reports were requested for future meetings:-

November 2018

- Site G Masterplan – formal responses and recommendations
- Building Control – Shared Service with Bexley
- Penge Library - Post Capital Completion Report

- Anerley Town Hall – Post Capital Completion Report
- Bromley Mytime – Lease Arrangements

Penge and Beckenham BID Managers to be invited to the meeting.

January 2019

- Homelessness Strategy

March 2019

- Renewal, Recreation and Housing Portfolio Plan

RESOLVED that subject to the addition of reports mentioned above, the Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Work Programme for the period November 2018 to March 2019 be noted.

37 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 item 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.

38 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 JUNE 2018

RESOLVED that the exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

The meeting ended at 9.30 pm

Chairman