

**RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING  
POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 16 November 2021

**Present:**

Councillor Yvonne Bear (Chairman)  
Councillor Gary Stevens (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillors Vanessa Allen, Julian Benington,  
Aisha Cuthbert, Christine Harris, Charles Joel and  
Richard Scoates

**Also Present:**

Councillor Kim Botting FRSA, Councillor Peter Morgan and  
Councillor Pauline Tunnicliffe

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

There were no apologies for absence.

**33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

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

Five questions for oral reply at the meeting and two questions for written reply had been received. A copy of those questions, together with the Portfolio Holder's responses can be viewed as [Appendix A](#) to these Minutes.

**35 MINUTES OF THE RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PDS COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 8 SEPTEMBER 2021 AND 12 OCTOBER 2021**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meetings held on 8 September 2021 and 12 October 2021 be confirmed.

**36 MATTERS OUTSTANDING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND WORK PROGRAMME**

Report CSD21072

The Committee considered a report setting out its work programme and updating on progress against outstanding actions from previous meetings. The Chairman noted that the Committee was expecting an update on Building

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Control and a report on the West Wickham Leisure Centre proposals at the meeting in January.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

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

The Committee considered the following report where the Renewal, Recreation and Housing Portfolio Holder was recommended to take a decision:

**A BUDGET MONITORING 2021/22**  
Report FSD21073

The Committee received an update on the latest 2021/22 revenue budget monitoring position for the Renewal, Recreation and Housing Portfolio based on expenditure and activity levels up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. An overspend of £614k was projected. Delays in completing the modular housing schemes that were beyond the control of the Council meant that the expected savings from temporary accommodation were not being achieved, and income was still lower than anticipated for building control and pre-application planning fees. There were also increases in staffing costs as staff were seconded to Covid-19 related work.

A table showing the Covid-19 grants relating to the Portfolio had been circulated. The Household Support Fund had only just been announced by the Government in October 2021, and a Member requested information about how this was being publicised.

**RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to endorse the Budget Monitoring report.**

**38 HOUSING PLANNING AND REGENERATION PORTFOLIO PLAN 2021-2022**  
Report ACH20-044

The Committee received an update for quarter 2 on the Portfolio Plan for 2021/22, and officers summarised progress on some of the key aims and projects. The West Wickham Business Improvement District (BID) had been delayed as staff had been supporting Covid-19 work, and there were ballots due in 2022 for the existing BIDs in Beckenham, Penge and Orpington. Work on small shopping parades had also been put on hold due to resources being diverted to other work. In Bromley High Street, the improvement scheme had been revised to focus on a tree-lined avenue in the lower section of the High Street. This was supported by the ward councillors, and the trees would be planted in the current season before March.

Work on promoting active lives through sport had also been paused due to the pandemic, but this was now progressing again. In terms of housing, the Medowship housing scheme was on-track, but there were delays in completing the modular housing schemes. The buildings were in place and largely finished, but there were delays with supplying and connecting utilities.

A Member commented that there was still an entry for Re-location and development of Beckenham Library, although this scheme was not proceeding, and the focus was now on improvements to Beckenham public halls. Officers confirmed that this would be clarified in the next update.

The Chairman requested that a due date column be provided in the next report.

**RESOLVED that progress on the actions associated with the Housing, Planning and Regeneration Portfolio Plan for Quarter 2 2021/22 be noted.**

### **39 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXECUTIVE REPORTS**

The Committee considered the following reports on the Part 1 agenda for the meeting of the Executive on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

**A DESIGNATION OF THE COVERT CONSERVATION AREA,  
THE THRIFTS CONSERVATION AREA AND THE EXTENSION  
OF THE CHISLEHURST ROAD CONSERVATION AREA**  
Report HPR2021/055

The Committee considered a report recommending the designation of the Covert Conservation Area (shown at Appendix 1), the Thrifts Conservation Area (shown at Appendix 2) and the extension of the Chislehurst Road Conservation Area (shown at Appendix 3). The proposed boundaries were informed by an independent assessment and were subject to public consultation between October and December 2020. Details of the representations received and how these representations have been addressed were set out in the report.

The report had been considered by Development Control Committee on 2 November 2021. The Committee had supported the recommendations, with the additional view that four houses in The Covert which were originally excluded from the proposed conservation area as they lacked architectural merit should be included in order to enhance the conservation area and protect against inappropriate development. The proposed change was illustrated in the map at page 167 of the agenda. At the request of a ward Councillor, the Committee had also suggested that Article 4 Directions across the Conservation Areas and the Areas of Special Residential Character should be checked to ensure that they were consistent.

**RESOLVED** that the Executive be recommended to approve the designation of the Covert Conservation Area (shown at Appendix 1 to the report), with the addition of the four houses previously excluded, the Thrifts Conservation Area (shown at Appendix 2) and the extension of the Chislehurst Road Conservation Area (shown at Appendix 3).

**B ORPINGTON WALNUTS REGENERATION PROGRAMME (PART 1)**

Report HPR2021/061b

The Committee considered a report requesting Members to give a steer in relation to their preferred option for the provision of leisure as part of the Areli/Tikehau Capital development proposals at the Walnuts Shopping Centre in Orpington. Further details of the options available, including financial details, were set out in a part 2 report. The Chairman emphasised that Members were being asked to give a view on leisure centre facilities, and not on town planning matters that were the responsibility of the Development Control Committee.

The Renewal, Recreation and Housing Portfolio Holder gave a brief introduction to the proposals. The current shopping centre was not doing well, with a large number of empty units and poor public realm. At the same time, the leisure centre was reaching the end of its useful life and required substantial investment. The developer's proposals represented an opportunity to address these issues and bring life to the town centre.

Officers explained that the leisure facilities would not be reproduced exactly – for example, less room would be needed for plant and infrastructure, and any replacement swimming pool would be 25m rather than the current 33m, in line with Sport England Guidance. Adult Social Care had been closely involved in the design of the replacement facilities for the Saxon Day Centre – the key was designing usable spaces for the next few decades, not just overall size. It was confirmed that 50% affordable housing would be required on Council owned land. On the remaining land, Planning would require Areli to be policy compliant in relation to affordable housing unless an accepted viability assessment was submitted as part of the planning application. It would not be possible in policy terms to accept the replacement leisure centre in lieu of affordable housing.

The Chairman invited Councillors Pauline Tunnicliffe and Kim Botting to speak as Orpington ward councillors. Both supported the scheme in principle, and viewed it as an exciting opportunity for Orpington that would provide residential opportunities, enhanced retail and replacement day centre and leisure facilities in high quality buildings.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

**C PROVISION OF HOUSING AND LIBRARY IMPROVEMENT  
WORKS IN WEST WICKHAM TOWN CENTRE**  
Report HPR2021/059

The report summarised the RIBA Stages 0-3 work undertaken in relation to the site of West Wickham Library and Station Road car park in West Wickham and set out the options for the site, in order to seek a decision from Members. The Renewal, Recreation and Housing Portfolio Holder commented that this was a superb plan to make use of the car park site, which was currently under-used, and the disused toilets, to provide an enhanced library facility and much needed affordable housing.

It was confirmed that Greenwich Leisure had been involved in the design of the new library – this would provide additional space for business and community use, a café and public toilet facilities. Questions had been raised about the parking surveys, but it was confirmed that as well as the survey in November 2019, a survey had been conducted after lockdown ended in July but before the school term ended. The scheme was scheduled to finish by September 2023 – provision would be made for a temporary library facility while the development took place.

A small addition to the recommendations was agreed to add the words “and any other appropriation” (see (9) below).

**RESOLVED that the report be noted and the Executive be recommended to**

**(1) Review the RIBA Stages 0-3 work undertaken proposing the redevelopment of the library and Station Road Car Park sites for housing, the expansion of the library, public realm improvements and the adoption of a service road to provide access.**

**(2) Recommend that Council approves the addition of the scheme to the Capital Programme at an estimate of £9,641k (note that this is the scheme cost, not the cost to the Council.)**

**(3) Recommend that Council approves the financing of the scheme as set out in paragraph 10.8 of the report, including an internal loan from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account of £2,147k.**

**(4) Approve the rent levels of the affordable housing at London Affordable Rent (LAR) levels to utilise the GLA Building Homes for Londoners Grant.**

**(5) Approve the undertaking of the adoption of the service road off Croft Avenue which is required for access to the scheme.**

**(6) Approve that the spend of £173k to date, which is included in the capital scheme costs, is retained in the Housing Investment Fund earmarked reserve.**

**(7) Approve the utilisation of £356k Section 106 contributions towards the affordable housing element of the proposals.**

**(8) To delegate approval to proceed to procurement for the design and build works contract at the end of RIBA Stage 4 with an estimated value of £8M to the Director of Housing, Planning, Property and Regeneration in consultation with the Renewal, Recreation and Housing Portfolio Holder, noting that a contract award will be coming back to Committee.**

**(9) Delegate authority to the Director of Housing, Planning, Property and Regeneration in consultation with the Director of Corporate Services and the Director of Finance to appropriate the affordable housing element of the site on completion of the construction works from planning purposes to housing within the Housing Revenue Account, and any other appropriation**

**(10) Note that the land appropriation value to the OHRA of the affordable housing element of the site has been independently valued at £260k.**

**(11) Note that the Council is foregoing a potential capital receipt of £1,270k from the housing part of the site, for the development to continue in line with the recommendations, and to achieve the Temporary Accommodation savings and a new library.**

#### **40 PROVISION OF LIBRARY SERVICES-CONTRACT PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Report HPR2021/060

In line with the Contract Procedure Rules, Members received an update on the performance of Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) in the provision of the Library Services contract. The report set out how the contract had been delivered in line with the contract, specification and key performance indicators since the last report in March 2021. Representatives from GLL attended the meeting to answer questions from the Committee. It was confirmed that performance remained good, and no penalties had been imposed. Visitor numbers were now almost back to pre-covid levels.

A Member suggested adding a KPI on tackling loneliness to measure how the service was serving communities on this issue. It would be difficult to add a KPI at this stage in the contract, but officers would look at this issue.

The Start Up Bromley project was going well, with the three main centres in Bromley, Orpington and Biggin Hill Libraries up and running. The Bromley facilities were proving particularly popular. Annual Performance Targets were set out in the report – these had been established by drawing on similar

projects elsewhere. The Chairman commented that these targets should tie in with other Council policies and priorities, especially in the Economic Development Strategy.

A Member commented that good libraries needed well-maintained buildings, and Beckenham Library did need some work. Officers agreed to provide a schedule of maintenance requirements.

The Council's Culture Team was working proactively with GLL to introduce innovative new schemes and activities to the borough's libraries and respond to local demand.

**RESOLVED that the report and the performance of the service provider since the last report be noted.**

#### **41 HERITAGE AT RISK UPDATE**

The Committee received an update on the Heritage at Risk Register which covered historic buildings and sites at risk of being lost through neglect, decay or deterioration. There were currently twenty five heritage assets within the borough on the latest annual version of the register.

The Council was working closely with Heritage England, and there was progress in addressing the issues on many of the sites, including Crystal Palace Park, the Scadbury Manor site and the Ice House at Sundridge Park.

Some repair work had been carried out at the West Camp at Biggin Hill Airport, and there had been contact with the agent/owner, but the negotiations were difficult. A ward member suggested opening up one of the barrack blocks and establishing a heritage trail linked to the Biggin Hill Memorial Museum.

A Member commented that some of these sites had potential to attract tourism, and suggested that the Council should be prepared to invest additional funds.

**RESOLVED that the update on sites within the borough that are included on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register be noted.**

#### **42 THEMATIC SESSION - REGENERATION, CULTURE & LEISURE**

The Committee received two presentations, on Culture and Regeneration, and on Mytime Active. Copies of the presentations had been published on the Council website.

##### **(A) Culture and Regeneration**

Lydia Lee, Assistant Director, Culture and Regeneration, gave a presentation on the work of her Division, which included the Regeneration, Culture and

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Economic Development Teams. The presentation focused on culture, sport and leisure and heritage – all issues that contributed to the identity of the borough, attracting investment, supporting employment, improving health and educational outcomes and making Bromley a place where people aspire to live and work. The presentation summarised the key sites, services, facilities and projects supported by the Division.

In response to questions, it was confirmed that the Chislehurst Library redevelopment project was led by the Property Division, and the Developer was about to start a public consultation process. It was explained that the Changing Places project involved a grant application for £200k to install four fully equipped toilets for people with serious disability and mobility issues at High Elms, Crystal Palace Park, Community House and the PRUH.

The Division was in the process of obtaining quotes for the development of a new Leisure Strategy for the borough, which would include sport. A Member commented that sports clubs were encountering problems as they sought to reopen after the pandemic. There were now grants available for clubs to apply for, and the Division was looking to improve the information available on the Council's website, including providing lists of clubs.

## **(B) Mytime Active**

Marge Maine, Chief Executive, Mytime Active, gave a presentation on their service provision in Bromley, which included leisure centres, swimming pools, golf courses and public halls, as well as a range of wellbeing activities. Before the pandemic, Mytime had faced challenges with income plateauing and costs rising, and golf was suffering a long-term decline in popularity. With the lockdown, income had dropped to almost zero overnight; leisure provision had been closed for eight months, all most staff had been furloughed. The organisation had to adapt rapidly, drawing on all possible sources of finance and working with the Council to establish a new framework of financial support (financial details were provided on a confidential basis.) She confirmed that Mytime was keen to support the Council's strategic priorities for the borough.

In response to questions, Ms Maine gave further details of some of the wellbeing initiatives on offer, which included motivational interviews, health assessments, Covid-19 rehabilitation, personal coaching/training, Wellbeing Walks and Healthy Habits weight management courses.

Councillor Julian Benington asked whether it was planned to re-introduce books of tickets for those who could not pay for classes in advance online. Mytime representatives offered to take this up after the meeting.

The Chairman thanked Ms Maine and her colleagues for their presentation.

**43 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**

**44 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE RENEWAL, RECREATION AND HOUSING PDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 OCTOBER 2021**

The exempt minutes of meeting held on 12 October 2021 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

**45 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF PART 2 (EXEMPT) EXECUTIVE REPORTS**

The Committee considered the following report on the Part 2 agenda for the meeting of the Executive on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

**46 ORPINGTON WALNUTS REGENERATION PROGRAMME (PART 2)**

The Committee considered options for the provision of leisure facilities as part of the proposed re-development of the Walnuts centre.

The Meeting ended at 10.10 pm

Chairman