

Minutes

Policy, Finance and Resources Committee Tuesday, 14th March, 2017

Attendance

Cllr Mrs McKinlay (Chair)	Cllr Kendall
Cllr Kerlake (Vice-Chair)	Cllr McCheyne
Cllr Barrett	Cllr Mynott
Cllr Faragher	Cllr Parker

Apologies

Cllr Hossack

Substitute Present

Cllr Ms Sanders

Also Present

Cllr Aspinell
Cllr Hirst
Cllr Mrs Hubbard
Cllr Mrs Murphy
Cllr Mrs Pound

Officers Present

John Chance	-	Finance Director (Section 151 Officer)
Philip Drane	-	Planning Policy Team Leader
Philip Ruck	-	Chief Executive
Jean Sharp	-	Governance and Member Support Officer
Lorne Spicer	-	Business Development and PR Manager
Steve Summers	-	Group Manager In House Services

327. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Hossack. Cllr Ms Sanders substituted for him.

328. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 15 February 2017 were approved as a true record.

Cllr Kendall advised that an update on item 282 – Revenues and Benefits Shared Service Agreement - had been requested at the 15.2.17 meeting but had not been forthcoming. The Chair asked officers to ensure an update was circulated to committee members without further delay.

329. Town Hall Remodelling - Temporary Relocation

Members were reminded that at Ordinary Council (19.10.16 Min 191) it was resolved to agree a recommendation to remodel the Town Hall building. The report on the 19 October 2016 also confirmed the need to relocate all services out of the Town Hall while the remodelling work continued. The report considered the relocation of back office services.

The report did not consider front line services including reception and any face to face interactions with customers which would be provided from 1 & 2 Seven Arches Road. Further it did not consider the location of committee meetings which would be provided from a local school.

The report requested delegated authority to enable the process to relocate to another premise on a temporary basis so the overall project was not delayed and could continue to meet the timelines necessary to secure temporary accommodation in order that the Town Hall was vacant and ready for the remodelling work to start later in the year.

The Chair advised that she had met with the opposition groups' leader and deputy leader to provide more details on the ongoing process and that a visit to the proposed temporary accommodation would be arranged for group leaders and committee chairs in due course.

A Member requested that bookable meeting space be made available in the town centre area to facilitate meetings, particularly with officers, for those Members who did not have private transport.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay **MOVED** and Cllr Kerslake **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report and following a debate a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

That delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive, S151 and Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Opposition Leaders to agree, negotiate and implement the temporary relocation of back office services out of the Town Hall building, including appropriate letting arrangements if required.

Reason for recommendation

The Town Hall project was on tight deadlines to achieve its target. If the Council was delayed agreeing temporary accommodation it would be difficult to keep the project on track in order for works to begin later in the year.

330. Brentwood Economic Strategy 2017-2020

The report presented a refreshed Brentwood Economic Strategy for 2017-2020 as requested at the 31 January 2017 Policy, Finance and Resources Committee meeting which was based on the recent findings of the Enterprising Essex: Opportunities and Challenges report undertaken by the Essex Economic Commission.

Officers advised that the document appended to the report was a draft and that Members' comments would be taken into account when the final document and the 2017/18 Economic Work Plan were produced.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay **MOVED** and Cllr Kerlake **SECONDED** the recommendation in the report and following a full discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was

RESOLVED

That Members approve the Brentwood Economic Strategy 2017-2020 and agree that a 2017/18 Economic Work Plan is implemented to support the delivery of the Strategy.

Reason for recommendation

To approve the refreshed Brentwood Economic Strategy and agree that a 2017/18 Economic Work Plan was implemented to support the delivery of the Strategy.

331. Herongate Village Hall

The report requested the approval of the Committee to enable officers to explore the various options for the future of Herongate Village Hall.

This was a long standing matter involving Charity Law. The hall was in a bad state of repair and Members were advised that the Council was the Custodian Trustee and there were no other living trustees in place.

Discussions had been going on with interested parties regarding possible funding to assist with any possible future option for the hall.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report including some additional words and following a discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

- 1. That the Committee approves that officers explore the various options for the future of Herongate Village Hall.**
- 2. That discussions are undertaken with the Parish Council to enable them to engage in and inform the possible options.**
- 3. That delegated authority be given to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Ward Members to determine which option is the most appropriate.**

Reason for recommendation

To enable the Council to deliver effective and efficient community services for the benefit of the Council and its residents.

332. Grass Verge Bylaws

The report before Members sought the approval of the Committee to enable officers to proceed with the introduction of prohibitions against parking on grass verges at locations within the Borough.

Section 6 (2) (a) and (5) (b) of the Essex Act 1987 allowed Brentwood Borough Council, working in conjunction with Essex County Council, to prohibit either entirely or at specified times, the driving or leaving of vehicles on grass verges beside Borough roadways, in conformity with the requirements of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Cllr Kerlake **MOVED** and Cllr Ms Sanders **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report and following a debate a vote was taken on a show of hands and it was

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

That officers further investigate and prepare a report on the application of restrictions relating to parking on grass verges within the borough , the authority under which any such restrictions can be applied and how any enforcement action can be taken. This report to be presented to the next PFR committee.

Reasons for Recommendation

1. This report requests the approval of the Committee to enable officers to proceed with the introduction of prohibitions against parking on grass verges at locations within the Borough.
2. Section 6 (2) (a) and (5) (b) of the Essex Act 1987 allows Brentwood Borough Council, working in conjunction with Essex County Council, to prohibit either entirely or at specified times, the driving or leaving of

vehicles on grass verges beside Borough roadways, in conformity with the requirements of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

333. Forestry Management Plan

Members were reminded of the paper agreed by the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee (PFR) on 21 June 2016.

Since that date officers had held discussions with the Forestry Commission to provide a Woodland Management Plan and associated maintenance for 10 years.

The Forestry Commission were close to agreeing a slightly modified plan and this would be brought back before Members in due course.

The purpose of the report was to seek the PFR committee's approval for an investigation into establishing a commercial arboricultural business to be run by Brentwood Borough Council.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay **MOVED** and Cllr McCheyne **SECONDED** the recommendation in the report and following a discussion a vote was taken on a show of hands and it was

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY

That the Committee agrees to commission a study carried out by officers, for Brentwood Borough Council to run an arboricultural business.

(Cllr Mynott declared a non-pecuniary interest under the Council's Code of Conduct by virtue of being a member of the Woodland Trust).

Reasons for Recommendation

To ensure that council assets are properly maintained and appropriate use is made for the benefit of residents and the environment.

334. Finance Restructure

The report requested the approval of the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee to allow the Chief Executive to conduct and implement restructures in service areas of the Council. Whilst the Council's Organisational Change Policy made it clear that although approval was not sought from Members in relation to the Service areas under review, it was important that Members were aware of the potential changes to the way in which services were delivered prior to any restructuring being carried out.

The area under consideration for restructure was the Finance Department. Members were advised that the potential outcome of the restructure could result in a shared management arrangement with a neighbouring borough.

If agreed, the proposed restructures would be in place by 30 September 2017.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay **MOVED** and Cllr Kerslake **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report and following a discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was

RESOLVED

- 1. That the restructure in the service areas as defined in 1.2 of the report proceeds in accordance with the Council's adopted policies and procedures.**
- 2. That the Chief Executive be granted delegated authority to undertake, manage and implement the said restructure provided that consultation takes place with the Leaders of the all political groups (or in their absence, their appointed deputies). Such consultation shall include meetings with the said Leaders and shall include advice as to progress.**

Reason for recommendation

To enable the Council to align its available resources with its service delivery model.

335. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm.