

Minutes

Policy, Projects and Resources Committee Tuesday, 18th September, 2018

Attendance

Cllr Mrs McKinlay (Chair)	Cllr Hossack
Cllr Kerslake (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Kendall
Cllr Barrett	Cllr Mynott
Cllr Hirst	Cllr Parker

Apologies

Cllr Ms Rowlands

Substitute Present

Cllr Bridge

Also Present

Officers Present

Philip Ruck	-	Chief Executive
Daniel Toohey	-	Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Jacqueline Mellaerts	Van -	Chief Financial Officer
Phoebe Barnes	-	Principal Accountant
Kim Anderson	-	Partnership, Leisure and Funding Manager
Chris Leslie	-	Executive Director of Commercial Services
Claire Mayhew	-	Corporate and Democratic Services Manager
Zoe Borman	-	Governance and Member Support Officer
Lorne Spicer	-	Business Development and PR Manager
David Wellings	-	Corporate Health & Safety Advisor

128. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Rowlands and Cllr Bridge substituted.

129. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Policy, Projects and Resources Committee held on 19th June 2018 were approved as a true record.

130. Chair's Update

Columbarium and Sanctums (formerly memorial wall)

The work on the preparation for the granite “columbarium” and “sanctums” has been sympathetically undertaken and is almost complete and the Chair encouraged members to visit the Woodman Road Cemetery for themselves. Set under the branches of a large established tree the setting is entirely sympathetic to the purpose.

Behind the scenes amendments to the website and forms are under way to ensure residents can find all the information they need to secure a place for their relatives.

Further plans will include a pet memorial area which will consist of Pet Memorial plaques. However, some remedial work to the boundary fence at the far end of the cemetery is needed before this can be established.

Community Halls Management

The Council's six community halls were included in a Value for Money Review as part of the Council's Leisure Strategy two years ago. It has been agreed that the best route for progress was to negotiate new Halls Management Agreements and Leases with the Brentwood Leisure Trust and the Chair can now report that a new loan of £180,000 has been approved for BLT to enable measures to be undertaken to be able to produce more of its own revenue income. As a result of this careful negotiation and agreement, the Management Contract payment to BLT has been reduced significantly – increasing efficiency and saving considerable funds forecast as a £100,000 saving for 2018/19.

Advertising & Sponsorship

Developing our commercial offering continues with a number of sites coming forward for consideration as potential hoarding billboard space that can be commercially rented out.

It has become clear that there is an appetite for local businesses to be able to promote their products and events. Due to a volume of vehicles passing the Town Hall daily it is easy to see why businesses identify such key areas as ideal for promotion. To this end we have consulted with several specialist companies to assess the potential value and revenue generation that can be produced.

It has been decided to continue to explore this opportunity in house in order to maintain control on the suitability of the advertising and to allow revenue to come to the council direct.

This follows on from the success with the Town Hall hoardings which are to be rented to a single business that is working closely with Brentwood Leisure Trust for the foreseeable future. A section of the hoardings will remain for Council and Community use.

Brentwood Business Showcase/Economic Development

The Brentwood Business Showcase takes place on November 1 at Brentwood School and has established itself as the must-go-to business event not just in Brentwood but in the county as a whole. I am delighted to announce that Wortley Byers Law will again be the main headline sponsor – and in fact it has opted for a higher cost sponsorship this year, with Mass & Co already signed up as Gold Sponsor. Google is bringing new workshops and its latest cutting-edge trends to the event which is a great. Registration for stands is underway and once again this event is set to reinforce Brentwood's standing in the community, county and countrywide.

Town Hall Update

The council operations across the board continue to develop unaffected by the new locations from which staff are working – including remote working, agile working and working from home. Indeed, this was particularly helpful given the heatwave enabling staff to maintain productivity effectively in the soaring temperatures.

The appointment of the marketing agents for the commercial and residential space is expected to be announced shortly - but remains commercially sensitive at present. The new hoardings will enable potential purchasers and residents to better understand and visualize the plans.

The Multi Storey Car park refurbishment

This huge project was expected to cost around £2m in total - but is now set to come in at approximately £1,850k in total across 2017/18 & 2018/19. The improvement is extraordinary with CCTV, bay markings, lights and spaces all now fit for purpose in this day and age. It makes a huge difference to the offering for parking and shopping within Brentwood and whilst it might not be the most glamorous of developments it has proved one of the most vital.

Essex Business Excellence Awards

The Chair noted that Brentwood Borough Council has been shortlisted in three different categories for the Essex Business Excellence Awards - Leadership Team of the Year, Customer Service Team and Not for Profit Organisation.

In addition, the Council has also been shortlisted for the Company of the Year award.

Any business from across the Essex county could enter, subject to completing the correct entry forms and providing the required paper work evidence. A shortlist of six companies per award category was initially established with the judges then interviewing council staff and representatives. The Council is now down to the last three in each of the four categories which is a well-deserved achievement.

Hutton Community Centre

At the 5 June 2013, Community Services Committee it was agreed by Members that there be a phased approach to the re-opening of Hutton Community Centre. After the refurbishment works for the building were completed, it was initially run by Brentwood Borough Council staff with a view to hand it over to a community organisation in the long term. At the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee on 22 March, Members agreed to a 15-year lease for Hutton Community Centre with Hutton Community Centre CIO.

HCC CIO were formed for the sole purpose of running Hutton Community Centre and consisted of 6 partners organisations: Lighthouse Furniture Project, Brentwood Grace Centre, Hutton Football Club, Hutton All Saint's School, Hutton Community Partnership and Hope Community Church, who took over the running of the centre from 1 July 2016. The Council had worked hard to establish a wide range of activities for all ages at the centre to support local need and the presentation by HCC CIO shows the development of the centre and activities provided under their management.

Allotments

Assets have now inspected the following 10 Allotment sites and discussed the various issues that are applicable to each one with representatives with Brentwood and Hutton Horticultural Societies:

1. Birkbeck Road, Hutton
2. Bishops Hall, Pilgrims Hatch

3. Crescent Rd, Warley
4. Honeypot Lane, Brentwood
5. Hartswood, Brentwood
6. Middle Rd, Brentwood (formerly referred to as Common Road)
7. Ongar Road, Brentwood
8. Park Road, Brentwood (The main entrance now on Cleves Way)
9. River Rd, Brentwood
10. Whittington Road, Hutton

Eight of these sites are controlled by Brentwood Horticultural Society and two by Hutton Horticultural Society.

At the request of the Horticultural Societies we are currently considering which of the sites qualify for 'Statutory Allotment' status and if there are any exceptions to this. Giving a site Statutory status will mean that approval from the Secretary of State will need to be obtained to dispose of the land or in the event that a site is proposed for redevelopment.

The Chair answered questions posed by Members and advised that:

- Information regarding the Town Hall will be distributed shortly and thereafter when appropriate. To date, much of the work undertaken has been preparatory work.
- Agreements with third parties are commercially sensitive and legally bound but will be shared when able.
- With regard to MSCP, officers are aware of the issues around anti-social behaviour and these are being followed up.
- A thorough survey has been completed regarding the allotments and officers are communicating with the allotment group. Ward Members will be involved at the appropriate time. This item will come back to Committee in the New Year.
- The Chief Executive will follow up Cllr Bridge's query regarding the allotment not listed in his Ward.
- A condition survey of the Community Halls has already commenced and a preliminary market engagement exercise on the management of the halls will commence on 20th September. A report will come back to Committee.

131. A presentation by HCC CIO

A presentation was provided by Jasper Clark, Treasurer, of Hutton Community Centre (CIO) updating Members on progress over the last 2 years.

Members praised the trustees and their partners for their hard work and achievements over that time and in particular the difference the centre has made to the local community.

132. 2018/19 General Fund Revenue, Housing Revenue Account, Capital Budget Monitoring and Treasury Activity Update

This report provided the Policy, Projects & Resources Committee with an update to the 2018/19 General Fund Revenue Budget, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Program which had been agreed at committee on 6th March 2018. Reporting the current projected outturn.

The report also gave an update regarding Treasury Management & Investment activity for 2018/19.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay **MOVED** and Cllr Kerslake **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

Following a full discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

- 1. To agree the projected outturn position for 2018/19 of the Council's General Fund Revenue budget as at 31 August 2018, as detailed in Table A of the report.**
- 2. To agree the projected outturn position for 2018/19 of the Council's Housing Revenue Account at 31 August 2018, as detailed in Table B of the report.**
- 3. To agree the projected outturn position for 2018/19 of the Council's Capital Program as at 31 August 2018, as detailed in Table C of the report**
- 4. To Note the Treasury Management Activity for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 August 2018 as detailed in section 6 of the report.**

Reasons for Recommendation

Effective financial management underpins all of the priorities for the Council and will enable the Council to operate within a sustainable budget environment.

133. Department for Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Pilot Programme for 75% Business Rates Retention - 2019/20

The Council currently participates in an Essex wide pool for Business Rate Retention (BRR). MHCLG have invited Local Authorities in England to pilot 75% Business Rate Retention in 2019/20.

The Council is invited to participate, in conjunction with other Essex authorities, in a bid for pilot area status. The purpose is to assist MHCLG in testing future scheme for retention of 75% business rates in economic area with mix tier authorities

The benefits to the Council would include significant increase to the share of the growth in its rates income.

Discussions are taking place with other Essex authorities; financial Review is still ongoing for the bid proposal. Due to the tight timescale set upon by MHCLG to submit interest by 25th September 2018, and to allow for the appropriate governance arrangements, delegated authority is therefore required to make sure the bid if upheld is successful.

In conjunction with a bid, authorities are asked to declare fall-back arrangements in the event of an unsuccessful bid. Currently Brentwood participates in the Greater-Essex pool and a revised pooling arrangement may be proposed.

Cllr McKinlay gave a summary of the report.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay **MOVED** and Cllr Kerslake **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report. Cllr Barrett moved an amendment:

- 2.2 That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of Policy, Projects & Resources Committee, to give notice formally of the Council's intention to accept or decline to opt into the 75% Business Rate Retention (BRR) Pilot Programme with the other constituent Essex local authorities *on condition Brentwood Borough Council is not in a worse position.*

This was accepted by the Chair.

A vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

- 1. Members note the content of the report and its potential implications for the forthcoming budget setting for 2019/20.**

2. That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of Policy, Projects & Resources Committee, to give notice formally of the Council's intention to accept or decline to opt into the 75% Business Rate Retention (BRR) Pilot Programme with the other constituent Essex local authorities on condition Brentwood Borough Council is not in a worse position.
3. That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of Policy, Projects & Resources Committee, to agree on behalf of the Council in principle to join with other authorities if a new Essex pool is required in the event of either no pilot bid being agreed with other authorities or the pilot bid being unsuccessful.

Reasons for Recommendation

To enable an informed decision by delegated authority, subsequent to the outcomes of an independent financial review and formulation of agreed terms, to be made in determining whether Brentwood Council should participate with Essex billing precepting authorities in the MHCLG's Pilot Programme for 75% Business Rates Retention (BRR) in 2019/20.

(Cllr Hirst declared a non-pecuniary interest as he is the Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Essex.)

134. Asset Development Programme Update

The aim of the Council's Asset Development Programme ("ADP") is to realise the potential of the Council's property asset base so as to deliver improved revenue streams from the portfolio but at the same time securing the regeneration, economic development and housing objectives of the Council. The report provided an update on the work of the Asset Development Programme Project Board ("Project Board") to date.

The report outlined the progress made by the Project Board on a) the Joint Venture Partner Procurement, b) the wholly owned Company (Seven Arches Investments Ltd), c) the Early Successes Programme and other in-house items including the Memorial Wall project.

Members raised concerns over the level of training being provided to the Project Board, and whether Members' remuneration would be reviewed in light of the extra work. The Chair advised training was being provided through the LGA and Montagu Evans and remuneration could be reviewed at the next Remuneration Panel meeting.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay **MOVED** and Cllr Kerslake **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

Following a full discussion a vote was taken on a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED:**

- 1. To approve the direction of the Asset Development Programme.**

Reason for the Recommendation

To update the Committee on the progress of the Asset Development Programme.

135. Feasibility Study for Parking on Housing Greens

At the Ordinary Council on the 6th March 2018 as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 to 2020/21 it was agreed that £25,000 would be allocated to the Council's Capital Programme for a Feasibility Study for parking on Housing Greens.

Possible areas of Housing Greens within the Council's ownership will need to be identified and subsequent feasibility studies undertaken to ascertain whether Housing Greens could be used for additional parking.

There are known sites within Hutton and Pilgrims Hatch where parking is an issue but there are also large green areas on former council housing estates that could benefit from such action.

Officers will identify possible sites that could be used for parking and report back to a further Policy, Projects and Resources Committee.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report and following a full discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

- 1. To instruct officers to identify possible sites for parking on Housing Greens and undertake a feasibility study.**
- 2. That a report be made to a further Policy, Projects and Resources Committee identifying possible sites for members' consideration.**

Reason for Recommendation

To enable Officers to undertake a feasibility study.

136. Leisure Strategy

The Leisure Strategy is one of the key strategies as set out in the Vision for Brentwood 2016-19 document. The Council has ageing facilities and needs to ensure that its leisure facilities are not only fit for purpose now but for the future. The Strategy and action plan sets out the vision, what the Council needs to achieve, the challenges it faces and how the priorities and outcomes have been identified. The Leisure Strategy is a large piece of work, so it has been split into workstreams to enable its delivery. The Strategy will cover a period of 10 years, but the supporting action plan will be a live document which will be reviewed and updated regularly to note the progress on the delivery of the Strategy. The Leisure Strategy has been approved by the Community, Health and Housing Committee on 3 July 2018 (Min Ref. 64) with a recommendation that it also be referred to Policy, Projects and Resources Committee for their consideration which is now before Members.

Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report and following a full discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED**:

- 1. That Members agree the Leisure Strategy and action plan at Appendix A.**

Reasons for Recommendation

As part of the Council's due diligence in delivering a successful Leisure Strategy, Members and officers need to have a complete picture of the current associated costs, risk profiles of the Borough's Leisure facilities and identify opportunities for income generation.

Comments received from Sport England as part of the Local Development Plan consultation, stated that a Leisure Strategy is required that assesses Council owned sports and leisure facilities in order that the Council can continue to work with partners to ensure that appropriate provision is made for the residents of Brentwood. The strategy should not only consider how the Council can provide services, but also how other partners can. The strategy should also use current sports facility evidence to identify strategic priorities to then inform what will be included in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Following this feasibility work, the Council will then be able to determine which projects will be funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and those funded by planning obligations.

The Council's Asset Management Strategy 2014/15 also sets out the need to obtain maximum income where possible from its asset portfolio.

137. Data Protection Officer

At the Regulatory and Governance Meeting, 11th July 2018, the committee agreed that ***“An individual be identified as a DPO* from within our authority and that this recommendation be brought to the next Policy, Projects and Resources Committee”***

** Data Protection Officer*

Put forth by the European Parliament, the European Council, and the European Commission to strengthen and streamline data protection for European Union citizens, the GDPR** calls for the mandatory appointment of a DPO for any organization that processes or stores large amounts of personal data, whether for employees, individuals outside the organization, or both. DPOs must be “appointed for all public authorities, and where the core activities of the controller or the processor involve ‘regular and systematic monitoring of data subjects on a large scale’ or where the entity conducts large-scale processing of ‘special categories of personal data,’”.

*** General Data Protection Regulation*

The DPO appointment is currently fulfilled on a shared management arrangement with Thurrock Council. The current Brentwood nominee for the DPO is Mr Lee Henley.

Cllr Bridge **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report and following a full discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED:**

- 1. Shared arrangements that are currently in place with Thurrock Council to continue and are to be reviewed in September 2019.**
- 2. That performance continues to be monitored to ensure that the obligations of the Council, under the control and management of the DPO, are being met by the shared management agreement in place.**

Reasons for Recommendation

To ensure the Council has in place a resource that is flexible, accountable, knowledgeable and effective, it is recommended that the current arrangement with Thurrock Council remains in place.

138. Revised Health and Safety Policy

The Health and Safety Policy (Appendix A) has been revised as required under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and, is reflective of current organisational and management structures within the Authority.

The health and safety policy has been passed to Corporate Leadership Board and the Health and Safety Committee members for comment and review in accordance with its conditions.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay **MOVED** and Cllr Kerslake **SECONDED** the recommendation in the report and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**:

1. **That the revised Health and Safety Policy (2018) be approved.**

Reasons for the Recommendation

A review and revision of the Council's health and safety policy is required to ensure that it reflects the organisation arrangements, structure and health and safety management system. This timely revision and endorsement enables the Council to continue its commitment to develop the health and safety culture and management system of the organisation and fulfil its legal duty.

139. Corporate Health and Safety Performance Report 2017- 2018

Brentwood Borough Council having responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all subordinate legislation has a duty to ensure that it not only protects employee health and safety but anyone else who might be affected by its undertaking. In that respect, it must have demonstrable systems and processes in place which reflect that compliance. This report identifies the standards now in place and the work progressing to improve health and safety systems and culture.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay **MOVED** and Cllr Kerslake **SECONDED** the recommendation in the report and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**:

1. **That the Corporate Health and Safety Performance Report 2017-18 be approved by Members.**

Reasons for Recommendation

Members are required to approve this report as it directly affects the Council, its employees and all others who may be affected by its undertaking.

140. Tommy Soldier Silhouette, "There But Not There" Campaign

This year marks 100 years since the end of The Great War. To mark this occasion there is a campaign for the 2018 Armistice project for the charity Remembered called 'There But Not There'.

Remembered aims to

- Inspire communities to purchase and install silhouettes of their local fallen wherever they are listed for the Armistice Period, 2018, and/or buy 6' Tommy figure for use in public space at any time through 2018.
- Educate all generations about why they made the ultimate sacrifice
- Raise very substantial funds to help those suffering from the hidden wounds of war, through the sale of the commemorative 'Tommies'.

In order to honour those who fought and made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom, this Council pledges support for the Tommy Soldier Silhouette, "There But Not There" campaign.

To support the campaign it is suggested that the Council commit to purchasing 2 silhouettes which, subject to any necessary approvals, will be placed at Brentwood's war memorial and in the Town Centre, as fitting tributes to the fallen.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendation in the report and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

- 1. To agree the purchase of two silhouettes which, subject to any necessary approvals, will be placed at Brentwood's war memorial and in the Town Centre.**

Reasons for Recommendation

To enable Officers to purchase the silhouettes.

141. Housing Benefit Overpayments Write Offs.

As outlined within the Council's constitution, all outstanding debts over £5,000 cannot be written off without Member approval.

This report requested the authorisation of the Committee to write off the Housing Benefit Overpayments listed with Appendix A to this report.

Cllr Hirst **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendation in the report and after a full discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

- 1. To approve the write offs of all the debts listed within Appendix A (exempt) to this report.**

Reason for Recommendation

To write off debts that are deemed non-recoverable as per the Council's debt recovery policy.

142. Urgent Business - Allen Ford, The Drive Warley - Lease Renewal

This report was tabled at the meeting. A copy is attached in the Minutes. The appendices are exempt.

This report considered the lease renewal of the Allen Ford garage in The Drive, Brentwood following the service of a break Notice by the Council.

Cllr Mrs McKinlay **MOVED** and Cllr Kerslake **SECONDED** the recommendation in the report and after a full discussion a vote was taken by a show of hands and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

- 1. That a new lease be granted in accordance with the terms set out in Heads of Terms attached at Appendix A (exempt).**

Reasons for Recommendation

The Council wishes to ensure the property continues to generate income.

The meeting concluded at 21:30