Minutes

Policy, Resources & Economic Development Committee
Wednesday, 16th December, 2020

Attendance

Cllr Hossack (Chair)
Cllr Parker (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Barrett
Cllr S Cloke
Cllr Mrs Hones
Cllr Kendall
Cllr Lewis
Cllr Mrs Pearson
Cllr Poppy

Also Present

Cllr Mynott
Cllr J Cloke

Officers Present

Greg Campbell	-	Director of Environment
Philip Drane	-	Director of Planning and Economy
Zoey Foakes	-	Governance & Member Support Officer
Tim Huggins	-	ICT Manager
Amanda Julian	-	Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer
Tracey Lilley	-	Director of Housing & Enforcement
Jonathan Stephenson	-	Chief Executive
Steve Summers	-	Chief Operating Officer
Jacqueline Van Mellaerts	-	Director of Corporate Resources

636. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for this meeting.

637. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Policy, Resources and Economic Development meeting held on 21st October 2020 were approved as a true record.

638. Variation on the order of the agenda

Cllr Hossack MOVED and Cllr Parker SECONDED and Members agreed to take Item 11 (Urgent Business) before Item 12 (Exempt – Barnston Way development – contract award).

639. Chairs update

Members noted the updates provided in the Chair's report.

640. Council Tax Reduction Scheme – 2021-2022

The report recommended two changes to the current Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTR) for 2021/22.

This would introduce additional support for apprentices and introduce a general 'variation' to the Council Tax Reduction scheme to allow the Council to increase / change the levels of bands / discounts within the scheme where there is an emergency situation, such as COVID for example.

The revised scheme to include these two additional elements will be subject to approval by Ordinary Council on 13 January 2021 in line with the requirement for approval of a scheme by 31 March 2021.

Public consultation on a revised scheme was undertaken from 5 October 2020 to 15 November 2020.

After a full discussion, Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Members were asked:
R1 That the revised Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2021/22, as set out in Appendix A of this report, be recommended to Ordinary Council for approval.

641. 2020-2021 Budget Monitoring Update

The report provided a financial update for the General Fund, Housing Revenue (HRA) and Capital Budgets for 2020/21, based on operational and financial impacts for the period April to October 2020. As a result of current operational and transitional arrangements, the financial impact of COVID-19 is included in the report.

The report also included the half year treasury management report, as required under the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21.

After a full discussion, Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Members were asked:
R1 To note the projected outturn, working balances and reserves forecast for 2020/21 and associated key risks.

R2 To note the Treasury Management activity and Prudential Indicators contained in the report.

642. Fees & Charges

Fees and charges made by the Council for various services are reviewed on an annual basis by the relevant Committees relating to the services provided. Recommended amendments to the fees and charges are incorporated into the budget setting process to take effect from the following financial year. Services areas have reviewed their fees and charges and submitted schedules to finance to co-ordinate.

After a full discussion, Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Members were asked to:
R1. Agree to the proposed charges for 2021/22 as attached in Appendix A-C subject to the annual budget setting process.

Reasons for Recommendation
Officers review fees and charges annually and this will be used to inform the 2021/22 budget setting process.

643. Roll out Of Electric Vehicle Chargers in Brentwood Council Car Parks

The report sought agreement to move forward with a procurement exercise in order to deliver the Electric Vehicle (EV) Chargers roll out plan for 2021/2022 into Council owned car parks. It also seeks agreement for this programme to include an option for 2025 and 2030.

After a full discussion, Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

A vote was and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Members were asked to:
R1. Agree to proceed with a procurement exercise to secure a partner to develop and implement the Council's provision of EV Chargers within Council owned car parks.

Reasons for Recommendation
The recommendation supports the Council and governments long term ambition to support the environment and reduce carbon emissions. The

decision if agreed creates a challenging roll out plan that commits the Council to delivering EV Chargers over a longer period of time.

This creates a plan that will assist the Council to manage what it decides to develop under the carbon agenda and manage expectations**.**

644. Draft Parking Strategy Development

Brentwood Council requires a modern parking strategy that provides a vision for car parking within the Borough. The strategy will provide clear direction for the future and be developed to support the Corporate Strategy 2020/2025.

The report asked members to approve the direction of a parking strategy and also to engage with a parking consultant in order to assist in delivering a parking strategy.

The report set out an initial timeline and identifies the work involved in this specialist area.

After a full discussion, Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Members were asked to:
R1. Agree the direction of the draft strategy and the workstreams included within the report.

R2. Engage with a parking consultant to develop and deliver the Brentwood Borough Parking Strategy

R3. Delegate authority to the Director of Environment in consultation with the Chief Operating Officer and Section 151 Officer to select an appropriate consultant and report back to this committee the final version for sign off.

Reasons for Recommendation
To procure expertise and capacity to develop a fit for purpose parking strategy in a reasonable time frame.

645. Environmental Enforcement Trial

The issue of littering across the borough has been raised by members of the public and the Council are seeking new and innovative ways to tackle the growing issue effectively without a financial burden to the Council.

It is hoped that through the partnership with National Environmental Services (NES) the Council would undertake a 12-month pilot whereby they will enhance our provision around environmental enforcement particularly in relation to littering offences.

NES will provide an ‘end to end’ environmental crime service at no cost to the Council.

After a full discussion, Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Members are asked to:
R1. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Housing and Community Safety the authority to agree contractual terms for a trial, and to enter into a trial, subject to consultation with the Chair of Environmental, Enforcement, & Housing Committee and any required procurement processes are followed.

Reasons for Recommendation
To ensure that the Council fulfil its Corporate objective around environmental issues and improve our enforcement activity.

646. Digital Strategy

The Council’s Corporate Strategy 2020-25 was adopted in January 2020 and outlined the Council’s key corporate priorities and objectives. The report sought approval from Members to adopt a Digital Strategy 2020-2025, which will complement and underpin the Corporate Strategy.

After a full discussion, Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

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

Members were asked to:
R1. Approve the Digital Strategy 2020-2025 contained within Appendix A.

R2. Agree for Officers to develop an action plan for delivery of the Digital Strategy, progress of which will be fed back to relevant committees.

Reasons for Recommendation
This strategy is critical to delivery of the Corporate Strategy and Business and Recovery Plan. It will also ensure that Council services are modern, innovative and fit for purpose.

647. Organisational Review

The report advised members of the need and implications of the recent organisational review for the Council’s Senior Leadership (SLT), which came into effect on the 1st December 2020.

The SLT review is part of a wider review of the organisations pay and renumeration as Brentwood Borough Council for a number of years has had

renumeration packages that have not been as competitive as most other Essex Local Authorities.

Members were asked to:
R1. To note the report.

Reasons for Recommendation
To inform members of the reasons for the proposed restructures.

648. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business and the meeting was closed to the press and public.

649. EXEMPT - Barnston Way development – Contract Award

After a full discussion, Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report.

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

The meeting concluded at 9:30pm.