

Minutes

Policy, Resources & Economic Development Committee Wednesday, 9th March, 2022

Attendance

Cllr Hossack (Chair)	Cllr Lewis
Cllr Parker (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Mynott
Cllr Barrett	Cllr Mrs Pearson
Cllr S Cloke	Cllr Wagland

Apologies

Cllr Poppy

Also Present

Cllr Bridge
Cllr White
Barnes

Officers Present

Phoebe Barnes	-	Corporate Manager - Finance
Phil Drane	-	Corporate Director (Planning and Economy)
Laurie Edmonds	-	Corporate Manager - Economic Development
Zoey Foakes	-	Governance & Member Support Officer
Steve Summers	-	Strategic Director (Deputy Chief Executive)
Jacqueline Van Mellaerts	-	Corporate Director (Finance & Resources)
Richard Wilson	-	Commercial Consultant

LIVE BROADCAST

[Live broadcast to start at 7pm and available for repeat viewing.](#)

332. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Poppy.

333. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Policy, Resources and Economic Development meeting held on 2nd February 2022 were approved as a true record.

334. Year in Review Presentation

A presentation was received by officers Phil Drane and Jacqueline Van Mellaerts highlighting all that had been achieved by this committee for the municipal year 2021-22.

The Chair and members applauded the work undertaken by the Council officers during this time.

335. Corporate Asset Strategy 2022-25

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 to adopt a Corporate Asset Strategy 2022-2025, which would complement and underpin the Corporate Strategy across all priorities.

The Corporate Asset Strategy provided a vision for the Councils asset portfolio, our approach to classify our assets as well as set seven key priorities that will deliver aims and objectives for our asset base.

After a full discussion, Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED**.

Members are asked to:

R1. Adopt the Corporate Asset Strategy as set out in Appendix A.

R2. Approve that delegated authority be given to the Corporate Director of Finance & Resources, in consultation with the Chair of Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee, to make minor artwork and formatting changes to the Corporate Asset Strategy in advance of publication.

Reasons for Recommendation

The Corporate Asset Strategy 2022-2025 is critical to the delivery of the Corporate Strategy 2020-2025.

336. Click It Local Extension

In the face of lockdowns and restricted access to retail businesses during COVID-19, the council has signed up to the Click It Local platform to help generate sales for local retail businesses. This is in line with 2021-22 key objectives to encourage people to do business in the borough as part of the wider corporate priority to grow the economy. Click It Local allows customers to purchase from multiple independent businesses in one place, make one

payment and have one consolidated delivery or collection. The platform is currently supporting 32 local independent businesses.

The contract with Click It Local ends in March 2022. This report provided an update on the impacts that the platform is having with regard to economic growth, as part of regular updates to the committee.

Members asked officers to provide a more detailed breakdown of local retail sector performance in advance of contract expiry, in order to inform further decisions about the longevity of the Click it Local platform in the borough.

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. Endorse extending the council's Click It Local contract by six months.

Reasons for Recommendation

It is recommended that the Click It Local Brentwood contract be renewed for an additional six months. With the funding from Essex County Council, the extension is risk free. The council will continue to work with Click It Local to help them onboard more businesses, support existing participating shops and develop a higher customer profile in the community.

A six-month extension will bring the council's contract into line with Rochford District Council and the North Essex Economic Board, ensuring that our businesses are receiving the same support as neighbouring authorities. Updates on the performance of Click It Local in Brentwood will be brought to the committee in future to inform decisions about the contract beyond six months.

337. Community Infrastructure Levy

The report updated members on the progress of preparing Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in the borough. It provided an overview of CIL and how Section 106 agreements can continue to be used alongside.

Before a CIL Charging Schedule can be adopted it must be subject to two rounds of consultation followed by an independent examination. The first stage of consultation, the Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule was undertaken in October 2016. The second stage is the publication of a final Draft Charging Schedule.

Following examination of the Brentwood Borough Local Plan 2016-2033, the Council is now in a position to progress work to finalise the Draft Charging Schedule for the second stage of consultation.

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. Approve that further work be undertaken to introduce the Brentwood Borough Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule, including updating viability evidence and the production of a final Draft Charging Schedule, to be brought to committee prior to examination submission.

R2. Approve that work begin to consider options for setting up a local panel that would decide on the priorities and spending of CIL and Section 106 monies, to be brought to committee in due course.

R3. Approve that options be considered and presented to a future committee for the creation of a CIL Officer role to lead on the administration and negotiation of development contributions.

Reasons for Recommendation

Given the amount of CIL revenue potentially available through allocation sites in the new Brentwood local plan, and the long-term nature of the proposals in the White Paper, it is recommended that the Council progress with the production of a CIL Charging Schedule. This will enable the Council to obtain additional infrastructure funding while any future changes to the CIL process, and the wider planning system, are considered, agreed, and implemented accordingly.

The introduction of a CIL Charging Schedule will maximise the potential for new development to generate income for the delivery of new infrastructure, while also ensuring that proposed rates do not render new development in the borough financially unviable.

It will be important to identify how CIL funds are collected and monitored alongside S106 contributions. For this reason, options should be presented on how members and key partners can take part in decisions through a form of panel arrangement. In addition, administrative functions can be part funded by CIL and so options should be presented to a future committee on the potential for creating a new officer role to lead and monitor wider developer contributions

338. Urgent Business

Cllr Hossack varied the agenda in order to take Urgent Business ahead of the Exempt agenda item.

An item for Urgent Business was brought to this committee by Cllr Barrett in relation to recent events in Ukraine.

After a full discussion, Cllr Hossack **MOVED** and Cllr Parker **SECONDED** recommendations below. A vote was taken and it was **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Members agreed that:

R1. This Committee recommends to the next Ordinary Council Meeting, that we as a Council condemn the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Putin, and that the Mayor, as first citizen of the Borough, endorses this position on behalf of the Council, alongside a minute's silence for the victims of this invasion.

We, as Brentwood Borough Council, stand together with our residents if Ukrainian heritage and will support them in their hour of need.

We have residents of Ukrainian heritage in our Borough. They are understandably fearing for the lives of their loved ones in Ukraine. The Borough has already demonstrated our solidarity with the Ukrainian community by lighting up the Town Hall in the colours of Ukraine and we are flying the flag of Ukraine.

We welcome the actions of Brentwood Mutual Aid and other groups in bringing the community together to support the people of Ukraine.

That we acknowledge this is an act of aggression by Putin, not by residents of Russian heritage living and working in Brentwood.

We must support all of our residents here to live peaceful lives without fear or anxiety.

We pride ourselves in welcoming residents from all over the world. We will warmly welcome Ukrainians to our Borough as part of any national refugee effort.

We urge:

- Peace.
- Residents to come together in difficult times and support each other when the burden can seem heavy.
- People to support the Ukrainian communities across Essex who are mobilising in support of Ukraine by donating to funds which they have set up to provide critical support for Ukraine at this time.
- The Government to do everything possible to support the Ukrainian people who are being displaced from their homeland including welcoming them into this country.

R2. Officers are asked to respond to the following as soon as practicable:

- Confirm if our housing department has contracts for the supply of gas with Gazprom, and if so that this is the Russian state-owned gas company.
- That if confirmed, this contract may directly fund the Putin-regime and in effect have an impact on the illegal invasion of Ukraine.
- Confirm that many companies, organisations and countries have chosen to exit contracts with Gazprom on this basis.

That Officers will:

- Endeavour to find a legal route to exit this contract at the earliest opportunity.

- That an urgent report is brought to the next appropriate committee meeting of Brentwood Borough Council with a proposal to exit this contract by the most expedient legal means, when the status is confirmed.
- If necessary, and no appropriate meeting is available, an extra meeting of an appropriate committee to be called as soon as is practicable.

339. Exclusion of the Press and Public

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Hossack and **SECONDED** by Cllr Parker that the public be excluded from the meeting on the items of business 7 on the grounds that the disclosure of exempt information as defined in schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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

340. EXEMPT - Seven Arches Investments Limited 2021/22 Business Plan

At 9.00pm in accordance with Rule 10.1 of the Council's procedural rules, Members resolved to continue the meeting for a further 30 minutes.

A presentation was given to members on the Seven Arches Investment Limited 2021/22 Business Plan.

A motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Hossack and **SECONDED** by Cllr Parker and was **RESOLVED**.

The meeting concluded at 9.15pm
