

Minutes

Policy, Resources & Economic Development Committee Wednesday, 13th July, 2022

Attendance

Cllr Hossack (Chair)	Cllr Naylor
Cllr Poppy (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Mrs Pearson
Cllr Kendall	Cllr Russell
Cllr Lewis	Cllr White
Cllr Mynott	

Also Present

Cllr Gelderbloem

Officers Present

Phoebe Barnes	-	Corporate Manager - Finance
Phil Drane	-	Corporate Director (Planning and Economy)
Zoey Foakes	-	Governance & Member Support Officer
Amanda Julian	-	Corporate Director (Law and Governance) and Monitoring Officer
Tracey Lilley	-	Corporate Director (Housing & Community Safety)
Jonathan Quilter	-	Strategic Planning Manager
Jacqueline Mellaerts	Van	- Corporate Director (Finance & Resources)
Richard Wilson	-	Commercial Consultant
Ian Winslet	-	Strategic Director

LIVE BROADCAST

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

76. Apologies for absence

No apologies were received.

77. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Policy, Resources and Economic Development meeting held on 9th March 2022 were approved as a true record.

78. 21-22 Outturn

This report gives a summary of the overall financial outturn position for the financial year 2021/22.

The key elements of the provisional outturn are:

General Fund

- 1) The outturn for the general fund is balanced position for 2021/22 compared to a budgeted surplus set at £240k.
- 2) In March 2022 it was forecasted that the outturn position would be of a breakeven position.
- 3) Working balances remain at £2.874 million this is still within the minimum level of reserves.
- 4) General Fund earmarked reserves have increased by £1.663 million to £12.446 million. Of which £5.196 million is committed for COVID-19 mitigation, £0.617 million is committed for specific future commitments, £2.362 million is committed for service level expenditure and £4.271 million is committed for future financial mitigation.

Housing Revenue Account

- 1) The outturn reflects a net underspend of £447k against the working budget of £434k.
- 2) The HRA working balance has increased significantly to £1.922 million as at the 31st March 2022.
- 3) The HRA earmarked reserves remain have increased by £100k to £2.5 million.

Capital

- 1) The capital outturn was £15.390 million compared to a reported revised budget of £33.306 million.
- 2) Requested slippage of £17.532 million will be carried forward into 2022/23

Treasury Management

- 1) The treasury activity and relevant prudential indicators for the year is listed in Appendix B.

The Draft Annual Financial Statements 2021/22 have been prepared and will be reported to Audit & Scrutiny Committee on 25th July 2022 to meet the Council's publication deadline by the end of July. The draft accounts are subject to an external audit process, which will later in the year. Until the audit is finalised the figures included within this report is a provisional outturn and could be subject to change. Any changes to the outturn will be reported back

to this committee once the Annual Financial Statements 2021/22 have been audited.

This item was for information only, therefore, no vote was required.

79. Budget guidelines and financial forecasts

The report sets out the proposed budget timetable and guidelines that will be followed to develop the budget for 2023/24 and the financial forecast for 2024/25 to 2026/27.

A 10-year financial forecast is included to assist Members in understanding the longerterm financial trajectory of the Council and to identify actions that can be taken to address the continuing deficit of resources over expenditure. These actions will assist Members in having to take decisions at future committees to address future deficit forecasts.

The 10 year forecast includes various static assumptions and includes the use of earmarked reserves to maintain working balances above the minimum required level until 2030/31.

This item was for information only, therefore, no vote was required.

80. Energy Rebate

The purpose of the report is to seek authority from Policy, Resources & Economic Development Committee to administer a Local Discretionary Energy Rebate scheme. As well as give information to members on the main energy rebate scheme announced by Government on 3 February 2022.

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

Members were asked:

To give delegated authority to the Corporate Director (Finance & Resources in consultation with the Chair of Policy, Resources & Economic Development to implement a Local Discretionary Energy Rebate scheme as set out in the criteria within this report.

Reason for Recommendation

To ensure the Council has a Local Discretionary rebate scheme in place in order to distribute the allocated funding to Brentwood Residents.

81. National Grid East Anglia Green Proposal

National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) has recently held a non-statutory consultation regarding the East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) project. East Anglia GREEN is a proposal to build a new high

voltage network reinforcement between Norwich, Bramford and Tilbury. This project is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).

This report provides an overview of the project and its potential impacts on Brentwood borough. A draft response had been submitted to comply with the consultation deadline and is subject to committee approval in line with the recommendation (Appendix A). The response objects to the proposed East Anglia GREEN scheme on the basis that it has not been clearly explained why an offshore route cannot be provided, direct impacts on the delivery of Dunton Hills Garden Village, and impacts on Green Belt, heritage, landscape and ecology. This is consistent with other responses from affected local authorities, including Essex County Council (Appendix B) and leaders (Appendix C).

This non-statutory consultation is the starting point for the project. There will be further statutory consultation in 2023. The council requests further ongoing engagement with National Grid on the scheme to help resolve its objections.

Members thanked Phil Drane and the team for the work undertaken and were very supportive.

Members were pleased that 13 MPs were in support including Alex Burghart MP.

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

Members were asked to:

R1. Approve the response to the East Anglia GREEN non-statutory consultation, as set out in Appendix A.

82. Ingatestone and Fryerning Neighbourhood Plan (2020-2033) Update

This report provides an update on the Ingatestone and Fryerning Neighbourhood Plan. Brentwood Borough Council has taken responsibility for the neighbourhood plan through the examination process and beyond, as required by regulations.

The council approved the designation of Ingatestone and Fryerning Parish as a Neighbourhood Plan Area in October 2017. The parish council neighbourhood planning group subsequently prepared a draft neighbourhood plan and consulted on the document before formally submitting the draft plan to Brentwood Borough Council in November 2021. The neighbourhood plan was brought to Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee on 24 November 2021, where the committee formally accepted the draft plan, agreed to undertake required consultation, approved delegated powers to

make any modifications as determined through the examination process, and proceed to referendum.

The neighbourhood plan has since been consulted on. An independent examination of the plan was undertaken by a Planning Inspector who has concluded that the plan can proceed to referendum provided the required modifications are made (Appendix A). The required modifications have been made to the plan and the referendum process commenced on 30 June 2022 (Appendix C). The referendum will run for 28 working days and the vote held on Thursday 4 August 2022. Residents within the parish area who are eligible to vote will be able to vote on whether the plan should be approved (or 'made'). A majority vote is required for the plan to be made. If the plan is made it will then form part of the council's planning development framework and need to be considered for any planning application in the area.

Members commended Ingatestone & Fryerning Parish Council on an impressive piece of work with such a high level of detail. Members expressed that this would be a great blueprint for a neighbourhood plan for other areas.

This item was for information only, therefore, no vote was required.

83. Brentwood Local Plan Timetable (Local Development Scheme 2022-2025)

As part of the plan-making process a revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) (local plan timetable) has been prepared. This provides an update to the currently published version, approved in September 2019.

The timetable requires updating to reflect the review and update required to the Brentwood Local Plan 2016-2033 under Policy MG06. This sets out the need to prepare a revised local plan to accommodate objectively assessed housing needs and submit to the Secretary of State for independent examination within 28 months of adoption, which is July 2024. An update to the timetable is also required for the preparation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).

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

Members were asked to:

R1. Approve the Brentwood Local Development Scheme 2022-2025, as set out in Appendix A.

Reasons for Recommendation

It is necessary to have an up-to-date local plan timetable. Delivery of the plan against the published timescales is monitored by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The revised Local Development Scheme sets out the timetable for preparation of the Local Plan Review, as well as

supporting documents such as Community Infrastructure Levy and Supplementary Planning Documents.

84. Lower Thames Crossing Local Refinement Consultation

National Highways are inviting views on the Lower Thames Crossing, a proposed new motorway connecting Essex and Kent through a tunnel beneath the River Thames to provide additional road capacity. A Local Refinement consultation has been launched following several previous consultations. This precedes the expected submission of a Development Consent Order application for the scheme. This consultation includes several technical refinements to the project, some of which directly impact on infrastructure or land within Brentwood borough. In addition to the ongoing discussion taking place with National Highways regarding outstanding issues impacting the borough, this report sets out a proposed response to the local refinements.

Members thanked Phil Drane and the team for all the work in preparing the response letter.

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

Members are asked to:

R1. Approve the response to the Lower Thames Crossing Local Refinement Consultation, as set out in Appendix A.

Reasons for Recommendation

It is recommended that the issues set out in Appendix A be issued in response to the Lower Thames Crossing Community Impacts Consultation. The council has engaged with National Highways on the Lower Thames Crossing project to date. It is proposed that issues raised in previous consultation responses are maintained where relevant and/or unresolved.

85. UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

Brentwood Borough Council has been allocated funding through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which can only be accessed through submission of an Investment Plan prior to the 1 August 2022 deadline.

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF or the Fund) is a central pillar of the UK government's ambitious Levelling Up agenda and a significant component of its support for places across the UK. It provides £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025, with all areas of the UK receiving an allocation from the Fund via a funding formula rather than a competition. It will help places across the country deliver enhanced outcomes and recognises that even the most affluent parts of the UK contain pockets of deprivation and need support.

Cllr Hossack requested that committee members are provided with a final copy of the investment Plan once submitted.

Cllr Kendall requested that the Investment Plan include reference to support of heritage and local attractions, in particular Brentwood Museum.

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

Members are asked to:

R1. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Chair of the Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee, to prepare and submit an Investment Plan for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

86. Membership Constitutional Working Group

The Council has a statutory duty to maintain an up to date Constitution, Local Government Act 2000, the Constitution must cover standing orders, delegations and code of conduct for members, it can also have local conditions and rules that reflect its own area and how to make decisions.

The Monitoring Officer (MO) has the responsibility to ensure that the Council's Constitution is up to date. To facilitate this the Council under Article 12 has convened a Constitution Working Group (CWG) which is a cross party working group that consults with the MO on changes necessary to ensure an effective and up to date Constitution is maintained by the Council.

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

Members are asked to:

R1. Agree the nominations for the Constitutional Working Group set out in paragraph 9 for the next municipal year.

Reasons for Recommendation

The Council has a statutory duty to have a written Constitution which sets out how the Council will operate and make decisions. The Constitution must be kept up to date and must be published.

The principle of proportionality is key to making decisions in that the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers; respect for human rights; a presumption in favour of openness; and clarity of aims and desired outcomes.

The Council has agreed that in order to promote good governance that there should be a CWG which reports to Council to recommend changes to the Constitution.

87. #Oneteam Transformation

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Executive on the progress of the #OneTeam Transformation Programme and to consider the recommendations made by the Audit & Scrutiny Committee following their pre-scrutiny of the draft s113 Agreement on 5 July 2022 and the additional recommendations made by the Rochford District Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6 July 2022.

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

Members are asked to:

R1. To note the progress of the #OneTeam Transformation Programme.

R2. Subject to any further recommendations, to approve the draft s113 Agreement.

R3. To authorise the Joint Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of Rochford District Council to approve the final terms of the draft s113 Agreement and to enter into all necessary and appropriate contracts and agreements to implement the s113 arrangements.

Reasons for Recommendation

The s113 Agreement is legally required to give effect to the Strategic Partnership between the Council and RDC and is necessary to underpin the appointments at Tiers 1, 2 and 3 plus other workforce alignment as progressed pursuant to Business Cases.

A vote was taken on Standing Orders and it was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** to extend the meeting for a further 30 minutes.

88. Urgent Business

There were no items of Urgent Business to discuss.

The public were excluded from the meeting for the item of business on the grounds that the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 was involved.

The Chair closed the meeting to press and public and continued the meeting in private session.

89. EXEMPT APPENDIX - Seven Arches Quarterly update

The public were excluded from the meeting for the item of business on the grounds that the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 was involved.

This report presents Seven Arches Investment Limited (SAIL) quarterly update to shareholders and provides management updates on the owned and managed commercial properties.

This item was for information only therefore no vote was required.

90. EXEMPT - Regeneration Fund

The public were excluded from the meeting for the item of business on the grounds that the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 was involved.

A Motion was **MOVED** by Cllr Hossack and **SECONDED** by Cllr Hossack to agree the recommendation in the report.

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