

Minutes

Asset and Enterprise Committee Tuesday, 18th November, 2014

Attendance

Cllr Quirk (Chair)	Cllr Mrs Coe
Cllr Sapwell (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Hirst
Cllr Aspinell	Cllr Kerlake
Cllr Clark	Cllr Morrissey
Cllr Cloke	Cllr Sleep

Also Present

Cllr Baker
Cllr Chilvers
Cllr Keeble
Cllr Mynott
Cllr Newberry
Cllr Russell

Officers Present

Jo-Anne Ireland	Acting Chief Executive
John Parling	Strategic Asset Manager
Chris Potter	Monitoring Officer & Head of Support Service
Jean Sharp	Governance and Member Support Officer

275. Apologies for Absence

No apologies had been received.

276. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2014 were approved as a true record and were signed by the Chair.

277. Chair's Update

Cllr Quirk gave updates as follows:

Bell Mead – this land had been sold subject to receipt of planning permission for a scheme to provide 14 residential units, 5 of which are to be affordable. The purchaser is under an obligation to submit a planning application within twelve weeks of the date of exchange

Warley Training Centre – Terms had been agreed regarding the Council purchasing five residential units. Pre-application discussions had taken place.

HRA housing sites – a number had been identified on underutilised land and had been discussed by the Housing and Health Committee. The provision of 12-15 social housing units was anticipated.

Herongate and Ingrave Community Centre – the legal team was consulting with relevant people.

Old House – this was to be discussed at Ordinary Council on 10 December 2014.

William Hunter Way – the consultation undertaken had been very successful with more than 5,000 responses and would also be discussed at the 10 December Ordinary Council meeting. The results of the consultation were on the Council website and would also be discussed at the WHW Working Group meeting taking place next week.

278. 6, 8 & 8a Harewood Road, Pilgrims Hatch, Brentwood - Rent Review

Members were advised that the property was let and was subject to an outstanding rent review as at 10 April 2012. Provisional agreement had been reached to settle the outstanding rent review and approval was sought from the Committee to conclude and record the settlement.

Cllr Quirk MOVED and Cllr Sapwell SECONDED the recommendation in the report and it was RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY to approve the settlement of the outstanding rent review.

279. Action Plan & Asset Review Update

Members were reminded that the Asset Management Strategy 2014/15 was approved by the Asset & Enterprise Committee on 15 July 2014. The report provided at that meeting set out the aims and objectives for the forthcoming year for the Council's property asset portfolio. An Action Plan Update appended to the report before Members set out the progress achieved on the more significant work flows.

The Strategy highlighted the entrepreneurial approach to the Council's management of its assets and this objective was being adopted as opportunities arose.

A Member suggested that the multi-storey car park be added to the list of assets to consider its long term use and the Chair agreed it should be considered at the next Committee meeting.

It was proposed that a review of all buildings in the Council's portfolio be undertaken. Members suggested officers investigate two small parcels of land in the town centre which could be marketable, also any possible alternative use of the BT building behind the Old House.

Cllr Quirk MOVED and Cllr Sapwell SECONDED the recommendation within the report and it was RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY to note the update contained in the appendix to the report.

(Cllr Cloke declared a non-pecuniary interest in Bell Mead by virtue of being a Parish Councillor for Ingatestone and Fryerning).

280. Hallsford Bridge

Members were reminded that at the 17 July 2014 Asset & Enterprise Committee it was resolved "That in principle the land should be transferred at an appropriate value and by a compliant mechanism to the Housing Revenue Account and to request that an appraisal be prepared and submitted to the next Housing and Health Committee to enable that Committee to make an in principle assessment as to whether affordable housing can be provided".

A report was presented to the Housing & Health Committee on 10 September and it was resolved "That the investigations into the possible development of the site for residential use are progressed and that a report is presented to the next Housing & Health Committee on 5 November 2014 with recommendations.

A further report was presented to the Housing & Health Committee on 5 November and it was resolved that " That the Hallsford Bridge site be referred back to the Asst and Enterprise Committee with a request from the Housing & Health Committee to sell and the proceeds to be used for affordable housing within the Tipps Cross Ward if land and sites are available".

The report before Members sought the approval of the Committee to sell the site to achieve best value for the Council. Any proceeds would be attributable to the General Fund Capital Programme for the reasons outlined in the report.

Cllr Quirk MOVED and Cllr Sapwell SECONDED the recommendations in the report:

2.1 That delegated authority be granted to the (Acting) Chief Executive to dispose of the Hallsford Bridge for best consideration.

2.2 That the proceeds of the sale be utilised to fund current and/or future schemes within the General Fund Capital Programme.

Following a discussion, Cllr Hirst MOVED and Cllr Kerlake SECONDED an AMENDMENT:

The addition of 2.3 The Committee recommends the Council to instruct Officers to identify a site in Tipps Cross for social housing where the proceeds of Hallsford Bridge could be used.

A vote was taken on a show of hands and the AMENDMENT was LOST.

Returning to the substantive motion, a vote was taken on a show of hands and it was RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that

- 1. Delegated authority be granted to the (Acting) Chief Executive to dispose of the Hallsford Bridge for best consideration.**
- 2. The proceeds of the sale be utilised to fund current and/or future schemes within the General Fund Capital Programme.**

281. Westbury Road Car Park, Brentwood

Members were reminded that the site under consideration was currently used as a permit car park. Until recently the car park was under-utilised, however, a contract had been agreed with a company known as IFDS for a period of 2 years for up to 60 spaces. The site layout was appended to the report.

An architect had been commissioned to determine how the site could be utilised better by developing it for mixed scheme of residential and retail units. Two suggested options were before Members.

Following a discussion Cllr Quirk MOVED and Cllr Sapwell SECONDED the recommendation in the report and a vote was taken on a show of hands. It was RESOLVED that further investigations should be undertaken to determine the viability of this site for development and that the preferred options are presented to the next Asset & Enterprise Committee with recommendations as to how it should be progressed.

(Cllr Morrissey declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of living near the relevant site).

282. Hutton Community Centre

The report before Members outlined the next phase of work following the re-opening of the Hutton Community Centre, with specific regard to the consideration of any future lease.

Cllr Quirk MOVED and Cllr Sapwell SECONDED the recommendation in the report and after a full discussion a vote was taken on a show of hands and it was RESOLVED:

To actively publicise the availability of the property to lease to community groups, to test the response received and to then report back to the Committee with the proposals received to determine the best proposal for the Council, the property and the community.

(Cllr Quirk declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of being the Ward member for Hutton Community Centre).

283. London Road & Woodman Road Cemetery Lodges, Brentwood

Members were advised that the two Lodges, which were held within the General Fund, had recently become vacant and advice had been sought regarding letting them to the private rented sector.

Officers had been advised that rentals between £1,200 and £1,400 per month might be achievable in the market place.

A Member pointed out that there was a toilet block attached to the lodge in Woodman Road cemetery which was in use and Members agreed this needed to remain available to cemetery visitors.

Cllr Quirk MOVED and Cllr Sapwell SECONDED the amended recommendation in the report and it was RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that:

- 1. When the two Lodges have been put into an acceptable condition the units are marketed and let at the best rental obtainable.**
- 2. The units are let on business tenancies with the business tenant having the ability to let the units on Assured Shorthold Tenancies.**
- 3. Officers are requested to give due consideration to retaining the toilet facilities at Woodman Road Cemetery.**

(Cllr Sapwell declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of living close to Woodman Road Cemetery).