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SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

Meeting of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Date: Thursday, 11th July, 2024

Place: Committee Room 1 - Civic Suite

Present: Councillor K Robinson (Chair)
Councillors I Ferguson (Vice-Chair), Sam Allen, M Berry, M Borton,
F Evans, M Faulkner-Hatt, N Folkard, D Garston, R Longstaff,
J McMahon, R McMullan, C Nevin, S Wakefield, N Ward, *T Cox and
*J Moyies

(*Substitute in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 30.)

In Attendance: Councillors P Collins, D Cowan and A Jones
C Shuter, P Bates, C Foster, G Halksworth, T Holland and R Harris

Start/End Time: 6.30 pm - 8.35 pm

1 Chair's Introduction & Apologies for Absence

(a) Chair's Introduction

Prior to the consideration of the matters set out in the agenda, the Chair outlined their expectations of the standard of conduct and behaviour to be shown at the meeting.

(b) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Courtenay (substitute: Cllr Moyies) and Councillor Nelson (substitute: Cllr Cox).

2 Declarations of Interest

The following interests were declared at the meeting:

(a) Cllr Borton – Minute 10 (Provisional Revenue and Capital Outturn 2023/24) – Council appointed member to South Essex Homes Board.

(b) Cllr A Jones - Minute 10 (Provisional Revenue and Capital Outturn 2023/24) – Council appointed member to South Essex Homes Board.

3 Questions from Members of the Public

The Cabinet Member for Finance, Assets and Investments responded to a question from a member of the public.

4 Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 1st February 2024

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on Thursday, 1 February 2024 be confirmed as a correct record.

5 Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 15th February 2024

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on Thursday, 15 February 2024 be confirmed as a correct record.

6 Minutes of the Special Meeting held on Wednesday, 24th April 2024

Resolved:

That the minutes of the special meeting of the Committee held on Wednesday, 24 April 2024, be confirmed as a correct record.

7 Housing and Pipeline Update

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director (Environment and Place), by way of pre-cabinet scrutiny, presenting an overview of the Housing Pipeline work to date and the next stage of the Pipeline, including site sales and appropriations, three housing development opportunities and an external funding opportunity.

The Committee discussed the report in some detail and asked questions that were responded to by the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and the Local Plan and appropriate officers. A number of recommendations were proposed and the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and the Local Plan undertook to review the report concerning the following matters:

- To include details that the planning pre-application submission was for housing on the Thorpedene site.
- To include the data from the early viability work undertaken concerning Hamlet Court Road Car Park.
- Look at the inclusion of the 30 homes figure for the Cattery and use alternative wording.
- Look at other potential funding options for the Cattery development in order to exempt the resulting homes from right-to-buy.
- To check whether the recommendation to authorise the sale of 291-297 Victoria Avenue was required as it may have been approved previously in a November 2023 cabinet report.

Resolved:

That, subject to the comments of the Scrutiny Committee outlined above, the report to Cabinet be noted.

8 Approval to Award a Contract for the Enterprise Resource Planning Solution

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director (Strategy and Change), by way of pre-cabinet scrutiny, concerning the approval to award a contract for the Enterprise Resource Planning solution.

The Committee asked questions which were responded to by the Cabinet Member and officers.

Resolved:

That the report to Cabinet, be noted.

9 Hybrid Transactional Mail Contract Extension

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources), by way of pre-cabinet scrutiny, concerning the approval to extend the Council's existing Hybrid and Transactional Mail contract by 24 months to 31st August 2026.

The Committee asked questions which were responded to by the Cabinet Member and officers and the Cabinet Member undertook to provide a written response to the Committee concerning the initial costs of the contract.

Resolved:

That the report to Cabinet, be noted.

10 Urgent Item of Business - Provisional Revenue and Capital Outturn 2023/24

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources), presenting the provisional revenue and capital outturn for 2023/24 and the indicative level of revenue balances going into 2024/25. The Cabinet had considered this report at its meeting held on 24th June 2024.

The Committee asked questions which were responded to by the Cabinet Members and officers. The officers also confirmed that future reports would only include Local Authority comparator information with regard to upper tier authorities, where appropriate.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet report, be noted.

11 Urgent Item of Business - Annual Treasury Management Report 2023/24

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) presenting the Annual Treasury Management report for 2023/24. This matter was considered by Cabinet at its meeting held on 24th June 2024.

The Committee asked questions which were responded to by the Cabinet Members and officers. The Cabinet Member for Finance, Assets and Investments undertook to provide the Committee with a written response setting out the Council's overall loan portfolio and differing rates of interest.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet report, be noted.

12 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved:

That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the item of business set out below on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

13 Hybrid and Transactional Mail Contract Extension - Confidential Appendix

This matter was considered in conjunction with Minute 86 (Hybrid Transactional Mail Contract Extension).

Chair: _____