

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Date: Thursday, 15th October, 2015

Place: Jubilee Room, Civic 1, Civic Campus, Victoria Ave

- Present:** Councillor M A Flewitt (Chairman), Councillor D A Garston (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors B Ayling, B C Arscott, M L Borton, T K Byford, A Crystall, J M Garston, A E Holland, D G Kenyon, J L Lamb, C J Nevin, K Robinson*, M Stafford and C W Walker
(*Substitute in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 31)
- In Attendance:** Councillors R A Woodley, I D Gilbert and D A Norman MBE (Executive Councillors)
Councillors Cox, Betson and Salter
R Tinlin, J K Williams, S Holland, F Abbott, S Leftley, J Chesterton, S Houlden, A Fiske, T MacGregor, A Fiske and A Keating
M Ambrose, S Long, T Nixon and M Medina (SEH – in attendance for item 5)

Start/End Time: 18.30 / 20.55

**** **Part I**

329 Apologies and substitutions.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J McMahon (substitute Cllr K Robinson), Councillor L Davies (no substitute) and Councillor F Waterworth (no substitute).

330 Declarations of interest.

The following interests were declared at the meeting:

- (a) Councillors Woodley, Gilbert and Norman MBE (Executive Councillors) - interest in the referred/called-in items; attended pursuant to the dispensation agreed at Council on 19th July 2012, under S.33 of the Localism Act 2011;
- (b) Councillor Crystall – agenda item relating to Summary Reports – non-pecuniary – Partner Governor at Southend Hospital;
- (c) Councillor J Garston – agenda item relating to Housing Working Party – non-pecuniary – local landlord;
- (d) Councillor D Garston -agenda item relating to Housing Working Party – non-pecuniary – private landlord owning one rented house in Southend;
- (e) Councillor Flewitt - agenda items relating to – SEH presentation; Better Queensway; ALMO Review; Housing Working Party - non-pecuniary – friend, family tenants of SEH Ltd;
- (f) Councillor Nevin - agenda item relating to Summary Reports – non-pecuniary – NHS employee at Bart's; previous employee at Southend, Mid Essex and Colchester Hospitals;

- (g) Councillor Salter – agenda items relating to - Better Queensway; ALMO Review - non-pecuniary – private landlord in Borough;
- (h) Councillor Lamb - agenda item relating to Summary Reports – non-pecuniary – Governor at Southend Hospital, on behalf of SAVS;
- (i) Councillor Holland - agenda items relating Better Queensway and Minutes of Housing Working Party - son works for SBC and involved in strategic housing and worked on the items – withdrew;
- (j) Councillor Holland – agenda item relating to Review of the Council’s Risk Management Policy – non-pecuniary – member of ALARM, mentioned in report.

331 Questions from Members of the Public.

Councillor Gilbert, the Executive Councillor for Community & Organisational Development responded to a written question from Mr Webb.

332 Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 16th July, 2015

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 16th July, 2015 be received, confirmed as a correct record and signed.

333 SEH – activities across sheltered housing network

The Committee received a presentation from officers from South Essex Homes on activities across the sheltered housing network. This covered the role of Sheltered Housing Officers and how they and the Community Development Team engage with residents. A booklet providing further details of the community development projects was also circulated to Members of the Committee.

The Committee asked a number of questions which were responded to. In response to a question, the Service Development Manager agreed to provide information on figures relating to sheltered housing referrals.

Resolved:-

That M Medina, T Nixon, S Long and M Ambrose be thanked for the interesting and informative presentation.

334 Monthly Performance Report - July 2015

The Committee considered Minute 245 of Cabinet held on 22nd September 2015, together with the Monthly Performance Report (MPR) covering the period to end August 2015, which had been circulated recently.

In response to a questions regarding CP 1.1 and the prioritisation given by the Police, the Executive Councillor for Community & Organisational Development said that he would take back comments / concerns to Chief Inspector S Anslow. He also advised that the Essex Police & Crime Commissioner has offered to meet with Councillors in the new year.

Resolved:-

That the report be noted.

Note:- This is an Executive Function.

Executive Councillor:- As appropriate to the item.

335 Annual Report – Comments, Compliments and Complaints

The Committee considered Minute 246 of Cabinet held on 22nd September 2015, which had been called in to all 3 scrutiny committees, together with a report of the Corporate Director for Corporate Services presenting the annual report on comments, compliments and complaints received throughout the Council for 2014/15.

Resolved:-

That the following decision of Cabinet be noted:-

“That the performance in respect of compliments, comments and complaints for 2014/15 be noted.”

Note:- This is an Executive Function

Executive Councillors:- Woodley, Moyies and Jones

336 Compulsory Purchase Order Authorities re land at Roots Hall and Fossetts Farm

The Committee considered Minute 248 of Cabinet held on 22nd September, 2015, which had been called in to scrutiny, together with a report of the Corporate Director for Corporate Services on a review of the resolutions of the Council to compulsorily purchase land within the Roots Hall Site and at Fossetts Farm pursuant to Section 226 Town and Country Planning Act 1990, in order to facilitate the development of the area.

Resolved:-

That the following recommendations of Cabinet be noted:-

“1. That the resolution made by the Council on 1st March 2012 to make a Compulsory Purchase Order in respect of land within the Roots Hall Site be reviewed at the next meeting of Cabinet on 10th November 2015.

2. That the resolution made by the Council on 1st March 2012 to make a Compulsory Purchase Order in respect of land at Fossetts Farm be withdrawn as it is no longer required.”

Note:- This is a Council Function

Executive Councillor:- Woodley

337 Corporate Asset Management Strategy 2015-2025

The Committee considered Minute 249 of Cabinet held on 22nd September, 2015, which had been called in to scrutiny, together with a report of the Corporate Director for Corporate Services presenting the Corporate Asset Management Strategy (CAMS) 2015-2025, incorporating a Commercial Property Investment Strategy.

Resolved:-

1. That the following decisions of Cabinet be noted:-

“1. That the updated CAMS 2015-2025, as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be approved.

2. That it be noted that the proposed CAMS now includes a commercial property investment strategy as referred to in sections 3 and 6 of the submitted report.

3. That it be noted that progression of the strategy will require specific capital resources being identified as part of the relevant budget process together with some revenue support to be funded from the Business Transformation Reserve.”

2. That, in accordance with Standing Order 39, the matter be referred to full Council for consideration. ||

Note:- This is an Executive Function
This item had previously been subject to pre-Cabinet Scrutiny
Executive Councillor:- Woodley

338 Local Code of Governance Review

The Committee considered Minute 250 of Cabinet held on 22nd September, 2015, which had been called in to scrutiny, together with a report of the Chief Executive & Town Clerk presenting the Council’s Local Code of Governance following approval by the Audit Committee on 24th June 2015.

Resolved:-

That the following recommendations of Cabinet be noted:-

“1. That the Council’s Local Code of Governance, as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be approved. ||

2. That the Council’s Constitution be updated with the revised Local Code of Governance.”

Note:- This is a Council Function
Executive Councillor:- Woodley

339 Review of the Council's Risk Management Policy, Strategy and Toolkit

The Committee considered Minute 253 of Cabinet held on 22nd September, 2015, which had been called in to scrutiny, together with a report of the Chief Executive & Town Clerk outlining changes to the Council's Risk Management Policy, Strategy and Toolkit.

Following a question, the Team Manager, Policy & Information Management said that he would look at the possible use of risk management software.

In response to questions, the Corporate Director for Corporate Services said that all Members are welcome to attend the risk management training which has been arranged for Audit Committee Members, taking place on 19th October 2015. Following the session, a copy of the Power Point presentation will also be made available to all Members of the Council.

Resolved:-

That the following decision of Cabinet be noted:-

“That subject to the inclusion of a reference to the business continuity planning process, the Council's risk policy, strategy and toolkit, outlined in Appendices 1 and 2 to the submitted report, be approved.”

Note:- This is an Executive Function
Executive Councillor:- Woodley

340 Better Queensway

The Committee considered Minute 255 of Cabinet held on 22nd September, 2015, which had been called in to scrutiny, together with a report of the Corporate Directors for People and Corporate Services detailing the work undertaken since the report of 23rd September 2014 together with proposals to take the 'Better Queensway' project forward.

In response to questions, the Corporate Director for Corporate Services agreed:

- (a) to circulate information on the lease types / length of leases in the properties;
- (b) to circulate electronically the colour plans in the documentation; and
- (c) confirmed that the scheme development costs will incorporate all costs associated in the scheme.

Resolved:-

That the following decisions of Cabinet be noted:-

“1. That the work of the Housing Working Party and the Project Team to date, be noted.

2. That Phase 2 of the project be progressed, which would include the following:

- Inclusion of Network Rail land at Victoria Station within the outline master plan, as set out in Appendix 1a to the submitted report.
- Undertake further works to determine the future of the tower blocks
- The proposed preferred offer to leaseholders
- Progress investigation work to 'cover' the Underpass and the remodelling of the roadways including the possible widening of Chichester Road
- Progress with further investigation work on the 3 financial options, including procurement routes
- Identify social infrastructure requirements as part of the whole development
- Continue to work with the Smart Cities Project
- Undertake an Economic Impact Assessment which will inform the design brief

3. That the Corporate Director for Corporate Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to negotiate to purchase any properties which become available within the 'Better Queensway' site if this offers value for money and proves to be advantageous to the Project.

4. That it be noted that best endeavours will be undertaken to minimise disruption to residents and wherever possible, move them only once.

5. That the presentation given to the Housing Working Party on 16th September 2015, as set out in Appendix 3 to the submitted report, be noted."

Note:- This is an Executive Function.

Executive Councillors:- Woodley and D Norman MBE

341 Review of the Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO) - South Essex Homes

The Committee considered Minute 260 of Cabinet held on 22nd September, 2015, which had been called in to scrutiny, together with a report of the Corporate Director for People proposing an extension of the Council's management agreement with South Essex Homes. The Committee also had before it a supplementary paper which had been circulated at the Cabinet meeting, setting out the rationale for extending the Management Agreement with South Essex Homes for a 3 year period.

Resolved:-

1. That the following decision of Cabinet be noted:-

"That the management agreement with South Essex Homes be extended for a further 3 year period from 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2019."

2. That, in accordance with Standing Order 39, the matter be referred to full Council for consideration.

Note:- This is an Executive Function

Executive Councillor:- D Norman MBE

342 Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Working Party held on Wednesday, 16th September, 2015

The Committee considered Minute 274 of Cabinet held on 22nd September, 2015, which had been called in to scrutiny, which was the Minutes of the Housing Working Party held on 16th September, 2015.

In response to questions regarding the sheltered housing review, the Corporate Director for People said that he would clarify when Council agreed to undertake the review, as part of the Housing Investment Plan.

Resolved:-

That the following decision of Cabinet be noted:-

“That the minutes of the meeting of the Housing Working Party be noted”.

Note:- This is an Executive Function.

Executive Councillor:- D Norman MBE

343 Action taken in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 46

The Committee considered Minute 275 of Cabinet held on 22nd September 2015, which had been called in to scrutiny. This concerned item 1.2 re Sealife Adventure Expansion.

Resolved:-

That the submitted report be noted.

Note:- This is an Executive Function

Executive Councillor:- Woodley

344 Summary Reports to Scrutiny Committee

Further to Minute 10 of Council held on 21st May 2015, at which it was agreed that the Council nominees to four specific outside bodies shall submit Summary Reports to every other ordinary meeting of the Scrutiny Committee, the Committee considered the following reports:-

- (a) Essex Fire Authority – Reports from Councillors Ware-Lane and Holland;
- (b) Southend University Hospital – Report from Councillor Crystall;
- (c) Essex Police and Crime Panel – Report from Councillor Gilbert; and
- (d) Kent & Essex Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority – Report from Councillor Lamb.

Resolved:-

That the Summary Reports be noted.

345 Minutes of the Meeting of Chairmen's Scrutiny Forum held on Tuesday, 8th September, 2015

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the meeting of Chairmen's Scrutiny Forum held on Tuesday, 8th September, 2015 be received and noted and the recommendations therein endorsed.

Note: This is a Scrutiny Function.

346 In depth scrutiny project – 'Control of personal debt and the advantages of employment'

Further to Minute 158 of its meeting held on 16th July 2015, the Committee considered the project plan in relation to its agreed in depth scrutiny project for 2015/16 – 'Control of personal debt and the advantages of employment'.

The Chairman advised that the project plan was agreed by the member project team at its meeting on 16th September 2015. The project team met again on 14th October 2015 and agreed that the planned main evidence gathering session will be held on 4th February 2016.

Resolved:-

That the project plan for the in depth scrutiny project – 'Control of personal debt and the advantages of employment', be agreed.

Note:- This is a Scrutiny Function.

347 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 would involve 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.

****** Part II(Confidential)**

348 Action taken in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 46 - Confidential sheet

Resolved:-

That the submitted report be noted.

Note:- This is an Executive Function
Executive Councillor:- Woodley

