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SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

Meeting of Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Date: Thursday, 3rd December, 2015

Place: Jubilee Room, Civic Centre, Southend-on-Sea

Present: Councillor Flewitt (Chair)
Councillors D Garston (Vice-Chair), Arscott, Ayling, Borton, Byford,
J Garston, Holland, Kenyon, Lamb, McMahon, McGlone*, Mulroney*,
Nevin, Stafford and Walker

*Substitute in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 31.

In Attendance: Councillors Betson, Gilbert and Woodley (Executive Councillors)
Councillors Assenheim, Cox and Hadley
R Tinlin, J K Williams, F Abbott, S Holland, J Chesterton, S Leftley,
D Patel, S Ford and A Fiske

Start/End Time: 6.30 / 9.05 pm

464 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Crystall (substitute Cllr Mulroney) and Councillor F Waterworth (substitute Cllr McGlone).

465 Declarations of Interest

The following interests were declared at the meeting:

- (a) Councillors Betson, Gilbert and Woodley (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 Woodley – agenda item relating to SO46 (Beach Hut leases) – beach hut owner – withdrew;
- (c) Councillor Holland – agenda items relating to – Capital Monitoring; Issues facing HRA; PSP; HRA Land Review project – sons involvement - withdrew;
- (d) Councillor Holland – agenda item relating to police presentation – non-pecuniary – son is police officer;
- (e) Councillor Flewitt - agenda items relating to – issues facing HRA; HRA land review project - non-pecuniary – friend, family tenants of SEH Ltd;
- (f) Councillor Flewitt - agenda item relating to police presentation – non-pecuniary – sits as a JP in east London area;
- (g) Councillor Flewitt – agenda item relating to Capital Monitoring – non-pecuniary – Airport Business Park –potential impact upon section of highway within his ward;
- (h) Councillor Assenheim – agenda item relating to Issues facing HRA – non-pecuniary – sister lives in Adams Elms House & would be in receipt of refund;
- (i) Councillor Assenheim – agenda items relating to – police presentation; Issues facing HRA - Board member South Essex Homes – attended pursuant to the dispensation agreed by the Standards Committee on 19th February 2015, under S.33 of the Localism Act 2011 to participate in the debate and vote;
- (j) Councillor Betson – agenda item relating to Issues facing HRA - Board member

South Essex Homes – attended pursuant to the dispensation agreed by the Standards Committee on 19th February 2015, under S.33 of the Localism Act 2011 to participate in the debate and vote;

(k) Councillor Arscott – agenda item relating to Capital Monitoring – non-pecuniary – friends members of Westcliff Rugby Club mentioned, near Airport;

(l) Councillor Cox – agenda item relating to PSP – non-pecuniary – Trustee Shoebury Community Association;

(m) Councillor Hadley – agenda item relating to PSP – non-pecuniary – Shoebury Community Association;

(n) Councillor McMahon – agenda item relating to police presentation – non-pecuniary – work & worked with Street pastors;

(o) Councillor McMahon – agenda item relating to Capital monitoring – non-pecuniary – mention of Rochford Club, is home to sport activity for NFL – a family member is a team member of this.

466 Questions from Members of the Public

The Leader responded to the written question from Mr Webb on behalf of the Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning & Regulatory Services and also responded to a further written question from Mr Webb.

467 Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 15th October, 2015

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 15th October, 2015 be received, confirmed as a correct record and signed.

468 Notice of Motion - Printing and Distribution of Hard Copies of Council Papers

The Committee considered Minute 399 of Cabinet held on 10th November, 2015, which had been called in to scrutiny. This concerned the Notice of Motion in relation to the printing and distribution of Council papers which had been proposed by Councillor Hadley and seconded by Councillor Walker and referred to Cabinet from the Council held on 22nd October, 2015.

In response to questions, the Leader confirmed that the current arrangements will not change until Members are up to speed with the new ModGov system.

Resolved:-

That the following decision of Cabinet be noted:-

“That it be noted that there are no plans to cease the general production and distribution of hard copy agendas and reports in the short term.”

Note:- This is an Executive Function.

Executive Councillor:- Woodley

469 Monthly Performance Report

The Committee considered Minute 404 of Cabinet held on 10th November, together

with the Monthly Performance Report (MPR) covering the period to end September 2015. The Committee additionally had before it the Exceptions Report which had been circulated on 27th November 2015 which included key performance indicators on crime.

The Committee welcomed Chief Superintendent Luke Collison and Chief Inspector Simon Anslow to the meeting for this item. They gave a presentation on responding to today's demands and planning for tomorrow's challenges and provided an update on Southend crime statistics. The Committee asked a number of detailed questions which were fully responded to at the meeting.

Resolved:-

1. That the report be noted.
2. That Mr Collison and Mr Anslow be thanked for the excellent, informative and helpful presentation and for answering questions on the crime statistics.

Note:- This is an Executive Function.

Executive Councillor:- As appropriate to the item.

470 Capital Monitoring for 2015/16 and Revised Capital Programme 2015/16 to 2018/19

The Committee considered Minute 405 of Cabinet held on 10th November 2015, which had been called in to scrutiny, together with a report of the Corporate Director for Corporate Services setting out the capital expenditure as at 30th September 2015 and proposing in-year amendments to the approved Capital Programme for 2015/16 to 2018/19 and later years.

Resolved:-

That the following recommendations of Cabinet be noted:-

- “1. That the actual capital expenditure position as at 30th September 2015 of £16.128 million as shown in Section 4 and Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be noted.
2. That the financing position of the Capital programme as at 30th September 2015, as set out in Section 5 to the submitted report, be noted.
3. That the proposed changes to the Capital Programme as set out in Appendix 6 to the submitted report, be noted.
4. That the revised Capital Programme for 2015/16 to 2018/19 and later years, that results from the changes, as set out in Appendix 7 to the submitted report, be approved.”

Note:- This is a Council Function.

Executive Councillor:- Cllr Woodley

471 Issues Facing HRA

The Committee considered Minute 409 of Cabinet held on 10th November, 2015 which had been called in to scrutiny, together with a report of the Corporate Director for People on the various financial pressures facing the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

With regard to service charges for heating, the Corporate Director said that he would investigate the feasibility of new Southend Energy company supplying energy to sheltered flats.

Resolved:-

That the following decisions of Cabinet be noted:-

“1. That the submitted report be noted.

2. That the refund of overpaid heating charges, be approved.

3. That from 2016/17 consideration be given to South Essex Homes being charged with setting and recovering service, heating and water charges directly, and their management fee be reduced accordingly.”

Note:- This is an Executive Function.

Executive Councillor:- Cllr Norman MBE

472 Council Procedure Rule 46

The Committee considered Minute 416 of Cabinet held on 10th November, 2015, which had been called in to scrutiny. This concerned item 1.1 re Beach Hut Leases, and item 1.2 re purchase of 36 Malvern, Coleman Street only.

In response to a question regarding the Beach Hut Leases, the Corporate Director for Corporate Services agreed to send a written response on the frequency of the renewal on beach hut leases and an estimate of the rent position.

Resolved:-

That the submitted report be noted.

Note:- This is an Executive Function

Executive Councillor:- As appropriate to the item.

473 In depth scrutiny project - 'Control of personal debt and the advantages of employment'

Further to Minute 346 of the meeting held on 15th October, 2015, the Committee received and noted an oral update on the in depth scrutiny project – ‘Control of personal debt and the advantages of employment’.

A representative from the England Illegal Money Lending Team will be giving a presentation on their work to the next project team meeting in January which other members on the Scrutiny Committee are welcome to attend.

Resolved:-

That update be noted.

Note:- This is a Scrutiny function.

474 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.

475 Projects - PSP Southend LLP

The Committee considered Minute 419 of Cabinet held on 10th November, 2015, which had been called in to scrutiny, together with a report of the Corporate Director for Corporate Services providing an update on the projects to be progressed through the Council's partnership PSP Southend LLP.

In response to a question, the Leader gave a commitment to assisting local societies at one of the schemes.

Resolved:-

That the following decisions of Cabinet be noted:-

"1. That the schemes set out in sections 4 of the submitted report be progressed through PSP Southend LLP and that conditional options over the sites are granted to enable the projects to proceed.

2. That it be noted that the granting of conditional options to the LLP means that PSP Southend LLP Members' Board will make all future decisions with regard to the development of these sites and the projects will be managed through the LLP."

Note:- This is an Executive Function.

Executive Councillor:- Cllr Woodley

476 HRA Land Review Project

The Committee considered Minute 420 of Cabinet held on 10th November, 2015, which had been called in to scrutiny, together with a report of the Corporate Director for People on the HRA land review project.

Resolved:-

That the following recommendations of Cabinet be noted:-

“1. That the capital budget of the HRA Land Review Project be increased by the sum identified in the submitted report in order to appoint a contractor and progress the project.

2. That the capital programme be amended accordingly (funded as per section 5.3 of the submitted report) and to profile the total budget as set out in the submitted report in 2015/16 and the balance in 2016/17.”

Note:-This is a Council Function

Executive Councillor:- Cllr Norman MBE

Chairman: _____