

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STRATEGY COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL OFFICES, CORKS LANE, HADLEIGH ON THURSDAY 15 JANUARY 2015

PRESENT: Jennie Jenkins – Chairman

Clive Arthey	John Hinton
Simon Barrett	Kathy Pollard
Tony Bavington	Trot Ward
Sue Carpendale	Sue Wigglesworth
Richard Cave	

Nigel Bennett was unable to be present.

74 SUBSTITUTES

It was noted that in accordance with Council Procedure Rule No. 5, a substitute was in attendance as follows:-

Trot Ward (substituting for Nigel Bennett)

75 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Clive Arthey declared a pecuniary interest in respect of Minute No. 82 below by reason of owning land which might be affected by a future CIL charge and was not present in the Council Chamber when the item was under consideration.

76 MINUTES

A motion to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on [20 November 2014](#) was proposed and seconded. Prior to a vote being taken, Tony Bavington stated that Minute No 67 was incorrect in that, based on his understanding of Council Procedure Rule No 17, the resolution not to accept the Notice of Motion should have been a recommendation to Council, as proposed by him and seconded at the meeting.

The Chief Executive re-iterated the Monitoring Officer's previous advice on the interpretation of CPR 17. Members were reminded that the wording of the Rule is to be reviewed by the Constitution Review Working Group and were subsequently asked to vote on the motion before them, as a result of which a majority of Members voted in favour.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2014 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Tony Bavington voted against the motion to confirm the minutes for the reason given above and asked for his vote to be recorded in these minutes.

77 PETITIONS

None received.

78 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None received.

79 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

None received.

80 WORK PLAN

The Head of Corporate Organisation submitted [Paper P89R](#) relating to items which had been identified on the Corporate Work Plan.

RESOLVED

That Paper P89R be noted.

81 JOINT MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND DRAFT 2015/16 BUDGET

The Head of Corporate Resources introduced a report from Management Board ([Paper P90](#)), asking Members to consider the draft Joint Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and draft 2015/16 Budget, covering the General Fund, Council Housing and Capital Investment.

She confirmed that the proposals were for a balanced budget with no increase in Council Tax, no change to the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme and no reduction in services. She also referred to various key aspects including the uncertainty of Business Rates income, and of Government funding after the General Election, use of New Homes Bonus (NHB), and the role of the Capital Programme in supporting the Council's Delivery Programme.

Lou Rawsthorne, Corporate Manager then outlined the key elements of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Investment Strategy 2015/16 to 2019/20 and the HRA Budget for 2015/16.

Both officers responded to Members' questions on various matters including

- the SPARSE grant which supports campaigning to obtain further resources for the additional costs of rural services
- the 'limit rent' to be fixed by Government
- income generation from projects such as the installation of Solar Panels
- the varying percentages of receipts from property sales which were available to the Council for investment in new HRA homes
- the need for robust business cases to support 'invest to save' and income generating projects

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

- (1) **That the draft Joint Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Budget proposals set out in Paper P90 be endorsed subject to further consideration at the February meeting for recommendation to Council.**

- (2) That the final General Fund Budget for 2015/16 be based on:-
- (a) A continuation of the funding strategy agreed for 2014/15 in order to deliver the Council's Transformation Programme and Strategic Priority outcomes;
 - (b) Linked to the above, using an estimated £2m from New Homes Bonus and Business Rates (section 31 Grant) received in 2015/16 to support the Budget, including Programme Development resources;
 - (c) No increase in Council Tax.
- (3) That the draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Investment Strategy 2015/16 to 2019/20 and draft HRA Budget for 2015/16 be agreed subject to further consideration at the February Strategy Committee meeting of either:-
- (a) An increase of 3% increase in Council House rents, equivalent to an average rent increase of £2.68 a week or;
 - (b) Such lower increase that relates to the 'limit rent' fixed by the Government for next year, which could be 2.5%, equivalent to an average rent increase of £2.23 a week.
- (4) That the revised HRA Business Plan in Appendix B to Paper P90 be noted.
- (5) That the proposed capital programme in Appendix C be agreed including the addition of a provisional sum of £25m for "Other unspecified Delivery Plan projects". This can then be allocated to investment proposals that meet the desired investment strategy returns and strategic priority outcomes.

Sue Carpendale abstained from voting on the recommendations and asked for her abstention to be recorded in the minutes.

82 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

The Head of Corporate Organisation introduced a report by the Head of Economy ([Paper P91](#)), providing Members with an update on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) development programme. A replacement Appendix 2 had been circulated to Members prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Members were advised that Recommendation 2.2 should be amended to read 'That Option 3 in paragraphs 8.13 to 8.15 be adopted ...' and references in tables in the report to 1-10 dwellings to be amended to reflect the 1,000 sqm threshold in the Ministerial Statement.

Matt Deakin, Senior Policy Strategy Planner, responded to questions from Members.

RESOLVED

- (1) That (a) the work carried out to date on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) development programme and (b) the Ministerial Statement (Appendix 1 to Paper P91) be noted.**
- (2) That Option 3 in paragraphs 8.13 to 8.15 of Paper P91 be adopted as the Council's preferred approach to amending and taking forward the CIL Draft Charging Schedule in light of the Ministerial Statement.**
- (3) That the Head of Economy in consultation with the Chairman of the Strategy Committee be authorised to agree and make any minor changes to the CIL Draft Charging Schedule for Babergh in Appendix 3, if necessary, prior to publication for public consultation.**

83 NEW JOINT LOCAL PLAN DOCUMENT: EARLY STAGE (REGULATION 18) PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Corporate Manager – Spatial Planning Policy introduced a report from the Head of Economy ([Paper P92](#)) seeking Member approval to carry out an early (Issues and Options) stage external public consultation exercise in order to inform work on preparing the new joint Local Plan document. The report included at Appendix (a) the Issues and Options Consultation material together with an outline work programme and timetable at Appendix (b).

Members were asked to consider an additional recommendation as advised by the Corporate Manager – Spatial Planning Policy which had been circulated prior to the commencement of the meeting:

- 2.3 That the Corporate Manager – Spatial Planning Policy in consultation with the Babergh Lead Member for Planning and Economic Development, be authorised to make such additional changes, plus any necessary corrections and clarifications as deemed beneficial to the consultation documents prior to the formal public consultation period.

The Corporate Manager responded to Members' questions and outlined how supplementary documents would be used to provide the detail to support the final Joint Local Plan Document.

RESOLVED

- (1) That agreement be given to officers embarking on an early (Issues and Options) stage external public consultation exercise starting in January 2015 in order to inform work on the commencement of preparing the new joint Local Plan document.**
- (2) That the Outline Work Programme and Timetable (Appendix (b)) for developing this new joint Local Plan document be approved.**

- (3) That the Corporate Manager – Spatial Planning Policy in consultation with the Babergh Lead Member for Planning and Economic Development, be authorised to make such additional changes, plus any necessary corrections and clarifications as deemed beneficial to the consultation documents prior to the formal public consultation period.**

The business of the meeting was concluded at 6:40 p.m.

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Chairman