

# Policy and Resources Committee

## Minutes

Tuesday, 22 September 2020 at 15:30

### PRESENT:-

Councillor Smith (in the Chair); Councillors P Carpenter, Grant, P Hammond, Myers, Plant, Wainwright, B Walker, C M Walker, Wells & Williamson.

Councillor Candon attended as a substitute for Councillor Flaxman-Taylor.

Mrs S Oxtoby (Chief Executive Officer), Ms K Sly (Finance Director), Mrs P Boyce (Strategic Director), Mrs L Barker (Strategic Director), Mrs N Turner (Housing Director), Mrs J Beck (Head of Property & Asset Management), Ms C Whatling (Monitoring Officer), Mr J Wedon (Senior Performance & Data Protection Officer), Mr M Severn (IT Support Officer) & Mrs S Wintle (Corporate Services Manager).

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Flaxman-Taylor & A Wright.

The Chairman passed on his best wishes, and those of the Committee, to Councillor B Wright, who had recently undergone an operation at the Norfolk & Norwich hospital and wished her a speedy recovery.

## **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Williamson declared a personal interest in items 8 & 14 as he was the Chairman of the Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust.

Councillor Wells declared a personal interest in items 8 & 14 as he was a member of the Great Yarmouth Preservation Trust.

Councillor Plant declared a personal interest in item 15 as he was a Director of Equinox Enterprises Ltd.

However, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, they were allowed to both speak and vote on the matters.

## **3 MINUTES - 21 JULY 2020**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2020 were confirmed by assent.

## **4 MINUTES - 28 JULY 2020**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2020 were confirmed by assent.

## **5 FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee received & considered the Forward Plan.

Councillor Wainwright requested that an item be added to the Forward Plan; Memorial Vases on benches on Gorleston Seafront. The Chairman reported that the Head of Property & Asset Management was compiling a report on the matter which would be presented to P & R Committee on the 20 October 2020.

The Chairman informed the Committee that a Special Council had been agreed with His Worship, The Mayor and would take place on Tuesday, 29 September 2020 at 6.30pm.

The Chairman reported that the following service committees would take place:-

- Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee - 1 October 2020 at 4pm

- Economic Development Committee - 26 October 2020 at 4pm
- Environment Committee - 4 November 2020
- Policy & Resources Committee - 20 October & 17 November 2020 at 3.30 pm.

## **6 QUARTER ONE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020/21**

The Committee received and considered the report from the Senior Performance & Data Protection Officer.

The Senior Performance & Data Protection Officer gave an update on current performance for the first quarter, April to June 2020/21, where progress was assessed against targets which were set at the start of the financial year.

The Senior Performance & Data Protection Officer reported that due to the Covid19 pandemic, most key projects had to be paused during quarter 1 of 2020/21 with senior management being redirected to the Council's Covid response, however, major projects such as the Marina Centre redevelopment did continue through this time.

The report also provided an update on the position of key projects which were linked to the corporate priorities from "The Plan 2020-25". A summary of progress for the suite of key projects and individual highlight reports for each of these key projects were presented in Appendix 1 of the report.

The Senior Performance & Data Protection Officer reported that the performance measures, as set out in Appendix 2, gave a comprehensive overview of how the authority as a whole was performing and covered most Council functions.

Councillor Wainwright referred to PR03: Collection rates Council Tax (Quarterly Cumulative) as he thought the predicted annual target of 97% for 20/21 was particularly high as many residents in the Borough had been furloughed or were experiencing financial hardship due to Covid19 and he felt that this figure should be re-looked at. He was also concerned regarding PR04: Empty Homes and asked why the Council could not facilitate a quicker turn around of empty properties. The Chief Executive reported that these homes were not in Council ownership but the Council was planning a targeted approach to reduce the numbers.

Councillor P Carpenter asked for clarification as to whether the security company were in situ at the Marina Centre and whether the start of construction would be delayed due to Covid19. The Strategic Director reported that security was on site and a six week gearing up period prior to the construction phase was in progress and it was hoped that the start date would not slip far past the planned date of 1 October 2020.

The Chairman asked that the Waterways project update be removed from future reports as the project was now complete.

Councillor Williamson asked that a meeting of the Wellesley Recreation Ground Working Group be arranged to give Members an update.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:-

That the Committee note all measures to be monitored during the next quarter and all key projects would continue to be monitored over the next quarter with the aim of maintaining a green status and where possible attaining a green status for those key projects which are currently amber.

### **7 REGULATORY INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 (RIPA) REPORT ON AUTHORISATIONS AND POLICY UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered the report from the Monitoring Officer.

The Monitoring Officer advised Members that no requests had been made for surveillance to be undertaken under the Regulatory Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) for the financial year 2019-20 and that following an inspection by IPCO, the policy had been updated to accord with the latest legislation and guidance.

#### RESOLVED:-

That the Committee note the report.

### **8 MARKET PLACE REDEVELOPMENT**

The Committee received and considered the report from the Head of Property & Asset Management. The Chairman reminded the Committee that the report contained a confidential appendix which should not be discussed during the public meeting.

The Head of Property & Asset Management detailed the updated design for the Market Place redevelopment to the Committee. Following the planning consultation, Historic England, had raised concerns regarding the structure of the six-day market and how it aligned with The Rows and integrated with the surrounding town centre. Adjustment of the roof line and more detail on the outward facing stalls together with some minor amendments to the stall layout have enabled the design to be undertaken over three phases now rather than the original planned two phases. This scheme would provide for additional corner stalls and enable traders to relocate over a longer time period.

The Head of Property & Asset Management reported that the redevelopment costs included the provision of a standard unit and traders will as part of the relocation process incur moving costs. Although the Council would not be liable for the costs to assist traders to relocate into their new stalls, it was suggested that a fund be made available to cover relocation costs. Two options have been considered; a loan facility and a service charge.

The Chairman reported that Councillor Wainwright and himself had attended a meeting of the market traders last week prior to the planning application being heard by the Development Control Committee.

Councillor B Walker asked whether the time capsule would be dug up which had been buried in the market place as part of the Council's 2020 Vision. The Chairman reported that this was in hand.

Councillor Plant asked for clarification regarding the loan facility and service charge options being considered to assist the market traders.

**RESOLVED:-**

That the Committee approve the provision of support to six-day traders relocation into the new market development through an option of a service charge as part of a new lease. The fund would be directly related to the cost of fixtures and fittings and calculated over the life of the lease. Final details of the lease agreement to be agreed in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer and Chief Executive.

## **9 ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY FOR TRANSITIONAL HOUSING**

The Committee received and considered the report from the Housing Director. The Chairman reminded the Committee that the report contained a confidential appendix which should not be discussed during the public meeting.

The Housing Director sought approval from the Committee to purchase properties from a Registered Provider to be held within the General Fund. Once the properties were repaired and renovated, they would be used as a transitional housing scheme allowing the occupiers to learn the skills to successfully maintain a tenancy.

The Chairman congratulated the Housing Director and her team for an excellent report and for securing £400k of the necessary funding element.

Councillor Williamson also congratulated the Housing Director & her team and asked whether this scheme would meet all of the current need in the Borough. The Housing Director responded that it would go a long way to meeting the current need but would not satisfy current demand.

Councillor Plant asked for assurance that the building would be free of tenure, that due diligence and a structural survey had been undertaken and a business case would be produced to understand the complexities of the Grade II building and to ensure that the works previously carried out were acceptable to meet current standards. He also suggested that a conversation should be undertaken with the Conservation Team. The Housing Director reported that Property Services had looked at the building and she would request a structural survey and hold discussions with the Conservation Team.

Councillor Wainwright congratulated the Housing Director for the excellent report and the funding which had been secured and reiterated the need for the building to be free of tenure to allow the Council to proceed.

**RESOLVED:-**

That the Committee:-

- (i) Approve, subject to a successful application for grant funding, the purchase of the properties identified in the confidential appendix from the Registered Provider,
- (ii) Recommend to Full Council the approval of the expenditure and the borrowing set out in the confidential appendix to purchase, repair and renovate the properties and meet all associated costs associated with the purchase and the intended use of the properties; and
- (iii) Delegate decisions in relation to the purchase of the properties and the completion of the required renovation works to the Head of Property & Asset Management and completion of any lease/licence to manage the properties once renovated, to the Housing Director & Section 151 Officer.

## **10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman reported that there was no other business being of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

## **11 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:-**

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12(A) of the said Act.

**12 CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX C - MARKET PLACE REDEVELOPMENT**

(Confidential Minute on this Item)

**13 CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX - ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY FOR TRANSITIONAL HOUSING**

(Confidential Minute on this Item)

**14 CONFIDENTIAL - COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER**

(Confidential Minute on this Item)

**15 CONFIDENTIAL - EQUINOX ENTERPRISES LIMITED AND EQUINOX PROPERTY HOLDINGS LIMITED - JULY AND AUGUST 2020 UPDATE**

(Confidential Minute on this Item)

**16 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES - 28 July 2020**

(Confidential Minute on this Item)

The meeting ended at: 17:30