

**Cabinet**  
**21 SEPTEMBER 2017**

Present: Councillors: Ray Dawe (Leader), Jonathan Chowen (Deputy Leader), Philip Circus, Brian Donnelly, Gordon Lindsay and Tricia Youtan

Apologies: Councillors: Kate Rowbottom and Claire Vickers

Also Present: Karen Burgess, Peter Burgess, Paul Clarke, Leonard Crosbie, Matthew French, Nigel Jupp and David Skipp

EX/29 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

EX/30 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

EX/31 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture made three announcements:

The launch of 20 new affordable housing units Cowfold would be taking place on 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 2017. These would be primarily for local residents, followed by those in neighbouring villages or with a local connection to Cowfold.

The launch of the project 'The Bridge' at Broadbridge Heath had taken place and work had now commenced on the development of the new sports centre.

Finally, tickets remained available for the launch night of the Horsham District Year of Culture on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September at the Capitol and Members were encouraged to come along.

The Cabinet Member for the Local Economy announced that the first annual Ameri-Car-Na event would be taking place in Horsham on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September. Proceeds would be donated to St Catherine's Hospice.

EX/32 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

No questions had been received.

EX/33 **PIRIES PLACE CAR PARK - POTENTIAL REPLACEMENT**

The Cabinet Members for Local Economy and Finance & Assets reported on a proposal for the demolition of Piries Place Car Park and its replacement with a new larger car park with improved usability and additional spaces.

The car park currently comprised 330 spaces and, whilst it was a popular car park within the town centre, it had a number of operational shortcomings which detracted from user experience:

- Narrow ramps with poor visibility
- Heads of ramps met with the need to give way (i.e. down traffic conflicted with up traffic)
- A high number of internal columns, which needed to be manoeuvred in order to park and exit
- Approximately 50% of the spaces were sub-standard with a width of less than 2.4 metres
- Difficult to access corner bays made some spaces unusable
- Cul de sac zones
- Poor lighting
- Tired appearance

Piries Place Shopping Centre was being redeveloped to create a new restaurant, cinema and hotel destination, due for completion in January 2019, and there was an opportunity to redevelop the car park within the same timescale, to achieve a coordinated opening with this major evening and leisure destination.

Consultants had been commissioned to undertake a review of parking capacity in Horsham and their report concluded that, whilst at present there was spare parking capacity within the town centre car parks, the effect of present and future development meant that this surplus was diminishing and would be taken up between 2018 and 2023. The consultants had therefore identified a requirement for between 200 and 380 new spaces by 2031.

The spare parking capacity that currently existed within the town centre would provide headroom whilst the car park was closed for redevelopment, although a mitigation strategy would be required during this period to manage peak demand.

Plans had been prepared which showed that, subject to planning approval, redevelopment of the car park could achieve from 113 to 230 additional spaces, including extra spaces for disabled drivers and parents with children.

It was proposed that the redevelopment of the car park would be procured through a Scape Group framework in order to meet the time constraints of coordinating this project with the Piries Place development. Scape Group was a public sector owned organisation which operated OJEU compliant

frameworks and, with a Scape framework, a contractor was selected to undertake the work on a design and build basis. To achieve programme, design development would take place alongside the planning and Council approval process, which meant there was a risk of abortive fees being incurred by the Council if, for example, planning permission were refused.

It was estimated that the capital cost of the project would be between £6,250,000 and £7,250,000 depending upon the option finally chosen and appropriate sources of funding would be identified by the Director of Corporate Resources (S151 Officer). Details of the resource consequences of the proposal were reported.

The proposal had been considered by a joint meeting of the Local Economy and Finance & Assets Policy Development Advisory Groups and their comments were reported.

#### RESOLVED

- (i) That the proposed redevelopment of Piries Place Car Park be approved, subject to satisfactory funding and satisfactory planning permission.
- (ii) That the Director of Planning, Economic Development and Property be authorised to enter into the contract for the construction of the facility within the approved budget figure.

#### RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL

That a supplementary capital budget of up to £7,250,000 be approved for the proposed redevelopment of Piries Place Car Park, phased across 2017/18 and 2018/19, provided that if the smaller scheme is approved the budget shall not exceed £6,250,000.

#### REASON

To replace an existing multi-storey car park, which has significant shortcomings, with a new larger facility which will meet modern standards and customer expectations.

#### EX/34 **PLANNING OBLIGATIONS AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Development reminded Cabinet that, as agreed by Council on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2017, the Council would start, from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017, to charge the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on liable developments (residential development and 'large format' retail development, including supermarkets and retail warehousing) at a charge of £135 per square metre for residential and £100 per square metre for 'large format' retail development. Funds collected through the CIL would be spent on infrastructure

on a District-wide basis (e.g. education, health, parks, sport and leisure, and transport).

In addition to the CIL charge, the Council needed to clarify what would be sought through Section 106 agreements. The revised Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) would provide this clarification. It was noted that affordable housing would still be provided through Section 106 agreements. In addition, the Council would only be able to seek funds through Section 106 agreements for local infrastructure schemes where they were directly linked to a particular development and could be classed as direct on-site mitigation.

Details of the key issues raised in respect of the draft Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD during the consultation period, and the recommended responses to those comments, were reported.

The Cabinet Member recommended approval of the Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD, incorporating revisions following consultation, so that it could come into force on the same day as the Community Infrastructure Levy.

#### RESOLVED

- (i) That the representations and responses to the draft Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document be noted.
- (ii) That the Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document, as amended by the changes set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved as supplementary guidance to be used in the determination of planning applications from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017.
- (iii) That the Cabinet Member for Planning and Development be authorised to approve minor editorial changes prior to publication.

#### REASON

To provide guidance on how Section 106 contributions will be sought once the Horsham CIL Charging Schedule is implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017.

#### EX/35 **DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS RATES RELIEF SCHEME**

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets reported that, in the Spring 2017 Budget, the Government had announced the establishment of a £300 million discretionary rate relief fund to support those businesses that faced the steepest increases in their business rates bills as a result of the 2017 revaluation.

Calculated under a national formula, the Council had been allocated a grant of £789,350 by the Government from this fund over four years, designed to taper off over the period.

The Government expected each local authority to devise their own local scheme to assist businesses. The conditions of the Government grant required authorities to provide support only to those ratepayers who faced an increase in their bills following revaluation and to provide support to ratepayers who faced the most significant increases in bills and those occupying lower value properties. A proposed scheme had therefore been prepared which targeted smaller, local businesses with increases of 7% or more in their business rate bills.

In the event that the discretionary rate relief awarded under the qualifying criteria (7% increase in bills for those properties with a RV of between £15,000 and £150,000) did not use the entire grant allocation for 2017/18, under the delegated authority, the Director of Corporate Resources and Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets would be able to flex the criteria slightly – for example perhaps by lowering the criteria to 6.75% (and an RV of between £15,000 and £150,000). This would help meet the Council's objective to spend as much of the available grant as possible.

The Finance and Assets Policy Development Advisory Group supported the proposed scheme. As the precepting authority, West Sussex County Council had also been consulted, in line with the Government's requirements, and welcomed the proposed scheme to support businesses detrimentally impacted by the revaluation of business rates.

#### RESOLVED

- (i) That the principles on which the Council would deliver the discretionary rate relief scheme be approved as reported.
- (ii) That the application of the scheme and resulting awards of discretionary relief be delegated to the Director of Corporate Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets.

#### REASON

The scheme will assist businesses occupying lower value properties that are facing rising rates bills as a result of the 2017 revaluation.

#### EX/36 **TRANSFORMATION FUND - TOP UP FROM THE 2016/17 BUDGET SURPLUS**

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets reported that the Council had delivered a £776,000 revenue surplus in 2016/17, after allowing for budgets that

would be carried over to 2017/18 to cover essential expenditure which had been unavoidably delayed.

A balanced budget was currently forecast from 2017/18 through to 2019/20 but this relied on the implementation of a range of actions to help deliver further income generation and efficiency measures, which would require further investment in transformational projects.

It was therefore proposed that £500,000 should be transferred from the General Fund reserve to the earmarked transformation reserve to assist with the implementation of such measures in the future. Effectively, this would be funded from the 2016/17 budget surplus.

The Finance and Assets Policy Development Advisory Group had been consulted and supported the proposal.

#### RESOLVED

- (i) That the transfer of £500,000 from the General Fund reserve to an earmarked transformation reserve be approved.
- (ii) That the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, be authorised to use the transformation fund as appropriate.

#### REASON

To top up the earmarked transformation reserve for projects that will help transform the Council in the future; being effectively funded from the 2016/17 budget surplus.

#### EX/37 **GIGABIT WEST SUSSEX**

The Cabinet Member for Finance & Assets reported that West Sussex County Council was planning to change its wide area network site connectivity in eight key towns in the County by installing a gigabit capable dark fibre network connecting local authority sites in the selected towns and had invited relevant District and Borough Councils to join the project.

The project would deliver new end-to-end dark fibre networks in Worthing, Shoreham, Chichester, Bognor Regis, Horsham, Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill and Crawley through a 20-year lease agreement with a single supplier. The selected sites would all be connected at 1000Mb (gigabit) speeds, with the County Council making the initial capital investment on behalf of the partner councils and then charging partners annually under the current wider area network arrangements without any increases in charges.

The Policy Development Advisory Groups for Economic Development and Finance & Assets had been consulted and supported the proposal.

RESOLVED

- (i) Agreed in principle that the sites within Horsham District, namely Parkside (including the Capitol Theatre), Hop Oast Depot and Horsham Museum, be part of a 20 year lease of new dark/passive fibre infrastructure as part of a contract between West Sussex County Council and the selected supplier subject to central Government funding, agreed lease terms and on a cost neutral basis.
- (ii) That the Director of Corporate Resources be authorised to enter into the necessary agreements once the tendering process has been satisfactorily completed.

REASONS

- (i) To take advantage of Central Government Gap Funding.
- (ii) To achieve the availability of world class digital infrastructure is vital to facilitate the delivery of public services, drive economic growth and enhance community wellbeing.

EX/38 **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

There were no matters currently outstanding for consideration.

EX/39 **FORWARD PLAN**

The Forward Plan was noted.

EX/40 **TO CONSIDER MATTERS OF SPECIAL URGENCY**

There were no matters of special urgency to be considered.

*The meeting closed at 6.22 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm*

**CHAIRMAN**