

Investment Board – 16 March 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the **Investment Board** held on **16 March 2016** when there were present:-

Chairman: Cllr M J Steptoe
Vice-Chairman: Cllr J R F Mason

Cllr T G Cutmore
Cllr R R Dray
Cllr N J Hookway
Cllr M Hoy
Cllr K H Hudson

Cllr G J Ioannou
Cllr Mrs J E McPherson
Cllr I H Ward
Cllr M J Webb
Cllr Mrs C A Weston

VISITING MEMBER

Cllr D J Sperring

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr C I Black.

OFFICERS PRESENT

A Dave	-	Chief Executive
S Scrutton	-	Director
M Harwood-White	-	Assistant Director, Commercial Services
M Hotten	-	Assistant Director, Environmental Services
M Power	-	Committee Administrator

57 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

58 MAXIMISE OUR ASSETS: ASSET REGISTER REVIEW

The Board considered the report of the Assistant Director, Commercial Services outlining the arrangements for the Asset Register Review project, which falls within the Maximise our Assets work stream.

In response to Member questions, the following was noted:

- The Council's Legal team are undertaking a review of all of the Rochford District Council owned sites and to identify any assets/sites that are not currently in the Asset Register. In terms of timescale, the initial phase of the review has identified sites listed on the Land Registry under Rayleigh Urban District Council and Rochford Rural Council that are not included in the existing Register. Deed packs will be created for these sites, with a view to their incorporation into the Asset Register by the end of May. An update on progress will be available by the end of April.

- The remaining Titles in the Asset Register will be reviewed but because of the size of the task, this will be done over a number of phases.
- The Register will be categorised and assets will be examined to identify options available to the Council, including, for example, premises with long leases to determine the best option available, including continuing with the lease or buying out the lease and re-developing the site.
- No additional significant pieces of land or sites have yet been identified during this review.

Resolved

- (1) That the approach to review the Asset Register identified in the officer report be noted.
- (2) That the Project Sponsor (with other invited Members the Project Sponsor identifies) meets with the officer project team for a detailed review of progress to date.

59 MAXIMISE OUR ASSETS: CREMATORIUM PROJECT

The Board considered the report of the Assistant Director – Environmental Services with an update on the Crematorium Project.

On 12 April the project team will meet to consider the scoping of the project and to determine whether there is a business case for proceeding with the establishment of a crematorium in the District. This meeting will be facilitated by an expert and 'top line' figures will be available: the initial views of the project team will be available following this. The expert who was initially approached is now not available to attend this meeting: the officer confirmed that the expert now appointed to attend the meeting is as qualified and able to advise the project team.

During discussion it was noted that pricing and future sales would not be included in this project as their inclusion may cause delay to the overall project and could detract from the focus of the scoping.

Research will be undertaken prior to the meeting on 12 April, including networking with other Councils that have gone through a similar process. Consideration will be given to aspects such as location and funding and any information will be circulated to the project team prior to the meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That the approach identified in the officer report to establish feasibility of the crematorium project be noted.

- (2) That the Project Sponsor (with other invited Members the Project Sponsor identifies) meets with the officer project team for a detailed review of progress to date.

60 MAXIMISE OUR ASSETS: ROCHFORD PROJECT

The Director and Leader of the Council provided a verbal update on the Rochford Project.

During discussion, the following was noted:

The Rochford Project is making good progress. Architects have been appointed and have toured sites in Rochford. The architects have been given a brief of designs that, as well as being functional and profitable, would be suitable for and in keeping with Rochford, and are working towards developing options in respect of the sites identified. The Leader and Deputy Leader will be meeting with the architects in the next two weeks. (Details of the architects, Levitt Bernstein, would be circulated to Investment Board Members.)

A progress meeting is planned for 20 April at which options will be reviewed by the project team. A report scheduled to be available in June will detail the final appraisals of the various options for consideration.

The Director advised that if it is decided to move to the next stage of the project the Council will have to give consideration to how the project will be funded.

It was confirmed that any reports that contain commercially sensitive information will be taken in private and confidential session when discussed. The issue of confidentiality will need to be considered as the projects progress.

61 COUNTRY PARK PROJECT

The Portfolio Holders for Community and Environment provided an update on the Country Park Project.

The Project Sponsor is Cllr Mrs J E McPherson. An initial, informal meeting was held to discuss a number of options and possible projects; these were passed to officers to look at in detail. A further meeting will be scheduled to draw up a project plan. A Member commented that tourism is likely to be a factor for consideration due to the business park development on Cherry Orchard Way.

62 NOMINATION OF MEMBER SPONSOR FOR HOCKLEY/RAYLEIGH PROJECT

Cllr Mrs C A Weston was agreed as Project Sponsor for the Hockley/Rayleigh Project. Cllrs R R Dray and M Webb would be on the project team. An initial meeting will be arranged.

63 PROJECT OFFICE UPDATE

The Director provided an update on the Project Office.

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The Project Office has commenced its work by undertaking a skills audit in respect of both officers and Members. Project Initiation Documents for all of the Projects have been prepared. The Project Sponsor event was a success and various support documents are being produced as a result. Work is now underway to prepare spreadsheet for all Projects, with timelines. Discussions around creation of a trading arm/trading company will now commence: the first meeting is scheduled to take place on 17 March. Further information will be available in due course.

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm.

Chairman

Date

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