

Investment Board – 18 January 2017

Minutes of the meeting of the **Investment Board** held on **18 January 2017** when there were present:-

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

Cllr T G Cutmore
Cllr N J Hookway
Cllr M Hoy

Cllr G J Ioannou
Cllr M J Webb
Cllr A L Williams

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs R R Dray, Mrs T R Hughes, T E Mountain and J E Newport.

SUBSTITUTES

Cllr Mrs C M Mason	- for Cllr T E Mountain
Cllr Mrs L Shaw	- for Cllr R R Dray
Cllr C M Stanley	- for Cllr J E Newport

VISITING MEMBERS

Cllrs Mrs J R Gooding, M J Lucas-Gill and D J Sperring.

OFFICERS PRESENT

S Scrutton	- Managing Director
N Khan	- Executive Director
M Harwood-White	- Assistant Director, Commercial Services
M Power	- Democratic Services Officer

6 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7 THE OLD HOUSE: OPTIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE USE

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director, Commercial Services outlining alternative options for the future use of the Old House, Rochford following recent office accommodation changes and seeking Member agreement to take forward the proposed options.

During debate, it was noted that once the Old House has been established as a Civil Ceremony venue, the offer can be developed to make available for an additional fee other rooms within the Old House and the garden, including the option of a marquee.

In response to a Member question, the Assistant Director, Commercial Services advised that the projected income in the report for the use of the Old House as

a Civil Ceremony venue was achievable and was based on the experience by the Council of holding civil ceremonies at the Windmill, Rayleigh, and the growth of revenue received by this venue. It was noted that, after initial set up costs in year one, the projected financial outlay would be low, primarily in respect of the cost of a licence and marketing of the services offered. Staffing costs were included in the projected figures; civil ceremony assistants are paid on an hourly basis.

To achieve the projected income in 2020/21 of £17,500, which was based on usage of the Windmill as a wedding venue, approximately 25 civil ceremonies would need to be held. The Old House venue for civil ceremonies would be run in a similar way to the Rayleigh Windmill venue.

Members recognised that the heritage of the District was important and that the public tours of the Old House should continue. A Member suggestion that relevant museum pieces and artefacts could be displayed in the Old House to develop the tour experience would be considered as management of the tours developed.

In response to a Member question, officers confirmed that the total projected expenditure for 2017/18 would be reduced if options A and B were to be combined, from £22,700 to approximately £17,700. The resolution would be amended to reflect this.

Resolved

- (1) That an access strategy to inform an access plan for the Old House be developed.
- (2) That, pending the outcome of (1), the Old House be licensed for Civil Ceremonies.
- (3) That, pending (2), authority be delegated to the Assistant Director, Commercial Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Enterprise and the Portfolio Holder for Community, to set the fees and charges for the use of the Old House for Civil Ceremonies and the Old House and the Civic Suite for meeting use by external organisations.
- (4) That, pending (3), the budget requirement be released, as outlined in the report, for Civil Ceremony and meeting room use of the Old House (noting that there will be a combined expenditure for 2017/18 in respect of options A and B of £17,700).
- (5) That the further uses outlined in the report, such as heritage, tours, education use and the potential for use as the Chairman's parlour, be developed. (ADCS)

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining item of business on the grounds that exempt information, as detailed in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1972, would be disclosed.

8 PROJECT WYVERN MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The Committee considered the exempt report of the Assistant Director, Commercial Services inviting Members to endorse the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Provision of Consultancy Services for Housing and Public Sector Land Development, in respect of Project Wyvern, for the Council by Essex County Council.

There was discussion in relation to the mechanism for releasing funds to Essex County Council for works undertaken and a request for a copy of the project plan to be circulated to Members of the Investment Board.

It was requested that, to aid clarification, wording in one paragraph of the MOU be amended.

Detail on the discussion is set out in the exempt appendix to these Minutes.

Resolved

That the contents of the Memorandum of Understanding, as attached as an appendix to the exempt report, be endorsed, subject to the amendment to the wording detailed in the exempt appendix to the Minutes. (ADCS)

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

Chairman

Date

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