

PEOPLE & PLACES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2021 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Collins (Chairman)

Cllrs. Dr. Canet, Cheeseman, Dyball, Edwards-Winsor, Hudson and Raikes

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. P. Darrington and Foster

Cllrs. Perry Cole, Dickins, Coleman, Parkin were also present via a virtual media platform, which does not constitute attendance as recognised by the Local Government Act 1972.

12. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the People & Places Advisory Committee held on 15 June 2021 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

13. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

14. Actions from Previous Meeting

The actions and updates were noted.

15. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder expressed her thanks to Kelly Webb and the Team who were involved in the thank you event that was held for the Volunteers who had helped throughout the Coronavirus pandemic. She had received thanks from those who attended, with praise for a wonderful evening.

The Portfolio Holder went on to share some service Highlights with Members including that a bid had been submitted to the UK Community Renewal Fund, and a bid for match funding from the Helping Hands Fund. If the bid was successful it would be used for a community hub project that would support 18-24 year olds in Swanley St Mary's & White Oak wards. The benefits would help develop those who were Not in Education or Employment or Training (NEETS) or those who were at risk of becoming NEET. It would also further support those who risk falling out of the system and missing out on government support.

Members were updated on the successful bids from Kent County Council's Containment Outbreak Management Fund, which helped to support the Family Fun

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days, carers event, Kent wide safeguarding system, Freedom domestic abuse support and the shop radio scheme.

Members were also updated with work continuing within the Community Safety Team, work surrounding leisure including the new White Oak Leisure Centre and refurbishments works for Orchards Academy sports hall; the West Kent Partnership including the including Kickstart scheme.

In regards to the voluntary sector, a Carers thank you event was held on 9 August at St Julians, as a thank you to all the carers in the District. The Portfolio Holder expressed her thanks again to the Team for organising a successful event. The 2022 Making It Happen community awards were to take place on 9 March 2022, and was open for applications. The Community Grants Scheme would be open again for applications, and Citizens Advice had signed their Service Level agreement for the first year.

The Portfolio Holder announced, that Millwall Football club had purchased land in West Kingsdown and would be working with the local community regarding their plans.

Members took the opportunity to ask questions of the Portfolio Holder on the update she provided.

The Chairman thanked the Portfolio Holder for her update

16. Referral from Cabinet or the Audit committee

There were none.

17. Budget 2021/22: Review of Service Dashboards and Service Change Impact Assessments (SCIAs)

The Head of Finance presented the report which set out updates to the 2022/23 budget within the existing framework of the 10-year budget and savings plan. The report presented growth and savings/additional income proposals that had been identified which needed to be considered, and requested further suggestions from Members, before finalising the budget for 2022/23.

Informed by the latest information from Government and discussions with Cabinet, it was proposed that the Council continued to set a revenue budget that assumed no direct funding from Government through the Revenue Support Grant or New Homes Bonus. This would result in the Council continuing to be financially self-sufficient. To achieve this aim and to ensure a balanced budget position over the next 10-year period would continue to be challenging due to the ongoing financial impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, homelessness and inflationary pressures.

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The budget process would be the same as two years ago as opposed to the shortened process last year, but streamlining the process in future years was being investigated.

No changes had been made to the assumptions at this stage, and the annual budget gap included in the report was £100,000 which related to the annual savings target. It was expected however, that the gap would increase.

Members discussed the report and it was suggested that the Council could charge for paid tourism events and sporting events.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that consideration be given to asking Officers to explore the following further suggestions for growth and income

- i) Charging for tourism events; and
- ii) Charging for sporting events

18. Voluntary Sector Barometer Survey

The Health and Communities Manager presented the report which detailed the results and the steps being taken to action the issues raised from the Voluntary Sector Forum's barometer survey in May 2021. Covid-19 had a major impact on the voluntary and community sector both nationally and locally and the survey would track the impact on the voluntary and community sector in the District.

Members were advised that the results of the survey were attached as Appendix A with the results groups by theme. A second barometer survey would shortly be undertaken to assess the action taken on issues identified so far.

Members discussed the report, focussing on the number of volunteers, and how to reach out to those who could volunteer their time.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Quality Duty

Resolved: that the report be noted and recommended to Cabinet.

19. End of Year Community Grants

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The Health and Communities Manager presented the report which provided Members with the year-end update on the 2020/21 Community Grants. During the summer, recipients of the grant were asked to provide an update and if there had been an impact of Covid-19 on their project, service or activity together with any changes made or planned. Since September, the Council had worked with all recipients to deliver as much of the projects, services and activities as possible. Where this had not been possible, the Council had accrued returned unspent monies and reinvested it in 2021/22 Community Grants, and carried forward two projects for delivery in 2021/22.

Members were provided with a summary of the community grants and their attention was brought to the case studies attached.

Members expressed their thanks to the Team and were pleased to see that a flexible approach had been taken to deliver services in unprecedented times.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

20. Farmstead Drive, Spitals Cross, Edenbridge - Development Proposal

The Strategic Head of Property and Commercial presented the report which sought approval for funding to undertake further feasibility and design work to facilitate the submission of a planning application and to deliver the scheme subject to receiving the necessary statutory consents. The development proposal was for a site located on Farmstead Road, within the Spitals Cross housing estate in Edenbridge. As this was a new capital project that was not accounted for in the Capital Programme 2020/21, and the estimated project budget, Council approval was required.

The estate was built in the 1960s, and as such the community buildings that currently occupied the proposed development site were at the end of their economic life and required substantial refurbishment. There was the opportunity to redevelop and re-provide the community hall and its facilities and to replace the shop with modern premises, to provide new housing, and public open space and parking. The sale of the residential accommodation would provide capital receipts to pay for these improvements.

Members asked questions of clarification. The District's Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2017) suggested that this part of the District required 79 new homes a year.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that

- a) It be recommended to Council that, the provision of £7,609, 620 in the 2021/22 Capital Programme to deliver the scheme within the financial implications, detailed as (i) to (vi) below, be agreed;

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- i. The scheme be intended to be funded (ultimately) from capital receipts from the sale of residential units in the scheme;
 - ii. A summary of the estimated scheme funding, based on feasibility to date;
 - iii. 23 residential units would be disposed of in the open market and according to the Council's property consultant, which were expected to generate a sales receipt of £8.143m. The affordable housing units were expected to generate £1.172m and would be discounted to reflect development costs and were in line with current market practice for affordable housing;
 - iv. Until receipts from the sales of the residential units were received, short-term external borrowing be used to fund the scheme. Potential financing costs were detailed within paragraph 18 of the report;
 - v. The new retail unit would be retained by the Council, and let on market terms. The Community Hall be leased to reflect community benefit, but also to ensure future on-going liabilities be recuperated; and
 - vi. Consideration be given to the VAT implications of the project, dependant on the use of some of the elements of the project may require specific VAT treatment and further VAT advice be sought.
- b) subject to approval, of recommendation (a) by Council, authority be delegated to the Strategic Head of Property and Commercial and the Chief Officer Finance & Trading, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance & Investments to proceed with the Scheme subject to final scheme viability; and
- c) subject to approval of recommendation (a) by Council, authority be delegated to the Strategic Head of Property and Commercial following consultation with the Chief Officer Finance and Trading and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to submit a planning application and to enter into any necessary contracts to facilitate the development and construction of the proposed scheme in accordance with the Council's Contracts Procedure Rules and for the disposal of the residential and commercial units.

21. Stangrove Development Proposals

The Strategic Head of Property and Commercial set out the report which sought Council's approval for a new capital project to proceed and for provision to be

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made within the Capital Programme for 13 new homes, a retail unit together with parking and landscape improvements within the Stangrove Estate in Edenbridge.

The Stangrove estate had several parcels of land which were poorly used, and by development of the sites, the Council would contribute to its housing targets, and also significantly improve the Estate's public realm by providing additional car parking spaces and landscaping improvements to the open spaces. A new community shop would also be provided in response to the local communities wishes. Design and feasibility work, alongside other due diligence studies had been undertaken and a planning application for the development was submitted in August 2021. Subject to planning consent being obtained and funding being finalised it was envisaged that the new scheme would be delivered by Summer 2023.

Members considered the report.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that

- a) It be recommended to Council that the capital funding of the scheme of £4,312,743 be agreed;
- b) It be recommended to Council that the scheme would only progress subject to the funding gap being eliminated and planning permission being obtained, be noted;
- c) It be recommended to Council that, subject to approval of the recommendation (a) the development scheme for 7 sites within Stangrove Park, Edenbridge to provide 7 off-street, communal car parks, a new community shop, improvements to landscaping and 13 residential units at an estimated total project cost of £4,312,743, as set out within the table above, be agreed; and
- d) Subject to approval of recommendation (a) by Council, the Strategic Head of Property and Commercial, following consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Chief Officer Finance & Trading, be delegated authority to enter into necessary contracts for the funding of the scheme and the disposal of the residential and commercial units.

22. Work Plan

The work plan was noted with the following additions:

30 November 2021

Establishing a Community Lottery

Sevenoaks District Community Safety Action plan mid-year update

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Sevenoaks District Community Plan mid-year update
Community Empowerment
White Oak Leisure Centre update

1 March 2022

Voluntary sector, second Barometer Survey
Citizens Advice Service Level Agreement
Sevenoaks District Community Safety Action plan 2022-23
Sevenoaks District Community Plan 2022 - 23
West Kent Partnership Update
Public Realm Commission update

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.24 PM

CHAIRMAN