

POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES - 13 JUNE 2016

Present: Councillor Lovelock (Chair)

Councillors Davies, Duveen, Eden, Gavin, Gittings, Hopper, Hoskin, Jones, Page, Skeats, Stevens, Terry and White.

A minute's silence was held at the beginning of the public session of the meeting, in memory of the victims of the mass shooting in Orlando, USA.

2. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved -

That pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of item 3 below as it was likely that there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs specified in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to that Act.

3. READING FESTIVAL - LAND CHARGES

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report seeking approval for the granting of a five year licence to Festival Republic for use of Council-owned land for the annual music festival.

Resolved -

That a five year licence be granted to Festival Republic on the terms outlined in section 4 of the report.

(Exempt information as defined in paragraph 3).

4. LAND NORTH OF ISLAND ROAD - WEST SITE

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report advising the Committee of the outcome of a marketing exercise to dispose of the long leasehold of a site near Island Road, which was shown on a Plan attached to the report.

Resolved -

That the site be disposed of on the terms set out in the report.

(Exempt information as defined in paragraph 3).

5. BRIDGE HALL, OXFORD ROAD

Further to Minute 78 of the meeting held on 15 February 2016, the Managing Director submitted a report on the outcome of voluntary sector bids for Bridge Hall.

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The report explained that three bids had been received, all of which were for the freehold of the property on an unconditional basis. All bidders were willing to accept a covenant on the building that it should continue to be used for community purposes for a minimum period of 10 years, and all bidders had been asked to provide evidence that funding was available for the purchase of the property and to effect repairs over a reasonable period of time. Bidders had also been asked how their current activities and proposed use of the hall would match with the Council's priorities.

The report set out the details of the three bids and asked the Committee to decide whether to accept any of them. The Chair proposed at the meeting that the bid from East African Community Group, be accepted.

Resolved -

- (1) That the three bids for Bridge Hall from voluntary sector organisations be noted;
- (2) That the bid from the East African Community Group be accepted.

(Exempt information as defined in paragraph 3).

6. READIBUS - ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Further to Minute 88 of the meeting held on 14 March 2016, the Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the outcome of a review of re-commissioning of Adult Social Care Transport (ASC-T) services provided by the Council.

The report proposed that a procurement process be carried out to commission an externally provided ASC-T service, with the successful provider commencing service from 1 October 2017. The report also sought authority to increase the amount of funding provided to Readibus until 30 September 2017, in order to offset the previous reduction in grant, and ensure that the organisation remained stable throughout the ongoing review.

Resolved -

- (1) That the funding provided to Readibus be increased to offset the reduction to grant until 30 September 2017;
- (2) That approval be given to complete a detailed Adult Social Care Transport (ASC-T) commissioning and review process and procure a single transport service to cater for the demands of all Adult Social Care Transport in Reading;
- (3) That the proposed changes to the operating model of the existing Adult Social Care Transport service be agreed, noting that once a

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service provider was confirmed through the procurement exercise, there would no longer be a requirement to operate the Council's existing internally resourced ASC-T Service, and that therefore those officers currently employed by the Council in this service area would be entitled to redundancy or redeployed in accordance with the Council's existing employment procedures including The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 as amended (TUPE) if applicable.

(Exempt information as defined in paragraph 3).

(Councillors Duveen and Hopper declared prejudicial interests in this item, left the room and took no part in the discussion or decision. Nature of interest: Councillors Duveen and Hopper were directors of Readibus.)

7. READING GREEN PARK STATION DESIGN WORK

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report seeking delegated authority to enter into a Development Services Agreement with Network Rail, in order to undertake the GRIP (Governance for Railway Investment Projects) stages 1-3 design work for Reading Green Park Station.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Head of Transportation & Streetcare, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Head of Finance, be authorised to enter into a Development Services Agreement with Network Rail to undertake the GRIP 1-3 design work for Green Park Station;
- (2) That the Council's named representative within the Development Services Agreement be the Head of Transportation & Streetcare.

(Exempt information as defined in paragraph 3).

8. PROPERTY IN CENTRAL READING

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report seeking approval to acquire a property in central Reading as an investment opportunity. The report set out the proposed terms of the purchase and the financial implications for the Council.

This item was brought to the Committee for urgent consideration, in accordance with Section 100B 4(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), on the grounds that the opportunity arose with insufficient time to prepare a report in time for the publication of the agenda on 3 June 2016 and that the matter needed to be

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determined prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Committee.

Resolved -

- (1) That the freehold interest in the property referred to in the report be purchased on terms outlined in paragraph 4.2;
- (2) That the Chief Valuer be authorised, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Chairman of the Audit & Governance Committee, to agree the final details of the purchase.

(Exempt information as defined in paragraph 3).

9. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 11 April 2016 and 25 May 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

10. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - RENT SETTING 2016/17

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services and Head of Finance submitted a report setting out a proposal to change Council housing rents and service charges for 2016/17, and asking the Committee to make a recommendation to the Council meeting on 28 June 2016. The following documents were attached to the report:

- Appendix A - PFI Area Rent Setting Options
- Appendix B - Housing Revenue Account: 2015/16 Outturn and 2016/17 Budget Summary

The report set out a proposal to change Council housing rents and service charges for 2016/17, in the context of recently passed legislation mandating a 1% rent reduction each year for four years for most social housing tenants. A 1.98% rent decrease on 3 October 2016 was proposed, which would equate to a full year effect in 2016/17 of the required decrease of 1%. No further reduction would then be required in April 2017.

The report explained that there were exemptions from the 1% reduction: for property that was subject to a PFI scheme (for all years), and for supported housing (which included sheltered housing and extra care housing) and temporary housing for homeless households (for one year). Rents for the exempt types of accommodation could be increased in line with the Council's adopted rent policy of CPI + 1%, which for 2016/17 would equate to a rise of 0.9%. Changes to service charges could also be implemented applying existing policies.

It was proposed at the meeting that, as the Council had always treated PFI tenants in the same way as other tenants, Council be recommended to apply the same rent

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reduction for PFI tenants as to other tenants in Council-managed homes for 2016/17, notwithstanding that it was not obliged to under the new legislation. This would enable further analysis and consultation with tenants to inform a decision about rent levels in 2017/18 and thereafter in the PFI area.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Committee make the following recommendations to Council on rental levels for 2016/17:
 - a) That all rents for general needs accommodation be reduced by 1.98% from 3 October 2016 (thus equating to a full year effect of a decrease of 1% in 2016/17) and that a full year effect increase in service charge be implemented from 3 October 2016;
 - b) That rents for supported and temporary accommodation be increased by 0.9% (CPI in September 2015 of -0.1% +1%) from 3 October 2016, in line with the Council's adopted rent policy, and that service charges also be adjusted from 3 October 2016 in line with agreed policy;
- (2) That a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee on the impact of Government legislation on the viability of the HRA, to inform decisions for future rent-setting policy.

11. DRAFT OUTTURN POSITION 2015/16

The Head of Finance submitted a report sets out the draft outturn position for the 2015-16 accounts for the Council, showing budget variances since the February Council report. An updated report was circulated prior to the meeting. The following documents were attached to the report:

Appendix A - proposed allocation of s106 receipts

Appendix B - Final Accounts Process

Appendix C - General Debtor Arrears by Service

The report summarised the financial position at the end of the 2015/16 financial year, setting out draft final budget variances. A summary of the Final Accounts process, leading to formal approval of the accounts by the Audit & Governance Committee at the end of September, was set out in Appendix B attached to the report.

The report also set out the capital programme provisional outturn and the committee were asked to approve the allocation of s106 receipts to various capital programme schemes, as set out in a schedule attached to the report at Appendix A.

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The report also noted that financial regulations required Committee approval for write offs above £20,000, and set out details of six irrecoverable Business Rates write offs for approval.

Resolved -

- (1) That the draft outturn position for 2015/16 as set out in the report be noted, and that it be noted that Audit & Governance Committee would receive the final accounts in September 2016;
- (2) That the use of S106 receipts as set out in Appendix A to finance capital programme be approved;
- (3) That the write-off of £270k business rate debts as outlined in the report be agreed, noting in most cases that the businesses were in liquidation or had been dissolved.

12. WINTER MAINTENANCE SERVICE TERM CONTRACT 2016-2019 - DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR CONTRACT AWARD

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report informing the Committee of the ongoing procurement process for the Winter Maintenance Service Term Contract and seeking delegated authority to enter into a contract with the successful tenderer.

The report noted that the Council provided a winter service function for 26 weeks of the year, starting on 1 October and ending on 31 March. During this period precautionary salting of the Primary network and snow clearance of the Primary routes were carried out based on information received from the weather forecasting services. The secondary precautionary salting network was also salted and / or cleared of snow during particularly prolonged hazardous weather conditions. This service was provided by a single contractor and had been run under a contract that now required re-tendering.

The report explained that it was proposed to tender for a new term contract running from 1 October 2016 for an initial term of 36 months, with the option to extend for a further 36 months subject to performance. In accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, it was proposed that a single stage open procurement process be undertaken to appoint a contractor.

Resolved -

That the Head of Transportation & Streetcare, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport, the Head of Legal & Democratic Services and the Head of Finance, be authorised to enter into a contract with the successful tenderer for the Winter Maintenance Service.

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13. REVIEW OF STATEMENT OF GAMBLING LICENSING PRINCIPLES

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report seeking approval for the 'Statement of Gambling Licensing Principles', which was attached to the report at Appendix I.

The report explained that the Statement of Gambling Licensing Principles had been reviewed and updated following some significant changes to the Gambling Act 2005. The revised Statement had been the subject of consultation and review between February and April 2016 and been recommended for approval by Licensing Sub-Committee 3 on 11 May 2016.

The report explained that the most significant change to Gambling legislation was a new requirement for premises licence holders to produce a local area risk assessment for their business, based on the Licensing Authority's Local Area profile. The requirement for the Licensing Authority to undertake and publish a local area profile to assist licence holders to produce a local area risk assessment was the main change to the Gambling Policy. Other changes were set out in Appendix II attached to the report.

Resolved -

That the revised "Statement of Gambling Licensing Principles", as attached to the report at Appendix I, be formally approved.

14. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Managing Director submitted a report asking the Policy Committee to make appointments or nominations to outside bodies for the Municipal Year 2016/17, or longer where required. A schedule of outside body appointments showing the Group Leaders' recommendations was attached to the report at Appendix A.

Resolved -

- (1) That the following be nominated or appointed (as indicated) to serve as the Council's representatives on the organisations listed below, for the Municipal Year 2015/16, or longer where indicated:

<u>OUTSIDE BODY</u>	APPT OR NOM	REPRESENTATIVE	TERM OF OFFICE	EXPIRY
Age UK Berkshire	A	Cllr Khan	Annual	6.2017
Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE)	N	Cllrs Gittings & Terry	Annual	6.2017
AWE Aldermaston - Local Liaison Committee	A	Cllrs Stanford-Beale & Livingston	Annual	6.2017

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<u>OUTSIDE BODY</u>	APPT OR NOM	REPRESENTATIVE	TERM OF OFFICE	EXPIRY
Berkshire Historic Environment Forum	A	Cllr Gittings	Annual	6.2017
Berkshire Maestros	A	Cllr Livingston	Annual	6.2017
Berkshire Pension Fund Panel	A	Cllr Dennis	Annual	6.2017
Caversham Consolidated Charities	N	Cllr Davies	Annual	6.2017
Caversham Park Village Association	A	Cllr Robinson	Annual	6.2017
Citizens' Advice Bureau Trustee Board	A	Cllrs Khan & Vickers; Mrs A Hendry	Annual	6.2017
Cleaner Kennet Campaign	A	Cllrs Gittings, Steele & Terry, Mr J Meek and Mr A J Warrell	Annual	6.2017
Girl's Trust for Educational Excellence and Enterprise	A	Cllr McElligott	Annual	6.2017
Hexham Community Association Management Committee	A	Cllr Gavin	Annual	6.2017
Kenavon Drive Management Company	N	Principal Property Development Officer	Annual	6.2017
Kennet and Avon Canal Trust	A	Cllr Gittings	Annual	6.2017
Kennet Day Nursery Association	A	Cllr McElligott	Annual	6.2017
Launchpad Reading	N	Cllr James	Annual	6.2017
Local Authorities - Action for Southern Africa Steering Committee (LA-ACTSA)	A	Cllr Tickner	Annual	6.2017
Local Government Information Unit Management Committee	A	Cllr Rodda Deputy - Cllr Eden	Annual	6.2017
Pakistani Community Association	A	Cllr Jones	Annual	6.2017
Project Alafia Management Committee	A	Cllr D Edwards	Annual	6.2017
Readibus Board of Directors	A	Cllrs Duveen, Hopper, Khan, Tickner, R Williams	Annual	6.2017
Reading Amateur Regatta Committee	A	Cllr Gittings	Annual	6.2017
Reading College Business Advisory Board	A	Cllr Jones	Annual	6.2017
Reading Community Welfare Rights Unit Management Committee	A	Cllrs Davies, Khan & Stanford-Beale	Annual	6.2017
Reading Deaf Centre	A	Cllr Khan	Annual	6.2017
Reading Dispensary Trust	A	Cllr R Williams	5 years	6.2021
Reading In Bloom Committee	A	Cllr Gavin	Annual	6.2017
Reading Voluntary Action	A	Cllr Rodda	Annual	6.2017

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<u>OUTSIDE BODY</u>	APPT OR NOM	REPRESENTATIVE	TERM OF OFFICE	EXPIRY
Richfield Avenue Boathouse Management Committee	A	Cllr Gittings and the Director of Environment & Neighbourhood Services (or nominees)	Annual	6.2017
River Thames Alliance	A	Cllr Davies and the Director of Environment & Neighbourhood Services	Annual	6.2017
Riverside Day Nursery	A	Cllr Page	Annual	6.2017
Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust - Governor	A	Cllr Tickner	Annual	6.2017
South East Employers	A	Cllrs Lovelock and Page (substitutes - Cllr Livingston)	Annual	6.2017
South Reading Educational Trust	N	Cllr McKenna	Annual	6.2017
Standing Committee On Archives	N	Cllr Livingston and the Head of Customer Services	Annual	6.2017
University of Reading Court	A	The Mayor	Annual	6.2017

- (2) That the appointments or nominations be made on an “or nominee” basis where the organisation in question was willing to accept this arrangement.

(The meeting started at 6.30pm and closed at 7.19pm).