

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2017, AT 7.00
PM

PRESENT: Councillor L Haysey (Chairman/Leader)
Councillors E Buckmaster, G Jones,
S Rutland-Barsby and G Williamson.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors A Alder, M Allen, S Bull,
G Cutting, M Freeman, Mrs D Hollebbon,
M McMullen, T Page, M Pope, P Ruffles,
T Stowe, C Woodward and J Wyllie.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Nathan Bookbinder	-	Policy Officer
Isabel Brittain	-	Head of Strategic Finance and Property
Martin Ibrahim	-	Democratic Services Team Leader
Anjeza Saliq	-	Project Manager
Alison Stuart	-	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Adele Taylor	-	Director
Liz Watts	-	Chief Executive

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Malcolm Hewines	-	Montagu Evans
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**264 WESTMILL CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Executive Member for Development Management and

Council Support submitted a report on the Westmill Conservation Area Appraisal following public consultation. She detailed the outcome of the public consultation in the report now submitted.

The Appraisal identified the special character of the Conservation Area together with the elements that should be retained or enhanced and those which detracted from the identified character. Once adopted by the Council, the Appraisal would become a 'material consideration' in the process of determining planning applications. It would also link into the development of neighbourhood planning.

The Executive supported the recommendations as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the responses to the public consultation be noted and the Officer responses and proposed changes to the Westmill Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be supported;

(B) authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Development Management and Council Support, to make any further minor and consequential changes to the document which may be necessary; and

(C) the Westmill Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be supported for adoption.

265 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY AND ASSOCIATED PILOT PROJECTS

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report updating Members on the financial sustainability agenda. He advised that, given the continuing uncertainty over future funding for local government, alternative funding streams and initiatives

needed to be explored. To this end, he summarised the outcome of a member workshop and the considerations of a member/officer group, which had identified the projects now detailed in the report submitted.

These findings had also been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting held on 17 October 2017. The Committee Chairman advised that some concerns had been expressed about the role of the Council in activity already dominated by the private sector and also whether it was appropriate to encourage gambling via a lottery. The Executive Member advised that these concerns had been taken on board in the revised policy that was now being proposed.

In response to a question, Officers advised that the proposed Community Benefit Lottery would operate online and would be promoted mostly via community groups.

The Executive supported recommendation (A) and approved recommendations (B) – (E)

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the Financial Sustainability policy, as detailed at Essential Reference Paper ‘B’ of the report submitted, be adopted.

RESOLVED - that (B) a full financial sustainability strategy be developed;

(C) the comments of Overview and Scrutiny Committee be received;

(D) the implementation of the projects below be delegated to the Head of Strategic Finance and Property upon consideration of sound business cases:

- Exploration of cost recovery approach to fees and charges
- Physical Advertising on council assets

- Advertising on the council website; and
- (E) a working group of officers and members be established to develop and deliver a Community Benefit Lottery.

266 OLD RIVER LANE, BISHOP'S STORTFORD LAND USE

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report on proposals for the Old River Lane site in Bishop's Stortford. He detailed the background to the project and the rationale for the preferred option as set out at paragraph 2.5 of the report submitted.

Various Members welcomed the report and in response to Members' comments and questions, the Leader agreed that the public should be assured that it was business as usual at the Rhodes Arts Centre. In respect of recommendation (A), the Chief Executive referred to the need to demonstrate Members' support for the future mixed use of the site since the Council's purchase of the core site.

At 7.32pm, during consideration of this report, the Executive resolved to exclude the press and public under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, on the grounds that part of the report contained exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act. However, Malcolm Hewines, Montagu Evans was allowed to remain in the chamber.

Members made comments and asked questions relating to the working group that had been set up to consider the funding issues and the potential TUPE arrangements.

At 7.42pm, the Executive agreed that the meeting should return to a public meeting and the public were readmitted to the chamber.

The Executive supported recommendations (A) – (C) and

approved recommendations (D) – (E)

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the land at Old River Lane and adjoining Northgate End should be used to develop a mixed town centre scheme, as set out in option 1a of the report submitted, to include:

- a significant new Arts/Cultural Centre that includes a 500 seat theatre, 3-4 cinema screens, shared reception space, potentially the Bishop's Stortford library, a one-stop-shop for Council services, hot-desking work space, cafe/bar;
- housing;
- retail; and
- parking provision for the whole site;

(B) funding of £225,000 be allocated to the next stage of scheme feasibility, in line with the requirements as set out in Essential Reference Paper 'E' of the report submitted (funding to be allocated from the NHB Priority Spend Reserve);

(C) delegation to Heads of Service for any general matters arising within their individual remits in order to progress the next stage of this project, including submission of a planning application for a new multi-storey car park, be authorised.

RESOLVED - that (D) the continued discussions with Bishop's Stortford Town Council and the Rhodes Birthplace Trust to create a delivery model for the Arts/Cultural centre which transfers the existing Rhodes Arts Centre business to the new building, be supported; and

(E) the work programme set out in section 5 of the report submitted, including the likely timeframes for submission of a planning application for a new multi-storey car park, and soft market testing for a

development partner for the rest of the development, be noted.

267 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor G McAndrew.

268 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader welcomed Members and the public to the meeting and reminded everyone that the meeting was being webcast.

She referred to the recent lobbying efforts of neighbouring councils in respect of the need for urgent investment in Princess Alexandra Hospital and the recent Budget announcement. She advised that a similar motion would be proposed at the next Council meeting.

Finally, the Leader also welcomed Malcolm Hewines, Montagu Evans, who had been working with the Council on the Old River Lane project and was in attendance for the item at Minute 266.

269 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 16 October 2017, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

270 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In respect of Minute 266 – Old River Lane, Bishop's Stortford Land Use, Councillor J Wyllie asked Members to note that, although not a disclosable pecuniary interest, he was a trustee of the Rhodes Birthplace Trust as well as a Bishop's Stortford Town Council Member.

271 REQUEST FOR AREA DESIGNATION FOR
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING: HUNSDON PARISH
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Leader of the Council submitted a report seeking approval for the designation of a neighbourhood area for Hunsdon, as detailed on the plan attached to the report submitted.

The Executive considered the application made by Hunsdon Parish Council and the consultation undertaken. The report submitted detailed the main areas of consideration in determining the application in accordance with Schedule 9 of the Localism Act 2011.

The Executive approved the recommendations now detailed.

RESOLVED - that the application for the designation of a Hunsdon Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan, submitted by Hunsdon Parish Council, be supported.

272 REQUEST FOR AREA DESIGNATION FOR
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING: HUNSDON WITH
EASTWICK AND GILSTON JOINT NEIGHBOURHOOD
PLAN

The Leader of the Council submitted a report seeking approval for the designation of a neighbourhood area for Hunsdon with Eastwick and Gilston, as detailed on the plan attached to the report submitted.

The Executive considered the application made jointly by Hunsdon and Eastwick and Gilston Parish Councils and the consultation undertaken. The report submitted detailed the main areas of consideration in determining the application in accordance with Schedule 9 of the Localism Act 2011.

The Executive approved the recommendations now detailed.

RESOLVED - that the application for the designation of a Hunsdon with Eastwick and Gilston Joint

Neighbourhood Plan, submitted by Hunsdon and Eastwick and Gilston Parish Councils, be supported.

273 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REVIEW 2017-18

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report reviewing the Council's treasury management activities for the first six months of the 2017/18 financial year, including the prudential indicators.

The Executive was advised that the Performance, Audit and Governance Committee had considered the report at its meeting held on 21 November 2017 and had supported the recommendations.

The Executive approved the recommendations now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) the comments of Performance, Audit and Governance Scrutiny Committee be received; and

(B) the Treasury management activity and prudential indicators for the first 6 months of the 2017/18 financial year be approved.

274 CORPORATE HEALTHCHECK 2017/18 QUARTER 2

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report on finance and performance monitoring for the Council as at 30 September 2017. This indicated a projected revenue budget forecast overspend of £251k for 2017/18. The Executive Member advised that the position for the end of October 2017 indicated a slightly improved position where a forecast overspend of £143k was projected.

The Executive Member also referred to the comments of the Performance, Audit and Governance Scrutiny Committee, who had considered the report on 21 November 2017. The Committee had expressed deep concerns with the financial situation reported. He explained that one of the significant causes of the projected overspend was the lower than

expected rental income at Charringtons House. He advised on the latest position in respect of new and renewed lettings but stated that further work was necessary. In response to a question, he confirmed that these lettings would not compromise any wider strategic plans for the site.

The Executive approved the recommendations now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) the projected revenue budget forecast overspend of £143k in 2017/18 as advised at October 2017, be noted;

(B) the capital budget forecast underspend of £1.573m, as detailed at paragraph 6.1 of the report submitted, be noted;

(C) the reported performance and actions for the period July to September 2017, as detailed at paragraph 9 of the report submitted, be noted; and

(D) the comments of Performance, Audit and Governance Scrutiny Committee be received.

275 STRATEGIC RISK MONITORING QUARTER 2

The Executive Member for Finance and Support Services submitted a report on action taken to mitigate and control strategic risks in the period July – September 2017.

The Performance, Audit and Governance Scrutiny Committee had considered the report at its meeting held on 21 November 2017 and had supported the recommendations.

The Executive approved the recommendations now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) the comments of Performance, Audit and Governance Scrutiny Committee be received; and

(B) the risk management controls implemented be approved.

276 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED – that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of Minute 266 (part) on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

The meeting closed at 7.46 pm

Chairman
Date