

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 5 JANUARY 2016, AT 7.00 PM

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

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors D Andrews, P Ballam, S Bull,
M Freeman, J Goodeve, J Jones,
M McMullen, M Pope and P Ruffles.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Drinkwater	- Director of Neighbourhood Services
Martin Ibrahim	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Brian Simmonds	- Head of Community Safety and Health Services
Adele Taylor	- Director of Finance and Support Services
Liz Watts	- Chief Executive

487

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

The Executive considered and supported the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel meeting held on 17 December 2015, on the Community Infrastructure Levy.

RECOMMENDED – that (A) the information contained in the report on the Community Infrastructure Levy be noted; and

(B) further analysis of CIL issues be undertaken, using additional resources if required.

(see also Minute 494)

488 **VILLAGE HIERARCHY STUDY (DECEMBER 2015)**

The Executive considered and supported the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel meeting held on 17 December 2015, on the Village Hierarchy Study (December 2015).

RECOMMENDED – that the Interim Village Hierarchy Study be noted, with a decision on the final Study deferred until further consultation with relevant Parish Councils has taken place.

(see also Minute 494)

489 **AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT (AMR) 2014/15**

The Executive considered and supported the recommendations of the District Planning Executive Panel meeting held on 17 December 2015, on the Authority Monitoring Report 2014/15.

RECOMMENDED – that the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) 2014/2015 contained at Essential Reference Paper 'B' and 'C' to the report submitted, be agreed for publication.

(see also Minute 494)

490 **LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader welcomed Members to the meeting and wished everyone a happy new year. She reminded Members that the

meeting was being webcast.

The Leader referred to Simon Drinkwater's impending retirement and thanked him for his service to the Council.

491 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 1 December 2015, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

492 REVIEW OF EMPTY HOMES STRATEGY

The Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing submitted a report proposing the revised Empty Homes Strategy and Action Plan for the period 2016 – 2020. He sought to identify the targets and actions that could be achieved based on the current level of resource and the additional elements that could be targeted with increased resources.

The Executive Member referred to the targets achieved under the previous strategy with the resources currently available. He suggested that a target of 10 properties returned to use each year with two enforcement cases formally initiated could be achieved.

However, an additional Empty Homes Officer (0.5 FTE) and an increase in the Assistant Empty Homes Officer from 0.2 to 0.4 FTE would allow the target to be increased to 14 properties brought back to use each year with up to 4 enforcement cases formally initiated. As a two year trial to demonstrate the increase in properties brought back into use, the financial implication for this would be £21,400 per annum to be funded from the transformation reserve. The Executive Member advised that this sum would likely be offset by increased New Homes Bonus funding arising from the return of the empty properties.

The Executive approved the recommendation now detailed.

RESOLVED – that the revised Empty Homes Strategy

and Action Plan be approved with the increased resources as now detailed, to allow for the increased target and additional elements.

493 WAYTEMORE CASTLE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT HLF BID

The Executive Member for Environment and the Public Space submitted a report detailing the outcome of a bid that had been made for Heritage Lottery Funding for restoration and improvements to Waytemore Castle Gardens, Bishop's Stortford. The purpose of the project was to conserve and enhance the heritage of Waytemore Castle Gardens, including Sworders Field and improve the park facilities to provide a wider range of activities, events and opportunities for community involvement.

The Executive Member explained that, although the bid had been unsuccessful on this occasion, there was every reason to believe that a resubmitted bid in August 2016 would be successful. He thanked Officers for their efforts in the bid submission process.

The Executive approved the recommendations now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) the terms and conditions of the grant be accepted; and

(B) the proposals to fund the project be approved and submitted for inclusion in the Council's Capital Programme for 2017/18.

494 DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL: MINUTES - 17 DECEMBER 2015

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the District Planning Executive Panel held on 17 December 2015 be received.

(see also Minutes 487 – 489)

495 TAXI CONVICTIONS POLICY

The Executive Member for Environment and the Public Space submitted a report reviewing the Taxi Licensing Conviction Policy following the findings of the Report of Inspection of Rotherham Council 2015 from the investigation into child sexual abuse. He explained that the policy update accompanied recent taxi licensing training for the Licensing Committee and was intended to ensure that the Council’s standards were set at an appropriate level and would stand up to external scrutiny.

In view of the Director of Neighbourhood Services’ impending retirement, it was suggested that the recommendation be amended to delegate authority to the Chief Executive instead. The revised policy would be subject to consultation with the taxi trade and unless there were substantial comments, the policy would be approved by the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment and the Public Space, for implementation without delay.

The Executive approved the recommendations as amended and now detailed.

RESOLVED - that (A) the Taxi Licensing Conviction Policy as now submitted, be approved in principle for the purposes of trade consultation; and

(B) subject to consultation, the final version of the policy in (A) above be approved by the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment and the Public Space, for implementation without delay.

The meeting closed at 7.19 pm

Chairman
Date