

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee

Minutes of meeting held in Ditchling and Telscombe Rooms at Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes, BN7 1AB on 30 June 2021 at 3.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Joe Miller (Chair), Robert Banks, Nancy Bikson, Roy Clay, Stephen Gauntlett, Christine Robinson, Adrian Ross and Steve Saunders.

Officers in attendance:

Philip Brown (Property Lawyer), Andrew Clarke (Deputy Chief Finance Officer (Financial Planning)), Nathan Haffenden (Head of Commercial Business Development), Jo Harper (Head of Business Planning and Performance), Oliver Jones (Strategy and Partnership Lead), Millie McDevitt (Organisational Effectiveness and Performance Lead), Nick Peeters (Committee Officer), Kate Richardson (Strategy and Partnership Lead for Sustainability) and Leighton Rowe (Development Project Manager).

Also in attendance: Councillor William Meyer.

9 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2021 were submitted and the Chair was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

10 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Liz Boorman (substituted by Councillor Jim Lord), Isabele Linington (substituted by Councillor Sylvia Lord) and Councillor Richard Turner.

11 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Robert Banks declared a personal interest in items 6b and 10 on the agenda – ‘Investing in Green Energy Initiatives’ and ‘Investing in Green Energy Initiatives EXEMPT appendix’ as a result of him being employed by the Local Government Association.

Councillor Saunders declared a personal interest in items 6f and 12 on the agenda ‘Community Grants Policy’ and ‘Community Grants Policy EXEMPT appendix’ as a result of his being a trustee of Community Transport Lewes Area (CTLA).

12 Urgent Items

There were none.

13 Written Questions from Councillors

There were none.

14 Requested reports due for consideration by the Cabinet on 8 July 2021

It was confirmed by members that, as part of the call-over process, the following reports would be included in discussion by the Committee.

6(a) Portfolio progress and performance report quarter 4 - 2020-2021 and end of year summary

6(b) Investing in Green Energy Initiatives

6(c) Provisional Revenue and Capital Outturn - 2020/2021

6(e) Re-imagining Newhaven

6(f) Community Grants Policy

6(g) Housing Development Update

Resolved that the officer recommendations in the following Cabinet report be supported in full:

6(d) Treasury management annual report 2020/21 and latest treasury management

14a Portfolio progress and performance report quarter 4 - 2020-2021 and end of year summary

Millie McDevitt, Organisational Effectiveness and Performance Lead, presented the report. During discussion the following points were highlighted.

- There were difficulties in directly linking incidents of fly-tipping with the introduction of charges for certain materials at household waste and recycling centres.
- There were continued discussions between stakeholders around increasing recycling rates with a number of educational programmes having taken place. The driving up of the recycling rate was an important area of focus for the Council in 2021/202, and the Communications team, the Operational Recycling team and the Strategy Partnership Lead for Quality and Environment will continue to collaborate on this.

It was confirmed that the following information would be provided to Members:

- The location of a second CCTV camera in Newhaven and the criteria for deploying the additional camera.
- Whether discussions were being held regarding the use of the Burgess Hill

Household Waste and Recycling centre.

- A study that identified trends between the use of household waste and recycling centres and incidents of fly-tipping, and the volume of household waste produced (with an emphasis on encouraging residents to reduce and reuse, rather than recycling, and a reduction in landfill and the incineration of waste).
- The data for recycling rates to be provided by East Sussex County Council.

It was requested that an update be provided at the next meeting on the waste service to include charging for environmental offences.

Resolved to support the officer recommendations in the Cabinet report subject to the following additional recommendation being considered by the Cabinet:

- 1) That the Cabinet request that officers look into providing more information on volumes of waste going to landfill/incineration, including historical trends and benchmarking information, and that a communication strategy/campaign on waste reduction alongside recycling be developed.

14b Investing in Green Energy Initiatives

The Chair, Councillor Miller, introduced the item and proposed that that item 6b. Investing in Green Energy initiatives and Item 10. Investing in Green Energy Initiatives, EXEMPT appendix, be considered together in an exempt session as Members were likely to discuss details in the exempt appendix.

Resolved that the public and press be excluded from the meeting as otherwise there was a likelihood of disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. (The requisite notice having been given under regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

Kate Richardson, Strategy and Partnership Lead, presented the report. During discussion the following points were highlighted:

- Government policy no longer supported the production of wind-farms as a form of sustainable energy. The proposals in front of Members was for an investment in the production of local solar energy.
- Members expressed concern over the agreement for the increased loan for development funding and urged officers to ensure the loan agreement was made directly with OVESCO Ltd.

Following discussion of the report and the exempt appendix, the public meeting resumed.

Resolved to support the recommendations in the report subject to the cabinet considering the following amended recommendation:

- 1) To delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Cabinet member for finance and assets, to increase the loan provision to OVESCO up to a maximum of £155,000 for development funding to take the solar farm proposal set out in section 2 and Appendix 1 of this report to planning submission, ***subject to the loan being agreement being made directly with OVESCO Ltd***, and subject to further due diligence being carried out, satisfactory loan terms and milestones being agreed.

14c Provisional Revenue and Capital Outturn - 2020/2021

Andrew Clarke, Chief Finance Officer, presented the report. During discussion the following points were highlighted:

- The £782,000 variance which reflected the reduced cost of financing and interest income was not part of the larger Capital Programme. The Capital Financing Support contribution of £500,000 was to aid the Capital Programme.

Resolved to support the officer recommendations in the Cabinet report in full.

14d Treasury management annual report 2020/21 and latest treasury management monitoring

This report was not requested for inclusion in discussion by the Committee (see minute 14). Members had previously resolved to support the officer recommendations in the report in full.

RESOLVED to support the officer recommendations in the Cabinet report in full.

14e Re-imagining Newhaven

The Chair, Councillor Miller, proposed that the Committee enter into an exempt meeting for the remaining substantive items on the agenda as each of the items had an exempt appendix which Members and officers were likely to discuss.

Resolved to exclude the public as otherwise there was a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information as defined in schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Nathan Haffenden, Head of Commercial Business & Development, presented the report. During discussion the following points were highlighted.

- Parking, including 'on-street' parking on the High Street, would be looked at as part of the 'due diligence' element of the proposals.
- Members proposed that the Council write a letter of thanks to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in respect of the funding provided towards the Programme. Members also requested that the officers involved in the programme be thanked.

Resolved to support the officer recommendations in the Cabinet report in full subject to the Cabinet considering the following additional recommendation:

- a) That the Cabinet write a letter of thanks to the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, for the Future High Streets Fund grant and thank those officers at the Council who have worked towards the Re-imagining Newhaven programme.

14f Community Grants Policy

Prior to discussion, Councillor Saunders declared a personal interest in the item as a result of his being a trustee of Community Transport Lewes Area (CTLA).

Oliver Jones, Strategy and Partnership Lead, presented the report. During discussion the following points were highlighted:

- The grants application pack was being worked on and would be circulated to Members when complete.

Resolved to support the officer recommendations in the Cabinet report in full.

14g Housing Development Update

Nathan Haffenden, Head of Commercial Business & Development and Leighton Rowe, HEDP Development Project Manager, presented the report. During discussion the following points were highlighted:

- The mix of modular and traditional builds within the schemes had not been specified and was not part of the decision making process.
- More information would be provided as the schemes progressed.
Balancing aspirations against available resources was a consideration.

Following discussion of the report and the exempt appendix, the public meeting resumed.

Resolved to support the officer recommendations in the Cabinet report in full.

15 Forward Plan of Decisions

Prior to discussion on the item, the Committee resolved to return to open session.

The Chair, Councillor Miller, introduced the Forward Plan of Cabinet decisions. Members requested that the following items be considered at the next meeting:

- Recovery and Reset programme
- Portfolio progress and performance report quarter 1 - 2021-2022
- Finance update - performance quarter 1 - 2021-2022
- Corporate Plan- Review of year 1 achievements
- Medium term financial strategy
- Asset Management Plan

Resolved to note the Forward Plan of Cabinet decisions.

16 Policy and Performance Advisory Committee Work Programme

The Chair, Councillor Miller, introduced the Policy and Performance Committee work programme for 2021/2022. Members requested that, along with the Cabinet reports already requested, the following item be included on the agenda for Committee's next meeting:

- An update on the Waste Service.

Resolved to note the Policy and Performance Advisory Committee work programme.

17 Date of Next Meeting

Resolved to note that the next meeting of the Policy and Performance Advisory Committee was scheduled for 16 September in the Ditchling/Telscombe Rooms, Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes commencing at 3:30pm.

The meeting ended at 5.15 pm

Councillor Joe Miller (Chair)