

ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE

27 May 2021 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Edwards (Chair), Staniforth (Vice-Chair), Bicknell, Chace, English, Goodheart, Huntley, Needs, Thurston, Warr and Worne

Councillors Cooper, Mrs Cooper, Coster, Dixon, Mrs English, Gunner, Oppler and Walsh were also in attendance for all or part of the meeting.

22. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Members and Officers to this first and virtual meeting of the Environment & Neighbourhood Services Committee.

The Chair confirmed that this meeting was being held in accordance with the resolution made at the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on 12 May 2021 (Minute 551) which continued Section 5 Part 5 of the Constitution (The Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules) and declared the use of Council powers, under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, and the general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, for making advisory decisions, as appropriate.

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

24. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The Chair confirmed there were two urgent items, which were Place St Maur and Environmental Permitting Consultation on Ford Energy Recovery Facility. These matters were urgent due to the meeting of Cabinet on 17th May 2021 being cancelled, and the short deadline for submitting a response, respectively. The Chair agreed to take both items, and confirmed these would be taken after Item 6 on the agenda.

25. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair confirmed one question had been submitted, which is briefly summarised below:

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1. From Mr Chester to the Chair of the Environment & Neighbourhood Services Committee, Councillor Edwards regarding terms of reference of this Committee

(A schedule of the full question asked and the response provided can be found on the [Environment and Neighbourhood Services Committee Public Question Web page](#))

The Chair then drew Public Question Time to a close.

26. START TIMES

The Committee

RESOLVED

That its start times for meetings for 2021/22 be 6.00pm.

27. COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chair invited the Interim Monitoring Officer to present his report. He then provided an introduction to the Terms of Reference, drawing Members' attention to the recommendations and the two appendices which detailed the general terms of reference and the specific terms of this Committee.

Members then took part in a full debate where the following points were raised:

- Could Biodiversity be added to the Terms of Reference, and should air pollution also be considered as a specific function of the Committee. The Chair confirmed that Biodiversity was within the remit of the Committee. The Director of Services confirmed that Officers would consider whether the different elements of pollution could be brought together in a report and brought to Committee, and that officers could make some suggestions at the next Agenda Preparation Meeting.
- It was asked whether discussions could be had on how more wildlife could be encouraged into the District.

Clarification was also sought around some of the points in the report, which was provided by the Chair and Officers at the meeting.

The Chair asked whether Members would agree to suggesting to the Constitution Working Party (CWP) that the wording on Appendix 1 - 3.1.6 – be changed from 'In discharging its functions, Committees must have regard to the ongoing requirement to make savings and efficiencies' to read 'In discharging its functions, Committees must have regard to the ongoing requirement to provide value for money'

This motion was proposed by Cllr Edwards and seconded by Cllr Goodheart.

The motion was put to a vote and was CARRIED.

The Chair asked whether Members would agree to suggesting to the Constitution Working Party (CWP) that a new standing item be added to the agenda after Public Question Time for Members Question Time.

This motion was proposed by Cllr Edwards and seconded by Cllr Needs.

The motion was put to the vote and was CARRIED.

A discussion then took place regarding Reserved Matters on Appendix 2, around compensation and grants.

The Chair went on to talk about the figures for awarding contracts, and the following points were raised:

- Whether the value for awarding contracts, delegated to Officers, should be reduced to £50,000 or remain at £100,000.
- If a contract was to be awarded for a period of more than a year and the full contract was going to cost over £100,000, this should be taken to the Committee.
- It was suggested that the Heads of Service provide a list at the Agenda Preparation Meetings of all contracts that were due for procurement, and the Chair and Vice Chair would then give a view on whether these should be taken to the Committee. Other Members offered their support for this.

A discussion took place around Outside Bodies and how feedback would be provided to the Committee, and the role of those Members sitting on the Outside Bodies.

The subject of Biodiversity was referred back to and Members agreed the suggestion to add Biodiversity onto the Terms of Reference would be taken to the CWP.

The Chairman then returned to the substantive recommendations which were then proposed by Cllr Edwards and seconded by Cllr Staniforth.

The Committee

RESOLVED - That

- 1) the general terms of reference for Committees in Part 3, Paragraph 3, of the Constitution and further note the specific terms of reference of

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this Environment and Neighbourhood Services Committee, as established by Full Council on 19 May 2021, as set out in Part 1 and Part 2 of Appendix 1 (attached), be noted;

- 2) the suggestions agreed by the Committee in respect of a change to Appendix 1 - 3.1.6; a new standing item to be added to the agenda for Members Question Time; to add Biodiversity onto the Terms of Reference, be taken to Full Council, through the Constitution Working Party (CWP) for clarifications of these terms of reference
- 3) the schedule of Environment and Neighbourhood Services Committee meetings as set out in the Calendar of meetings, attached as a background paper accessible by e-link; be noted and
- 4) the matters reserved scheme whereby matters not reserved by Committee to itself are delegated to Officers be approved as set out in Appendix 2 (attached).

28. PLACE ST MAUR

The Chair invited the Principal Landscape Officer to present her report. She then explained the reason for the item being an Urgent Item was so that tenders could be issued and the Project Programme be met. The item had been due to go to the meeting of Cabinet on 17 May 2021, however this meeting was cancelled. It was then highlighted that the report focussed on two elements of the procurement process, the Construction Contract for Place St Maur, and the Traffic Studies for The Esplanade. Key points in the report were then highlighted.

The Principle Landscape Officer also shared a summary of events that could take place on the sites. These included those that were more established such as the ice rink and Folk Festival; screenings such as sport and national events; themed fairs and markets including covered markets in a marquee; theatrical performances and a range or family activities. It was mentioned that this was the start of a new opportunity for Bognor Regis in terms of event programmes and also opportunities to link with road closures of The Esplanade should event organisers wish to take this forward.

Members then took part in a full debate and the following points were raised:

- Had accessibility for everyone including the partially sighted and wheelchair users, been taken into consideration. The Principle Landscape Officer confirmed this had been taken into account and the site would be accessible.
- It was stated that a disabled changing places toilet was being pursued, and was hopefully something that would be coming up later in the year.
- It was noted it would be beneficial for all the Ward Members involved in the location to be briefed on the progress.

The recommendations were then proposed by Cllr English and seconded by Cllr Chace.

The Committee

RESOLVED – that

1. the Heads of Terms, as set out in the report, for the Place St Maur construction contract procurement process be approved; and
2. the budget of £70K approved by Full Council for the Esplanade traffic studies be noted and the Heads of Terms, as set out in the report, for the procurement process be approved.

29. ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITTING CONSULTATION ON FORD ENERGY RECOVERY FACILITY

The Chair invited the Group Head of Technical Services to present his report, who then provided a summary. He explained the Council has been invited by the Environment Agency to submit a response to a consultation on an application for an Environmental Permit. He explained the reason for it being an Urgent Item was due to the current deadline for a response being 23 June 2021. It was explained that Officers were seeking authority from this Committee to submit a consultation response.

The recommendation was proposed by Cllr Bicknell and seconded by Cllr Huntley.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That delegate authority be given to the Group Head of Technical Services, in consultation with the Chair of the Environment & Neighbourhood Committee, to submit a response to the consultation on an application for an Environmental Permit ref: EPR/MP3904BD.

30. WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair invited the Group Head of Technical Services to present the Work Programme to the Committee. He and the Group Head of Neighbourhood Services introduced the Work Programme and explained that additional items would be added onto this, particularly in the latter parts of the year.

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The Chair explained to Members that if they had any suggestions for items to be added onto the Work Programme, they should send these to the Chair and Vice-Chair, who would then have discussions with Officers. It was asked that such suggestions not be brought to Committee directly by Members.

The recommendations were then proposed by Cllr Bicknell and seconded by Cllr Needs.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That its Work Programme for 2021/22 be noted.

(The meeting concluded at 7.37 pm)