

POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

31 March 2022 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Gunner (Chair), Pendleton (Vice-Chair), Cooper, Oppler, Roberts, Stanley and Dr Walsh.

Councillor Edwards was also in attendance at the meeting.

[Note: Councillor Oppler was absent from the meeting during consideration of the matters contained within Minute 800 to 806 (Part).

800. APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An Apology for Absence had been received from Councillor Dixon.

801. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

802. MINUTES

The minutes from the meeting of the Committee held on 10 February 2022 were approved by the Committee as a correct record and were signed by the Chair at the conclusion of the meeting.

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

The Chair confirmed that there were no urgent matters for this meeting.

804. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair confirmed that no questions had been submitted for this meeting.

805. COUNCIL VISION - PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT 2022-2026

The Group Head of Policy presented this report to the Committee. She explained that the Council Vision had been approved by Full Council on 9 March 2022. The report presented the proposed indicators to be used to measure performance against the key themes set out in the Vision. These had been set out in Appendix A of the report.

There was one change to be made in the final version of Appendix B which was moving CP22 on page 26 [% of Licence Applications determined] which should be placed under the Wellbeing theme rather than the Housing theme. Most of the Corporate Plan Indicators would be reported monthly to the Corporate Management Team, and quarterly to all Service Committees from April onwards. In the interest of

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transparency to Members, all Service Committees would receive the same report. There would be a report at the end of each year setting out the overall performance against the Vision objectives and the Corporate Plan.

The Chair invited questions. It was felt the list of KPIs may be too long, and there should be more customer feedback. The expectations of residents and customers should be looked at and their satisfaction measured. The Chief Executive explained that the indicators were there to help the council assess its performance against the objectives identified in The Vision Document. Customer insight was being looked at additionally, and the Chief Executive anticipated moving towards live customer feedback.

It was hoped that over time there would be an opportunity to reconfigure and refine some of the measurements. Clarification was sought on when the Vision measurements would be reported, and why each of the Service Committees would receive the same reports. The Group Head of Policy explained the measurements would be reported annually. The same report would be provided to all Service Committees in the interests of transparency. The expectation was that each Committee would focus on the relevant indicators to them, but Members would have access to all indicators.

Clarification was sought on what was defined as an Empty Home, and as this was an area the council performed well in whether consideration might be given to re-defining this. The Director of Place would provide a response to this question after the meeting.

Councillor Walsh proposed an amendment to the recommendations which was the addition of a third recommendation which was to agree to refine these KPIs to include more customer resident feedback at the earliest opportunity. This was seconded by Councillor Stanley and on this being put to the vote it was declared CARRIED.

The substantive recommendations were then proposed by Councillor Pendleton and seconded by Councillor Stanley.

The Committee

RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL - That

- (1) The proposed indicators to measure the outcomes for the Council Vision key themes be agreed;
- (2) The proposed Key Performance Indicators be agreed; and
- (3) These KPIs be refined to include more customer relevant feedback at the earliest opportunity.

806. BUSINESS RATE POOL - DECISION MAKING

The Director of Place presented the report to the Committee explaining that it addressed how decisions on the Business Rate Pool could be made in a timely manner. The recommendations were then explained to the Committee.

It was asked that Members be notified by email as soon as practicable regarding any decisions made under the delegated authority in recommendation 2. The Chief Executive committed to doing this.

The recommendations were then proposed by Councillor Cooper and seconded by Councillor Walsh.

The Committee

RESOLVED - That

(1) Any membership contributions for external partnerships currently funded from the Business Rate Pool will continue to do so until the funds are exhausted, or a decision is made by the constituent authorities of the Business Rate Pool to cease funding, whichever is the sooner; and

(2) Authority be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to determine in agreement with the other West Sussex Authorities, this Council's position on how any Business Rate Pool funds are used both in respect of the 2015-2021 Business Rate Pool and the 2022 onwards Business Rate Pool.

807. LITTLEHAMPTON TOWN CENTRE - FIBRE DUCTING WORKS

The Director of Place presented the report to the Committee explaining that it sought the committee's approval to increase the budget of the Littlehampton Town Centre Improvement Works by £240,000 to include the installation of fibre ducting within the project. This would provide the future capability of Ultrafast Full Fibre internet connectivity to businesses and residences in the Town Centre.

The Chair invited questions. There was concern at the amount of money this would cost, and it was asked whether there was any room for negotiation, or an agreement with City Fibre that a proportion of costs could be recovered. The Director of Place confirmed that the Cost Consultants had been approached, who had confirmed the proposed costs were reasonable, and not over-inflated. Officers would continue to work to ensure net cost to Council would be reduced as much as possible.

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The issue of ducting had been raised at previous Meetings over the past 3 years, and Members had requested that ducting for Fibre be installed when the high street was dug up. The Director of Place explained that City Fibre had not been in a position to lay the ducting prior to the Public Realm works being undertaken. If the work was not carried out now, there would be a delay of five years.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Cooper and seconded by Councillor Pendleton.

The Committee

RESOLVED – That

- (1) The budget for the Littlehampton Town Centre Improvement Works be increased by up to £240,000 for the installation of fibre ducting to Littlehampton Town Centre funded from the corporate underspend for 2021/22;
- (2) Authority be delegated to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, to investigate and enter into the most advantageous model for the utilisation of the ducting; and
- (3) Authority be delegated to the Director of Place to seek agreement from West Sussex County Council for any additional permissions required for the laying of fibre ducting.

808. LEISURE OPERATING CONTRACT [MEETING OF THE HOUSING & WELLBEING COMMITTEE HELD ON 17 MARCH 2022]

The Interim Group Head of Corporate Support and S151 Officer presented the report to the Committee. Arun District Council had provided support to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its leisure operating contract. This report sought the Committee's approval for a virement of budget for the arrangements agreed by Housing and Wellbeing Committee on 17 March 2022. The minutes containing a recommendation from the meeting of the Housing and Wellbeing Committee held on 17 March 2022 were circulated to the meeting.

The Chair invited questions from Members and overall support was expressed towards the recommendation.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Cooper and seconded by Councillor Stanley.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the virement of £289,127 from the Covid-19 contingency budget for 2021/22 to cover the shortfall in expected income from the Council's Leisure Management Contractor during 2021/22 be approved.

809. OUTSIDE BODIES - FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS

The Chair confirmed that there were no issues to feedback to Members.

810. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received the Work Programme for the new Municipal Year. This was a work in progress and would be expanded further.

It was asked whether updates around the Levelling Up Fund could be included as a regular item on the agenda. The Director of Place confirmed he expected the first update would be given at the Committee Meeting on the 30 June 2022.

(The meeting concluded at 18.32 pm)