

POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

8 February 2024 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Stanley (Chair), Nash (Vice-Chair), Birch, Cooper, Greenway, Gunner, Oppler and Pendleton.

Councillors Goodheart, Northeast and Tandy were also in attendance at the meeting.

610. APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An Apology for Absence had been received from Councillor Brooks.

611. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Greenway declared a Prejudicial Interest in one of the applications listed as part of Agenda 13 [The Regeneration of The Regis Centre – Update] and confirmed that he would provide the meeting with more detail at the commencement of that item.

612. MINUTES

The minutes from the Special Meeting of the committee held on 8 January 2024 were approved as a correct record and were signed by the Chair at the conclusion of the meeting.

613. 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 items.

614. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

615. LITTLEHAMPTON SEAFRONT PROJECT

The Principal Landscape and Project Officer presented a further project update report to Members. This noted that planning approval had been gained the week commencing 11 December 2023 and so the project team was now pushing forward in preparing the information needed to discharge the pre-commencement conditions. The project team was also working through the stage 4 designs and were putting together a detailed programme for the multiple procurement packages to obtain a price for the works. The construction programme had been revisited due to the impact of the value engineering process. It was anticipated that work would commence on site in the Spring and there was a lot to think about in terms of construction, logistics and phasing. Once those plans had been finalised these would be shared widely.

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Having received this update, a question was asked about project costs and value engineering in terms of what these might be and where would they occur in terms of the next stages of the project.

The Principal Landscape and Project Officer confirmed that the cost plan had been concluded towards the end of last year identifying the need to make savings of £560k. This had meant that a detailed piece of work had had to be undertaken with the design team making every effort to ensure a minimal impact as possible on the design, the result being that the design approved by planning had been largely unaffected, though there had been some revisiting of building materials and slight changes to the specification. It was confirmed that the scheme would be as envisaged and previously reported. Most of the savings required had been identified.

The Committee then noted the contents of the report.

#### 616. THE REGENERATION OF THE THE REGIS CENTRE, BOGNOR REGIS

The Interim Regeneration Officer provided a further update on the regeneration of the Regis Centre, Bognor Regis and outlined some key points since his last update provided to the Committee on 6 December 2023.

Planning consent had been secured so work was progressing on the pre-commencement conditions to get those discharged as soon as possible. Work was also progressing on retendering the contract for the construction work and it was confirmed that tender responses had been received were being evaluated, with the moderation meeting taking place on 13 February 2024. The RIBA stage 4 design had been progressing as far as was possible without a contractor with great involvement from the existing design team to ensure that not too much time was being lost.

The Committee was reminded that now Arun Arts had vacated the premises, this had allowed for the required intrusive survey works assessing the existence of asbestos and other structural and ground survey issues to be taking place inside of the building. It was reported that a lot of asbestos, under the floor slabs, had been found and so the necessary measures were being taken regarding removal and disposal.

The latest draft cost plan was encouraging as some cost savings had been made earlier on in 2023 resulting in the project still being well within its contingency levels. It was reported that further funding was required to complete the rest of the photovoltaic cells on the roof even though £45k of funding had been secured for this purpose and so work was progressing with regeneration colleagues to find the remaining amount required. A revised business plan had been received from Arun Arts and this confirmed that two of its Trustees had resigned and so the Group Head of Economy was contacting the interim chair to ascertain how they would progress.

There were still key risks around the project programme as the Council had had to retender for a main contractor and this had taken longer than expected. Delay had also been caused by Arun Arts taking longer than expected to vacate the building with the knock on effect being that the intrusive survey work had started later than planned.

The Chair then invited questions. The Regeneration Consultant was asked when he thought building work would begin. It was confirmed that a new contractor would not be appointed until late February 2024 and so a realistic timeframe to give was that it would be early May before any demolition work would commence.

Information was sought in terms of what the impact of that work would be on the Place St Maur in terms of space taken up. It was explained that this would be considerable. The Regeneration Consultant confirmed that the Committee would receive a written report update for its next meeting on 7 March 2024 providing more detail on this.

The Committee then noted the update report provided.

#### 617. POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer presented the Committee with its Budget Monitoring report covering the Quarter 3 period up to 31 December 2023, which it was being asked to note.

The key highlights were the underspends amounting to £314k which was a positive change from the forecast of £258k reported as part of the quarter two report. The main changes were that the Council was looking to capitalise some of the revenue costs associated with delivering the Regis Centre project. This would be kept under close review and any changes would be reported to the Committee. It was reported that there were no overspends and that the capital programme was being reviewed as part of the budget setting process.

The Committee then noted the content of the update provided.

#### 618. COMMITTEE REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET 2024/2025

The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer presented his report which was asking the Committee to consider and approve its revenue budget for inclusion in the Council's overall 2024/25 revenue budget, which this Committee would consider as a later item on this agenda.

It was reported that the net change in the revenue budget between 2023/24 and 2024/25 was a decrease of £275k and the key changes were explained to Members as set out in the table provided at Paragraph 4.4 of the report.

Having had the recommendations proposed by Councillor Nash and seconded by Councillor Oppler,

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### The Committee

#### RESOLVED – That

- (1) It agrees the 2024/25 Revenue Budget as illustrated in Appendix A of this report;
- (2) It agrees the 2024/25 Capital Programme as illustrated in Appendix B of this report; and
- (3) It agrees that the Revenue Budget for this Committee be included in the Council's overall General Fund budget.

#### 619. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 31 DECEMBER 2023

The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer presented to Members the Council's Budget Monitoring Report to 31 December 2023 which the Committee was required to note.

The main highlights to bring to Members' attention were forecast variations which were explained in detail. They were net overspends of £246k at a cost-of-service level which had been offset by a forecast overachievement of investment interest income and additional in year grant funding of £110k from central government for new burdens, resulting in an overall underspend of £643k. This represented an improved swing of £506k since the Quarter 2 report, the main changes including an increase in car parking income [£247k] and the capitalisation of Levelling Up Project Management costs [£221k].

The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer then worked through the main points of interest for Members in respect of the other Service Committees and the significant movements in forecasting exceeding £100k were explained. It was brought to Members' attention that for Revenues and Benefits, the Quarter 3 forecast indicated an overspend of £330k, which was an adverse change of £416k from the Quarter 2 forecast due to a net increase in supported accommodation costs. The reasons for this were explained in detail.

Turning to the Capital programme monitoring for 2023/24 it was confirmed that there were no overspends or new schemes added with the key areas of underspending being explained as detailed in the report.

On the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), the Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer explained that the HRA reserves balance was predicted to fall to around £550k in 23/24 which represented a negative change of £632k from when the Housing & Wellbeing Committee received an update in November 2023. The report that had been submitted to that meeting had been attached as an appendix to the Budget Monitoring Report for the Committee's information.

It was explained that this was due to an increase in demand for repairs and maintenance and that there were inflationary pressures to be taken into consideration as well. It was intended to increase the capital spend on planned maintenance which would hopefully reduce this expenditure going forward, however, this was still a precarious situation for the Council to be in.

The Committee then noted the contents of the report.

## 620. COUNCIL REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS 2024/2025

The Chair confirmed that before inviting the Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer to present the budget report, he proposed to start with the recommendations that had been submitted for this Committee to consider from each of the service committees. Each of the recommendations had been set out in the supplement pack circulated to the meeting and uploaded to the web and emailed to Councillors on 7 February 2024. The Chair confirmed that he proposed to take these recommendations on block. The recommendations were as set out below and were from the:

- Environment Committee – 23 January 2024 – Minute 547 – Committee Revenue and Capital Budget 2024/25 - [Page 3 of the supplement pack].
- Housing & Wellbeing Committee – 25 January 2024 – Minute 559 – Committee General Fund Revenue and Capital Budgets and Housing Revenue Account budgets 2024/25 [Page 6 of the supplement pack]
- Planning Policy Committee – 30 January 2024 – Minute 573 – Committee Revenue and Capital Budgets 2024/25 [Page 8 of the supplement pack]
- Corporate Support Committee – 31 January 2024 – Minute 590 – Committee Revenue and Capital Budgets 2024/25 [Page 11 of the supplement pack]
- Economy Committee – 1 February 2024 – Minute 601 – Committee Revenue and Capital Budgets 2024/25 [Page 12 of the supplement pack].

Having had these recommendations proposed by Councillor Oppler and seconded by Councillor Nash, the Committee

RESOLVED – That

(1) The Revenue budget for this Committee [the Environment Committee] be included in the overall General Fund budget when considering the overall budgets on 8 February 2024;

(2) The General Fund Revenue Budget, HRA Revenue Budget and Committee Capital Programme for this Committee [the Housing & Wellbeing Committee] be included in the overall General Fund budget when considering the overall budgets on 8 February 2024;

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- (3) The Revenue budget for this Committee [the Planning Policy Committee] be included in the overall General Fund budget when considering the overall budgets on 8 February 2024;
- (4) The Revenue Budget for this Committee [the Corporate Support Committee] be included in the overall General Fund budget when the Policy & Finance Committee considers the overall budget at its meeting on 8 February 2024; and
- (5) The Revenue Budget for this Committee [the Economy Committee] be included in the overall General Fund Budget when the Policy & Finance Committee considers the overall budgets at its meeting on 8 February 2024.

The Chair confirmed that he would now focus on the whole budget for 2024/25. Before inviting the Group Head of Finance and Section 151 to present the budget to the Committee, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Birch and were then seconded by Councillor Oppler.

The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer then presented the key elements of his report. Firstly, he confirmed that it was proposing that Arun's Band D Council Tax for 2024/25 be set at £208.39, which was an increase of 2.99% over 2023/204. Council was also being asked to approve increasing HRA rents and HRA garage rents by 7.7%. The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer outlined that his report was also asking the Council to note the impact of the budget proposals on the HRA reserve balance and the Council's Usable Revenue Reserves.

Turning to the Local Government Finance Settlement, the results of this had been reported to the Special Meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee held on 8 January 2024. As part of the provisional settlement, the Council had received indication that it would receive an extra £250k in grant representing an 11% increase on the previous year's figures. The Secretary of State had also announced extra funding for local government to the tune of £600m, most of which would be directed to adult social care services, however, there was £100m coming to district councils which was estimated to represent around £150k extra for this Council from that announcement. The numbers were still subject to final confirmation by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DHLUHC), but it was now estimated that an additional £50k for Arun may be forthcoming, Therefore, the total extra funding anticipated to be received, because of the most recent announcement, was £450k compared to the 2023/24 budget. The New Homes Bonus grant (NHB) totalled £1.37m for 2024/25 but it was emphasised that the Council would not receive this in 2025/26. As it had not been confirmed what this would be replaced with, this would make budget planning past 24/25 even more challenging. Business Rate Pools had been confirmed as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement and so the West Sussex Business Rates Pool would continue for 2024/25.

The Council Tax Referendum principles had not changed and remained at 3% or £5, with 3% being the higher figure for Arun District Council. This equated to an increase in the Band D Council Tax of £6.05, which was about 11 pence per week.

Returning to the additional grant money received, the report before Members outlined how the Council proposed to use the additional funding. The £150k had been set aside to deliver the financial strategy; the recruitment of a Chief Executive; and to fund the newly established Flood Forum. Any further additional funding would be added to this budget. The Council's net revenue budget requirement for 2024/25 was £33.1m, representing a reduction of approximately £400k from 2023/24, which was not a significant change. Of the £400k, £100k of that reduction related to the net cost of service committee budgets. The other £300k was due to additional investment income resulting from continued higher interest rates.

Looking ahead, it would be necessary to revisit the assumptions when updating the Medium-Term Financial Strategy in the earlier part of the 2024/25 financial year. The main changes had already been reported to Service Committees as part of the consultation process in preparing the budget. Much of the increases reported would be offset by savings embedded into budget proposals totalling approximately £1.5m. It was important to emphasise to Members that these could not be achieved without risk, but it was hopeful that they would be delivered. Each of the Service Committees would receive quarterly budget monitoring reports to keep Members fully briefed on progress. The impact of the 2024/25 budget proposals on the Council's usable Revenue meant that £3.5m would be used to fund the revenue budget. It was explained that this could be reduced if the Council could identify further savings in 2024/25 and work on this was progressing. The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer then drew Members' attention back to its meeting held on 26 October 2023, when the Committee had considered its Financial Prospects report which had then estimated a figure of around £4.5m that would need to be taken from reserves. This figure had reduced considerably for 2024/25.

Members' attention was then drawn to the HRA budget as the reserve for this budget would fall to approximately £0.5m in 2023/24. Indications did show that the reserve level would increase to around £1m by the end of March 2025, which although an improvement would still be well below the Council's approved threshold of £2m. Work was taking place with the new Group Head of Housing to update the HRA Business Plan which might identify the need to review this level. Focusing on the 2024/25 budget, it was explained that to achieve the £1m reserve target, it was proposed to increase rents by 7.7%. It was accepted that these would be difficult decisions for Councillors to make and it was emphasised that this recommendation had not been chosen lightly. The financial position of the HRA had been regularly reported to Members throughout the year and so it should not come as a surprise that this action was required. The 6.7% increase in benefits announced by the Chancellor as part of his Autumn Statement, which would come into force from 1 April 2024, would hopefully help to cushion the impact of the increase on residents. The recommendation was one of financial necessity and it was recognised that this would cause difficulty for some. Voids levels were being targeted heavily to try and increase income for the Council.

Under the capital programme, no new schemes were proposed as part of the budget setting process and there would be significant project slippage as had been explained in detail as part of earlier agenda items. The delivery of the financial strategy would be partly dependent upon capital investment and affordability with the programme being kept under constant review.

Looking at the adequacy of reserves, they were forecast to fall to £17m by March 2025. Although this was not seen as a significant problem, it was clear that the Council could not sustain using its reserves year on year to balance the budget. The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer stated that he wished to update the Committee on the budget consultation. In addition to undertaking the usual consultation through each of the Service Committees and with non-domestic rate payers, a wider public consultation process had been launched on the Council's web site. Although this had not achieved a great response, 58 in total, this was seen as something to build on for future years.

The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer confirmed that The Local Government Act 2003 required him to report on the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of calculating Council Tax and housing rent levels. He was also required to report on the adequacy of the Council's reserves. It was confirmed that he was satisfied that the estimates, as presented, were sufficiently robust. On the adequacy of reserves, he confirmed that he was content that the minimum level of balances should not fall lower than £10m in 2024/25 with the Council being well above that figure now, but this would have to be reviewed each year as a legal requirement.

The Chair then invited questions from Members. The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer was thanked for his detailed work undertaken and especially given the difficult and challenging circumstances. Members were pleased that the Council had started a process of public consultation on the budget which needed to be enhanced. The proposed increase in rents for tenants was a difficult realisation to accept. It was hoped that the increase in benefits would assist in bridging this financial burden for many. It was pleasing that the Council had been able to achieve a reduction in the amount it was drawing down from reserves, especially when considering the extreme challenges that had been faced. At the same time, the need to safeguard reserves was critical. Arun's borrowing remained low and so it needed to consider borrowing opportunities for invest to save projects which would deliver budget savings.

#### The Committee

RECOMMEND TO THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL ON 21 FEBRUARY 2024 – That

- (1) The General Fund budget as set out in Appendix 1 is approved;
- (2) Arun's Band D Council Tax for 2024/25 is set at £208.39, an increase of 2.99% over 2023/2024;



- (3) Arun's Council Tax Requirement for 2024/25, based on a Band D Council Tax of £208.39, is set at £13.451 million, plus parish precepts as demanded to be transferred to the General Fund in accordance with statutory requirements;
- (4) The HRA budget as set out in Appendix 2 is approved;
- (5) HRA rents be increased by 7.7% in accordance with the provisions of the rent standard;
- (6) HRA garage rents be increased by 7.7% to give an average rent of £15.60 per week (excluding VAT) and heating and water/sewerage charges be increased on a scheme-by-scheme basis, with the aim of balancing costs with income;
- (7) The Capital Programme as set out in Appendix 3 is approved.

The Council is requested to note:

- (8) That the Group Head of Finance, in consultation with the Leader of the Council has approved a tax base of 64,550 for 2024;
- (9) That the HRA balance to remain below the Council's set minimum level of £2 million for the 2024.25;
- (10) The impact of the proposed 2024/25 budget on the Council's Usable Revenue Reserves as set out in Appendix 4; and
- (11) The results and commentary of the public budget consultation process as summarised in Appendix 5.

#### 621. CARBON EMISSION UPDATE - 2022-2023 FINANCIAL YEAR

The Climate Change and Sustainability Officer presented his report which was providing the Committee with an update on the emissions (Scope 1, 2 and 3) of the Council for the 2022-2023 financial year which the Committee was being asked to note.

Each of the scopes was explained in detail with the report providing an overview in terms of where each of the scope's emissions were sitting for the 2022-2023 year whilst also providing a comparison to the baseline year which was 2020 to 2021 financial year.

Having provided a detailed presentation, it was confirmed that the Council's overall total emissions had been reduced across the Council and this could be confirmed as a 35% reduction. A breakdown was provided for each scope as set out below:

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- Scope 1 had seen a minor increase in emissions relating to gas from heating the Council's buildings, but a reduction in terms of fuel used for fleet vehicles as a result of the Council transitioning its vehicle fleet to all electric vehicles.
- Scope 2 – emissions had remained at zero as the Council had continued to purchase its electricity from renewable technologies with the Council reporting market based rather than location based emissions meaning the Council was measuring based on its purchasing decisions.
- Overall, for Scope 1 and 2, this had seen a drop from 392 in 2021 to 2022 to 170 tCo2e in 2022-2023. By following actions within the Climate Change and Biodiversity Work Plan there was potential for these to be even further reduced.
- Scope 3 – as expected continued to be where most of the Council's emissions sat. This scope continued to be the largest source of emissions sitting at 99%, with the two largest single emitters being, purchased goods and services (91%) and leisure centres (6%). The total tCo2e had seen a significant reduction but this was still an area needing to continue to be looked at with increasing urgency and commitment. It was explained that the levels of reduction were likely to be linked to the changes in methodology used by the consultants and the general inaccuracy of using spend data to monitor supplier emissions. As part of this year's work procurement emissions would be addressed by targeting the Council's top suppliers and engaging with them more around climate action.

In conclusion, it was important to ensure emissions were reduced across all scopes to reach the 2030 Carbon Neutral target. Overall, total emissions had reduced across the Council representing a 35% reduction. As part of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan, the Council had also undertaken numerous projects which were also supporting reducing emissions reduction and Arun's impact on the environment. Appendix A to the report provided the full set of results for the 202-2021 and 2022-2023 financial years with Appendix B providing the comparisons across all three years.

These results showed a step in the right direction, but not at a fast enough rate, threatening the Council's chance of achieving its Carbon Neutral target by 2030.

The Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan was being revised in accordance with the updated results along with specific actions and would be reported to the next meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee on 7 March 2024.

Following the detailed presentation provided, many questions were asked by the Committee. Looking at the methodological changes, what were the consequences of those changes in terms of what was not being counted and in comparison, to what was being counted before. It was explained that this was very difficult to quantify and at the moment like for like figures were not available, however, contact would be made with the consultants to obtain as much information as possible. This led to further discussion and a request being made that Officers arrange for a multi-year contract to

be placed with a contractor so that methodologies could be compared year on year and comparable data achieved.

The Joint Interim Chief Executive and Director of Environment and Communities confirmed that this would be investigated by Officers and that an update on progress would be brought to the Committee.

A request was made for further detail on the report from the consultant to be emailed to Councillors. It was agreed that this would be actioned. A spreadsheet providing a summary of the actions listed and what had been achieved in the Climate Change Action Plan was also requested. It was explained that this information would be reported to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Committee was pleased that there had been a significant reduction in reduction in emissions and this was seen as a very positive step in the right direction, however, at not a fast enough rate. In order for the Council to achieve its 2030 target, were there any other measures that the Council should be adopting to ensure that the target would be achieved. In response, it was confirmed that the biggest issue to overcome was that of procurement with this being an extremely difficult area to reduce and so many other councils were struggling. Additionally, the Council could look to upgrade its buildings to help further Scope 1, but this would represent a very small saving. The best next step would be to deep dive into procurement. The Council had results from some exercises completed and so it needed to start implementing them to address this.

The Committee then gave its permission for a non-Committee member to address the meeting. Reference was made to the Council's leisure facilities and what success had been made in ensuring that such buildings installed solar panels. A similar request was made in relation to the Council's housing stock and possibly beach huts. It was confirmed that PV panels had been installed to the south elevation on the wet side at the Arun Leisure Centre. There had also been a successful application to the swimming pool support fund for PV installation at the Wave in Littlehampton. Discussions were ongoing with Officers to source additional help to the leisure centre to reduce emissions. On social housing, this was not something that had been investigated by the Climate Change and Sustainability Officer as the Council's housing emissions did not fall within scopes 1, 2 or 3. However, now that the new Group Head of Housing was in position this could be revisited. Beach huts had not been investigated but could be.

The Committee then noted the contents of the report.

622. ARUN COMMUNITY ASSET FUND - CONSIDERATION OF BIDS - ROUND 1

*(Prior to the commencement of this item, Councillor Greenway redeclared his Prejudicial Interest made at the start of the meeting in relation to one of the applications, which was the Bognor Regis Youth and Community Club. Councillor Greenway confirmed that he had previously been a Trustee, he was no longer a Trustee, but to ensure complete transparency he would leave the room whilst the application for this Club was considered and would not take part in any voting on this specific application).*

The Joint Interim Chief Executive and Director of Growth presented his report which was asking the Committee to approve the allocation of funds specific to four projects set out in the report – these were:

- Bognor Regis Youth & Community Club - £20,000
- Slindon Parish Council - £20,000
- Arundel Lido - £19,000
- Bognor Fun Bus CIC Children and Youth Project - £18,000 to £22,000.

Before providing some updates to the meeting, the Committee was reminded of the decisions it had made at its meeting held on 26 October 2024 when it resolved to agree that the Arun Community Asset Fund be established; how it should be run and the criteria that needed to be met in terms of assessing applications.

Four applications for funding had been received and the report had provided the detail surrounding each application. In respect of the application from the Arundel Lido, it had since been confirmed that the amount of funding being sought had reduced from £19k to £15k as since the application had been submitted, the Lido had secured other funding sources. In respect of the fourth application from the Bognor Regis Fun Bus CIC Children and Youth Project, Members were asked to note that the funding amount requested ranged from £18k to £22k. Members' attention was drawn to the criteria agreed confirming that the capital costs of an individual project should not exceed £20k and so if Members were minded to support this application, a sum of no more than £20k could not be approved. Another point drawn to Members' attention was the criteria that any project should have the support of 50 per cent of Ward Members. An issue with the fourth application was that it did not have fixed assets, this was a mobile project in its nature that could venture into multiple wards making it very difficult to identify any individual ward to allow consultation with ward members to take place and to gain such approval. It had not therefore been possible to undertake this consultation.

Having received the updates provided, the Chair invited debate and suggested that a decision be made first on the application from the Bognor Regis Youth and Community Club so that on conclusion of this application, Councillor Greenway could return to the meeting to take part in considering the remaining applications.

Councillor Birch then proposed the first application, and this was seconded by Councillor Nash.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the application from the Bognor Regis Youth and Community Club in the sum of £20,000 be agreed.

*(Councillor Greenway then rejoined the meeting).*

The Chair then returned to the remaining applications 2, 3 and 4 and invited comment and debate.

The Committee fully supported application 2 [Slindon Parish Council – “Keeping the Kids Playing”] as it was seen as a great opportunity to support an area of the district that was very seldom mentioned. It was acknowledged that the play equipment needed urgent replacement due to its age and that its replacement would greatly benefit children of varying ages and abilities. The application had the full support of Ward Members and the Member of Parliament.

Discussion then focused on the remaining funding available [£25k] and that any further applications should focus on providing for the youth of the district and other areas of the district such as Littlehampton, Rustington and other eastern wards. Members were asked to encourage other organisations to apply. It was agreed that to focus applications on children in the community was vital. The Interim Joint Chief Executive and Director of Growth felt confident that applications from the eastern side of the district would be received as part of the next round of bids.

Views were expressed by some Councillors that application 4 should not be supported as it had only been in operation for a short time and had no operational history or accounts. It was outlined that this applicant had applied for funding from Bognor Regis Town Council who had refused it on the grounds that it did not have any operational history. There was a Councillor who stated that he would find it uncomfortable providing funding on that basis as he had not seen solid historic information, nor could he find a web site whereas the other applications all had long-standing history and pedigrees by comparison. On that basis, Councillor Gunner confirmed that if the Committee disagreed with his views, he wished for the voting on application 4 to be taken separately. There were other Councillors who held similar concerns over the lack of a track record with application 4 and so it was suggested that the applicant might wish to provide further information and prove that they could support themselves. Officers were asked if they could ask the applicant to provide more substantial information. Clarification was also sought as to who the Ward Members were supporting the application. It was explained that it had not been possible to consult with specific Ward Members as this was a multi-ward project and so the application could be seen to be not fully complying with the application criteria.

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Following discussion, the Committee confirmed that the application should be deferred so that further information could be obtained.

The proposal to defer application 4 was then proposed by Councillor Stanley and seconded by Councillor Gunner.

The Committee

#### RESOLVED

That consideration of application 4 from the Bognor Fun Bus CIC Children and Youth Project be deferred until additional information was provided and multiple Members from varying Wards had been consulted.

Debate then focused on application 3 from the Arundel Lido which was fully supported by the Committee.

Having had applications 2 and 3 proposed by Councillor Birch and seconded by Councillor Nash,

The Committee

#### RESOLVED

That application 2 [Slindon Parish Council – “Keep the Kids Playing” and application 3 [Arundel Lido – New Insulated Pool Covers and Frame] be approved.

#### 623. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2022-2026 - QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

In the absence of the Group Head of Organisational Excellence, the Interim Joint Chief Executive and Director of Growth presented the Key Performance Indicators for 2022 to 2026 covering the Quarter 2 Performance period from 1 April to 30 September 2023, which the Committee noted.

#### 624. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee in receiving and noting its Work Programme for the remainder of the municipal year 2023/2024, received confirmation that two further items would be added for its next meeting to be held on 7 March 2024 – these were:

- Council Tax on Empty and Second Homes; and
- Angmering Sports Hub Project – Update Report

625. OUTSIDE BODIES - FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS

Having received confirmation from the Chair that there were no feedback items to report to this meeting, a Councillor requested to receive reassurance that the appropriate Committee would receive a feedback report updating Members on the activities of the Greater Brighton Economic Board as these had been provided to the Committee by the former Leader of the Council.

The Chair confirmed that future updates on the activities of the Board would be provided. In responding to the request made to receive feedback reports following meetings of West Sussex Leaders, it was confirmed that these meetings were held in closed session and were private.

(The meeting concluded at 7.23 pm)