

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & CULTURE COMMITTEE

4.00pm 12 JANUARY 2017

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL, NORTON ROAD, HOVE, BN3 3BQ

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Robins (Chair), Cattell (Deputy Chair), Nemeth (Opposition Spokesperson), Druitt (Group Spokesperson), Greenbaum, Morris, Allen, O'Quinn, Peltzer Dunn and C Theobald

PART ONE

41 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

(a) Declarations of Substitutes

41.1 Councillor Taylor was present in substitution for Councillor C. Theobald.

(b) Declarations of Interest

41.2 Councillor Peltzer Dunn declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in respect of Item 48 – Fees & Charges 2017/18 – Economy, Environment & Culture Directorate as he owned a beach hut.

41.2 Councillor Druitt declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in respect of Item 49 – Toad's Hole Valley Supplementary Planning Document – Draft SPD Consultation, as director of the Bug Lemon Bus Company, the company could potentially bid for transport servicing of the site a future date. The Senior Lawyer confirmed that as the report was only asking for permission to consult at this stage, it would be appropriate for him to remain present during the discussion and vote on the application.

(c) Exclusion of Press and Public

41.3 The Committee considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any of the items listed on the agenda.

41.4 **RESOLVED:** That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the items contained in part two of the agenda.

42 MINUTES

42.1 Councillor Greenbaum requested that paragraph 36.2 be amended to read, 'Councillor Greenbaum commented that she was unhappy that there had not been the required

consultation with ward councillors about the Oktoberfest event planned for the Level, and she had therefore not been able to consult with local residents. It was clarified that the consultation had taken the form of an attachment listing all events in an email to all Ward Councillors, as was standard for an event of this size. Councillor Nemeth commented that he thought this was adequate consultation. It was agreed that in future Officers would undertake to inform Ward Members of proposed events in their Wards to better facilitate a dialogue with Officers, Members and residents.'

- 42.1 **RESOLVED** – That, with the above addition, the Chair be authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2016 as a correct record.

43 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 43.1 The Chair read the following communications:

"Hove Library Announcement

Following the decision of the Policy Resources and Growth Committee in June 2016 to reject the move of Hove Library to a new location, a cross-party Members Working Group was set up to look at ways of securing the future of Hove Library in the Carnegie building.

Hove Library is a much loved historic building, but is expensive to run. In order to keep providing modern library services to the local community, the council is exploring how to generate more income to help cover the costs of Hove Library.

A number of ideas have been discussed by the cross party Members group, and three of them are being shared with the public to gather people's views. The ideas include the provision of library services to British and Irish Modern Music Institute (BIMM), which is being piloted for two terms to see if it works. The library could also host a café with a community focus in the ground floor open space area, while we are also looking at the possibility of hiring out the basement as new office space or a nursery.

The council will also need to look at what demand in the market there is for using Hove Library, what works are needed to the building to accommodate any commercial use, as well as what the Hove library users think of the ideas.

Explore GB

I am now delighted to be able to confirm that VisitBrighton has secured a really significant conference event ExploreGB 2017, which will be hosted in Brighton from 2 – 3 March at the Brighton Centre.

ExploreGB is VisitBritain's flagship event providing Great British & Irish tourism suppliers and destinations with an invaluable opportunity to meet and do business in the city.

350 international travel buyers from over 40 countries will be attending the event, as well as 40 or more domestic and international travel media.

As overseas visitors currently contribute over £250m per annum to the Brighton & Hove economy, hosting ExploreGB 2017 represents a unique opportunity to showcase the city, and to grow this contribution from international tourism over future years.

Full details will be found in the printed minutes.

Events

During December, I was able to attend a meeting of the Brighton and Hove Tourism Alliance, also the Brighton and Hove Economic Partnership, spoke to many business owners at the Sussex Business Awards and enjoyed a fantastic event showcasing the many groups involved in DanceActive.”

- 43.2 The Chair agreed that the following information would be circulated as part of the minutes:

“350 international travel buyers from over 40 countries will be attending the event Buyers will originate from, Europe, Asia, North America, Australasia, South America and Africa, in addition 40+ domestic and international travel media will also be in attendance. Following previous events, media attendees have written high quality editorial pieces in international travel publications which will represent a significant level of Advertising Value Equivalent (AVE) exposure for the City.

Overseas visitors currently contribute over £250m per annum to the Brighton & Hove economy; hosting Explore GB 2017 represents a unique opportunity to grow this contribution through direct engagement with an international audience of key decision makers, all of whom have significant purchasing power and thus can directly influence international visitor numbers and economic benefit derived from international tourism in future years.

Previous reports have come to Leaders Group highlighting the importance to taking a positive and proactive role in promoting investment in the city as a place to visit and do business. The Explore GB event provides a strong opportunity to showcase the city whilst also developing further links to the Government’s ‘GREAT Britain’ campaign following the recent visit of the Chief Executive and senior officers to No.10 Downing Street to explore how the city can better link with the campaign to improve marketing of the city as a destination as part of a wider strategy to improve how the city is marketed internationally as a place to visit and do business.

As the host city, we are presented with a unique opportunity to expose our brand to a highly receptive audience who are key decision makers from the international travel and tourism sector.

During December, I attended a meeting of the Brighton and Hove Tourism Alliance, also the Brighton and Hove Economic Partnership, spoke to many business owners at the Sussex Business Awards and enjoyed a fantastic event showcasing the many groups involved in DanceActive.”

44 CALL OVER

44.1 All items on the agenda were reserved for discussion.

45 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

45.1 The Chair noted there was one deputation referred from Council on 15 December 2016.

45.2 The Chair gave the following response:

“I do agree that books are and will continue to be the ‘vital beating heart of public libraries’, and there is good objective evidence provided by CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) which shows that Brighton & Hove Libraries are performing above average in comparison with other similar library authorities.

There is also good evidence to indicate that Hove Library is not being unfairly treated in terms of the book stock provided, or in terms of the satisfaction levels of the public with the library stock.

This evidence is supplied in the full written answer that will be sent to you and published with the minutes.

In regard to the other points you have raised:

There is no objective evidence that the standard of fiction at Hove Library has fallen. The Library Service purchases for the broad range of borrowers, and aims to purchase stock in greatest demand that will get the greatest use. What might appear ‘low brow’ to some is eagerly read by others.

While it would be idyllic to have enough money and space to buy every book for every library, this is simply unrealistic, and so decisions have to be made about how many copies are bought and where they are located.

Anyone can recommend a book to be bought for stock, and this is a free service. If someone wants to be notified when that book is added to stock, this involves extra costs, so this cost needs to be covered by a reservation fee.

Although much of the stock is selected by Bertrams, they employ their own Librarians to support this process, so there is still good professional librarian input. Brighton & Hove library staff also make recommendations for purchase, and 20% of stock is selected locally.

The deputation mentioned concerns over specific titles that Mr Hawtree has experienced, and the Library Service is happy to investigate any of these and contact him directly with a response.

The deputation also mentions some issues Libraries have had with their Bibliographic Services supplier many years ago, and because of the PFI contract the Library Service were able to get compensation payments for these errors which were then put back into the bookfund to buy more books.

It is not possible to provide this Bibliographic Service in-house more cheaply than the current external contract. The amount we pay would only cover the cost of just over one Librarian to do the work that currently a large team at Bertrams provide.

It is true that the budget proposals over the four year period from 2016 to 2020 have identified a reduction in bookfund spending of approximately 25%. This is in line with budget reductions across the council, and also across other library authorities.

A fuller response will be provided in writing.”

- 45.3 Councillors Peltzer Dunn and Druitt raised points in relation to specific figures for the book fund and further information on the PFI contract and the status of the book fund. It was agreed that this information would be included in the full response that would be circulated as part of the minutes.
- 45.4 **RESOLVED** – That the deputation be noted.
- 45.5 As stated at 45.3 the full response is set out below:

“I do agree that books are and will continue to be the ‘vital beating heart of public libraries’, and there is good objective evidence provided by CIPFA which shows that Brighton & Hove Libraries are performing above average in comparison with other similar library authorities.

There is also good evidence to indicate that Hove Library is not being unfairly treated in terms of the book stock provided, or in terms of the satisfaction levels of the public with the library stock.

Latest Comparative information with nearest neighbours (similar authorities) published by CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) on 12th December 2016:

Compared with our nearest neighbour (similar) authorities, Brighton & Hove Libraries:

Specific data on books only for 2015-16:

- Has above average total lending book stock with 296,258 books, compared to average of 274,401 (4th out of 15)
- Has above average total book stock with 382,950 books compared to average of 360,393 (5th out of 15)
- Has above average number of books in stock per 1000 population (1,342 compared to average of 1,301) (6th out of 15)
- Purchases above the average of books per 1000 population (156 compared to average of 120) (3rd out of 16)
- Spends above the average on books per 1000 population

- Has above average issues of books per annum (865,281 compared to average of 819,049) (7th of 16)

Brighton & Hove data on stock and reservations:

- In 2014-15 survey, the following percentage of respondents said the book stock was good or very good: Jubilee Library 78%, Hove Library 77%, community libraries 84%
- Hove Library has 44% of the amount of book stock compared to Jubilee Library, yet it only receives 25% of the number of visits. (Jubilee Library books: 124,656; Hove Library books: 54,700) (Jubilee Library visits 938,021; Hove Library visits 235,872 in 2015-16)
- The reservation fee of £1 per item full cost (50p concessions) is paid on all reservations, regardless of whether it is in the borrower's local library or not.
- Last year, Hove library borrowers made 9,972 requests – it is not possible to tell whether they were items that had to be brought in from another library or whether they were reservations for books that were already in Hove Library but on loan to someone else.
- An average of only 39% of all reservations are actually collected across all libraries. Each reservation costs about 84p to process (staff finding book and putting it aside, etc)
- We have estimated that about £22,596 worth of staff work went into processing the uncollected reservations last year (across the whole service).
- We also know that 40% of Hove Library users already visit Jubilee Library so are able to borrow directly from there instead of placing a reservation.

In terms of other points raised in the deputation:

There is no objective evidence that the standard of fiction at Hove Library has fallen. The Library Service purchases for the broad range of borrowers, and aims to purchase stock in greatest demand that will get the greatest use. What might appear 'low brow' to some is eagerly read by others.

While it would be idyllic to have enough money and space to buy every book for every library, this is simply unrealistic, and so decisions have to be made about how many copies are bought and where they are located. As the Library Service purchases around between 45,000 and 50,000 items of stock every year, there is also a clear need to withdraw old and out of date books to make space for the new stock.

The book reservation and book request system are costly to deliver, and the more libraries spend on administration of these services, the less there is for stock purchasing. Anyone can recommend a book to be bought for stock, and this is a free service. If someone wants to be notified when that book is added to stock, this involves extra costs, so this cost needs to be covered by a reservation fee. Libraries will soon be introducing a system by which stock will remain in the library where it is returned, so if there are many items of Jubilee stock that are wanted by Hove Library borrowers, these will remain in Hove Library for others to borrow.

Although much of the stock is selected by Bertrams, they employ their own Librarians to support this process, so there is still good professional librarian input. There are 153

library authorities in the country, and most of the stock that they want is similar for every authority, so it does not make sense for each separate library authority to employ someone to select the same stock 153 times. The 80/20 rule applies, with 20% of the stock being locally selected, with all library staff able to make recommendations for purchase.

There is no evidence that library staff left the service last March because of they were unable to select book stock. Bertrams have been selecting stock for the Library service since the year 2000, and they do so under strict instructions on the range, quality and standard of selection as outlined in stock profiles that have been written by Brighton & Hove Library staff.

The deputation also mentions some issues Libraries have had with their Bibliographic Services supplier many years ago, and because of the PFI contract the Library Service were able to get compensation payments for these errors which were then put back into the bookfund to buy more books.

It is not possible to provide this Bibliographic Service in-house more cheaply than the current external contract. The amount the Library Service pays would only cover the cost of just over one Librarian to do the work currently done by a large team at Bertrams. It is not just about selecting books, there is a much wider process of sourcing suppliers, placing pre-orders as well as back orders, cataloguing and processing the stock, and transporting the stock to the library shelf-ready.

It is true that the budget proposals over the four year period from 2016 to 2020 have identified a reduction in bookfund spending of approximately 25%. This is in line with budget reductions across the council, and also across other library authorities.

The book fund remains part of the Bibliographic Services sub contract under the PFI (Private Finance Initiative) for Jubilee Library. It has been possible to make changes to the book fund spending by negotiating a variation to contract with the private sector partner. The variation has to be agreed by both parties, and the contract has to remain economically viable for the partners and sub-contractor. The Bibliographic Services contract is market tested every five years.

The deputation mentioned concerns over specific titles that Mr Hawtree has experienced, and here is the information in regard to these items:

Long, long life of trees – Fiona Stafford

This item is a Yale University Press publication – it is not currently within the library stock policy to automatically receive American publications. However, if a customer requests such an item the Library Service will consider purchase. This item was published on 2nd August 2016. It was ordered following the request on 17th August 2016 and received on 30th August. One copy bought for Jubilee Library.

Keep On Keeping On – Alan Bennett

This item was published on 20th October and it was received by the Library Service on 25th October at 8 locations around the city (including Hove Library). As Alan Bennett is such a well-known author, this title would have been ordered in advance of publication,

and was received fully catalogued and processed within the contractual requirement of 8 working days from date of publication.

The Evenings – Gerard Reve

A 70 year old book translated from Dutch this year. It was published on 3rd November, it was ordered once it was suggested on 21st November and it was received on 24th November. Two copies bought for Jubilee.”

46 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

46.1 The Chair noted there were six written questions listed on the agenda.

Planning Enforcement

46.2 Councillor Nemeth asked: “How many open cases are on the system presently; how many new cases have been opened in each of the last four years; what is the average case resolution length for each of the last four years; and what is the oldest open case on the system presently?”

46.3 The Chair provided the following written response: “There are currently 816 Enforcement cases on the system.

There was a detailed Enforcement Report that went to Planning Committee this week on 11 January. This sets out the following enforcement case figures for the last four financial years:

- 2015/2016 – 576 cases received
- 2014/2015 – 666,
- 2013/2014 – 658,
- 2012/2013 – 755.

Figures for the current financial year 2016/2017 will be made available in the next Enforcement Annual Report. However the amount so far for this financial year is 680 (excluding over 300 referrals of large HMOs from the Private Sector Housing Team). This already exceeds the number received in the last three years.

In terms of the average case resolution length, there is not currently a way of reporting this. Enforcement cases are very varied in terms of time taken for resolution compared to planning applications. It is expected that in the future Uniform (Planning’s IT system) will be able to provide more detailed information on this.

In terms of the oldest open case on the system - there are a small number of old cases on the system that are over 10 years old. Now that a full time Principal Planning Officer has been appointed to manage the Enforcement Team it is intended to focus resources on closing older cases.”

46.4 By way of a supplementary Councillor Nemeth asked, why there was no data on case length, and what was proposed to clear the backlog of open enforcement cases.

46.5 The Chair deferred to Officers to respond, and it was explained that the previous software did not allow interrogation on case length, but it was expected the new software would allow a full analysis this financial year. In relation to clearing the backlog of open enforcement cases, it was hoped the staffing vacancies would be filled in the next few months; a new enforcement policy would be brought forward to consider how cases were prioritised, as well as looking at old outstanding cases.

Swimming

46.6 Councillor Nemeth asked: "What role did the Chair play in attempting to prevent members of the public swimming in the sea on Christmas Day?"

46.7 The Chair provided the following written response: "The dangers of sea swimming particularly in the winter are apparent to us all. It is not possible to prevent members of the public swimming in the sea on Christmas Day. However, measures have been implemented on Christmas Day in recent years as a considered response to the growing number of people entering the sea, many inexperienced and inappropriately dressed for sea swimming, and some under the influence of alcohol. Therefore, barriers were put in place to prevent access to Albion Beach which is the most dangerous due to its proximity to the large groynes, Palace Pier, and its steeply shelving beach. In addition, Seafront Officers patrolled the shoreline to give safety advice to potential swimmers to increase awareness of the dangers. While I did not play a direct role in these measures, I am very supportive of the Seafront Team who do such a good job throughout the year and often in difficult circumstances to make the Seafront as safe as possible."

46.8 By way of a supplementary Councillor Nemeth asked that given the strength the public feeling this, would the Chair pledge to get involved in this issue this year, and consult public opinion

46.9 In response he Chair it was unlikely he would play a role in this, and felt the matter should be better left to Seafront Officers that were professionals in their field.

i360

46.10 Councillor Nemeth asked: "What regular meetings are held between i360 bosses and either the Chair or senior Council officers to discuss the ongoing performance of the asset?"

46.11 The Chair provided the following written response: "The i360 Board meets on a monthly basis and the council has observer status at the meeting. A senior officer of the council is therefore present at all these meetings when ongoing and historic performance of the i360 is discussed."

46.12 By way of supplementary Councillor Nemeth noted that it was his understanding the Council received a percentage of the profits, he queried if these figures would be kept confidential?

46.13 The Chair deferred to Officers, and it was explained that the financial performance of the i360 needed to be considered by what could be public and what was commercial

sensitive. There was risk provision in terms of the loan for the i360 that would appear in the Council's accounts and would be reported through the normal budgeting process.

King Alfred

- 46.14 Councillor Nemeth asked: "Will the Chair commit to providing a full and frank written update to all tenants and clubs at the King Alfred who are currently in the dark over what the future holds for the building?"
- 46.15 The Chair provided the following written response: "We know that there is great interest in the very important King Alfred development. However, as most people understand it is not possible to conduct every step of the hugely complex process of legal and financial negotiations in public, but everyone will get a full say via the planning process, and decisions will be made at committee in the usual way."
- 46.16 By way of supplementary Councillor Nemeth asked if a single letter could go out to the various clubs.
- 46.17 In response the Chair agreed this would be done.

Tourism

- 46.18 Councillor Peltzer Dunn asked: "What plans does the Chairman have to make use of tourism data much earlier than the current system of looking at a particular summer's figures over a year after it has ended?"
- 46.19 The Chair provided the following written response: "We are very proud of the continuing importance of the city as a national and international tourist destination.

Tourist bodies throughout the UK use either the STEAM model or Cambridge Model to estimate the economic impact of tourism as the most up to date and accurate figures available that enables comparison with other tourist destinations. These figures have been used by the Tourism sector nationally and have been the standard way of assessing the impact of tourism for many years. Brighton, along with other Southern destinations, commissions the research department at Tourism South East to utilise the Cambridge Model to produce our annual Economic Impact figures.

Both models utilise data produced by VisitBritain, VisitEngland and the Office of National Statistics to generate regional statistics. The data produced by VisitBritain, VisitEngland and the Office of National Statistics is based on the Great Britain Tourism Study which surveys 16,000 people, the Great Britain Day Visits Survey which surveys 18,000 people and the International Passenger Survey which surveys 36,000 people. Due to the high volume of surveys, the information takes many months to analyse and collate, so is not published until the following April / May. Tourism South East then use this data to inform the Cambridge Model, which is generally delivered in August the following year.

However, it is important to note that whilst the Cambridge Economic Impact Assessment data gives us an overview of yearly trends, the annual business plan of VisitBrighton, the tourism department of Brighton & Hove City Council, evolves through dialogue with

their 550 City-based tourism-related business partners to establish business needs, discussions with the Brighton & Hove Hoteliers Association, ongoing regional liaison with Tourism South East and national discussions with VisitBritain and VisitEngland, who regularly produce inbound research insights.

The strategy of the tourism department is flexible enabling it to embrace opportunities and address challenges which are identified. An example of this is the recent appointment of a Chinese PR company who are representing Brighton to travel agents in China, following a boost to Chinese visitor numbers to the UK following Brexit due to the weakened pound.

VisitBrighton will continue to work closely with stakeholders locally, regionally and nationally to ensure that the Council continues to inspire and drive awareness both to domestic and international visitors.”

46.20 By way of supplementary Councillor Peltzer Dunn asked for a briefing note for the Committee on this at a future date.

46.21 In response the Chair noted that he had requested a report to the March meeting specifically in relation to tourism.

Christmas Shopping

46.22 Councillor Taylor asked: “What meetings were held by Administration councillors with traders in the run-up to Christmas in preparation for Brighton & Hove’s busiest shopping season?”

46.23 The Chair provided the following written response: ““The council focuses all year round on supporting traders, not just in the run-up to Christmas.

Feedback from previous years’ Small Business Saturdays, and as discussed at this committee last November, included retailers saying that Christmas is already a high footfall period, which is why a key part of the strategy for supporting traders is and should be about providing information to local businesses about business support services all year round.

In general terms the council liaises with the business through business networks in the city, including attending business meetings and events, which is the most effective use of everyone’s time, and how traders as business owners present their views to the council officers and the administration.

As I was unwell in the period right before the Christmas season began, I would like to put on record my thanks to other members of the administration for covering key events for me so with such good will at this time.”

46.24 By way of supplementary Councillor Taylor noted was asking for more specific examples of meetings, as well as how any analysis would be would be undertaken of this year.

46.25 The Chair deferred to colleagues on the Committee: Councillor Morris noted that he met with local businesses throughout the year, and Councillor Allen explained that he was

Chair of the Open Market CIC and regularly met with traders. The Chair also took the opportunity to publically thank colleagues for their work during his period of illness in late 2016.

46.26 The Chair noted there were no further items listed under Member Involvement.

47 FEES & CHARGES 2017/18 – LIBRARY SERVICE

47.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director for Neighbourhoods, Communities & Housing in relation to Fees & Charges 2017/18 – Library Service. The report presented the review of fees and charges for the Libraries and Information Services and the changes would be implemented from April 2017.

47.2 Councillor Peltzer Dunn welcomed the report and noted he understood the necessity to increase fees and charges; however, he did not support the reintroduction of overdue fees for children, he expressed concern that this might deter some parents from letting their children borrow from the library, as they might incur fees. He also noted that the option for staff discretion could put some staff in a difficult position.

47.3 Councillor Allen requested further information on the Booklover's Store after the meeting. In response to further questions from Councillor Allen it was explained that generally when books were requested the library would buy them; inter-library loans were used largely when it was not possible to buy a book any longer, or where there would be very little demand for the book if purchased. Whilst the actual costs to the service for inter-library loans was £18.15, the library charged a flat fee of £7 and it was general practice for most libraries not to seek to recover the full costs of inter-library loans.

47.4 Councillor DrUITT noted that some fees were 100% for concessionary cardholders, and argued more should be done for services users that qualified for concessionary rates. He noted that the Green Group would abstain on recommendation 1. In response Councillor Cattell noted that where the rate was 100% for concessionary card holders it had been at the level for some years, Councillor DrUITT responded that his point had been to argue that a more progressive fees policy could be considered.

47.5 In response to Councillor Nemeth it was clarified that the libraries generally bought items that were requested; however, the report now proposed that the service cease notifying people when this item was in stock, and they instead pay a reservation fee. The Council was a member of the South East Library Management System (SELMS), the largest consortium of this nature in Europe; this consortium offered its members a free lending service, the chances of being able to borrow within the group were high and reduced the instances where it was necessary to use inter-library loans outside of the group. Lending across authorities was reviewed to ensure no one authority was disproportionately impacted and required financial compensation; however, on the whole lending was fairly even across the consortium.

47.6 In response to Councillor Morris it was explained that the exhibition spaces varied from library to library, there were costs in preparing the spaces so it was important to ensure that the libraries recovered these. In response to a further query from Councillor Taylor it

was confirmed that these changes would be reviewed to ensure they raised the intended funds.

47.7 Councillor Peltzer Dunn moved an amendment to remove paragraph 3.10 from the report, namely the reintroduction of late library fees for children. This was seconded by Councillor Nemeth.

47.8 The Chair put the proposed amendment to the vote; the vote was tied with 5 in support and 5 against, the Chair exercised his casting vote to defeat the amendment.

47.9 The Chair then put the substantive recommendation to the vote. Recommendation 1) was **carried** with 8 in support and 2 abstentions, and Recommendation 2) was **carried** unanimously.

47.10 **RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the committee approves the fees and charges for Libraries and Information Services for 2017/18 in Appendix 1.
- 2) That the committee grants delegated authority for officers to negotiate hire fees where commercially necessary outside the approved fees & charges.

48 FEES & CHARGES 2017/18 - ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT & CULTURE DIRECTORATE

48.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director for Economy, Environment & Culture in relation to Fees & Charges 2017/18 - Economy, Environment & Culture Directorate. The combined report presented the review of fees and charges across four service areas: Seafront, Sports Facilities (including golf courses), Brighton Centre and Outdoor Events. The changes would be implemented from April 2017 unless otherwise stated.

48.2 In response to the Chair it was clarified that the tickets for riding the Volks Railway would also include access to the visitor centre; however, Officers would need to check if the maintenance yard was also open to the public.

48.3 In response to Councillor Nemeth it was explained that the fee for the hire of the bandstand ensured it would be available; appropriate set up was undertaken; any liaison with the café underneath took place and any other such duties. It was agreed that Officers would update the Committee after the meeting in relation to any instances of the bandstand being used for weddings without being hired.

48.4 In response to Councillor Peltzer Dunn it was agreed that Officers would look into whether it was feasible to look allowing the bandstand to be hired for weddings during the off peak months.

48.5 In response to Councillor Morris it was explained that a policy was agreed by the Committee approximately three years ago in relation to filming in the city; this had been benchmarked to set the charges appropriately.

- 48.6 Councillor Greenbaum highlighted the concerns she had raised at the previous meeting in relation to outdoor events in the city; Officers clarified that, as agreed, a briefing was being drafted for the Committee.
- 48.7 In response to Councillor Druitt it was explained that a scheme was being trailed for discount day access to golf courses, similar to discount access to the city's leisure facilities. This would start in April on selected days, with a view to a full scheme the following year.
- 48.8 In response to Councillor Taylor it was explained that the calculation used in the uplift for fees at leisure facilities was the industry standard. In response to a further query it was explained that was a very open and thorough dialogue with Freedom Leisure in relation to the level of fee increases each year; the Council would always seek to ensure it achieved value for money.
- 48.9 Councillor O'Quinn stated her view that price for access to all the city's sports facilities was very reasonable and offered very good value for money.
- 48.10 In response to Councillor Druitt, Officers agreed to investigate if there was a way to better negotiate discount to protect leisure services users from increased fees.
- 48.11 The Chair then put the recommendations to the vote individually. Recommendations 1), 2), 5), 6) & 7) were **carried** with 8 in support and 2 abstentions and recommendations 3) & 4) were **carried** unanimously.
- 48.12 **RESOLVED:**
- 1) That the committee approves the fees and charges for the Seafront for 2017/18 in Appendix 1a.
 - 2) That the Committee approves the fees and charges for the Bandstand for 2018 & 2019 in Appendix 1a.
 - 3) That the Committee approves the fees and charges for the Sports Facilities for 2017/18 in Appendix 2a.
 - 4) That the Committee approves the fees and charges for the Golf Courses for 2017/18 in Appendix 2b.
 - 5) That the Committee approves the fees and charges for the Brighton Centre for 2017/18 in Appendix 3.
 - 6) That the Committee approves the fees and charges for Outdoor Events for 2017/18 in Appendix 4.
 - 7) That the committee grants delegated authority for officers to negotiate hire fees where commercially necessary outside the approved fees & charges.

49 TOAD'S HOLE VALLEY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT – DRAFT SPD CONSULTATION

- 49.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director for Economy in relation to Toad's Hole Valley Supplementary Planning Document – Draft SPD Consultation. The report provided a summary of the responses received as a result of the consultation on the Toad's Hole Valley Issues and Options paper and sought agreement to consult on a Draft Supplementary Planning Document for Toad's Hole Valley.
- 49.2 In response to Councillor Greenbaum it was explained that the site in the north-east corner of the wider site was not under the same ownership. The owners were not compelled to submit a joint application, and Officers were not of the view that it would prejudice the wider site, and they were satisfied that the application met the requirements of the policy. The Council had commissioned a feasibility study for district heating across the wider site.
- 49.3 In response to Councillor Druitt it was explained that the consultation would utilise systems the Council already had in place to ensure networks such as residents meetings were engaged.
- 49.4 The Chair noted there was an amendment from the Conservative Group and called on Councillor Nemeth to propose this. Councillor Nemeth stated that he hoped to strengthen the policy by allowing for custom and self build, as well ensure the involvement of householders and local people.
- 49.5 Councillor Peltzer Dunn formally seconded the amendment.
- 49.6 Officers clarified that the Council was under duty to grant permission for self-service plots; there was a requirement to identify sites and keep a register.
- 49.7 Councillor Cattell noted she was uncomfortable with the prospect of a large number of custom builds and felt the strength of much of the city's architecture was in its uniformity.
- 49.8 In response to Councillor Druitt it was highlighted that this was an acceptable amendment in planning terms, and it would be considered as part of the planning process. Councillor Druitt put to Councillor Nemeth that the wording of his amendment could be modified to also make reference to community land trust and co-operative housing; Councillor Nemeth noted he was happy to accept these additions.
- 49.9 The Chair then put this amendment to the vote. This was **carried** unanimously.
- 49.10 Councillor Cattell noted she was delighted that this report was coming forward and thanked the work undertaken by Officers.
- 49.11 Councillor Morris welcomed the report, and noted that he hoped underground refuse management would be picked up through the course of the application.
- 49.12 The Chair then put the recommendations to the vote.
- 49.13 **RESOLVED** – That the Economic Development & Culture Committee:

- 1) Notes the responses of the early stakeholder consultation on the Issues and Options paper for a Toad's Hole Valley Supplementary Planning Document used to inform the preparation of a Draft Supplementary Planning Document for this site;
- 2) Gives authority to consult on the Draft Toad's Hole Valley Supplementary Planning Document and accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment which will inform the preparation of the final version of the document and to authorise the Head of Planning to may make any necessary minor editorial/grammatical amendments to the Draft Supplementary Planning Document prior to consultation.
- 3) That the following sentence be inserted into Clause 4.28 on page 16 of the Draft Toad's Hole Valley Supplementary Planning Document:

“Custom-build, self-build, community land trust and co-operative will be encouraged in order to both facilitate this aim and to promote the involvement of local businesses and creative professionals.”

50 MAJOR PROJECTS UPDATE

50.1 In response to questions the following information was given:

- In relation to Preston Barracks it was explained that the planning application was expected imminently.
- The finish date for the King Alfred would be circulated to the Committee. Assurance was also provided that all partners were working hard to progress the project; whilst there were some legal and commercial issues that were taking longer than expected, this was common on a project of this size and complexity.
- It explained that Officers were looking into how progress updates for Major Projects were communicated, with a view to doing this with a better of use of technology.

50.2 **RESOLVED** – That the Committee note the update.

51 ITEMS REFERRED FOR COUNCIL

51.1 There were no items referred to Council.

52 PART TWO MINUTES - EXEMPT CATEGORY 3

52.1 Councillor Peltzer Dunn requested that two minor typographical errors in the minute be corrected.

52.1 **RESOLVED** – That, with the above change, the Chair be authorised to sign the Part Two minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2016.

53 PART TWO PROCEEDINGS

53.1 **RESOLVED** – That the information contained in Part Two (Item 53) remain exempt from disclosure to the press and public.

The meeting concluded at 6.30pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of