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## **General Public Services and Economic Development Committee**

### **MINUTES**

**Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, WD3 1RL on Tuesday, 19 March 2024 from 7.30 pm - 8.48 pm.**

**Present:** Councillors

Stephen Giles-Medhurst in the Chair  
Kevin Raeburn  
Paul Rainbow (Co-Chair),  
Reena Ranger  
David Raw  
Andrew Scarth (Co-Chair)  
Stephen Cox  
Chris Mitchell

**Officers in Attendance:**

Justin Wingfield, Head of Property & Major Projects  
Marko Kalik, Head of Planning Policy and Conservation  
Kimberley Rowley, Head of Regulatory Services  
Hannah Doney, Head of Finance  
Anita Hibbs, Committee Manager

#### **GPS&ED21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Stephen King, Oliver Cooper, Andrea Fraser and Chris Whately-Smith, with the substitutes being Councillors Stephen Cox and Reena Ranger.

#### **GPS&ED22 MINUTES**

The Chair, Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst advised that there was a correction to be made to the minutes of the General Public Services & Economic Development Committee meeting, held on 16 January 2024; which was to indicate clearly in the minutes that Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst was Chair of that meeting.

With that correction to the minutes, the Committee approved the minutes of its meeting of 16 January 2024, and authorised the Chair to sign them as a correct record.

#### **GPS&ED23 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items of other business.

#### **GPS&ED24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst, Andrew Scarth, Paul Rainbow, Kevin Raeburn, Chris Mitchell and Reena Ranger declared a non-pecuniary interest, stating that they have access and use of electric vehicles.

## **GPS&ED25 BUDGET MANAGEMENT - PERIOD 10**

Hannah Doney, Head of Finance highlighted some of the key income streams:

The forecast income for 2023-24 for pay and display car parks is already at £181,831 this year, which means the Council is already achieving more than it did in the previous year, well on target to achieve the budget.

In response to a request for a full report on the success of the air source heat pump and the energy cost, the officer responded that she would liaise with a colleague to see when a reasonable amount of data on utility cost will be available to provide to Members.

The officers also responded to a question regarding the reoccurring deficit of approximately £1,000,000 in the budget, that the budget for next year, where possible, will have taken into account expected pressures in future years, as part of the process. In terms of the figures; there has been some negative news coming through from period 8, which won't have been known at the time the budget was being set for future years.

The first port of call would be to look at where we can reduce spend next year, if we need to. If there is pressure on the budget in the next year, that will impact on the general fund position, the Council does have a healthy general fund, steps will need to be taken in future years' budgeting to potentially repay some of that money into the general fund if it's deemed necessary.

In response to a question raised around budget for footpaths and alleyway surveying and flooding and maintenance, Justin Wingfield, Head of Property & Major projects advised that officers have identified some initial areas that are in need of urgent works, and they are being prioritised, and capital funding made available in the forthcoming financial year to use for the urgent works. A programme of investments will be developed over the coming months.

The Chair responded to a question around parking enforcement and a potential for increasing enforcement officers, advising that additional money was allocated within the budget for parking enforcement to use for extra enforcement hours but not for increasing enforcement officers.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst moved the recommendation; that Members note and comment on the contents of the report.

On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

That Members note and comment on the contents of the report.

## **GPS&ED26 CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL PROGRAMME AND CONSERVATION SERVICE UPDATE**

Marko Kalik, Head of Planning Policy and Conservation introduced the report advising that Officers are proposing undertaking the Rickmansworth Town Centre and Sarratt Church End appraisals; the reasons being that the Rickmansworth Town Centre appraisal is the oldest and a fairly large area, with the much smaller Sarratt Church End area, which helps balance the cost of the larger one against the smaller conservation area.

The aim would be to bring the Rickmansworth Town Centre appraisal back to this Committee in October, to give the consultants enough time to work on it. The rest of the conservation service is currently outsourced to Play Services, who provide comments on the planning applications. That is covered by the vacant Senior Conservation Officer post.

As part of the appraisal process, there will be a public consultation, so people will have the opportunity to comment.

In response to a request for clarification, the Officer explained that there will be two appraisals this year; the first one being the Rickmansworth Town Centre appraisal, followed by the Sarratt Church End, and next year will be another two, starting with the Croxley Green appraisal.

Councillor Reena Ranger proposed an amendment to the recommendations, seconded by Councillor David Raw, as follows:

- The Rickmansworth Town Centre Conservation Area to be replaced by Rickmansworth Conservation Area.
- Members note that preserving and enhancing our conservation areas is part of this Council's statutory duty.
- Members agree that all conservation appraisals should be undertaken every five years, as recommended by Historic England.
- Where objections from statutory consultees and longstanding stakeholder bodies such as Moor Park 1958, are received on conservation grounds, written objections from the conservation officer should be available on the planning portal for due consideration.

In response to the proposal the Chair and Marko Kalik both advised that the name of the conservation areas cannot be changed from what they were designated as originally.

The Chair further advised that the proposed amended amendment would have to be costed, and if there were budgetary implications, it would need to be considered at Policy & Resources Committee and then at Full Council.

Any objections that are called in to the Planning Committee will have written conservation area comments.

Therefore, the Chair ruled that such proposals based on the above could not be put to a vote and the proposer agreed.

Councillor Giles-Medhurst moved the original recommendation as proposed by the Officers.

On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

That:

- Members agree to prioritising the preparation of the Rickmansworth Town Centre and Sarratt (Church End) Conservation Area Appraisals in the 2024/25 financial year rather than increasing the number of written conservation comments on planning applications.
- Members note that it is not possible to increase the number of written conservation comments being provided on planning applications without agreeing additional budget to cover this.

**GPS&ED27 AMENDMENT TO TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER (TRO) FOR HENBURY WAY CAR PARK**

Justin Wingfield, Head of Property and Major Projects introduced the report which proposes an amendment to the existing Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for Henbury Way Car Park, South Oxhey, in order to facilitate market trader parking for the proposed South Oxhey market.

There were no questions raised on this item by the Committee.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst moved the recommendation; that the Committee approve this recommendation to agree to the variation of the existing Henbury Way car park TRO to allow permit parking for market traders in accordance with this report, and authority is delegated to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Lead Member of Public Services together with relevant Ward Councillors, to implement the required variation to the Traffic Regulation Order and for Officers to make any necessary amendments or variations to the proposal as may be required, including as a result of responses to any consultation; as well as to address or set aside any formal objections to any Notice of Proposed Traffic Regulation Orders in connection with approval of the final TRO variation scheme.

On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being by general assent.

RESOLVED:

- i) The Committee approve this recommendation to agree to the variation of the existing Henbury Way car park TRO to allow permit parking for market traders in accordance with this report.

AND

- ii) Authority is delegated to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Lead Member of Public Services together with relevant Ward Councillors, to implement the required variation to the Traffic Regulation Order and for Officers to make any necessary amendments or variations to the proposal as may be required, including as a result of responses to any consultation; as well as to address or set aside any formal objections to any Notice of Proposed Traffic Regulation Orders in connection with approval of the final TRO variation scheme.

## **GPS&ED28 PROPOSALS FOR OFF-STREET (CAR PARKS) ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS IMPLEMENTATION**

Kimberley Rowley, Head of Regulatory Services introduced the report.

An external consultant has been employed by the Council who has been supporting officers moving the work forward.

The government has recently changed their funding options; the ORCS funding that is allocated directly to local authorities has now been changed to what is called the LEVI funding, and this is allocated to County authorities. Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) have been given an indicative allocation of £6,015,000 capital funding. The funding is aimed at residents with no access to on street parking but includes rapid chargers.

The aim of HCC was to implement EV chargers by the end 2024 (Quarter 4), however, the implementation is now likely to be pushed back to 2025 (Quarter 3-4), due to the information and evidence gathering required for the funding.

The Chair responded to questions raised by committee members, and concerns around the demand for EV chargers, explaining that the operators wouldn't be suggesting the sites if they did not think these were viable for them.

There will need to be changes to the traffic regulation orders so cars that are not electric should not be able to park in parking spaces that are designated for electric cars. This will initially only occur in the public car parks where there are existing TROs.

The Officer reassured the committee that officers will continue to look at the demands for EV chargers; the requests coming in are monitored by officers. HCC have done a lot of work on demand mapping to see where those demands exist. They are looking at a 6 fold increase in charging points in Hertfordshire by 2023.

In response to a question raised around weight capacity assessment and EV charging operators; the Officer advised that none of the car parks being considered are multideck so the weight capacity would not be of concern. Officers firstly reached out to a Charge Point Operator, Blink. The identified operator already operates in Watford providing on street EVCP for Watford Borough Council and a number of other local authorities. They are already on the framework and TRDC could direct award to them.

An ORCs funding application has already been submitted to Blink, and it would enable officers to go ahead with at least 10 charging points at this stage. If the Council don't receive the ORCs funding it would need to revert back to using the LEVI funding to pursue anything beyond our leisure centre car parks.

The Committee considered the recommendation, and a decision was made not to pursue the Aquadrome car park at this point due to future refurbishment proposals and constraints such as flooding.

Furthermore, in response to a request from the Chair for clarification; the Officer provided a summary of the original recommendation, and a proposed amended version of the recommendation as follows:

The proposed amended recommendation supports the hybrid model but brings forward the leisure car park sites jointly with the town centre car park sites using the identified CIL funding (if ORCs funding is received).

That Members agree to:

- i) On receipt of confirmation of ORCs funding (external funding) pursue the Electric Vehicle Charge Point proposals for Council car parks utilising the Option 3 Hybrid method and action plan (see point 3.7) but to include prioritisation of the 7 town centre car park locations (referred to in table at para 2.37) detailed with a final decision on scheme implementation and delivery to be delegated to the Director of Finance in conjunction with the Lead Member to ensure timely project delivery.

OR

- ii) In the absence of ORCs funding (external funding) pursue the Electric Vehicle Charge Point proposals for Council car parks utilising the Option 3 Hybrid method and action plan (see point 3.7) but with a final decision on scheme implementation and delivery to be delegated to the Director of Finance in conjunction with the Lead Member to ensure timely project delivery.

AND

- iii) Officers to continue to investigate further proposals for Off Street Electric Vehicle Charging in other Council car parks and liaise with Hertfordshire Highways regarding On Street proposals with any funding opportunities identified.
- iv) The production of a comprehensive Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy for Three Rivers District Council.

Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst moved the proposed amended recommendation.

On being put to the Committee the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being 7 For, 0 Against and 1 Abstention.

RESOLVED:

That Members agree to:

- i) On receipt of confirmation of ORCs funding (external funding) pursue the Electric Vehicle Charge Point proposals for Council car parks utilising the Option 3 Hybrid method and action plan (see point 3.7) but to include prioritisation of the 7 town centre car park locations (referred to in table at para 2.37) detailed with a final decision on scheme implementation and delivery to be delegated to the Director of Finance in conjunction with the Lead Member to ensure timely project delivery.

OR

- ii) In the absence of ORCs funding (external funding) pursue the Electric Vehicle Charge Point proposals for Council car parks utilising the Option 3 Hybrid method and action plan (see point 3.7) but with a final decision on scheme implementation and delivery to be delegated to the Director of Finance in conjunction with the Lead Member to ensure timely project delivery.

AND

- iii) Officers to continue to investigate further proposals for Off Street Electric Vehicle Charging in other Council car parks and liaise with Hertfordshire Highways regarding On Street proposals with any funding opportunities identified.
- iv) The production of a comprehensive Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy for Three Rivers District Council.

**GPS&ED29 OTHER BUSINESS - IF APPROVED UNDER ITEM 3 ABOVE**

None

**GPS&ED30 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Chair moved, duly seconded, the following motion:

“that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under paragraph (X) of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act. It has been decided by the Council that in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.”

**CHAIR**