

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: Asset Management and Economic Development Cabinet Committee **Date:** Thursday, 10 April 2014

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.00 - 7.51 pm

Members Present: Councillors Mrs A Grigg (Chairman), W Breare-Hall, Ms S Stavrou and C Whitbread

Other Councillors: Councillors K Angold-Stephens, Ms J Hart, Mrs C Pond and D Stallan

Apologies: Councillor Mrs E Webster

Officers Present: C Pasterfield (Chief Estates & Valuation Officer), J Nolan (Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)), J Leither (Democratic Services Assistant) and G J Woodhall (Democratic Services Officer)

23. WEBCASTING INTRODUCTION

The Chairman reminded everyone present that the meeting would be broadcast live to the internet and that the Council had adopted a protocol for the webcasting of its meetings.

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor W Breare-Hall declared a personal interest in agenda item 5, Asset Management Co-Ordination Group Report item 4, St John's Road by virtue of being a member of Epping Town Council and a resident of Epping. The Councillor had determined that his interest was non-pecuniary and would remain in the meeting for the consideration of the issue.

25. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2014 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

26. ASSET MANAGEMENT CO-ORDINATION GROUP REPORT

The Cabinet Committee noted a report from the Asset Management Co-ordination Group on the progress they made with the development of Council's property assets.

The Assistant Director, Asset Management & Economic Development reported orally on further progress which had been achieved since the matters had been considered by the Group.

(1) Langston Road Retail Park

Outline planning approval had now been granted and the Section 106 Agreement had been signed by Epping Forest District Council, Essex County Council and Polofind Limited. Negotiations were ongoing with Polofind Limited regarding a development agreement to jointly develop the site. Following a number of meetings with legal advisers, Berwin Leighton Paisner and accountants Price Waterhouse Coopers, a corporate structure was now being proposed for Council members to consider. The meetings had been attended by the Council's Director of Resources, Director of Governance and Chief Estates Officer.

Members noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting regarding a joint development agreement and the formation of a Limited Partnership.

(2) Oakwood Hill Depot

A planning application had been re-submitted and had been registered as valid on 5 March 2014. This application would now progress to an Area Plans Sub-Committee South meeting.

(3) Pyrles Lane Nursery

The Council had now completed the purchase of 79 Pyrles Lane, the property adjacent to the entrance of the site. A further planning application would be considered in the future for the development of this site, taking into account concerns raised at the previous planning committee.

(4) St John's Road

Essex County Council (ECC), Epping Town Council (ETC) and Epping Forest District Council (EFDC), had carried out an expressions of interest exercise which had attracted strong interest. ETC had appointed Strettons Chartered Surveyors to act on their behalf. Permission had been sought from the three Councils to enter into detailed negotiations from a mixed use developer to ascertain the details of their offer for a fixed period. This approach had been approved by all three Councils and detailed negotiations would be entered into with the developer, Frontier Estates.

(5) Waste Contractor's Depot

The Waste Contract negotiations were continuing and the final result would not be known until July 2014. It would also be known at that time when the Langston Road Depot would be vacated.

(6) North Weald Airfield

This had been examined as part of the Local Plan and was included within the Master Plan for North Weald. A meeting had been held with Savills, the Consultants acting for the Council. Savills had produced a draft report with regard to the Council's land holdings which would be presented to Members in the future.

(7) Torrington Drive

The purchase of the head lease would be completed on the 11 April 2014. The refurbishment of the Sainsbury's store had been complete and they had reopened for business.

The lease of the Post Office, which was situated on the corner of Torrington Drive and The Broadway, was due for renewal. The Post Office had asked for a meeting to discuss the new lease. A meeting was scheduled for 17 April 2014 and a report would be submitted to the Cabinet Committee at the next meeting.

(8) Winston Churchill Public House

The developer had agreed Heads of Terms with the Council and the Spirit Pub Group to redevelop the site comprising of two retail units, a pub and 64 flats. A conditional agreement had now been signed with the developer.

(9) Broadway Car Parks / Burton Road Depot

A number of commercial and residential proposals were being considered but there were no firm proposals to report at this time. At the Asset Management Co-ordination Group on 10 March 2014 it was agreed that a scheme to demolish garages in Vere Road and layout new parking for shoppers and the Sir Winston Churchill development would be brought forward.

(10) Lindsey House Epping

There was a restrictive covenant on this property and Officers from the Estates and Valuations department were considering the future potential use or sale of this property.

The restrictive covenant related to the Council not being able to convert the property into flats, it was a large house with no back garden. Officers were working to see if the restrictive covenant could be removed as going forward as a house was not viable.

(11) Town Mead Depot

The Council architect had prepared outline drawings and Waltham Abbey Town Council (WATC) had discussed the matter at a Council meeting. A meeting had been held with the Leader and Clerk of WATC and matters were now being progressed with consultants who had advised that a detailed topographical survey needed to be undertaken.

(12) Church Hill Former Car Park

The site had been marketed and following a second round of final bids an offer had been accepted. Completion of the sale was expected on the 17 May 2014.

(13) Leader Lodge

Preparation to re-market was under way and the property would be re-tendered in the near future.

Resolved:

(1) That the monitoring report on the development of the Council's property assets be noted; and

(2) That regarding item 7, (Torrington Drive), the Assistant Director (Asset Management and Economic Development), submit a report to the next meeting of the Cabinet Committee on the current situation of the renewal of the Post Office Lease.

Reasons for the Decision:

To progress the renewal of the lease.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

27. NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD UPDATE

The Chairman referred to the recent accident concerning a plane which had flown from North Weald Airfield and offered her condolences to the families of the pilot and the passenger that had been killed.

The Assistant Director, Asset Management & Economic Development presented a report to the Cabinet Committee regarding income generation at North Weald Airfield.

He advised that there were three main sources of income at the Airfield:

- (a) that related to the Saturday and associated Bank Holiday Markets;
- (b) that related to the leases and licences held by the various aviation and non-aviation tenants (i.e. those occupying hangars and other buildings); and
- (c) that associated with short term/casual lets for a range of different activities.

In categories (a) and (b) above these were managed by the Estates Division (currently within the Governance Directorate) whilst category (c) was managed by the Airfield Manager as part of operational duties, within the new Neighbourhoods Directorate. This report dealt primarily with this category.

There had been an increase in income generated via casual lettings in 2013/14 from £74,000 in 2012/13 to an estimated £98,000. This was an increase of 32% year on year. This arose from:

- a monthly increase negotiated with Carlimits
- attracting new users such as Stunt Drive UK
- use of the runway for vehicle racing/testing
- general increase in ad-hoc uses generated through the "Spirit of North Weald" newsletter.

Further increases in 2014/15 were anticipated through additional ad-hoc users, including a company who intended to operate a vertical wind tunnel.

Members expressed concern that whilst the report showed what the Airfield was achieving it did not show any business plan for the future. The Chairman advised the Cabinet Committee that the Airfield Manager had apologised for not being able to attend the meeting and that he would be invited to attend the next meeting to answer Members concerns.

Resolved:

- (1) That the report on Income generation at North Weald Airfield be noted; and
- (2) That the Airfield Manager attend the next meeting.

Reasons for the Decision:

To update the Cabinet Committee on the current arrangements.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

28. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Cabinet Committee noted that there was no other urgent business for consideration.

29. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED:

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the items of business set out below on the grounds that they would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

<u>Agenda Item No.</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Exempt Information Paragraph Number</u>
9	North Weald Airfield - Main Runway Interim Report	3 and 5

30. NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD - MAIN RUNWAY INTERIM REPORT

The Assistant Director, Asset Management & Economic Development presented a report to the Cabinet Committee regarding the Main Runway at North Weald Airfield.

The appointed consultants, RPS, had completed their assessment of the main runway and had submitted a draft report for officers' consideration. There was to be a final meeting at the Airfield on 23 April 2014, where it was hoped to be able to 'sign off' the report and make it available to Members.

Resolved:

That the current position regarding the consultant's report on remedial works to the main runway be noted.

Reasons for the Decision:

To update the Cabinet Committee on the interim outcome of the consultancy report on the remediation of runway 02/20 at North Weald Airfield.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To delay this report until the receipt of the final consultant's report. However, there were no further scheduled meetings of this Committee until the new municipal year and it was therefore considered appropriate to inform the Committee of the current position and likely outcomes.