

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: Asset Management and Economic Development Cabinet Committee **Date:** Tuesday, 21 October 2014

Place: Council Chamber, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 7.00 - 8.30 pm

Members Present: Councillors Mrs A Grigg (Chairman), Ms H Kane and C Whitbread

Other Councillors: Councillor D Stallan

Apologies: Councillors W Breare-Hall and Ms S Stavrou

Officers Present: D Macnab (Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Neighbourhoods), C Pasterfield (Assistant Director (Asset Management and Economic Development)), M Warr (Performance Improvement Officer), J Leither (Democratic Services Assistant) and P Tredgett (Information Assistant)

Also in attendance: L Hughes (Director, Hughmark Continental Limited)

18. 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.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(a) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor H Kane declared a personal interest in agenda item 5, Economic Development Progress Report, item 1 by virtue of being the Chairman of the Town Centre Partnership and a Ward Member and agenda item 6, Asset Management Co-ordination Group Report, item 10, Town Mead Depot by virtue of being a Ward Member. The Councillor had determined that her interest was non-pecuniary and would remain in the meeting for the consideration of the issue.

(b) Pursuant to the Council's Code of Member Conduct, Councillor C Whitbread declared a personal interest in agenda item 6, Asset Management Co-Ordination Group Report item 4, St John's Road by virtue of being 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.

20. MINUTES

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2014 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the correct information not being recorded, Minute 16, Recommended (4) should read:

- (4) That Members noted an outright sale of North Weald Airfield was excluded.

21. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM PROGRESS REPORT

The Economic Development Officer (EDO) presented a report to the Cabinet Committee and updated them on a number of projects, themes and issues being explored by the Economic Development Team.

- (1) **Waltham Abbey Town Centre** - The Waltham Abbey Economic Development Plan (EDP) was circulated to the Town Council for comment and a second iteration of the plan had been produced and circulated to partners of the Town Council and Town Partnership. A subsequent meeting had been held to discuss the next steps for that plan and to highlight some of the key projects being undertaken.

Further development of the Waltham Abbey EDP would be undertaken in the light of the findings of studies commissioned from Peter Brett Associates and Colliers International. It was anticipated that these reports would be received by the end of November and be presented to the next meeting of the Cabinet Committee.

- (2) **Heritage Lottery Funding** - An officer working party had been established to look at submitting a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to undertake a heritage based development project in the Market Square area of Waltham Abbey. This was at an early stage and to date a site visit to identify the critical heritage buildings to be incorporated into such a bid was the only concrete step taken. The next stage would be to submit a project enquiry to HLF and seek a meeting with them to identify both the weaknesses in a previously submitted unsuccessful bid and the scope for a successful revised bid.

- (3) **Economic Development Priorities and Plans** - Outline plans were now being drawn up for both the Epping and Ongar town centres. Initial walk rounds of each town would be undertaken to identify particular issues and a process of consultation with key partners would commence shortly afterwards.

The EDO advised Members that all town centres in the District would be considered when drawing up the Economic Development Plans.

- (4) **Tourism** - Under the direction of One Epping Forest, the Tourism & Visitor Board had recently held its inaugural meeting. A second Tourism Summit was to be held later this year. It was planned to coincide this event with a workshop to launch the Visit Essex Rural Escapes Toolkit and would be an excellent opportunity to help shape the way that our rural tourism economy developed in the future.

A Tourism Development Manager had now been appointed and would take up the post in November 2014.

- (5) **Access To Funding Roadshow** - In conjunction with the Essex Innovation Programme it was planned to host an Access to Funding Roadshow at the Civic Offices on 17 November 2014. This would bring a number of key funding exhibitors, including NWES, Growth Accelerator, Start-Up Loans and others, together to present some of the funding opportunities which existed for businesses in the district. The event would be part of a programme of events throughout Essex and would hopefully attract a number of local businesses.

(6) **Start-Up Loans** - It had been agreed to tie up with Start-Up Loans, a Government backed agency that offered loans of up to £10,000 to businesses that were pre-trading or within their first 12 months of trading. A meeting was planned to discuss the next steps and it was hoped that this would be taken forward in the next couple of months.

(7) **Partner Liaison** - The Economic Development team continue to liaise with, support and attend meetings with a number of Partner Organisations. These included, at varying intervals:

- Lea Valley Food Taskforce
- Essex Economic Development Officer group
- Essex Tourism Officer Group
- Epping Forest Town Team
- Eastern Plateau Local Action Group
- Stansted Airport Local Authority Forum
- Tourism & Visitor Board
- West Essex Skills & Learning Forum
- Waltham Abbey Town Partnership

Resolved:

(1) That the progress and work programme of the Council's Economic Development Section be noted; and

(2) That the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) be added to number 7 of the report, Partner Liaison.

Reasons for Decision:

To update the Cabinet Committee on the progress made with regard to Economic Development issues.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

None, as this was a monitoring report for noting only.

22. ASSET MANAGEMENT CO-ORDINATION GROUP REPORT

The Cabinet Committee noted a report from the Asset Management Co-ordination Group on the progress made with the development of the 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) **Epping Forest Shopping Park** – Two letting agents had been appointed to market the retail park. They were talking to a number of fashion retailers who had shown a strong interest at this early stage. An updated report would be presented at the next meeting of the Cabinet Committee.

The Consultant team was almost up to full strength, there were two appointments still to be made and a shortlist had been prepared. A tendering process would be carried out in the next 2-3 weeks. This project was moving ahead and it would soon be clear what the target dates and the programme the joint partners would be working to. An updated report would be presented at the next meeting of the Cabinet Committee.

(2) **Oakwood Hill Depot** – The Council's consultants, Stace were resolving the final planning conditions with the Planning Department. A full report with revised costings and a detailed programme would be presented at the next Cabinet Committee meeting.

(3) **Pyrles Lane Nursery** – A new planning application for residential development was being prepared and a new traffic survey had been completed. Options regarding design were being considered with regard to the access to the site and a new application should be submitted by Christmas.

(4) **St John's Road** – The Council were in discussion with the joint partners Essex County Council and Epping Town Council and they were now looking to appoint solicitors to liaise directly with the developer Frontier Estates Limited with a view to progressing this site.

(5) **North Weald Airfield** – Approval from Council had been received with regard to business aviation to look for a partner who had experience within this specialist area to help Epping Forest District Council to increase business on the aviation side and generate more income. Savills, the consultants, were looking to progress this as soon as possible.

(6) **Torrington Drive** – Talks were continuing with TFL but they had emphasised that the redevelopment of Debden Station car park was not on their current development programme.

The link between the tube station and the Broadway would further enhance the route to the Broadway and any further updates would be presented to the next meeting of the Cabinet Committee.

(7) **Winston Churchill Public House** – Demolition of the public house had now taken place and a detailed programme from our development partners was awaited.

Planning permission had now been obtained to demolish the lock up garages in Vere Road. This would give the shoppers a much improved car park to the rear of the shops.

(8) **Broadway Car Parks/Burton Road Depot** – Possession had now been taken of the former jewellers shop which has relocated on The Broadway. Work to demolish the shop and widen the walkway to provide better access to the Burton Road car park was now being progressed.

(9) **Lindsay House Epping** – Possession had now been taken of this property and approval granted at the 23 June 2014 Cabinet to market the property. Agents had been appointed following a tender process. Essex County Council had expressed interest in the building and discussions were taking place with them.

(10) **Town Mead Depot** – The Council were looking to appoint an architectural and planning consultant to assist Peter Brett Associates to formulate a scheme which would be able to address the flooding issues.

(11) **Leader Lodge** – This was in the final stages with legal services for disposal.

Resolved:

That the monitoring report on the development of the Council's property assets be noted.

Reasons for Decision:

To comply with the Cabinet Committee's previous request to monitor the development of the Council's property assets periodically.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

None, as this monitoring report was for information not action.

23. NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD INCOME GENERATION UPDATE

(1) The Director of Neighbourhoods gave a verbal update of income generating opportunities at North Weald Airfield.

(a) The North Weald Community Day held in September 2014 had been a great success with over 4,000 people attending on the day and raising a sum of £7,000 for charity.

(b) Kings Hanger 5A was in the final stages of being rented.

(c) The pilot training proposal that was discussed at the last meeting of the Cabinet Committee had progressed in that a report had been prepared and would be presented to Cabinet, giving details of a proposed agreement, with a provider of training which would generate income for the Council.

(d) Best Parties Ever, an outdoor events organiser providing corporate hospitality had informed NWA that they will not be holding future events at the Airfield. They had been holding events at the Airfield for several years. An alternative provider would be sought.

(e) North Weald Airfield hosted a drive in movie event on the weekend of the 10 October 2014 this had been a great success and was sold out with over 500 people in attendance on each night.

(f) A production company had been filming at the Airfield with approximately 6 trucks and 20 actors, recreating a scene at Heathrow Airport.

Resolved:

That a formal written report would be presented at the next meeting of the Cabinet Committee on 11 December 2014.

(2) The Assistant Director of Asset Management and Economic Development gave a verbal update of the park and ride scheme that had been discussed at an earlier Cabinet Committee meeting. He advised that the current Consultants had specified that they were not experienced to consult on a park and ride scheme.

Members advised that this scheme would need to be explored first by talking to other authorities who were running a similar scheme. Chelmsford operated a successful park and ride scheme and Officers should contact them for information to evaluate if this would be a viable scheme for North Weald Airfield before instructing consultants.

Resolved:

That a formal written report would be presented to the next meeting of the Cabinet Committee on 11 December 2014.

24. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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

25. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Resolved:

(1) 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	Licence Fee for North Weald Market	3

26. LICENCE FEE FOR NORTH WEALD MARKET

The Director of Neighbourhoods presented a report to the Cabinet Committee regarding the Licence Fee for North Weald Market. He introduced Mr Lew Hughes from Hughmark Continental Limited who attended the meeting and gave a verbal report on the current status of the market and trading conditions.

Decision:

(1) That the Council would vary the current licence on a temporary basis to eliminate any fixed fee and alternatively would receive a 75% profit share from Hughmark Continental Limited, regarding North Weald Airfield Market;

(2) That a formal review of the variation to the licence of North Weald Airfield Market would take place at the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on the 23 April 2015;

(3) That as a condition of the variation all outstanding arrears were brought up to date;

(4) That a 100% of the rate reduction that Hughmark Continental Limited had applied for at North Weald Airfield Market be paid to the Council; and

(5) That all of the above conditions were backdated to the beginning of the financial year, 1 April 2014.

Reasons for the Decision:

To ensure the future viability of the Market at North Weald Airfield.

Other Options Considered and Rejected:

To continue with the current licence arrangements. However, this would run the risk of the Market becoming economically unviable in the near future.

CHAIRMAN