

High Wycombe Town Committee Minutes

Date: 7 March 2017

Time: 7.00 - 9.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor A R Green
(in the Chair)

Councillors K Ahmed, Z Ahmed, M Asif, Ms A Baughan, H Bull, Mrs L M Clarke OBE, M Clarke, M P Davy, R Farmer, S Graham, M Hanif, A E Hill, M Hussain JP, A Hussain, M Hussain, M E Knight, B E Pearce, R Raja, S K Raja, N J B Teesdale and Ms J D Wassell

ALSO PRESENT:

Mr Oliver O'Dell Chief Executive, HWBIDCo

34 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hashmi.

35 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

36 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on the 17 January 2017 be agreed as a correct record.

37 HWBIDCO BUSINESS PROPOSAL

The Committee welcomed Oliver O'Dell, Chief Executive of the HWBIDCo, to the meeting.

Mr O'Dell explained that HWBIDCo would be undertaking the Business Improvement District (BID) renewal process. He informed the Committee that business rate payers would be receiving voting papers in June this year and would be asked if they would like HWBIDCo to continue for another five year term. The vote would be a 28 day postal ballot run independently of HWBIDCo. It was noted that voters must be able to vote on a formal business proposal document; which would be provided to each voter for consideration. To achieve a second term, over 50% must vote yes with over 50% equivalent Rateable Value of those who choose to vote. The outcome of whether the BID Company had achieved a second term would be known by 5 July 2017.

It was reported that the BID area would be the same and would not include the Baker Street development area at this stage and the rate of the Bid Levy would be 1% of the rateable value. Mr O'Dell stated that this minimum threshold was low in comparison to other BIDs.

Mr O'Dell said that there had been various challenges in addition to delivering projects. These included: establishing HWBIDCo in the town, securing trust to deliver promises, working with a core team of two people and changing perceptions.

He stated that the type of BID would be based on economic development of the town with four key themes based on what businesses had said they want for the town, and these were Busy, Good Management, Thriving Businesses, and Well Represented.

Mr O'Dell explained that there were approximately 300 BIDs nationwide with Milton Keynes as the most recently confirmed. He stated that BIDS were an established mechanism and he hoped that High Wycombe would continue to take advantage of the opportunities that the BID would bring.

The Chairman thanked Mr O'Dell for his update and presentation, and a discussion took place on issues such as engaging the larger shopping centres, examples of successes over last 5 years, engaging with businesses and work undertaken with partners regarding Desborough Road.

Discussions also took place on the Market and specifically the management of the contract. It was noted that the Estates Team would be contacted to provide an update at the next meeting.

38 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY FUNDING UPDATES

The Committee received a report which provided progress on the implementation of projects previously supported by the Committee with the local allocation of CIL funding collected from developments in the unparished area. The Committee also considered the recommended draft 2017/18 to 2018/19 CIL funding programme at Appendix B to the report, which had taken into account income projections.

It was noted that the HWTC CIL Working Group had met previously in December 2016 however since meeting the costs of the new Cemetery at Queensway had been finalised. The Chairman noted that the New Cemetery would require substantial funding and requested that the funding be amended to support the project. The amendments suggested to Appendix B were as follows:

2. Remaking the River on Oxford Road, £300,000 in 2018/19 – to be reallocated to funding for the New Cemetery at Queensway.
5. Little Market undercroft for 2017/18, £100,000 – to be reallocated to funding for the New Cemetery at Queensway.

The Committee were informed that a Heritage Lottery bid may be submitted for remaking the river and plans had been delayed regarding the Little Market undercroft.

Members considered the list of projects that had been implemented and the Officer responded to more detailed questions.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the progress and spend on schemes previously supported by the HWTC through CIL funding be noted.
- ii) That the funding programme outlined in Appendix B to the report be amended so that
 - Remaking the River on Oxford Road, £300,000 in 2018/19 – be reallocated to funding for the New Cemetery at Queensway,
 - Little Market undercroft for 2017/18, £100,000 – be reallocated to funding for the New Cemetery at Queensway.
- iii) Following the above amendments, that the recommended draft 2017/18 to 2018/19 Community Infrastructure Levy funding programme (Appendix B to the report), be submitted to Cabinet for formal approval.

39 PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO) TO CLOSE FOOTPATH HWU/80/1

The Committee welcomed Sarah McBrearty, Community Services Team Leader to the meeting, who provided information on a possible public consultation on the implementation of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to close a footpath behind houses on West End Road.

It was reported that there had been numerous reports of anti-social behaviour taking place along the footpath which had been reported to the local Councillor, the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer and the police. Due to the number of complaints it was felt that restricting the public right of way was the only option.

Main issues arising from closing the footpath included that some residents used the footpath to access parking spaces in rear of their gardens, which they are legally able to do, the general use by the public and residents, access to rear gardens and the rear of the local shop, access for emergency services, and access for BCC Waste and Cleansing for maintenance.

Members noted that proposal was to install gates, with key-coded access for residents and business owners, to restrict the public right of way.

Members were concerned that the gates would not be secure and the ongoing costs of maintenance. It was suggested that a different approach regarding permanently closing the public right of way needed to be considered. Therefore the Committee agreed not to proceed with a public consultation.

RESOLVED: That a public consultation exercise not be undertaken.

40 NEW CEMETERY - PHASING AND BUDGET REQUIREMENTS

The Committee considered a report which outlined the proposed funding requirement of £404,000 for the first phase of the new Cemetery at the Queensway site.

It was reported that following a previous decision by the Committee a feasibility study had been undertaken on the new Cemetery which provided an initial cost of £1,963,322. Following this, a valuation exercise was undertaken which achieved savings of £283,532, providing a revised capital cost of £1,679,790.

The project would be phased over three years with phase one works to include planning, procurement, preparation of the site, planting, associated fees and contingencies. It was noted that phase one would enable child burials to start taking place.

The Committee was informed that the CIL Working Group had recommended £400,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds in 2017/18 be awarded to the project. During earlier discussions at the Committee meeting, it was also decided to award a further £100,000 of 2017/18 CIL funds and £300,000 of 2018/19 CIL funds towards the overall project. To enable phase one of the project to begin additional funds from the Special Expense Reserves were required.

A query was raised regarding the planned security arrangements at the new Cemetery and it was reported that these would include high railings on all sides, CCTV on the building and only funeral vehicles would be allowed beyond the car park.

It was also reported that, regarding the current High Wycombe Cemetery, a meeting had taken place on site with Mr Chandler. Following this a section of fencing had been installed, signs put up and extra police patrols. Officers were exploring a range of ways to improve security, including low cost CCTV in a few areas for daytime use. A report would be brought back to the Committee in June with options.

Discussions would need to take place with Hazlemere Parish Council regarding use of the new Cemetery and if this was to be considered, then details would be brought to the Committee for consideration.

The Head of Community and all the Officers involved were thanked for all their work on the project.

RESOLVED: That it be recommended to Cabinet

- i) that £404,000 be allocated in 2017/18 from Special Expenses Reserves to fund the first phase of the project; and
- ii) to note that additional funding could be required over the following two years but could be allocated from CIL and/or Reserves.

41 INFORMATION SHEETS

RESOLVED: That Information Sheet 01/2017 Budgetary Control Q3 2016/17 be noted.

42 HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE - FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee's draft work programme looking ahead to November 2017 was presented for review.

Members agreed that the Council's Estates Team should be invited to attend the June meeting of the Committee to provide an update on the Market contract. A report outlining options regarding security at the High Wycombe Cemetery would also be added to the June Committee.

RESOLVED: That the forward work programme be noted and updated as above.

Chairman

The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:

Mrs J Durkan	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Mr I Hunt	Democratic Services Manager
Mrs S McBrearty	Community Services Team Leader
Ms E Jewell	Head of Community
Mr G Coll	Developer Contributions Officer