

MINUTES

FINANCE AND RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

13 JANUARY 2016

Present:

Councillors: Herbert Chapman
(Chair)
Douris (Vice-
Chairman)
Ashbourn
Barnes
Birnie
Clark
Imarni
Silwal
Taylor
Tindall

Officers:

Louise Collins
David Skinner
Nicholas Brown

Member Support Officer
Assistant Director - Finance & Resources
Group Manager - Commercial Assets &
Property Development

Also Attendance: Councillor Elliot – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources

The meeting began at 7.30 pm

1 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Joint Budget OSC (Finance and Resources) meeting held on 8th December were confirmed by the Members present and signed by the Chairman.

2 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors E Collins, Fethney and Mills.

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

4 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

5 **CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE IN RELATION TO CALL-IN**

None.

6 **ACTION POINTS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

None.

7 **ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Portfolio Holder had nothing to add to the Asset Management Report.

D Skinner, Assistant Director for Finance and Resources introduced the Asset Management Report to Members. He mentioned that the Asset Management Strategy was originally produced by the consultants EC Harris in consultation with senior officers across the Council and submitted to Cabinet on 21 January 2014.

Councillor Birnie asked if it was correct that the Council has 19 Public Conveniences and they yield £150 per annum.

N Brown, Group Manager – Property and People said that he would get back to Members with the correct figure as he was unsure.

Councillor Birnie referred to the 23 woodlands, page 9 of 38 with zero income from them. Is there a policy in connection to this.

D Skinner said that it is not plantation, it was scrub with woodland.

Councillor Ashbourne commented on the clarity of the report and said that it was an excellent report with lots of detail. He referred to the housing development and regeneration opportunities and said that it would be useful to add it in accordance with a government plan.

Councillor Tindall referred to the 5.5 million net income from the housing developments. He asked if the new board would take into account the various trends and to not sell off for a quick profit.

D Skinner informed Members that they will be examining the income stream.

Councillor Barnes asked if there would be an update each year with regards to the market value.

D Skinner said that there were different methods they needed to comply with. He said that a lot of the properties were valued at depreciated costs. He explained that when the Council disposes of an asset they go for the real value.

Councillor Birnie asked if the management committee will be reporting to Cabinet in the future.

D Skinner confirmed that the Property Management Board will look at the process with regards to the action plans and all decisions will be made by the Director of Finance.

Councillor Silwal asked for clarification on the term “heritage”.

D Skinner explained that when a site is classed as a “heritage”, it will usually be to do with the nature and listing the valuation of the building.

Councillor Silwal asked the officer if the Council would be able to sell allotments for profit.

N Brown explained that the Council is not in a position to sell allotments due to the fact that they cannot sell the land that they are on and would struggle to get planning permission to build on that land.

Councillor Barnes asked the officers to explain why the cost of impact of Community Centres and Public Conveniences were listed at £2million.

D Skinner explained that they firstly look at the income stream and then at the capital receipt. He said that there is no market value for public conveniences at present.

Councillor Douris said that he was concerned with the two different valuations, “property sector” and “private sector”. He asked if this leaves the Council vulnerable to external auditors.

D Skinner said that there was no value in the document and that they comply with the auditors whom in return are happy to sign off the accounts.

Councillor Tindall referred to page 17/38 and the Public Conveniences being Redundant. He asked if they should be included in the accounts whereby “redundant” usually means; no use.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources explained that they have some value and worth something even though they are not being sold.

Councillor Douris referred to page 5/38 and the new Property Management Board. He asked if served by the Property team, would the Council need a new board or would it be in addition.

D Skinner said that the board would be a well served property board with no extra cost to Members or staff. They would look strategically at issues and what options were available to the Council over the next 2 years.

Councillor Imarni asked if the Council has any stipulation of shops opening hours within the community.

N Brown explained that most of the shops have provisions in place but it depends on each individual lease.

Councillor Douris asked the officers if the Council has the responsibility to maintain void garages.

N Brown mentioned that there is no responsibility to the Council if they are privately owned.

Councillor Douris made reference to no 39-41 The Marlowes and asked for an update.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources mentioned that they are still in a rent period until 31 march 2016, upon which will then be leased to the NHS.

The Chair also referred to the void garages and brought Members attention to the fact that some of the areas are very small. He pointed out that the areas are small and not viable and there are major problems with parking. If the garages were put up for sale/rent or knocked down and parking pads to be put there they would generate an income.

Action:

1. N Brown to confirm to Members what income is generated from the 19 Public Conveniences.

Outcome:

Members noted the report.

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APPENDIX A - WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2015/16

None.

The Meeting ended at 8.35 pm