

Minutes of a meeting of the **Policy Group** of the Purbeck District Council held in the Council Chamber, Westport House, Wareham on Wednesday 1 February 2017 at 7.00pm.

Present:-

Councillor Gary Suttle (Chairman)
Councillor Barry Quinn (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors Cherry Brooks, Laura Miller, Peter Webb and Peter Wharf

Also in attendance: Councillors David Budd and Wendy Meaden

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting: Sue Bellamy, Senior Planning Policy Officer; Bridget Downton, General Manager – Planning and Community Services; Sue Joyce, General Manager – Resources; Anna Lee, Planning Policy Manager; Steve Mackenzie, Chief Executive and Kirsty Riglar, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager

(Note: These minutes have been prepared by officers as a record of the meeting and of any decisions reached. They are to be considered and confirmed at the next meeting of the Group).

84.16/17 **Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Bill Pipe.

85.16/17 **Urgent items**

The Chairman reported that there were no urgent items.

86.16/17 **Public participation time**

There were no members of the public present.

87.16/17 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 December 2016 be taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

88.16/17 **Declarations of Interest by Members**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

89.16/17 **Forward Plan for Policy Group and Council Meetings**

The Policy Group considered the current Forward Plan. It was noted that, since publication of the agenda, an item setting out the results of the independent review of the Partial Review process to date and proposals for public engagement and updating the Local Development Scheme had been added to the Forward Plan and would be submitted to Council at its meeting on 21 February 2017.

Resolved that the Forward Plan be received.

90.16/17 **Draft Revenue Budget 2017/18**

The General Manager - Resources presented a report seeking support to recommend to Council the level of council tax and the General Fund Revenue Budget for 2017/18. She explained that the draft budget had been prepared on the basis of the budget assumptions agreed by Council in September 2016, aimed at broadly continuing current service levels. It had been assumed, as part of the budget preparations, the Council would agree:

- (i) the fees and charges supported by Policy Group in November;
- (ii) the draft capital programme supported by Policy Group in November; and
- (iii) the Treasury Management Strategy supported by the Audit and Governance Committee in December.

The draft budget assumptions included Council increasing council tax by £5, which was an increase of 10 pence per week for a Band D property.

Particular attention was drawn to the fact that the draft budget was in surplus by £20k, which would allow the Council to approve a growth item of £20k which would be combined with the apprenticeship levy of £15k, already included in the base budget, to help fund apprentice posts required by new regulations. Approval was also sought for a further growth item for one-off costs to complete works identified in the Asset Management Plan for Westport House at a value of £11,500. As a one-off cost, this would be funded from reserves and so would not impact on the revenue budget's bottom line.

The General Manager – Resources informed Members that, since the fees and charges were considered in November, the pre-application fees had been reviewed and amended. Additionally, it was proposed to introduce a parking charge for coaches at Norden car park. There was considered to be space within the car park that could be allocated for coaches but further investigation about the practicalities and proposed charge was required. Members expressed their support for the introduction of such a charge. Officers undertook to include this in the report submitted to Council.

Resolved that a detailed report be submitted to Council recommending:

- (1) increasing the council tax by £5 from an annual Band D council tax of £177.41 to £182.41;
- (2) approval of the growth item of £20,000 to fund future apprentice posts in conjunction with use of the apprenticeship levy;
- (3) approval of the growth item to fund £11,500 of one-off costs identified in the Council's Asset Management Plan for Westport House, to be funded from reserves;
- (4) approval of the draft General Fund Revenue Budget, based on the assumptions included within this report;
- (5) approval of the fees and charges included in this report and those already considered by Policy Group in November 2016; and

- (6) approval of the Capital Programme for 2016/17 – 2020/21 considered by Policy Group in November 2016, updated for any Council approvals and timing information.

91.16/17 **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) reviews and CIL and Section 106 expenditure**

The Senior Planning Policy Officer presented a detailed report regarding various matters relating to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). These included responses to consultation on the Preliminary Draft CIL charging schedule which would inform a new schedule being developed alongside the Purbeck Local Plan Partial Review, review of the current Regulation 123 list, the principles and processes for allocating funds and an application for funds for the monitoring and visitor management at Bog Lane Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).

One Member suggested that, whilst planning agents and developers were increasingly knowledgeable about CIL, it was one of the least well understood mechanisms that the Council operated. He suggested that it would be an advantage to produce a simple leaflet to explain this, which would aid the understanding of parish and town councils and local residents. Officers agreed to consider this but proposed that an explanatory paragraph be included in the report to be submitted to Council.

In response to a Member's question, the General Manager – Planning and Community Services explained the way in which the CIL funding passed to parish and town councils could be used and that there was a requirement for them to publish an annual monitoring report detailing expenditure.

Members welcomed the report but agreed that, due to the variety of the issues covered by the recommendations, it would aid clarity to include the relevant headings in that section of the report to Council.

Resolved that a report be submitted to Council recommending that:

- (1) the responses to the consultation on the review of the Preliminary Draft CIL charging schedule be noted and the actions set out in Appendix 1 to the report be agreed;
- (2) consultation on the proposed update to the existing Regulation 123 list for 6 weeks to include projects that mitigate other Habitat Regulations requirements be agreed;
- (3) the top slicing of CIL for all Habitat Regulations requirements be agreed as follows:

Houses	£3,357
Flats	£2,403
- (4) allocation of CIL for the railway loan at £1793 per dwelling, subject to funds being available;
- (5) the process for agreeing expenditure of Section 106 and CIL receipts be agreed, as set out below:

- a. Initial assessment by Planning Policy Manager to determine that the project meets the basic criteria. Any bids that are not supported by the Planning Policy Manager will be circulated to the Environment Portfolio Holder and the General Manager - Planning and Community Services for information.
- b. Consultation with Natural England to confirm their support for the project.
- c. Agreement of expenditure by the General Manager - Planning and Community Services, in consultation with the Environment Portfolio Holder;

and

- (6) the expenditure of £4,670 for Bog Lane SANG monitoring and phase 1 of visitor management.

92.16/17 **Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour Supplementary Planning Document**

The Senior Planning Policy Officer presented a report seeking support for the adoption of the Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). She explained that the draft document was consulted upon during October and November 2015. Since that time, the document had been simplified and updated as a result of the consultation responses and particular attention was drawn to the key changes. Members noted that the SPD only covered how the Council – together with the other local authorities in the Poole Harbour catchment area – would ensure that new development was nitrogen neutral. In these circumstances, mitigation would be secured as part of Section 106 Agreements, whereas CIL receipts would need to be used to provide mitigation for windfall or infill development and any new tourism accommodation. The agricultural sector had also prepared a plan for reducing nitrogen leaching from farming. Members were informed that Natural England supported the SPD in principle.

Councillor Meaden welcomed the revised version of the SPD, detailing her comments on the document. In particular, she considered that there were already technologies developed which could assist in nitrogen mitigation, such as de-nitrifying bioreactors, end-of-pipe solutions and increased use of watercress beds. She suggested that these solutions, together with other emerging technologies, should be explored to provide the best possible means of reducing nitrogen levels in Poole Harbour.

Members expressed some concern at the reference in the document to the assertion that there was adequate land for food production and considered that the Council should avoid taking agricultural land out of production as a nitrogen mitigation measure. Officers undertook to seek a view from the Department of Farming and Rural Affairs on this point in advance of the report being submitted to Council.

In response to a Member's question, officers confirmed there had been liaison with Wessex Water in the amendment of the SPD and no indication had been given that the company would no longer be responsible for its infrastructure as a result of the deregulation of water services. It was also confirmed that Wessex Water was required to remove 75% of nitrogen from waste water within the Poole Harbour catchment.

Resolved that a report be submitted to Council recommending:

- (1) adoption of the Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour Supplementary Planning Document; and
- (2) that the Council delegates agreement of minor changes to the SPD prior to adoption to the General Manager - Planning and Community Services, in consultation with the Environment Portfolio Holder.

The meeting ended at 8.41pm.

Chairman