

## **AGENDA ITEM NO. 4**

Minutes of a meeting of the Asset Development Committee held in the Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July at 4:00pm

### **PRESENT**

Councillor Bill Hunt (Chairman)  
Councillor Lorna Dupré  
Councillor James Palmer (as a Substitute)  
Councillor Lisa Stubbs

### **OTHERS**

Maggie Camp – Solicitor  
Spencer Clark – Senior Open Spaces & Maintenance Officer  
John Hill – Chief Executive  
Adrian Scaites-Stokes – Democratic Services Officer

### **3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

### **4. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Councillors David Chaplin, Steve Cheetham, Dan Schumann and Mathew Shuter. Councillor James Palmer acted as a Substitute Member for this meeting.

### **5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **6. MINUTES**

Councillor Lorna Dupré asked when the report about the bus shelters in Market Street Ely would be brought back to the Committee, when the review about the public conveniences could be expected and about an update relating to Council car parks.

The Committee was informed that work was in progress regarding the bus shelters and a report may be brought back to the Committee meeting in September. A report would be going to the Commercial Services Committee next week about the public conveniences review and this Committee would be updated about the car parks later in this meeting.

It was resolved:

That the minutes of the Asset Development Sub-Committee meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2015 and the Asset Development Committee meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2015 be confirmed as correct records and be signed by the Chairman.

## 7. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- The agenda stated that the Committee had a quorum of 5 Members, similar to the other policy committees which had 11 Members. Therefore, as this Committee only consisted of 7 Members, the quorum for this Committee had been adjusted pro-rata by the Monitoring Officer and was now 3 Members.
- A Member of the Committee had requested a discussion on the starting time of the Committee's meetings. This Committee would likely arrange site visits prior to its meetings quite often, which would be more difficult once the nights started to draw in. Therefore there was no intention to start the meetings later so the meeting start times would not be altered.

Councillor James Palmer suggested that the Chairman write to the Committee Members to inform them of this.

- It was pleasing that the contracts for Barton Close, Witchford had been exchanged. There was just some final work to tidy up on the site boundary details.
- Members were reminded that pigeon holes were available for using for their mail.
- Little Thetford Parish Council had expressed their delight with the new fencing placed around an area of open space, which some residents had been driving over.

## 8. **ASSET MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME 2014/15**

The Committee considered a report, reference Q44, giving an update on the Asset Management Planned Maintenance Programme 2014/15 including spend to date.

The Senior Open Spaces & Maintenance Officer advised the Committee that only 78% of the budget had been spent on maintenance but a good proportion of the programme had been covered. There had been some over spending on the Paradise swimming pool, due to unexpected circumstances, and on public open spaces, due to additional expense. The re-surfacing of all the car parks had not quite been completed during the year but would be included in the current year.

Councillor Lorna Dupré found the layout of the report difficult to understand, as everything had to be cross-checked with other parts of the report, particularly relating to whether the work was programmed in and comparing the predicted costs against the actual costs. A simpler way to lay out this information in one document was needed. She questioned whether the works for 72 Market

Street, Ely would be charged to the previous tenants. The Chief Executive thought it was important that Members had a high-level summary page but some consideration would be given to how the other information was presented. Members needed to know the agreed programme, whether there were any changes to it and the budget implications. The works in Market Street had not been caused by the previous tenants but were for re-decoration following the end of the tenancy.

In response to Councillor James Palmer's query, it was revealed that the Council was receiving rent from Cemetery Lodge.

It was resolved:

That the Asset Maintenance Programme 2014/15, specifically the actual spend to end March 2015, be noted.

#### 9. **ASSET MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME 2015/16**

The Committee considered a report, reference Q48, previously circulated, which presented the proposed Asset Maintenance Programme for 2015/16.

Councillor Lisa Stubbs noted that the lifts within the Council building were non-compliant and the relevant works had been deferred. She questioned what the insurance implications were. Councillor Lorna Dupré was also very concerned about putting off the work to make them compliant, as the lifts broke down quite often. Not only Councillors but members of the public and staff relied on these lifts and the Council had a duty to make its building accessible. 2016/17 was too long and would be too late to do the work.

The Senior Open Spaces & Maintenance Officer explained that this had only recently become part of his responsibilities. The problem with the lifts was the manual operation should they break down. Full costs for the relevant work were being obtained and the work was programmed in. However, given the deliverability of this work it would not happen until 2016/17.

Councillor Bill Hunt asked the Senior Open Spaces & Maintenance Officer to bring a report back to the next meeting about the two lifts.

The Senior Open Spaces & Maintenance Officer highlighted the additional works that would take place on several projects including the riverside slipway, new moorings, The Paddocks Littleport, grass cutting, the Downham Road site and Ely Market Place. The Chief Executive stated that there was also a contingency within the programme to help deal with any unexpected issues.

In reply to Councillor Lisa Stubbs' questions, it was disclosed that the original contractor doing the work on the fire doors had not completed the works. This work had to be re-tendered, with the work hopefully being completed this summer. LED lighting, if used, could be re-used in other places.

It was resolved:

- (i) That the Asset Maintenance Programme for 2015/16 be approved;
- (ii) That the actual spend to the end of June 2015 as set out in Appendix 2 be noted.

10. **ANNUAL REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Committee considered a report, reference Q45, previously circulated, which sought to appoint a nominated representative to the outside body "Making Assets Count" (MAC) and to receive the annual report from the Council's representative on that outside body.

Councillor Lorna Dupré was disappointed that there was no report from the Council's representative, or attendance, on the MAC outside body. There were issues about this body and getting no report did not tell Members anything, though this Committee needed to be briefed on the Outside Bodies it was responsible for.

The Chief Executive noted that there had some scepticism about MAC, as the partners within that outside body had talked about amalgamating assets and sharing benefits. It would be unfair if this Council sold one of its assets only for the partners to take the majority of the money for it. This Council also had different ambitions that did not align with that of the County Council.

Councillor James Palmer had attended one of the MAC meetings but in 2 years it had only managed to raise £1.9 million, which was not very good. Councillor Huffer would have a challenge to make MAC productive, as it had been a huge disappointment so far.

Councillor Bill Hunt would brief Councillor Huffer, so that anything relevant to this Council would be brought back.

It was resolved:

- (i) That the proposed nominated representative, Councillor Julia Huffer, be appointed to the outside body "Making Assets Count", which falls within the remit of the Asset Development Committee, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report;
- (ii) That the annual report from the appointed Council representative on the activities and manner in which funding is spent by this outside body within the responsibility of the Asset Development Committee be noted.

11. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRESS**

It was resolved:

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the remaining item nos. 9 to 12 because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the item(s) there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Category 3 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

12. **LAND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY (PARISH OF SOHAM)**

The Committee considered an Exempt report, reference Q46, previously circulated, relating to a land development opportunity in Soham.

The Senior Open Spaces & Maintenance Officer advised the Committee that the Council had been approached by a resident relating to land owned by the Council. The Council had assisted the resident to proceed with their request.

It was resolved:

That the Chief Executive be instructed to act as recommended, in consultation with the Chairman.

13. **LAND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND ASSET DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE 2015/16**

The Committee considered an Exempt report, reference Q47, previously circulated, providing an update on land development opportunities and the asset development programme.

The Chief Executive advised the Committee this was a regular item used to draw out specific actions needed to progress development matters. The Committee was appraised as to the current status of a number of projects in different locations in the district and a number of questions of clarification were answered. A new recommendation was subsequently made to report back to the Committee with further details relating to a specific location.

It was resolved:

- (i) That the recommendations in the report be agreed;
- (ii) That the update in relation to previously identified land opportunities and asset development programme be noted;
- (iii) That the Chief Executive be instructed to bring back a report to the next meeting of the Committee relating to a land development opportunity in Ely.

14. **FORWARD AGENDA PLAN**

The Committee considered it forward agenda plan.

The forward agenda plan was received.

15. **EXEMPT MINUTES**

Councillor Bill Hunt noted that a lot of officer time had been spent investigating and reporting on an issue that would have been of minor benefit to the Council. He therefore requested that, should officers come across similar issues, they be brought to this Committee so it could decide whether the issue was worth pursuing or otherwise, to prevent unnecessary work.

It was resolved:

That the exempt minutes of the meeting of the Asset Development Sub-Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> march 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

The meeting concluded at 5:15pm.