

Minutes of the meeting of the Commercial Services  
Committee held in the Council Chamber,  
The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> September  
2014 at 5.30pm

### **P R E S E N T**

Councillor Richard Hobbs (Chairman)  
Councillor Lavinia Edwards  
Councillor Lis Every  
Councillor Sheila Friend-Smith, MBE  
Councillor Tony Goodge  
Councillor Elaine Griffin-Singh  
Councillor Bill Hunt  
Councillor Tom Kerby  
Councillor James Palmer (Substitute for Councillor Allen  
Alderson)  
Councillor Hazel Williams, MBE  
Councillor Pauline Wilson

### **OFFICERS**

Allison Conder – Principal Leisure & Community Services  
Officer  
Louise Duffield – Accountancy Assistant  
John Hill – Chief Executive  
Janis Murfet – Democratic Services Officer

#### 18. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

#### 19. **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Allen Alderson.

It was noted that Councillor James Palmer would substitute for Councillor Alderson for the duration of this meeting.

#### 20. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 21. **MINUTES**

Further to Minute No 16 (Annual Reports of Representatives on Outside Bodies), Councillor Wilson asked whether the query regarding representation on ADeC had been clarified.

At the request of the Chairman, the Democratic Services Officer informed Members that she had received an email from Caroline Cawley, Co-Director of ADeC, saying that since the organisation no longer received funding from the District Council and was now linked with the City of Ely Council, they had agreed representation on their Board from the City Council.

It was resolved:

That subject to the correction of a minor typographical error, the Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## 22. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- Agenda Item No 6 (presentation by The Sports Consultancy on the New Leisure Centre) had been withdrawn from the agenda.

Following discussions, it had been decided that a report would first go to the meeting of the Corporate Governance & Finance Committee to decide on the options regarding the finance available. After this, the report to the Commercial Services Committee would provide Members with an overall picture upon which they could base their decision. It was suggested that it might be necessary to arrange a special Committee meeting to discuss the new leisure centre, but Members would be advised of this in due course.

- Active Ely was the pilot programme supported by the City of Ely Council and Sainsbury's, which aimed to get people more active by providing free outdoor activity sessions using the new outdoor fitness equipment at Ely Country Park. The programme aimed to support the Council's objective to encourage people to become more active and thereby reduce the likelihood of later life preventable illness.

The 7 week programme had now finished and proved to be very popular and successful with a total of 131 participants attending the different sessions on offer; from mums and buggy sessions, to over 60's sessions at a total cost of £1,902 (£14.20 per activity intervention). Some valuable feedback was received and lessons learned, such as moving the timing of the over 60's to later, but overwhelmingly people who attended a session wanted to see a similar scheme run again, possibly starting earlier in the Spring. This is good news and will need to be considered by the Council's service review group for Sport and Health services.

The Chairman said he wished to offer his congratulations to Officers, the City of Ely Council and Sainsbury's for such a successful programme. Having attended the first session, he was encouraged by the level of professionalism.

- Members, Officers and residents gathered last Friday to celebrate and raise the Green Flag at Ely Country Park. Councillor Sheila Friend-Smith was in attendance to accept the flag.

The Green Flag was a very important achievement for the City as it meant we now had a second green space to receive official recognition as one of the UK's best green spaces – the other being Jubilee Gardens of course, which achieved the award for a 10<sup>th</sup> year running. The award was not easy to achieve, and retaining one was even harder as you had to show year on year continuous improvement.

Both Jubilee Gardens and Ely Country Park were excellent examples to show how local volunteers had really played such a key role in supporting the Council's work to develop, maintain and inform local people about the value of these places. An update report would be brought back to this Committee in January 2015, to bring Members up to date with progress with the two year development plan agreed by Community & Environment Committee in January 2013.

The Chairman remarked that without the work of the volunteers, the Park would not have been of such a high standard. He also paid tribute to Allison Conder, Principal Leisure & Community Services Officer, for all the work she had put in to move the project forward over the last four years.

- The East Cambs (pilot) Parish Conference was held on Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> September at Soham Village College. 12 Parish Councils were represented, with 45 attendees overall. Councillors Hazel Williams and Lis Every supported the event. When surveyed, 100% of respondents said they would be keen to attend another similar event. Respondents rated the overall usefulness of the conference as 4 out of 5 (5 being very useful). A paper will be presented at this Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> November with options for future multi-agency parish conference arrangements.

*At this point the Chairman proposed and the Committee agreed that the order of business would be taken as follows: Agenda Item 8, Agenda Item 7, and the remainder of the reports in the published order.*

23. **NEW LEISURE CENTRE: EMERGING OPTIONS & UPDATE – A PRESENTATION BY THE SPORTS CONSULTANCY**

This item was withdrawn from the Agenda (Minute No 22 refers).

24. **BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee considered a report, reference P74, previously circulated, which sought to update Members on the Committee's financial position for 2014/15, based on current projections for both revenue and capital expenditure.

The Accountancy Assistant summarised the main points of her report, drawing Members' attention to paragraph 3.4 which set out the variances to the revenue budgets for each of the Committee's services. It was noted that

with regard to Asset Management, the 2014/15 Service Level Agreement paid to Ely Outdoor Sports Association from this budget in 2013/14 had now been reimbursed from the Sports & Recreation budget. In connection with the Parking of Vehicles, a one-off saving was due from the rent of part of the Newnham Street car park by the Post Office, and an ongoing saving had been achieved through the increase in income at the Angel Drove car park.

Turning next to the Committee's capital projects, the Accountancy Assistant informed Members that slippage was required to complete the Ely Country Park project in this year.

Referring to Appendix 1 of the report, Councillor Goodge asked for an explanation of the new entries to the capital programme in respect of the Downham Road Site and Drainage Site Infrastructure; he wished to know who decided the requirement if this was new work. The Accountancy Assistant replied that she was only able to report on the revenue budget, but she would make sure he was provided with an answer.

Councillor Griffin-Singh noted that the cost of one of the grasscutter gardeners had been recovered from the S106 Reserve and asked whether the criteria for using the money was being applied correctly. The Accountancy Assistant informed her that the money was commuted sums paid over to the Council. In connection with this, Councillor Goodge commented that the cost of the Parks & Gardens Team was quite expensive and he wondered how closely figures were scrutinised as they came in. The Chairman responded, saying that there should be a constant awareness of costs and the Parks & Open Spaces Service Delivery Plan would show this when it came to the next Committee meeting.

It was resolved:

1. That this Committee's projected overspend of £5,124 compared to its approved revenue budget of £2,185,297 be noted;
2. That this Committee's projected overspend of £133,000 compared to its approved capital budget of £164,000 be noted.

This overspend is funded from the 2013/14 slippage budget.

## 25. **LEISURE & COMMUNITY SERVICE PLAN 2014/15**

The Committee received a report, reference P73, previously circulated, which provided Members with a 2014/15 Service Plan for Community & Leisure Services. The Plan set out the objectives for improvement, plans for delivery, and the performance measures that would assess the impact of delivery on the community.

The Principal Community & Leisure Services Officer reminded Members that the new planning arrangements required each service area to set out a strategy map, key performance indicators and targets, and a detailed statement about how the service will be delivered. The Plan would become the single most important document for the service area, and Community & Leisure Services was the first one to come to Committee.

It was noted that the Community & Leisure Services Team delivered some of the Council's highest profile most public facing services, which were principally focussed on building resilience within local communities and ensuring that the needs of all the District's residents were heard. The Team also led the Council's corporate priority of delivering a new District leisure facility.

As part of delivering this remit, the following strategic priorities had been identified within the organisation's strategic outcome area:

- **Community** - Work with partners to ensure that people feel safe in their neighbourhood
- **Community** - Support community resilience and wellbeing by improving the sustainability of leisure and community facilities
- **Finance** - Provide Councillors with a business plan for the new District Leisure Centre
- **Environment** - Ensure Ely Country Park and riverside are developed to meet the needs of the local community and empower local communities to improve opportunities for play
- **Customer** - Ensure that customers are effectively consulted about the Council's services; can easily feedback their issues and receive a response back to the issues raised
- **Customer** - Ensure that customers are effectively consulted about the Council's services; can easily feedback their issues and receive a response back to the issues raised.

The Principal Community & Leisure Services Officer said the Service Plan had been written with the whole team and Councillor Josh Schumann, the Community & Leisure Services Service Delivery Champion.

The new service planning approach aimed to improve the Council's approach to delivering outcomes and key priorities. The Community & Leisure Service Plan provided a public facing document setting out clear ambitions for the service, and establishing greater accountability of elected Members and Officers to the local community.

The Principal Community & Leisure Services Officer said she did not propose going through the whole Plan in great detail, but was more than happy to respond to comments and questions from the Committee.

Members were unstinting in their praise for the Service Delivery Plan.

The Chairman said he would never have imagined that a document could be so well put together, self explanatory and user friendly and he congratulated the Principal Community & Leisure Services Officer on behalf of the Committee.

Councillor Palmer agreed, saying he was delighted to see such a very clear document. It was tremendously important to have this in place to judge the programme and he too offered his congratulations.

Councillor Williams declared the Plan to be “a superb document”, but she was concerned about there being the capacity to deliver, as it was a massive job. She just wanted to be sure that the Council would re-appoint to the Sport & Health Development Officer post because the existing staff only had so many hours in the day.

The Chairman concluded by asking the Principal Community & Leisure Services Officer to take the thanks of the Committee back to her team. Whereupon,

It was resolved:

That the Community and Leisure Service Plan for 2014/15 be approved.

26. **COMMUNITY FUND GRANT SCHEME**

The Committee received a report, reference P75, previously circulated, from which Members were asked to note the grant offered to the Adams Heritage Centre in Littleport under Officer delegated powers.

Councillor Hunt commented that the Heritage Centre offered a wonderful peek back into the past; it was excellent for Littleport and the area.

It was resolved:

That the grant of £828 offered to the Adams Heritage Centre, Littleport, under Officer delegated powers, be noted.

27. **ACTION TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ON THE GROUNDS OF URGENCY: (COMMERCIAL SERVICES) – APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD**

The Committee considered a report, reference P76, previously circulated, from which Members were asked to note the action taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of urgency, in connection with the appointment of a Member representative to replace Councillor Kevin Ellis on the Cambridgeshire Health & Wellbeing Board.

It was resolved:

That the action taken by the Chief Executive, on the grounds of urgency, be noted.

28. **FORWARD AGENDA PLAN**

The Committee considered the previously circulated Commercial Services Forward Agenda Plan.

Having noted that there was a full programme of items for the meeting scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> November 2014, the Chairman said that it might be necessary to hold a special meeting after this date, to discuss the new

leisure centre. Members would be consulted on a suitable date, should the extra meeting be needed. Whereupon,

It was resolved;

That the Forward Agenda Plan be noted.

29      **ASSET DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Committee received the Minutes of the meeting of the Asset Development Sub-Committee held on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Asset Development Sub-Committee held on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2014 be received and noted.

30.      **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was resolved:

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the remaining item no.14 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 there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Category 3 Part 1 Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as Amended).

31.      **ASSET DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE – EXEMPT MINUTES**

The Committee received the exempt Minutes of the meeting of the Asset Development Sub-Committee held on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

It was resolved:

That the exempt Minutes of the meeting of the Asset Development Sub-Committee held on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2014 be received and noted.

The meeting closed at 6.05pm.