

# **FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

21 SEPTEMBER 2020

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and was an online remote meeting in compliance with the Council Procedure Rules Relating to the holding of Remote Meetings and the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

### **Present:**

Councillor Shane Moore (In the Chair)

Councillors: Christopher Akers-Belcher, James Brewer, Paddy Brown, Jim Lindridge, Sue Little, Ann Marshall, John Tennant, Stephen Thomas and Mike Young.

Officers: Denise McGuckin, Managing Director  
Neil Wilson, Assistant Chief Solicitor  
Chris Little, Director of Resources and Development  
Beverley Bearne, Assistant Director, Development and Growth  
Tony Hanson, Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services  
David Cosgrove and Denise Wimpenny, Democratic Services Team

### **27. Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Leisa Smith.

### **28. Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **29. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 August 2020**

Confirmed.

### **30. Minutes of the meetings of the Safer Hartlepool Partnership held on 10 January and 20 March 2020**

Received.

**31. Minutes of the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board held on 26 June 2020**

Received.

**32. Community Safety Plan 2020-2021** (*Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services*)

**Type of decision**

Budget and Policy Framework.

**Purpose of report**

To consider and comment on the Safer Hartlepool Partnership Community Safety Plan 2020-2021.

**Issue(s) for consideration**

The Director of Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services reported that the process to develop an new three-year Community Safety Plan was due to commence earlier in the year by the Safer Hartlepool Partnership but had been 'over-taken' by the Coronavirus Pandemic. Due to this delay and the additional work required to produce a three-year plan it was agreed that a one-year plan for 2020-21 be developed with a new three-year plan deferred to next year.

The proposed strategic objective for 2020-21 was "To make Hartlepool a safe, prosperous and enjoyable place to live, work and visit". The key priorities for the Partnership in 2020/21 were Drugs and Alcohol; Anti-social Behaviour; and Domestic Violence. The draft plan had been approved by the Safer Hartlepool Partnership at its meeting on 4 September and was submitted to this Committee as part of an eight week consultation period which would utilise a wide range of mechanisms including local press and social media.

A Member referred to the most recent report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, when Cleveland Police were rated as 'inadequate'. The Community Safety Plan referred to the significant joint working between the Council and Cleveland Police which involved significant expenditure on the Council's part but Members had not received any update on the progress the force had made in addressing the 'inadequate' rating. The Member suggested that a Members' Seminar be programmed to be held before the new Community Safety Plan was submitted to Council so that Members' were properly updated. There were significant concerns that had to be addressed. The Member also referred to a personal incident in recent days when they had been subject to a hate crime and when this was reported to the Police, they

were informed such incidents 'were not a priority' at this time. This was extremely concerning.

The Committee supported the proposal for a Members' Seminar and Members also voiced their concerns at the incident reported by the Member. The Managing Director stated that Cleveland Police were holding an event later in the week to outline the improvements made since the inspection report and she would discuss with the Police an appropriate date for a presentation to all Councillors.

The following decisions were agreed without dissent.

### **Decision**

1. That the Draft Safer Hartlepool Partnership Community Safety Plan 2020-2021 be noted.
2. That a Members' Seminar be arranged for a date prior to the consideration of the finalised Community Safety Plan by Council so that Cleveland Police can update Councillors on the progress made in addressing the issues raised in the most recent report from Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, when Cleveland Police were rated as 'inadequate'.

## **33. Northgate House Lease Extension** (*Director of Resources and Development*)

### **Type of decision**

Key Decision (test (i)) Forward Plan Reference No. RN04/20.

### **Purpose of report**

The report sought approval for the extension of the lease to the current tenant of Northgate House.

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

The Director of Resources and Development reported that Northgate House, (formerly known as Bryan Hanson House) had been let to Northgate Information Solutions UK since March 2014. The lease was due to expire in March 2021 but it had provisionally been agreed to extend the existing lease on the terms set out in the confidential appendix to the report. The appendix contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (paragraph 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

The proposed extension of the lease at the same rent as the original amount was considered to represent present market rental value and was

considered likely to do so for the next few years. Were the property to fall vacant at the end of the current term it was considered there would be a significant void period and difficulty in re-letting at a similar rental level. These risks had been exacerbated by the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the decision of many businesses to reduce their use of office space.

Members supported the proposals and supported the view that there was no desire for another void office building in the town. A Member indicated that they wished to raise a question that may relate to the details set out in the confidential appendix to the report and the Chair, therefore, sought a proposal to exclude the press and public from the meeting.

### **Decision**

That further consideration of the details contained within the confidential appendix to the report be undertaken in closed session.

## **34. Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation Order) 2006**

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Minute 35 – (Northgate House Lease Extension) – This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely (paragraph 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

## **35. Northgate House Lease Extension** *(Director of Resources and Development)* This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely (paragraph 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

### **Type of decision**

Key Decision (test (i)) Forward Plan Reference No. RN04/20.

### **Purpose of report**

The report sought approval for the extension of the lease to the current tenant of Northgate House.

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

A Member raised questions in relation to the 'feed in tariffs' generated by the solar panels on Northgate House and what level of income/cost offset these created. The Director of Resources and Development undertook to provide these details to the Committee.

### **Decision**

That the meeting return to open session.

**The meeting returned to open session.**

## **36. Northgate House Lease Extension** *(Director of Resources and Development)*

### **Type of decision**

Key Decision (test (i)) Forward Plan Reference No. RN04/20.

### **Purpose of report**

The report sought approval for the extension of the lease to the current tenant of Northgate House.

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

The Chair proposed the recommendations as set out in the report together with the provision of the information requested in relation to the solar panels on the building.

The following decision was agreed without dissent.

### **Decision**

That the extension of the lease as set out in the confidential appendix to the report be approved. The appendix contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, (paragraph 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

**37. Rodney Street Bungalow Acquisition** (*Director of Resources and Development*)

**Issue(s) for consideration**

The Director of Resources and Development reported that there were still some issues to be resolved in relation to the scheme and requested that the matter be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

**Decision**

That the matter be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

**38. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent**

None.

The Committee noted that the next meeting would be held on Monday 19 October, 2020 commencing at 10.00 am.

The meeting concluded at 10.20 am

**H MARTIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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