

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 21st NOVEMBER, 2019
AT NELSON TOWN HALL**

PRESENT –

Councillor M. Iqbal (Chairman – in the Chair)

Councillors

*N. Ahmed
Musawar Arshad
C. Carter
D. Clegg
V. Fletcher
M. E. Foxley*

*P. J. Foxley
Y. Iqbal
A. Mahmood
B. Newman
Y. Tennant
D. M. Whipp*

Also present:

Councillor S. Cockburn-Price

Officers in attendance:

<i>Dean Langton</i>	<i>Chief Executive</i>
<i>Philip Mousdale</i>	<i>Corporate Director</i>
<i>Susan Guinness</i>	<i>Chief Financial Officer</i>
<i>Neil Watson</i>	<i>Planning, Economic Development and Regulatory Services Manager</i>
<i>Jane Watson</i>	<i>Head of Democratic Services</i>

(Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M. Goulthorp, J. Henderson and C. Wakeford).



The following people attended the meeting and spoke on the items indicated:

<i>Les Cromey</i>	<i>District Enforcement</i>	<i>Minute No. 111</i>
<i>Kate Cox</i>		
<i>Emma Jane McDonald</i>		

<i>Ghalib Hussain</i>	<i>Elliott House, Nelson</i>	<i>Minute No. 115</i>
<i>Israr Raja</i>		



106. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members were reminded of the requirements of the Member Code of Conduct concerning the declaration of interests.

107. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from members of the public.

108. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 24th October, 2019 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

109. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

19/0613/HHO Full: Demolition of existing kitchen and stores and erection of replacement single-storey rear extension at 25 Sefton Street, Brierfield for Mrs. Farzana Zaman

At a meeting of the Brierfield and Reedley Committee on 6th November, 2019 the decision to approve this application was referred as a recommendation to this Committee as the decision to approve the application would be a significant departure from policy.

RESOLVED

That planning permission be **refused** for the following reason:

1. The proposed rear extension, by virtue of its 6.3m depth, would appear significantly overbearing and would result in unacceptable losses of light for the occupants of 23 Sefton Street to the north and the development therefore fails to comply with Policy ENV2 of the Pendle Local Plan Part1: Core Strategy (2011-2030) and the guidance of the Design Principles Supplementary Planning Document.

110. STRATEGIC MONITORING REPORT 1st APRIL TO 30th SEPTEMBER, 2019

The Chief Financial Officer submitted a report on progress made with the actions in the current Strategic Plan along with monitoring information on the Council's revenue and capital budgets for the period ending 30th September, 2019.

Committee were asked to review the performance information provided and comment as appropriate.

RESOLVED

That the progress made on actions identified in the Strategic Plan attached to the report as Appendix A, be noted.

REASON

To inform Committee of performance monitoring information relating to the Council's services and financial plans.

111. DISTRICT ENFORCEMENT

The Corporate Director submitted a report which provided an update on the work of District Enforcement which had been running as a pilot for the last 12 months.

The report provided details of the enforcement activities undertaken by District Enforcement compared with the enforcement activities the Council had undertaken the previous year. They had been able to provide more resources which had resulted in more fines and prosecutions.

During discussion reference was made to general criticisms and the attitude of the District Enforcement officers to members of the public when approached about a littering offence. More positive examples were also discussed.

It was acknowledged that the service provided by District Enforcement was tackling the littering problem but there were areas of concern which the Committee felt needed addressing. It was suggested that a discussion be held with District Enforcement with a view to renegotiating the contract which would aim to address these issues.

RESOLVED

- (1) That formal notice be given to District Enforcement to terminate the agreement in February, 2020 but that Group Leaders and relevant officers meet with them before the notice takes effect to try to renegotiate the agreement with a view to focusing more on the Council's requirements.
- (2) That a report on the outcome of the meeting referred to in (2) above be submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee in either January or February, 2020 so that a final decision on whether to terminate the contract can be taken.

REASON

To continue the increase in enforcement activity, together with improved co-ordination, whilst achieving savings.

112. NELSON TOWN DEAL, MASTERPLAN AND FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND

The Housing, Health and Engineering Services Manager submitted a report which provided an update on the preparation of a masterplan for Nelson Town Centre, the development and submission of a Future High Streets Fund bid and the recent announcement of funding for a potential Town Deal for Nelson.

Nelson Town Centre Masterplan

Consultants Cushman and Wakefield had been gathering data and reviewing documents. The first public consultation meeting was held on 29th October and was attended by nearly 80 people. Thirty additional comments had also been submitted via the website and through social media. Further consultations would be held in the New Year with the aim of having a draft masterplan produced by Spring 2020. This would support the Council's Stage 2 submission for the Future High Streets Fund.

Future High Streets Fund

It was noted that a further bid for £80k had been submitted and an outcome was awaited. If successful this would support more detailed feasibility work and additional support in developing the business case. This was still a competitive process and there was no guarantee capital funding would be secured.

Policy and Resources Committee (21.11.2019)

15th January, 2020 was the deadline for submission of the draft business case, 30th April, 2020 was the deadline for the final business case and funding announcements would be made in Summer/Autumn 2020.

It was reported that there was a strong correlation between the Nelson Masterplan and the Future High Streets Fund business case and therefore it made sense that the Cushman and Wakefield contract be extended to provide additional support in the development of this bid and the Town Deal for Nelson.

Town Deal for Nelson

Reference was made to the timescales to progress a Town Deal, the Town Boundary and the need for a Town Deal Board.

RESOLVED

- (1) That progress on the Nelson Town Centre masterplan and the Future High Streets Fund be noted.
- (2) That the waiver of the Contract Procedure Rules to allow the extension of the contract with Cushman and Wakefield to allow for a wider masterplan to be developed and to provide additional support in the development of the Future High Streets Fund bid be noted.
- (3) That the Chief Executive be granted delegated authority to agree the scope of the additional work and the contract sums.
- (4) That the requirements of the Towns Fund be noted and a further report be submitted to this Committee with proposals for a governance structure to support progress towards agreeing a Town Deal.

REASONS

- (1) *To keep the Committee informed of progress.*
- (2) *To provide additional capacity.*

113. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT UPDATE

The Housing, Health and Engineering Services Manager submitted a report on the current position regarding the delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs). This was a six month update following the report submitted to the Committee in June 2019.

Changes had been made to help reduce the time taken to approve a grant. A temporary technical officer had also been employed for a 6 month period to help tackle the outstanding referrals. This had resulted in a reduction from 115 at the start of the year to 43 as at 12th November, 2019.

It was noted that there was an increase in the number of grants that were being estimated to cost over the maximum mandatory grant of £30,000. As a result people were experiencing time delays in securing additional funding. It was suggested that a discretionary grant fund be set up to address this issue.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the current position be noted.
- (2) That staff be congratulated for the work they have undertaken to help reduce the number of outstanding referrals over the past 6 months.
- (3) That Council be recommended to approve a £25,000 discretionary grant from within the existing DFG fund for the remainder of the current financial year to provide additional funding for mandatory grants over £30,000.

REASONS

- (1) *To keep the Committee informed.*
- (2) *To provide assistance with mandatory grants over £30,000.*

114. 10 REGENT STREET, WHITEWALLS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, COLNE

The Chief Executive submitted a report following receipt of a request to purchase the freehold or extend the long lease of the land edged black on the plan attached to the report.

Committee were advised that the disposal would take away control from the Council and could affect any future development of the industrial estate and therefore the recommendation was to refuse the request to buy the freehold. However, the extension to the lease term might secure a longer term occupation and the Council would receive a premium.

RESOLVED

That the request to purchase the freehold be refused but the lease be extended by an additional 32 years and the Chief Executive be authorised to negotiate and agree terms for the lease extension.

REASON

None of the other Council owned areas on the industrial estate were occupied on leases longer than 125 years so the recommendation was for the remaining 93 years of the lease to be extended by 32 years with payment of a premium to be negotiated. This would result in the lease being for a 125 year term which was originally granted.

115. ELLIOTT HOUSE, NELSON

The Chief Executive submitted a report on the outcome of a recent tender exercise for the disposal of Elliott House in Nelson. The building had become surplus to the Council's requirements and Committee were asked to consider whether to proceed with its disposal.

It was reported that only one sealed bid had been submitted by the deadline of 15th November, 2019. This was for an unconditional bid of £224,000 for the property and had been submitted by the Lightbeam Academy. They were a registered charity and aimed to create a community hub to promote wellbeing, cohesion and respect for all members of society.

Committee were advised that if the bid was rejected and the property offered to the market it might realise a price higher than that offered but equally in the local static office market it may not. The

Council would continue to incur costs for Utilities and Services, Insurance Premiums, Water Rates and Business Rates whilst the property was empty.

There was a proposal to include within the disposal terms that the Council would continue to use part of the building for storage at nil charge for the term to be agreed. A Claw Back covenant was also proposed if the property was sold on at profit.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That the bid of £224,000 from the Lightbeam Academy be accepted.
- (3) That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive to agree the detail within the terms and conditions of sale with regards to the Council continuing to use part of the building at nil charge for storage and the Claw Back provision.

REASONS

- (1) ***To update Members on the outcome of the tender exercise following its resolution to invite sealed bids from the organisations interested in acquiring the property.***
- (2) ***To allow Members to consider whether the price offered and benefits proposed were acceptable.***
- (3) ***To enable minor terms and conditions to be agreed without recourse back to this Committee.***

116. TENDERS

The Corporate Director submitted a report on tenders which had been received and accepted.

RESOLVED

That the tenders which had been received and accepted be noted.

REASON

To agree acceptance of tenders/offers in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules.

Chairman _____