

**CABINET held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON
WALDEN at 7.00 pm on 5 DECEMBER 2013**

Present: Councillor J Ketteridge – Leader (Chairman)
Councillor J Cheetham – Deputy Leader
Councillor R Chambers – Portfolio Holder for Finance
Councillor J Redfern – Portfolio Holder for Housing
Councillor H Rolfe – Portfolio Holder for Community,
Partnerships and Engagement
Councillor A Walters – Portfolio Holder for Community Safety

Also present: Councillors E Godwin, S Howell, M Lemon, E Parr and V
Ranger.

Officers in attendance: J Mitchell (Chief Executive), R Harborough (Director
of Public Services), R Millership (Assistant Director Housing and
Environmental Services) S Joyce (Assistant Chief Executive-
Finance), M Perry (Assistant Chief Executive - Legal), B Tice
(Scripting Officer) and A Webb (Director of Corporate Services).

CA63

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Mr Reed spoke in relation item 13, High Roding Conservation Area
Appraisal. He said he was addressing the Cabinet today because he had
not been able to obtain answers from council officers or his local Member.
He was concerned at the proposed designation of 3 open spaces, which
were on his land, as environmentally important areas of open space and also
the consideration to place Article 4 directions on a number of his properties.
He contested the contents of the report and asked for an explanation of the
recommendations.

Mr Hugo spoke about a piece of land that was proposed as an
environmentally important area of open space. He had purchased this land
in order to build a house for his family. It had a fence around the perimeter,
there were no proper views and the plot had not been farmed for 20 years.
He commented that the village recreation areas did not appear to have been
designated in the appraisal, only private land. He said that this land was his
family's future and asked that the designation of the land be reconsidered.

The Chairman thanked the speakers for their comments and said he would
move the High Roding item forward so they could listen to the discussion.

CA64

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no apologies for absence received.

Councillor Barker declared a non-pecuniary interest as the local councillor
for High Roding and in her capacity as a County Councillor, as a member of
the Essex Pension Fund Board.

CA65 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 October were approved subject to the correction of the figure in the first line of minute CA44 to read 8.5%.
The minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2013 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

CA66 **QUESTIONS OR STATEMENTS FROM NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**

Councillor Eastham had attended the meeting to speak on item 9 and Councillor Menell to speak on item 12. The Chairman agreed they could make their comments when these items were discussed.

CA67 **CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL HIGH RODING**

Councillor Barker said that there were a number of areas of concerns with the report and the issues raised by local residents needed to be addressed. She suggested the report be deferred for these matters to be resolved.

RESOLVED that the item be deferred for further consideration and a report be made to the next meeting of the Cabinet.

CA68 **PENSION FUND DEFECIT**

Councillor Chambers presented a report on the triennial valuation of the UDC share of the Essex Pension Fund, and proposals to meet the ongoing deficit funding commitment for the next 3 years.

He explained that the Local Government Pension Scheme was a national scheme, locally administered by Essex County Council and Uttlesford was obliged to make payments into the Pension Fund according to the Funding Strategy approved by the County Council.

The UDC share of the pension fund deficit as at 31 March 2013 was £11.6m, and this had to be funded during a 30-year recovery period. The Council had options about the timing of deficit payments but the most economically advantageous option was to make 3 years' worth of payments at the start of the 3 year period, reducing costs by £109,000. This would necessitate the use of reserves in year 1, and replenishment of reserves in years 2 and 3.

The council also had to make an ongoing employers' contribution to meet expected future liabilities arising from current scheme membership, which was done as a percentage of basic salary. The assessed contribution rate was to increase from its present level of 13% to 13.9% in 2014/15, 14.8% in 2015/16 and 15.7% in 2016/17.

It was noted that reforms of the Local Government Pension Fund were in progress, the effect of which would be reported at a later date.

The Cabinet agreed to the course of action proposed.

RESOLVED to agree the approach to funding the pension deficit as set out in paragraph 20-24 of the report subject to approval of the budget by Full Council in February 2014.

CA69

TURPINS INDOOR BOWLS CLUB - LEASE

Councillor Eastham declared a non-pecuniary interest as the council's representative on Turpins Indoor Bowls Club.

Councillor Chambers presented the report on the lease arrangement with the Turpins Bowls Club. The report explained that Solar Panels had been installed on the roof of the bowls hall by Emotion Shaping Energy Ltd in 2012 but without the consent of the council as freehold owner of the property. The Bowls Club currently occupied the premises under a 25 year lease dated 27 March 1997, which contained an absolute prohibition on assignment and underletting of the whole or part of the lease.

Emotion Shaping Energy had proposed an underlease for 25 years to be granted by Turpins out of the current lease but this would have involved a significant risk and weaknesses for the Council. Alternative approaches had been considered but on the advice of the District Valuer, the only feasible option was for Turpins to surrender the whole of the current lease (which had an unexpired term of 9 years) back to the Council. A new lease would then be granted immediately to Turpins for a further period of up to 25 years. By doing this Turpins would be able to grant the necessary sub-lease of the roof space to ESE Ltd for the period of time required.

The Director of Public Services explained that the financing of the solar panels required a security of tenure for 25 years. The new lease would provide for this and also clarify responsibilities and safeguard interests. Negotiations were continuing between Turpins and the Council over the terms of the lease.

Councillor Eastham said that the Bowls Club had not realised that it needed permission from the council, but this was the best way forward for both parties.

Councillor Rolfe suggested that other organisations, that leased property from the Council, should be reminded of what they were allowed to do under the terms of the lease.

RESOLVED that

- 1 The Cabinet agrees to Turpins being allowed to surrender the whole of the current lease (which has an unexpired term of 9 years) back to the council.
- 2 A new lease then be immediately granted to Turpins for a further period of up to 25 years with specific provision for an

underlease between Turpins and Emotion Shaping Energy for use of the roof space.

CA70

SHELTERED HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Councillor Redfern presented a report which updated the Cabinet on the review of the council's sheltered schemes. In 2012 a consultant had been commissioned to undertake a review of existing sheltered schemes. This had identified 5 schemes, Reynolds Court, Alexia House, Hatherley Court, Walden Place and Parkside as the poorest performing, and Cabinet had approved further in depth option appraisals to be carried out on these schemes.

Each scheme had been assessed in terms of its size, demand and possible options for the future. The estimated total cost to address all 5 schemes would be around £12.5m, if the schemes were to be re-developed and £8.7m if re-modelled. Possible options for the schemes at Reynolds Court and Alexia House had been discussed at the Housing Board on 22 August. It was important that any plans developed were implemented over a timescale that allowed for residents' involvement. The residents of Reynolds Court were aware that options were being considered; the next step was to consult with them and also to ensure that no new lettings took place.

Councillor Redfern said that officers had already started discussions with tenants and local Members had also been kept involved.

Once there was a realistic scheme option there would be a further report to the Housing Board to enable members to decide if any of the suggested proposals should be taken forward.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet notes progress with appraisals of the schemes and approves the following recommendations of the Housing Board:

- i) Consultation take place with residents of those schemes currently providing bedsit type accommodation.
- ii) Further investigations on options for Reynolds Court are carried out to enable accurate costs to be established.
- iii) Officers cease letting to new tenants at Reynolds Court.

CA71

TOUR DE FRANCE WORKING GROUP

Councillor Rolfe reported that the Tour de France cycle race would be passing through Saffron Walden, Radwinter and Felsted on 7 July 2014. Although the tour organisers would be responsible for the majority of the logistics associated with the event there would be some local involvement. He explained that Essex County Council had proposed that this event be dealt with in a similar way to the Olympic torch relay in 2012. This would involve setting up a working group comprising relevant members and officers to meet on an adhoc basis to assist with the organisation and to ensure that it was a successful event for the district.

Councillor Rolfe said this was an exciting opportunity for the district and it was important that all relevant interest groups were included. Councillor Lemon said the Council should draw on the experience of the Olympic events, particularly using the council officers who had previously been involved and the pool of trained volunteers.

RESOLVED

- 1 A Member/officer working group be established to oversee and support the event taking place in the district.
- 2 £20,000 be earmarked in the 2014/15 budget to deal with any emerging requirements.

CA72

CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISEL WENDENS AMBO

Members considered a report on the Conservation Area Appraisal for Wendens Ambo, under the Listed Buildings and Conservation Area Act 1990. The report gave details of the outcome of the consultation. The parish council had considered the document to be worthwhile as it was likely to strengthen control of development in the area.

Councillor Menell had attended the meeting for this item and said that the parish council was very happy with the report and with the way the officer had conducted the appraisal. She thanked Mr Tice for his assistance with this project.

RESOLVED that

- 1 The Conservation Area Appraisal be approved and used to assist in the process of determining planning applications for implementing management proposals
- 2 The Wendens Ambo Conservation Area boundary be formally amended.

CA73

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that under Section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

CA74

MEAD COURT TENDER

The Cabinet was advised of the fixed price tender figure to redevelop the sheltered scheme at Mead Court, Stansted. This figure was higher than

estimated for a number of reasons, the primary one being the site abnormalities found during the surveys. There was also the issue of price inflation and over heating of the market. If the additional costs were approved the project would be able commence straight away.

Mr Hall, from the council's appointed quantity surveyors Henry Riley, attended the meeting to answer members' questions. He confirmed that the problems with this site were particularly unusual and could not have been foreseen. The Cabinet discussed the report in detail and re-affirmed its commitment to progressing the development of this site.

RESOLVED that

- 1 The Cabinet accept the fixed price proposal of £4,241,654.
- 2 An additional £536,900 be authorised from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital budget for the redevelopment of Mead Court Stansted.

The meeting ended at 8.00pm.