

ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT & MAJOR PROJECTS CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 57

Brighton & Hove City Council

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

ENTERPRISE, EMPLOYMENT & MAJOR PROJECTS CABINET MEMBER MEETING

4.00pm 23 MARCH 2009

BANQUETING SUITE, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Kemble (Cabinet Member)

Also in attendance: Councillor Turton (Opposition Spokesperson)

PART ONE

44. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

44a Declarations of Interests

44.1 There were none

44b Exclusion of Press and Public

44.2 In accordance with section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ("the Act), the Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Employment and Major Projects considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during an item of business on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as defined in section 100A (3) of the Act) or exempt information (as defined in section 100I(1) of the Act).

44.3 **RESOLVED** – that the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

45. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

45.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes held on 9 December 2008 be agreed and signed by the Cabinet Member.

46. CABINET MEMBER'S COMMUNICATIONS

Progress on Economic Task Force

46.1 The Cabinet Member reported that the Economy Task Force, since its first meeting in November, had steered the successful delivery of the council's recession relief activity. The Be Local, Buy Local campaign had been well supported by both businesses and residents alike; the Business Lifebelt Support workshops, clinics and events were the envy of every authority in the region and the Cabinet Member congratulated all of the organisations who had been working with the council. The council would be suspending roadworks over the bank holiday periods again and were continuing to offer different payment schedules for local businesses, if they pay the council rent or rates to help their cashflow. The Task Force continued to meet regularly and the Cabinet Member was also delighted to report that representatives from the Community & Voluntary Sector had joined.

Business Rates

- 46.2 The Cabinet Member reported that around 875 Businesses were visited by the Revenues Inspection team during January/February and all others were written to. The number of current Small Business Rate Relief cases was 2959. The Council had made refunds or adjustments to accounts totalling some £407K.
- 46.3 The Small Business Rate Relief form had been printed inside the additional information leaflet sent out recently with the Annual Bills and the Business Rates team were already getting some of these back. The Business Lifebelt leaflet also went out with the Annual Bills.

City College Pelham Street Planning Approval

- 46.4 The Cabinet Member reported that City College was successful in its planning application for a new Pelham Street campus, to replace the existing unsightly and unsuitable Pelham Tower building.
- 46.5 Officers in the council's Capital Projects team had worked hard in partnership with the college and colleagues in City Planning to get to this point and ensure that the college was well placed in the ongoing consideration of funding bids by the Learning and Skills Council. The Council should have a better understanding of the availability of funding following a review of funding applications in April. The city council was confident about the case that the city and the college could work together to show the regeneration benefits that capital funding of new Further Education facilities would bring. It was understood that the LSC has made it clear that it sees City College as an important provider of vocational education.
- 46.6 If the college was successful in its bid to the Learning and Skills Council then the city as a whole would benefit from a considerable investment, both in terms of jobs and education opportunities. Officers would continue to work with the college on their plans for sites across the city to ensure everyone had access to vocational education in modern fit-for-purpose facilities.

Directorate Name Change

- 46.7 The Cabinet Member reported on the proposed change in name of the Directorate that supported the Cabinet Member Meeting. From 1 April 2009 the Directorate's title would change from Cultural Services to Culture & Enterprise.
- 46.8 The Cabinet Member believed that this was a positive and forward looking reflection of the work of the directorate and the city council in driving a strong and vibrant cultural offer that is inter-linked and inter-dependent on sustainable economic growth.
- 46.9 The Enterprise element would capture the work the council leads in promoting economic development, business support and growth and in the delivery of major projects.

47. ITEMS RESERVED FOR DISCUSSION

- 47.1 All items were reserved for discussion.

48. PETITIONS

- 48.1 The Cabinet Member had before him the following petition presented at Council on 29 January 2009 by Councillor Davey and signed by 1067 people.

"We the undersigned, being local residents, shoppers and traders, urge Brighton and Hove City Council:

1. To support our plans for an improved London Road, retaining and enhancing its unique qualities as a culturally diverse area with a thriving market and a large number of small businesses, shops and amenities serving the local community.
2. To reject any moves by large companies to turn the area into a "clone town" with the demolition of historic frontages and structures, the displacement of local businesses, the privatisation of public spaces and the building of another large store or supermarket.
3. To reject any proposals that would bring more vehicles into the area through the provision of a large car park and modifications to traffic flows in adjacent streets."

- 48.2 The Cabinet Member reported that as the petition related to the supplementary planning document it would be forwarded to the Environment Cabinet Member Meeting for consideration.
- 48.3 **RESOLVED** – That the petition be noted and forwarded to the Environment Cabinet Member Meeting for consideration with the Supplementary Planning Document.

49. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- 49.1 There were none.

50. DEPUTATIONS

50.1 The following deputation had been forwarded from full council on 29 January 2009 as follows:

“St. James’s Investments (SJI) has been steadily buying up property along the London Road and has produced proposals for regenerating the area ostensibly based on two public consultations. Brighton & Hove City Council has an ongoing ‘Masterplan’ for this area that lays down definite parameters for any regeneration proposal. ‘Another London Road’ Campaign (ALR) is concerned that SJI is not only ignoring these parameters, but is also pursuing a pre-planned agenda that includes a Tesco superstore which does not reflect the needs and wishes of the local residents and businesses.”

50.2 The Cabinet Member reported that the deputation and accompanying material be forwarded to the Environment Cabinet Member Meeting for consideration with the Supplementary Planning Document.

50.3 **RESOLVED** – That the deputation be forwarded to the Environment Cabinet Member Meeting for consideration with the Supplementary Planning Document.

51. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

51.1 There were none.

52. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

52.1 There were none.

53. NOTICES OF MOTIONS

53.1 There were none.

**54. BUSINESS RETENTION & INWARD INVESTMENT STRATEGY &
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

54.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Cultural Services which presented the Business Retention and Inward Investment (BRII) Strategy and Implementation Plan (for copy see minute book). The Strategy set out a more proactive role for the city council in safeguarding and developing existing businesses together with attracting new businesses to the city. It would provide a framework for the economic development function of the city council to work with partners, both internally and externally to safeguard and develop the economic base of the city.

54.2 Councillor Turton asked why GVA Grimley Ltd was commissioned to develop the strategy and why they were considered relevant to Brighton & Hove? The Economic Development Officer explained that there had been 34 expressions of interest in the brief. Around 16 or 17 full submissions had been made. A detailed analysis had taken been carried out and four firms had been selected for final interview. GVA Grimley Ltd had been appointed out of this process. They were an internationally known consultancy agency.

- 54.3 Councillor Turton noted that manufacturing was a growth area, especially in food and drink. He referred to page 27 – Targeting, and asked what was the rationale for having 50 employees as a benchmark. Why not have a lower fresh hold of 20. The Economic Development Officer replied that he would review the core data and provide information to Councillor Turton about this issue.
- 54.4 Councillor Turton referred to paragraph 1.10 on page 31. He asked if there would be further information provided to the Cabinet Member Meeting on the identification and development of sufficient and appropriate start up and grow-on floorspace. The Head of Tourism and Venues confirmed that this matter would be revisited at a future Cabinet Member Meeting.
- 54.5 Councillor Turton referred to paragraph 1.16 relating to the key requirements for a more effective set of tools to collate, manage and utilise information etc. He asked if it was possible to purchase an off the peg software system. The Head of Tourism and Venues replied that it might be possible to use existing tools but this matter would be explored further.
- 54.6 **RESOLVED** - (1) That the Business Retention and Inward Investment Strategy and Implementation Plan be approved.
- (2) That the Director of Cultural Services provides updates on the actions contained within the Implementation Plan.

55. ECONOMIC STRATEGY

- 55.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Cultural Services which requested agreement to the Economic Strategy for Brighton & Hove produced by the Economic Partnership. The strategy covered the period 2008-2016 (for copy see minute book). The purpose of the strategy was to agree a direction for the economic development of the City among the private sector, local and regional public agencies, higher and further education and others with an interest in the local economy.
- 55.2 Councillor Turton referred to page 87 – D12 which referred to the definition of “key worker” to be widened to include some private sector employees. He asked for more details about this matter. The Head of Tourism and Venues replied that he would investigate this further and contact Councillor Turton. He thought that it would apply to companies that provided an essential public service such as bus companies.
- 55.3 Councillor Turton asked the Cabinet Member if there had been Cabinet level meetings to discuss development projects in the city. The Cabinet Member replied that he was not able to discuss specific planning applications but assured Councillor Turton that talks were taking place to try to ensure that some major development projects which would provide economic benefit to the city were progressed in the near future.
- 55.4 **RESOLVED** - (1) That the actions contained within the strategy and specifically those that require the direct support of the city council be agreed.

The meeting concluded at 4.25pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of