

TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CABINET ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES of the meeting held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1RS, at 6.00 pm on Tuesday, 11 January 2022

Present: Councillor David Scott (Chairman)
Councillors March, Ms Palmer, Ellis, Rutland, Hill, Pope and Allen

Officers in Attendance: Paul Taylor (Director of Change and Communities), Gary Stevenson (Head of Housing, Health and Environment), Nigel Bolton (Interim Service Manager) and Caroline Britt (Democratic Services Officer)

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Hamilton

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

COM1/21 Apologies were received from Councillors Fairweather and Patterson. Councillor Britcher-Allan was not present.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

COM2/21 There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary or other significant interest made at the meeting.

NOTIFICATION OF PERSONS WISHING TO SPEAK

COM3/21 Councillor Hamilton had registered to speak on Agenda Item 5 – Grounds Maintenance Contract.

FORWARD PLAN AS AT 17 DECEMBER 2021

COM4/21 The Forward Plan was taken as read.

RESOLVED – that the Forward Plan as at 17 December 2021 be approved as a correct record.

GROUND'S MAINTENANCE SERVICE

COM5/21 Nigel Bolton, Interim Services Manager introduced the report set out in the agenda.

Speaker: Councillor Sarah Hamilton.

Discussion and questions from Members included the following:

- Biodiversity was very important and TWBC would continue to work to ensure that any adverse impact on the environment was minimal.
- The Council would further ensure that measures were included so that the contract was as environmentally friendly as practically possible.
- Tivoli had an environmental policy which already supported most of the objectives raised by Councillor Hamilton. This included compliance with current environmental legislation, the implementation of Best Practice, the reduction of their own carbon footprint, the protection of the natural environment and the prevention of pollution.

- Tivoli also had a track record of 're-wilding'.
- TWBC were about to launch a new section on their website that would provide information to the public about all the carbon reduction measures that the Council were undertaking and the measures available to the general public.
 - The Queen's Green Canopy Initiative had delivered 70 specimen trees and nearly 300 saplings to schools and parishes within the Borough.
 - Any risk associated with increases in wages, National Insurance contributions etc. would sit with the contractor and not the Council. The specification clearly set out what was expected from the contractor. Failure to deliver could result in sanctions that were clearly defined in the contract.
 - There was no requirement for Tivoli to offer/agree an extension to the contract so in doing so, they would have been aware of the changes in the economy.
 - It would be the responsibility of the Council to ensure good communication of measures being undertaken (green issues etc.). But it was recognised that Tivoli would absolutely support the Council.
 - The sanctions available would depend on the level of the incident. A low level incident that could be easily rectified would probably be in the form of a rectification order that would include an instruction of what had to be done and a timescale for completion. A default in the contract could result in a financial penalty. In extreme cases the contract could ultimately be terminated.
 - The Council had a complaints system so instances of under performance etc. would be recorded.
 - It was noted that towards the end of summer 2021 there had been anecdotal evidence of some consistent failures by the contractor. Since then, there had been a marked reduction of recorded instances (including on social media).
 - It was agreed that an additional recommendation would be included that reflected the environmental/biodiversity issues.

To note, the matter was decided in taking the exempt information set out in the Agenda as read.

RESOLVED – That the recommendations set out in the report be supported and that a further recommendation be added in relation to environmental/biodiversity issues.

URGENT BUSINESS

COM6/21 There was no urgent business.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

COM7/21 The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 26 January 2022.

NOTES:

The meeting concluded at 6.45 pm.