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Council

Monday 16th April 2012 7.00 pm

Council Chamber Town Hall Redditch



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Agenda Item 4

Council

5th March 2012

MINUTES

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Present:

Councillor Anita Clayton (Mayor), Councillor Gay Hopkins (Deputy Mayor) and Councillors Peter Anderson, Michael Braley, Rebecca Blake, Andrew Brazier, Juliet Brunner, David Bush, Michael Chalk, Simon Chalk, Greg Chance, Brandon Clayton, Andrew Fry, Carole Gandy, Adam Griffin, Malcolm Hall, Bill Hartnett, Roger Hill, Phil Mould, William Norton, Jinny Pearce, Brenda Quinney, Mark Shurmer, Debbie Taylor and Derek Taylor

Also Present:

D Andrews (Chair, Standards Committee) and M Collins (Vice-Chair, Standards Committee)

Officers:

T Buckley, J Carradine, C Felton, S Hanley, T Kristunas, J Pickering, J Staniland, S Skinner and L Tompkin

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

102. WELCOME

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

103. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Robin King, Wanda King and Alan Mason. It was reported that Councillor Robin King had been readmitted to hospital. The Mayor passed on the Council's best wishes to Robin and Wanda.

104. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

MAYOR, in the Chair



Council

105. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 16th January and 20th February 2012 be confirmed as correct records and signed by the Chair.

106. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) <u>Mayor</u>

The Mayor's communications and announcements were as follows:

Mayoral functions

The Mayor advised that, since the previous ordinary meeting of the Council, she had attended many events and engagements, the highlights of which had been the re-opening of the Abbey Stadium complex and an afternoon at Studley Castle with two local residents who had been married for 70 years and were celebrating their platinum wedding anniversary.

b) <u>Chief Executive</u>

The Chief Executive had no announcements.

c) <u>Leader</u>

The Leader's announcements were considered under the following headings:

i) <u>Work placements from Auxerre</u>

The Leader informed Members that the Council had managed to secure work placements for two Auxerrois at the Town Hall during the summer months, one in the Housing Team and a second in the Directorate Support Team. Officers were thanked for arranging the placements and accommodation for the individuals concerned.

ii) <u>Big Lottery funding</u>

The Leader was pleased to be able to inform Members that the Borough had received a significant amount of funding from the Big Lottery fund to be spent in the Church Hill area over the coming years. The Council, in conjunction with the Big Lottery fund, local residents and other partners would consider and decide upon priorities and develop a plan to cover the period of the funding. A meeting was to be arranged in the near future involving Officers and relevant Members to consider the implications for the Church Hill area.

Council

107. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

No questions had been received.

108. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

No motions had been received.

109. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Members received the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee held on 31st January, 20th February and 21st February 2012.

RESOVED that

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 31st January 2012 be received and all recommendations adopted;
- 2) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 20th February 2012 be received and noted; and
- 3) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 21st February 2012 be received and all recommendations adopted, subject to:

<u>in respect of Minute 173 (Housing Revenue Account –</u> <u>Outcome of Review)</u> it being noted that the Leader had provided an assurance that a number of considerations would be covered in the report proposed to be submitted to the Executive Committee on the building of Council houses by the authority, including:

- a) a cost-benefit analysis of the scheme;
- b) an analysis of the number of sites suitable for housing;
- c) timescales for the development to be delivered on each site;
- d) the means by which the Council was proposing to deliver the housing;
- e) details of the tendering process to engage the outside contractors;
- f) a measure of the prudent level of reserves to be retained in the HRA budget; and
- g) a financial appraisal and feasibility study for each site.

Council

110. REGULATORY COMMITTEES

The Council received the minutes of recent meetings of the Council's Regulatory Committees. It was noted that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 4th January 2012 inadvertently had been submitted for the Council's consideration for a second time.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee held on 23rd January 2012 be received and all recommendations adopted;
- 2) the minutes of the meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 9th January 2012 be received and all recommendations adopted; and
- 3) the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 1st February 2012 be received and adopted.

111. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

There were no urgent business decisions under the Council's urgency procedures for consideration at this meeting.

112. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL (IF ANY)

There were no separate items of Urgent Business for consideration at this meeting.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm and closed at 7.37 pm

MAYOR, in the Chair

13th March 2012



Executive

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MINUTES

Present:

Committee

Councillor Michael Braley (Chair) and Councillors Juliet Brunner, Greg Chance, Malcolm Hall, Jinny Pearce, Debbie Taylor and Derek Taylor

Also Present:

Councillor Andrew Brazier

Officers:

M Bough, J Cochrane, R Dunne, C Flanagan, S Hanley, A Heighway, T Kristunas, S Morgan, J Pickering, D Taylor and A de Warr

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

182. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Brandon Clayton and Carole Gandy.

183. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

184. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair commenced by referring to the recent sad death of Councillor Robin King. The meeting rose and observed a minute's silence as a mark of respect to Councillor King.

The Chair advised that the following item of business, scheduled on the Forward Plan to be dealt with at this meeting, had been rescheduled to a later meeting of the Committee:

• Tenancy Strategy and Policy 2012 - 2014

Chair



He also advised that he had accepted the following item as Urgent Business:

 Redditch Borough Council / Choose How You Move in Redditch Co-Promotional Agreement

(Not on the Forward Plan and not meeting the publication deadline)

185. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meetings of the Executive Committee held on 20th and 21st February 2012 be confirmed as correct records and signed by the Chair.

186. REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL / CHOOSE HOW YOU MOVE IN REDDITCH CO-PROMOTIONAL AGREEMENT

Officers reported that an opportunity had arisen during the previous week to gain a substantial sum of sponsorship money through the Choose How You Move programme, a programme funded by the Department for Transport. The additional funding stream was linked to the Council's co-promotion of the Halfords Tour Series national cycle race in the town on 24th May and would supplement existing budgets for the provision of public information about and the promotion and marketing of the Council's events programme.

It was noted that the Choose How You Move initiative was focussed on changing people's habits and behaviours over a period of time with the funding spanning a period of three years. Officers suggested that the new promotional tools could be used to support the Voluntary and Third Sector in the leisure and cultural arenas.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the agreement proposal be noted and agreed; and
- 2) the Council be requested to note that £70,000 will be received from Worcestershire County Council in advance for inclusion to the Arts and Events budgets for the above proposal over the next three financial years.

(This report had been accepted as a matter of Urgent Business – not having met the publication deadline and not on the Forward Plan – and was considered at the meeting as such, with the approval of the Chair, in accordance with the Council's constitutional rules and powers vested in the Chair by virtue of Section 100 (B) (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 to agree



to matters of urgency being discussed by reason of special circumstances.

In this case the special circumstances were that the report needed to be considered at the current meeting in order to formally notify Members of the securing of, and to seek agreement for the receipt of, a significant amount of programme funding prior to its incorporation into the Council's budget for the coming financial year).

187. PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ENFORCEMENT POLICY

The Committee considered a report regarding a draft Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy which set out the legal responsibilities, principles and priorities that the Private Sector Housing Service would follow when enforcing legislation to demonstrate compliance with national regulatory requirements.

Members welcomed the Policy, recognising that it would enable the Council to assist those in private sector accommodation, both owner-occupiers and those in private rented accommodation, in part through the support it would provide to responsible private landlords. Officers stated that, as with any new Policy, the Council would periodically review the provisions put in place to demonstrate that they were operating effectively.

There was some surprise expressed at the numbers of properties within the Borough which had failed to reach the Decent Homes standard as measured by the Building Research Establishment. Officers confirmed that the numbers were correct, but that the proportion was in line with, and even slightly better than, the national average.

RESOLVED that

the Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy attached at Appendix 1 to the report be approved and adopted.

188. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 3, PERIOD ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2011

Members received the latest quarterly monitoring report setting out the Council's performance over a range of services and against a number of measures.

The areas where the Council was performing particularly well were highlighted as were several areas of current concern. Members raised a number of matters. There was some doubt expressed as to the value in recording the numbers of British Crime Survey

Executive Committee

comparator crimes reported as these, by their very nature, failed to include any crimes that were not reported, thereby rendering the data somewhat subjective. Officers reported that there was currently a national trend of increasing levels of acquisitive crime. In response to the suggestion that decreasing the funding for the Police Service would not assist in tackling an upsurge in crime, it was noted that the West Mercia Police Force was unusual in still recruiting Officers at the present time.

There was some concern expressed that the pricing structure for performances at the Palace Theatre might preclude any improvement in visitor numbers at that facility. The relevant Portfolio Holder responded that bench-marking exercises had demonstrated that the Palace was performing better than the majority of its competitors in attracting audiences. However, he did undertake to investigate the pricing structures for shows at the Theatre and report back to Councillor Hall.

The Benefits Service was commended for continuing to achieve a reduction in the time taken to process claims from those in receipt of benefits.

RESOLVED that

the update on key performance indicators for the period ending 31st December 2011 be noted.

189. APRIL - DECEMBER (QUARTER 3) - FINANCE MONITORING REPORT 2011/12

The Committee received a monitoring report detailing the Council's financial position at the end of the third quarter of 2011/12. Officers reported that the Council was on course to achieve the savings included within the budget agreed in February 2011, including savings relating to shared services, Transformation, vacancy management and changes to Terms and Conditions.

RESOLVED that

the current financial position on Revenue and Capital be noted as detailed in the report.

190. BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT PLAN - QUARTERLY MONITORING - OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2011

A report was received setting out information relating to the performance of the Benefits service and on a number of major changes arising from forthcoming legislation which were due to impact on the service over coming months and years. The meeting was provided with an update on the major implications of the Welfare Reform Bill, key amongst which was the proposal to introduce a Universal Credit in place of a range of existing benefits, intended to simplify the system of claiming benefits and encourage and reward employment.

Concern was expressed that there may be unintended consequences from the legislation, with measures such as the size restrictions in social tenancies and Council Tax Benefit replacement leading to increasing levels of homelessness within the Borough and more widely. A question was also asked concerning the low numbers of prosecutions and cautions resulting from the large volume of investigations carried out. Officers explained that the majority of cases were generated by either data matching or referrals from official sources, including other members of Council staff.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

191. QUARTERLY MONITORING OF WRITE OFFS - 1ST APRIL -31ST DECEMBER 2011

The Committee received a report demonstrating the action taken by Officers with respect to the write-off of debts in the first three quarters of the financial year and the profile of the outstanding debt to the Council. It was noted that the level of debt written off to date was within the limits for bad debt provision as agreed by the Council.

RESOLVED that

the contents of the report be noted.

192. MAKING EXPERIENCES COUNT - QUARTERLY CUSTOMER SERVICE REPORT

The Committee considered the quarterly monitoring report on customer service. The report provided Members with a breakdown of the numbers of complaints and compliments recorded across the Council. Officers informed the Committee that further steps were being introduced to gain a fuller picture of failure demand and to receive feedback from customers and complainants.

Members noted that the report listed the numbers of justified and unjustified complaints as assessed by the Council and there was some concern that the assessment was somewhat subjective. It

Executive Committee

was conceded that this may be true to an extent and Officers undertook to add a number of 'unjustified' complaints to future reports for Members' information.

RESOLVED that

the update for the period 1st October 2011 – 31st December 2011 be noted.

193. SICKNESS ABSENCE PERFORMANCE AND HEALTH FOR PERIOD ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2011

Officers presented a report detailing sickness absence performance across the Council up until the end of the third quarter of 2011/12.

Generally, the Council was exceeding its target and was headed for a decrease of 2.41 days in the projected outturn figure for 2011/12 compared to the previous year. It was noted that Housing services were going against this overall trend.

Further comparative information was being sought to contextualise the performance in Redditch. It was also reported that the Council was struggling to fill the joint post with Bromsgrove District Council of Occupational Health advisor at the present time.

Members expressed some disquiet that a lot of work was being devoted to the preparation of this information. It was suggested that the data for future reports might be tailored to allow its use more readily as a management tool for Officers and Members.

RESOLVED that

subject to the comments noted, above, the contents of the report be noted.

194. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 14th February 2012. It was noted that the recommendations contained therein had been considered at previous meetings of the Executive Committee.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26th January 2012 be received and noted.

195. SHARED SERVICES BOARD

The Committee considered the minutes of the meeting of the Shared Services Board held on 26th January 2012.

RESOLVED that

the minutes be noted.

196. MINUTES / REFERRALS - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, EXECUTIVE PANELS ETC.

There were no minutes or referrals to consider under this item.

197. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

Members considered the latest version of the report on the activity of the Council's Advisory Panels and similar bodies. It was noted that the next meeting of the Planning Advisory Panel would be taking place on 3rd April and that the most recent meeting of the Grants Panel had been held on 8th March. Officers reported that the operation of the Procurement Group would be held in abeyance whilst work on Transformation was progressed.

198. ACTION MONITORING

Members considered the most recent version of the Committee's action monitoring report. It was noted that the report on concessionary rents for voluntary sector organisations had been deferred to a meeting at the end of May.

199. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that

under S.100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matters on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended.

Item 18 – Property for Compulsory Purchase – Property A; and

Item 19 – Property for Compulsory Purchase – Property B.

200. PROPERTY FOR COMPULSORY PURCHASE - PROPERTY A

The Committee received a report recommending the compulsory purchase of a property which had been empty since 2007 and was currently uninhabitable. The property was considered to be a blight on the neighbourhood and the former tenant had failed to prove legal right to the property.

It was questioned whether the Council had a strategy for identifying properties which might be subject to such action in a systematic manner. Officers disclosed that there were only a very small number of such properties that had been empty for five years or more and, of those, only two which met the Council's current criteria for compulsory purchase.

(During consideration of this item Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed relating to an individual, which would identify an individual and relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information).)

201. PROPERTY FOR COMPULSORY PURCHASE - PROPERTY B

Further to the previous item, the Committee was requested to consider the compulsory purchase of a property which had been empty since 2001. It was reported that the Council would look to bring this property back into the Council's housing stock should the purchase be agreed, given the nature and location of the property.

(During consideration of this item Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed relating to an individual, which would identify an individual and relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information).)

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm and closed at 8.09 pm

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Chair

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Agenda Item 10

Planning

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REDDITCH RARANAH CANACI

Committee

29th February 2012

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Michael Chalk (Chair), Councillor Roger Hill (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Peter Anderson, Andrew Brazier, Malcolm Hall, Bill Hartnett and Brenda Quinney

Also Present:

Jinny Pearce and M Collins (observer for Standards Committee) and Mr B Sharp (County Council Highways Engineer)

Officers:

A Hussain, A Rutt, S Skinner and S Williams

Committee Services Officer:

J Smyth

73. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Robin and Wanda King.

74. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

75. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 1st February 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Chair

76. PLANNING APPLICATION 2011/258/FUL – TEARDROP SITE, BORDESLEY LANE, REDDITCH

Erection of a petrol filling station, including forecourt shop, canopy and 8 pumps, car wash, car care facilities, car parking, offset fills and associated plant and landscaping

Applicant: Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd

Mr B Adams, objector and Mr D Templeton, the Applicant's Agent, addressed the Committee under the Council's public speaking rules.

Mr B Sharp, a Worcestershire County Council Highway Engineer, was invited to provide expert advice on a number of detailed Highways matters.

RESOLVED that

- 1) having regard to the development plan and to all other material considerations, planning permission be GRANTED subject to conditions and informatives as summarised below:
 - "1. Time limit for commencement of development (3 years);
 - 2. Shop not to be open if Petrol Filling Station is not open,
 - 3. Materials / finishes to be agreed,
 - 4. Hard landscaping materials to be agreed,
 - 5. Soft landscaping to be implemented and maintained as per submission,
 - 6. Tree protection as requested by Arboricultural Officer,
 - 7. Archaeology recording condition,
 - 8. Development not to be open to the public or commence use until S.278 off-site highway works have been completed (these include 2 lane entry to roundabout from Millrace Rd, re-surfacing and re-lining of the roundabout),

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- 9. Access, turning and parking to be completed prior to use / occupation,
- 10. Method of maintaining safe adjacent highway during construction to be agreed and implemented,
- 11. As requested by Severn Trent Water,
- 12. As requested by Drainage Officer,
- 13. Approved plans specified,
- 14. Development to occur in accordance with ecological mitigation strategy,
- 15. Updated tree protection and assessment details to be provided and agreed,
- 16. Details of species, locations etc and programme for planting of new hedgerow planting to be agreed and implemented as agreed,
- 17. Details of maintenance of existing hedgerows / trees to be agreed and implemented to ensure hedging and smaller trees are retained;"

plus the following additional conditions agreed by Members at the meeting:

- "18. the egress on to the main roundabout to be two lanes wide for a minimum of 30 metres,
 - 19. the left hand lane of these two lanes to be protected by a continuous white line and have a minimum acceleration distance of 50 metres towards Redditch,
 - 20. traffic travelling from Birmingham to have only one lane that goes on towards Redditch,
 - 21. the central lane, taking traffic across the island from both the petrol filling station and the main store, to be reinstated,
- 22. traffic exiting towards Birmingham to be separated from traffic going to the petrol filling station so that traffic exiting from the Birmingham lane can better predict when a gap is approaching,

23. the island to be completely resurfaced before the new lanes are installed"; and

Informatives

- "1. Reason for approval
- 2. As requested by highways
- 3. As requested by Severn Trent Water";

and additionally,

2. "any proposed advertising / signage and future screening matters to be brought to the Planning Committee for determination."

(The Committee considered the report and information provided by the public speakers and Mr Brian Sharp, a County Council Highway Engineer who had been invited to the meeting to provide expert highway advice following a request from the Committee at its previous meeting, when the application had been deferred.

Consideration was also given to a number of proposed additional conditions, tabled at the meeting by a member of the Committee, and which the majority of Members considered would alleviate the increased volume of traffic likely to be generated by the Petrol Filling Station onto the junction of Bordesley Lane and Millrace Road in conjunction with additional traffic generated by the redeveloped Abbey Stadium and recently approved Hotel and Restaurant development.

The Committee also considered that, given the proximity of the subject site to the Crematorium and the associated sensitivities, any advertisement / signage for the development and future screening proposals should be determined by the Committee rather than under delegated powers.)

77. PLANNING APPLICATION 2012/004/COU – 9 DOWLERS HILL CRESCENT, GREENLANDS

<u>Change of use from Class A1 (Shops) to</u> <u>Class A5 (Hot Food Takeaway),</u> new shop front and rear yard extension

Applicant: Mr Mohammed Qasim Rafig

Councillor Rebecca Blake, Ward Councillor and Objector, and Mr Clive Robinson, the Applicant's Agent, addressed the Committee under the Council's public speaking rules. **RESOLVED** that

having regard to the Development Plan and to all other material considerations, Planning Permission be REFUSED, for the reason stated in the main report.

78. PLANNING APPLICATION 2012/018/RC3 – WINYATES DISTRICT CENTRE, WINYATES

<u>Environmental enhancements -</u> <u>demolition of existing garages,</u> <u>provision of additional car parking spaces and</u> <u>provision of refuse bin collection area</u>

Applicant: Redditch Borough Council

RESOLVED that

having regard to the Development Plan and to all other material considerations, Planning Permission be GRANTED, subject to the Conditions and Informatives summarised in the main report.

79. TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NO. (138) 2011 -CONFIRMATION - TEARDROP SITE, LAND AT BORDESLEY LANE, REDDITCH

The Committee received a report which proposed the long-term protection of two mature Oak trees and one Horse Chestnut Tree that were considered to be significant and of positive benefit to amenity and therefore worthy of retention in the longer term.

RESOLVED that

Tree Preservation Order No. (138) 2011, as detailed in the Schedule attached at Appendix 1 to the report and Plan at Appendix 2 (issued under separate cover in the Application Site Plans pack), be confirmed.

80. TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NO. (139) 2011 -CONFIRMATION - FORMER DINGLESIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL AND ADJACENT COUNCIL OWNED LAND

The Committee received a report which proposed the long-term protection of a group of five mature Oak trees and an Ash Tree that were considered to be significant and of positive benefit to amenity and therefore worthy of retention in the longer term. **RESOLVED** that

Tree Preservation Order No. (139) 2011, as detailed in the Schedule attached at Appendix 1 to the report and Plan at Appendix 2 (issued under separate cover in the Application Site Plans pack), be confirmed.

81. TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NO. (140) 2011 -CONFIRMATION - LAND OFF OAKENSHAW ROAD,

The Committee received a report which proposed the long-term protection of a group of eleven mature Oak trees that were considered to be significant and of positive benefit to amenity and therefore worthy of retention in the longer term.

Members fully supported the protection of the trees in question and queried whether it would also be possible to ensure the retention of the hedgerows either side of the trees at the location. Officers undertook to look into the potential for retaining the hedgerows as a separate matter, as protection of hedgerows was dealt with under different legislation.

RESOLVED that

Tree Preservation Order No. (140) 2011, as detailed in the Schedule attached at Appendix 1 to the report and Plan at Appendix 2 (issued under separate cover in the Application Site Plans pack), be confirmed.

82. APPEAL OUTCOME – 80 LONGFELLOW CLOSE, WALKWOOD

The Committee received and noted an item of information in relation to the outcome of an appeal against a refusal of planning permission, taken by Officers under delegated powers, namely:

Planning Application 2011/192/COU Change of use of open space to garden area and enclosure with fencing

The appeal against the Council's decision to refuse planning permission had been dismissed, on the grounds that the area of open space was a valuable contribution to the quality of the urban area and that a change of use to garden area and enclosure with fencing would harm the general character and visual amenities of the area.

83. PLANNING ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY – SIX MONTH UPDATE

The Committee received and noted a report which provided statistics showing enforcement activity for the previous six months.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm and closed at 8.23 pm

CHAIR