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Friday 8 January 2021

To all Members of the West Bridgford Special Expenses and Community Infrastructure Levy Advisory Group

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the West Bridgford Special Expenses and Community Infrastructure Levy Advisory Group will be held on Wednesday, 13 January 2021 at 5.30 pm via Microsoft Teams to consider the following items of business.

Yours sincerely



Sanjit Sull
Monitoring Officer

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of the meeting 29 September 2020 (Pages 1 - 6)
4. Special Expenses 2021/22 Budget Update

A presentation will be delivered.

Membership

Chairman: Councillor G Moore

Councillors: B Buschman, P Gowland, R Jones, R Mallender, S J Robinson, D Viridi, G Wheeler and J Wheeler



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MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
WEST BRIDGFORD SPECIAL EXPENSES AND COMMUNITY
INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY ADVISORY GROUP
FRIDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER 2020

Held virtually at 11.00 am via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT:

Councillors G Moore (Chairman), B Buschman, P Gowland, R Jones, R Mallender, S J Robinson, D Viridi, G Wheeler and J Wheeler

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

P Marshall	Principal Policy Planner
M Sawyer	Planning Contributions Officer
H Tambini	Democratic Services Manager
S Whittaker	Financial Services Manager

6 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies.

7 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

8 Minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 3 June 2020 were declared a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Reference was made to members of the Group having agreed to send officers a list of community groups in the West Bridgford area who might benefit from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Although some members of the Group had submitted a list, other Group members were reminded to do so.

9 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Update

The Planning Contributions Officer and the Principal Planning Policy Officer delivered a presentation to the Group, which updated the Group on the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in West Bridgford. A copy of the presentation was circulated with the minutes.

The Planning Contributions Officer presented a financial update on the CIL, together with an outline of the difference between the Neighbourhood CIL and the Strategic CIL, which the Council had committed to making available. The Group was informed of the contributions collected to date, together with details of contributions that were due for collection by 1 April 2021 and by 1 April 2022. Assuming those payment periods were adhered to, the figures listed equated to the minimum contributions that would be received, which would allow the Council to start scheduling particular parts of the process, including

the identification of projects. The Group noted that potential significant sums could be made available from developments that had yet to commence, including the retail aspect of the Wilford Lane site and eight dwellings at Melton Road. In respect of the Strategic CIL, it was noted that it was more limited in its application and the timing of its use would require careful consideration.

In answer to a question regarding the Strategic Infrastructure list and its interaction with Section 106 monies, it was clarified that when the Infrastructure Funding Statement was published in December 2020, that would contain the Strategic Infrastructure list as defined in legislation. Currently the previous legislation no longer applied and the Council had a list of infrastructure that it would like to apply through CIL and that would be formalised in the Statement in December 2020. Each year, when the Statement was published, the Group would be updated of any changes that could affect it. In respect of Section 106 monies and where it was appropriate to seek planning contributions, potential CIL contributions would also be collected and had to be taken into account. The Group requested that a copy of the Strategic Infrastructure list be circulated with the minutes.

In answer to a question regarding possible factoring of likely collection percentages to manage expectations, the Group was advised that following the commencement of any large development, payments would be made in instalments. The figures in the presentation outlined the guaranteed figures for the three timelines and the Group would continue to be updated at each meeting, with updates from developers, when that was possible.

Reference was made to potential significant changes to the planning system going forward, with any significant changes being raised at the earliest opportunity. Changes to use classes would also require a review of the Charging Schedule and it was hoped to publish an amended Schedule with the Infrastructure Planning Statement in December 2020.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer outlined the process and timeline that had been produced to invite, consider and rank submitted bids over the next six to nine months, with the Group considering the list at that stage. Local communities had to be consulted and a four-week online consultation would be undertaken towards the end of 2020. Any comments would then be considered and a final ranking would be made and reported back to the Group in September 2021.

In answer to a question regarding the proposed timing of the consultation and the importance of allowing adequate time for this to take place, particularly given the current challenging circumstances, the Group was advised that given the generous overall time line, it might wish to consider delaying the consultation until later. The Planning Contributions Officer suggested that it might be preferable to undertake the consultation in early 2021, following the publication of the Infrastructure Funding Statement, to allow people to have access to that information. The Group noted that the terms of the consultation process were open to interpretation, which could equate to bids being invited from the local community, with the Group then deciding which schemes were a priority. The Principal Planning Policy Officer confirmed that he would check the legislation and it might be possible to remove the need for the four-week consultation period.

Members of the Group referred to the importance of ensuring that the process was fair to all residents and the need to identify what weight would be given to bids being received. Given their local knowledge, the important role that ward councillors should take in this process was also reiterated. The Group was reminded that it was looking at the whole of West Bridgford, as some areas were already so developed that no further development could take place.

The importance of inclusiveness was reiterated. Disability and mental awareness issues were cross cutting, with the current Covid-19 pandemic making consultation even more challenging for some and the organisations who supported those groups must be invited to bid. The Group suggested that it would be helpful to see a draft of the letter inviting bids before it was sent.

Reference was made to social media and the importance of the Group being aware of the many different platforms that people now used to engage with each other. In this process, some groups would inevitably be disappointed and social media could come into play in those circumstances.

The Group confirmed that it was happy with the process, subject to the inclusion of rolling bids, ensuring inclusivity for all groups and the importance of continued awareness in respect of social media use.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer outlined the information that a bid should contain and confirmed that a form and guidance notes would be produced. A member of the Group requested that part of the wording should be amended to reflect that sometimes a need was already there, rather than being 'created by development' and asked that the wording could include the phrase 'extended by development...'.

A member of the Group referred to the consultation process, the number of bids that potentially could be received, in conjunction with managing expectations and workloads and referred to importance of careful monitoring going forward. The Principal Planning Policy Officer confirmed that guidance and support would be available when the bidding process commenced to ensure that everyone knew the criteria that needed to be followed.

A member of the Group suggested that the possibility of having a two-stage process could be considered, with a 'first draft' of tentative ideas being considered by a ward councillor before any formal bid was made. It was noted that this process was already taking place informally in many wards. The Principal Planning Policy Officer suggested that an 'Expression of Interest' phase could be added to the start of the process. A member of the Group noted that in West Bridgford the wards were less distinct than rural areas, and many potential schemes could come from cross cutting organisations and involve councillors from different wards. It would be more helpful for members of the Group to see a draft of the initial letter before it was sent to community groups.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer outlined the assessment criteria that would be used to rank the bids. A member of the Group raised concerns that the proposed assessment criteria would be too complex, with submitted schemes not fitting into the suggested criteria. In respect of meeting needs in

West Bridgford, it was noted that a substantial amount of CIL money was already benefiting the whole of West Bridgford, given that it was a small area and it would be appropriate to consider this criteria more broadly. The Group requested that the wording be amended to reflect the previous comments regarding the inclusion of the phase 'extended by development...'

The Group was presented with examples of how projects would potentially score well against the Council's Corporate priorities. A member of the Group requested that healthier lifestyle choices should include a reference to mental health, and improved facilities for people with disabilities. A member of the Group referred to the work already undertaken by the West Bridgford Growth Board, which had its own remit, budget and grants to cover issues related to vibrant town centres and reiterated the importance of not duplicating work. The Group agreed that it would be appropriate for the process to concentrate on the first three Corporate priorities.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer provided a list of community groups that might be interested in bidding and the Group agreed to send the names of any other groups or organisations to the Planning Contributions Officer.

In answer to a question regarding Metropolitan Housing and its potential eligibility to bid, the Principal Planning Policy Officer advised that it would be acceptable, if it had infrastructure improvements in mind that might benefit West Bridgford residents.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- a) an Expressions of Interest phase be included in the start of the bidding process and submitted to the next meeting of the Group for consideration; and
- b) further consideration be given to how best to assess bids in more detail, following the Expressions of Interest phase.

10 **Special Expenses Update**

The Financial Services Manager presented the report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services outlining the Special Expenses year-end revenue outturn position including the balance on the Notional Fund for 2019/20 and the Quarter 1 position at the end of June 2020.

The Financial Services Manager referred to the outturn position, which had been reported during the year to the Corporate Overview View Group and Cabinet. There was a small overspend of £9k, which equated to 2% of the budget and was primarily due to the creation of the sinking fund for the Hook skate park. In respect of the Notional Fund, the closing figure was a surplus of £138k. In respect of Quarter 1 figures, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been an overall projected shortfall for this year of a net figure of £31k, which included £30k from discretionary grants for three of the premises within the Special Expenses area and an estimated £90k from a Government scheme to reimburse the Council for lost income. Overall, the total estimated deficit for the year including the previous year's carried forward deficit will be £57k. It was proposed to fund the deficit by a loan, which could

be spread over five years, to minimise the effect on the tax payer. The Group was reminded that the situation remained fluid, with the potential for a second lockdown and the situation would continue to be monitored and reported to the Corporate Overview View Group and Cabinet.

It is **RESOLVED** that:

- a) the 2019/20 revenue outturn position and reasons for variances in Appendix A be noted;
- b) the position on the notional surplus/deficit as at 31 March 2020 in Appendix B be noted;
- c) the Quarter 1 position as at 31 June 2020 and projected outturn as set out at Appendix C be noted;
- d) the proposal as profiled at Appendix D for Rushcliffe Borough Council to issue a loan to the Special Expenses account to cover the revenue deficit in the Notional Fund, which will be recovered over a five year period be agreed.

The meeting closed at 12.10 pm.

CHAIRMAN

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