

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

**Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny and Policy Development
Committee**

Meeting held 29 July 2015

PRESENT: Councillors Bob Johnson (Chair), Ian Auckland (Deputy Chair), Lewis Dagnall, Julie Gledhill, Ibrar Hussain, Helen Mirfin-Boukouris, Roy Munn, Robert Murphy, Joe Otten, Ray Satur, Steve Wilson, Paul Wood, Pat Midgley (Substitute Member) and Geoff Smith (Substitute Member)

.....

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received and substitutes attended the meeting as follows:-

Apology

Substitute

Councillor Gill Furniss
Councillor Neale Gibson
Councillor Martin Smith

Councillor Geoff Smith
Councillor Pat Midgley
No substitute nominated

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 RESOLVED: That the public and press be excluded from the meeting before discussion takes place on the appendix in Item 7 on the agenda relating to the proposed disposal of Walkley Library, on the grounds that, if the public and press were present during the transaction of such business, there would be a disclosure to them of exempt information as described in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4.1 The minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 8th April and 20th May 2015, were approved as correct records.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 Members of the public raised the following questions relating to the proposed disposal of Walkley Library:-

5.1.1 *Barbara Waterhouse*

(a) What protection will there be for the long-term future of the

library service at Walkley Library?

- (b) For example, as volunteers, we are concerned that if the café bar is really successful, it might encroach on the space set aside for the library and, in particular, might lead to a loss of the library's ability to use areas initially designated as shared. What measures will be placed to prevent this?
- (c) Conversely, if the café bar does not prove successful, and Forum Café Bars either wish to sell the building voluntarily or are forced to sell it because they have gone into liquidation, what would have happened to the area set aside for library services?
- (d) Would any new owner be obliged to allow use of the relevant area of the building at a rate the associate library could afford?

5.1.2 Thelma Williams

- (a) Why did the Council agree to Forum Café Bars' demand for the freehold, given it is common practice for businesses to secure funding on the basis of an agreed lease on a building?
- (b) Given that if the library fails, and the fact that there will be provision for the lease to be surrendered to the landlord, in the event that there are no library groups willing and able to run a library service from the property, does this not give every incentive for the landlord to do its utmost to help the library to fail? Why is the Council so set to disadvantage the community?

5.1.3 Phil Khorassandjian

- (a) When the Council decided to sell the freehold, why did they not put it out to public tender given that there may be other organisations/agencies more compatible with a library interested in purchasing and sharing the building?
- (b) We understand that there will be a clause in the agreement stating that the Council will have first option to buy back the building if Forum Café Bars decide to sell. Given the financial constraints under which the Council is operating currently, and for the foreseeable future, doesn't the Council accept that this is highly unlikely?
- (c) One of the reasons given for the sale to Forum Café Bars is that refurbishment of the building, under a lease to Walkley Carnegie Library or another group, 'would inevitably be delayed'. Has the Council considered that a community group

could programme the refurbishment work in phases, such that delay and disruption of the library service would not be an issue?

- (d) One of the reasons given for the decision to dispose of the building to Forum Café Bars was that it will 'help to stimulate the local economy through investment, ... and new employment opportunities'. Our research suggests there is little support in the local business community for such a view. Can you explain the reasons for your optimism?
- (e) Why has the Council, especially given that it is a Labour-controlled Council, not done more to ensure that the library building remains in community ownership, even if sold?
- (f) How is it that the Council has not recognised the importance of the building as a community asset when considering the optimum route to maintaining library services?

5.1.4 Marcus O'Hagan

- (a) In the light of the fact that several questions I raised on this issue still remained unanswered, is it reasonable to conclude that, since the Council chooses not to answer these questions, it has not exercised its duties, and therefore is acting illegally in many aspects of the budgets approved?
- (b) Can the Council demonstrate that the procedures used to determine the basis of the sale of Walkley Library are legal, and meet all the criteria required, including 'best value' to the City?
- (c) Could it be that the truth is that transparency is no longer a core value of the Authority?

5.1.5 Veronica Hardstaff

- (a) Can we be reassured that the sale of the building will lead to the library restored to a good condition, worthy of its Grade 2 listed status, whilst complying with the Equality Act and modern legislation?

5.1.6 Julie Varley (Not in attendance)

- (a) As a business owner in Walkley, I have always found out about every stage of the process of the changes to Walkley Library through word of mouth. As the changes will directly affect my business, why have I not been directly informed of any meetings? Yes, I understand the meetings have been

advertised in various venues, however, this current option will directly affect my trade as Forum Café Bars sell similar products to myself, and targets the same market. Why has this final stage been undertaken in a secretive way?

- (b) I am a small business owner on the road. I work hard to attract customers to my business and I know that many of them use private cars to access my business. I receive regular feedback that they struggle to park in the Walkley area. The proposed changes to Walkley Library will make it a large capacity venue, and it will aim to attract sufficient customers to make it a viable business. It is naïve to blindly accept that all their customers will access the venue on foot or utilising public transport and, as such, there will be a large increase in vehicular traffic requiring parking in the locality, causing increased issues for residents and current businesses. Whereabouts in Forum Café Bars' plans for the use of the library have they made any provision for the increase in traffic and parking in the area?

5.1.7 Cath Simmonds

- (a) How will the Council guarantee that the library service is continued and is not subsumed within what will be an unequal relationship between a private enterprise which owns the freehold, and a voluntary group?
- (b) As the future of the Carnegie building and the library within it is highly dependent on the success of Forum Café Bars' business, what independent research was conducted and what degree of scrutiny was given to Forum Café Bars' commercial business plan?
- (c) Given that the Walkley Carnegie Library building will no longer be community resources, how does the Council envisage the Library retaining existing members and attracting new ones, especially from more marginalised sections of the community, such as those on low incomes, the elderly or the isolated?
- (d) Under Section 4 of the report into the disposal of Walkley Library, it becomes apparent that should the Library fail for any reason, Forum Café Bars would have beneficial use of the whole building. Why have the potential needs of the community, which in an uncertain future may require an alternative social provision to the library service, not been protected or even considered?

5.1.8 Helen Milner

Why doesn't the Council trust the people of Walkley and the people of

Sheffield to finance and operate a thriving and successful modern library – that is de facto a community asset?

5.1.9 Kevin Hanson

- (a) What objection would the Council have to putting the community in control of the building, through granting a long lease, sale or other appropriate means?
- (b) Can the Council explain how and why the benefits attributed to redevelopment by Forum Café Bars should be superior to those following redevelopment by the community?
- (c) A public meeting was held in the Walkley Carnegie Building on 10th February 2015, which Dawn Shaw and a number of other City Council representatives attended. Is the Council aware that if this meeting had been minuted, it would show that a large number of those present were opposed to the idea of selling the freehold of the library to Forum Café Bars, and that this opposition has since grown?
- (d) Since Forum Café Bars' demand for the freehold became known, there has only been one public meeting, at which there was considerable opposition. The decision to support the proposed sale was taken by a small group of library volunteers at meetings to which the public were not invited, reportedly on the advice of Councillors or Council officers. How would the Council justify this situation in terms of its commitment to the principle and practice of democracy?
- (e) Is it difficult to see how a bid by Forum Café Bars could be considered acceptable when the Model Heads of Lease precluded the sale of alcoholic beverages? What consideration was given to the concerns expressed by members of the community about a bar sharing premises with the Library?
- (f) As the Council must now be aware of the level of concern amongst constituents, is it now prepared to put on hold the decision to sell to Forum Café Bars until further consideration of alternatives could be undertaken, such as sale to the community?

5.1.10 Vanessa Williams

What impact would Forum Café Bars have on the local economy in Walkley?

5.1.11 John Illingworth

Have there been any steps taken to see if the building could be converted to housing, and managed by the Council or a Housing Association?

5.1.12 Anne Carter

What will happen to the building if the proposed development does not go ahead?

5.1.13 Carol Hodgetts

- (a) At the public meeting on 10th February 2015, it was not apparent that the only option was the sale of the Library. When, and by whom, was the decision made to sell the library?
- (b) Why has the sale of the Library, and its valuation, not been advertised and put out to tender since the decision to sell was made?
- (c) How can the Council guarantee the viability of the Library in what will be a very much reduced space if the sale to Forum Café Bars goes through?
- (d) What will happen to the Library and building if Forum Café Bars' takeover fails, particularly in the light of the closure of a number of other bars in Walkley over the last few years?
- (e) There is much widespread opposition to the Council's proposed sale of the Library in Walkley, and across the City. Why has the Council chosen to ignore this?

5.2 Councillor Isobel Bowler, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, indicated that, on the basis that the review of the Library Service in Sheffield and the majority of the work relating to Walkley Library, predated her term as relevant Cabinet Member, she was not able to respond in any detail to the questions raised. She had, however, requested that a brief presentation be made at the meeting, setting out the history in terms of the decision, and which would hopefully answer a number of the questions raised.

5.3 Dave Wood, Interim Property Surveying Manager, reported that following Cabinet approval to proceed with the review of Library Services, expressions of interest had been sought from volunteer groups to run 10 associate libraries, which included Walkley Library. The initial process of putting forward expressions of interest commenced in early 2013, culminating in business plans being submitted in June 2014. The Council received two expressions of

interest to run Walkley Library – one from a voluntary group and one from a commercial organisation planning to run a combined café-bar and library. This was the only instance where a commercial organisation had put forward a bid. An Assessment Panel, comprising officers from Libraries, Property and Communities, met on 10th July 2014, to go through all the bids received and to assess whether the various bids were acceptable and whether any of them needed further clarification. Both bids for Walkley were assessed as being acceptable, although both had areas which needed clarifying. The Panel reconvened on 6th August 2014, to review the clarifications received, and confirmed that both Walkley bids had passed the threshold required. As a result, both groups were asked if they would explore working together to produce a combined proposition for running the building – using private sector finance to bring the property back into good condition and using volunteers to provide a library service. When both parties had confirmed a way forward, officers addressed issues around how this could work from a property perspective. Negotiations with Forum Café Bars commenced in early November 2014, and the basis of a deal was agreed in December 2014. After this, officers commenced wider tripartite discussions to agree how the proposal would work, culminating in a public meeting held on 10th February 2015, at the library. Since then, there had been a number of meetings held between the three parties to finalise the detail, which resulted in a report being put forward to the Leader of the Council, for approval, in June 2015. The report was a closed report as it contained commercially sensitive information, although the decision taken is a matter of public record on the Council's website, subject to the scrutiny call-in.

- 5.4 Mr Wood stated that the decision to sell the freehold interest in the building was made as a result of the bids received to run a library service from it, when it became apparent that the sale of the freehold would be required in order to secure a commitment to invest significant capital funding in the refurbishment of the building. This proposal was not excluded by the process to establish a sustainable associate library by submission of business plans, and achieved the aims of that process. Therefore, there was no reason to put the building on the open market. This is why the property has not been advertised for sale on the open market. However, the Council had been able to demonstrate that it had obtained best consideration for the property, in accordance with its statutory requirement, by procuring an independent third party valuation which demonstrated that it had obtained above market value for the property. The Council had also complied with its own Disposals Framework – which is an adopted Council policy, setting out how it deals with property disposals and circumstances where an off-market transaction would be acceptable. Under the current plans, there would be an exclusive area in the building for a library plus the option of more exclusive library space or shared space with the Café Bar. The exclusive area

would be accessed without the need to enter the licenced premises. These proposals were currently under discussion with the parties involved before identifying the final space to be included within the library lease. The proposals would not proceed until all three parties were happy with the outcome. The sale included a 125 year lease back to the Council for the provision of a library service, and would also give the Council first refusal to buy the whole building back if the freeholder ever decided to sell. Therefore, whilst ever there was a group willing to run a library service, its future within the building would be secure. The Council has always stated that its priority was to continue to have vibrant and accessible library services across the City. Officers believed this proposal gave the most sustainable long-term future for a library service in Walkley. The library building was owned by the Council outright and was not held in trust on behalf of the local community, as had been suggested. The Council acquired the site of the library – it was not donated by Andrew Carnegie. The building is in poor condition as the Council had had to prioritise its limited budget on ensuring that health and safety related issues had been prioritised across its operational portfolio. Significant funds would be required to bring the property back into good condition, and this was something that Forum Café Bars would have funding for from the outset.

- 5.5 The terms agreed were subject to Forum Café Bars obtaining planning permission, listed building consent and a Premises Licence, prior to completing the purchase of the building. These applications would be considered by the relevant Authorities, having full regard to the amenities of local residents and the impact on the locality, including highways and parking issues. The future of the library would be protected by a 125 year lease back to the Council, and this lease would continue in place irrespective of the identity of the future owner of the freehold and their financial status. If the freeholder goes into administration, the lease would still remain in force. The freehold sale and 125 year lease would place restrictions on the future use of the building to ensure that the wider building was not used in such a way as to cause problems for the ongoing provision of a library space. As the Council would hold the 125 year lease, it would have a position of strength to enforce covenants if issues do arise in the future. Provisions had been included within the agreed terms for the freeholder to buy out the remainder of the 125 year lease if there were no groups that were able to provide a sustainable library service and the library facility had to close. However, whilst ever there was a lease in place with a library group, then the Council would not be able to progress such a course of action unilaterally. The Council had offered the Library Group a 25 year lease of the library space from the outset, provided that it could provide a sustainable business plan for a period of 10 years. The terms agreed with Forum Café Bars provided for all maintenance and utility costs to be provided cost-free to the Council for the first 21 years of the lease and therefore, the

Library Group would benefit from these savings, supporting its viability. The Library Group would need to be able to demonstrate it had a sustainable future for the library beyond March 2017, when the funding agreement to support Associate Libraries came to an end. Forum Café Bars had confirmed that it would need to acquire the freehold interest in order to provide security for the significant investment and risk it would be taking with the property. The Council had been able to secure significant benefits in return for the benefit of future library provision in Walkley.

5.6 David Hollis, Assistant Director of Legal and Governance, provided an explanation of the legal process in connection with the disposal of buildings, under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, indicating that the Council had the power to dispose of any buildings it owned if it saw fit, and there was no requirement for the Council to tender or offer such buildings for sale on the open market. The Council would need to seek the consent of the Secretary of State if it wanted to dispose of any buildings under current market value. He added that any highways issues linked to the change of use of the building would be considered as part of the planning procedures.

5.7 Councillor Isobel Bowler stated that she had reviewed the position with regard to the Library Service when appointed as the relevant Cabinet Member, and, in connection with Walkley Library, she had met with the Library Group, Forum Café Bars and local Ward Councillors, and officers had reported on the options available, as well as providing details on the condition of the building. It was also made clear at the meeting that support from the Council to the community library group could not be guaranteed. Details of the lease arrangements were also made clear to all parties involved. The local Councillors present at the meeting all expressed a wish to see the building remain as a community resource, and it was the Council's wish to work with, and support, the local community, and encourage vibrancy in the local neighbourhood.

5.8 In response to further questions from members of the public, it was confirmed that the Council had received two expressions of interest from Forum Café Bars and Walkley Carnegie Library Group, and following a review of the bids, it was deemed that they complemented each other. The advertisements in terms of the expressions of interest was widely publicised, and open to any group or organisation that wished to submit a bid.

6. CALL-IN OF THE LEADER'S DECISION ON THE PROPOSED DISPOSAL OF WALKLEY LIBRARY

6.1 The Committee considered the decision of the Leader made on 30th June 2015, relating to the proposed disposal of Walkley Library.

6.2 Signatories

The Lead Signatory to the call-in was Councillor Ben Curran and the other signatories were Councillors Olivia Blake, Neale Gibson, Geoff Smith and Lewis Dagnall.

6.3 Reasons for the Call-in

The signatories had confirmed that they wished to ensure that further scrutiny was undertaken on the Leader's decision to sell Walkley Library.

6.4 Attendees

- Councillor Isobel Bowler (Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods)
- David Hollis (Assistant Director of Legal and Governance)
- Dave Wood (Interim Property Surveying Manager)
- Nick Partridge (Libraries, Archives and Information Manager)

6.5 Councillor Ben Curran addressed the Committee as Lead Signatory, initially expressing his thanks and appreciation in terms of how quickly arrangements had been made for the call-in to be considered by the Committee, and to the Carnegie Walkley Library Group for the excellent work in operating the Library following the re-organisation in 2014. He stated that there were mixed feelings in the community in terms of the proposed disposal of the Library building, and confirmed that there was nothing in the original deeds following the transfer of the building from Andrew Carnegie to the City Council, indicating that the Council could not dispose of the building. He stated that he hoped that a number of questions and concerns raised by members of the public, particularly residents in Walkley, would be answered and alleviated, respectively, particularly relating to the levels of consultation, the best way forward in terms of protecting the library service in the area, and the future involvement of any other interested groups. Councillor Curran concluded by expressing his concerns if members of the public had not received written responses to questions raised in connection with the review of library services in the City, at public meetings.

6.6 David Hollis stated that checks had been made of the original documents regarding the alleged sale of the library building by Andrew Carnegie to the Council, and confirmed that the Council had acquired the land from a third party and owned the freehold of the building with no restrictions attached.

6.7 Questions from Members of the Committee

Members raised questions and the following responses were provided:-

- The Business Plan process had been deemed to be transparent and correctly executed.
- The Assessment Panel established to review all the bids received comprised Nick Partridge, Dave Wood, an officer from the Communities Portfolio and an officer responsible for dealing with grants, who therefore had experience of dealing with community groups. The tests used by the Panel in connection with the assessment process, included viability and how the bids integrated community needs.
- Considerable time and effort had been put in by all the groups and organisations who had submitted bids to run one of the 10 associate libraries, therefore it had been deemed not fair or suitable to bring in any new groups after all this work.
- The terms of the 125 year lease would give the Council first refusal to buy the whole building back if the freeholder ever decided to sell, meaning that whilst ever there was a group willing to run a library service, its future within the building would be secure.
- As well as the Council's and Kier's valuations, the Council had also procured an independent third party valuation.
- It was Forum Café Bars' policy to own the freehold of a building it would be investing in, and this had been indicated in their bid. Due to the condition of the building, it had been deemed critical to attract significant commercial investment.
- It was not clear as to why Forum Café Bars had offered above market value for the building, but by doing this, the company had demonstrated how serious they were in terms of their future plans.
- If the Council wanted to buy back the building at any time in the future, the sale price would be determined by the market value at that time.
- The future of the Library would be protected by a 125 year lease back to the Council. The freehold would include both the building and the land.
- Whilst it was difficult to assess the impact of the proposed development on other businesses in the area, the feedback received had indicated that local businesses largely supported the plans.

- The Council had only been made aware that Forum Café Bars wished to purchase the freehold interest in the building when the Assessment Panel reconvened on 6th August 2014, to review the clarifications received. Given the level of investment required in connection with the renovation of the building, it had been decided that this would be the best option. Council officers had also taken into consideration Forum Café Bars' excellent business record.
- All relevant protections had been written in as part of the conditions of the 125 year lease, including a condition stopping the landlord from using the property for reasons which are incompatible with a library service.
- It was envisaged that the Council would look to achieve security of tenure in terms of the building on the expiration of the 125 year lease.
- In terms of all the associate libraries, the Council was working closely with all the voluntary community groups running the libraries, with fortnightly meetings being held and training and advice provided to all the groups. To date, all the 10 associate libraries remained open.
- The lease would provide for Forum Café Bars to meet the full costs of all utilities and maintenance of the property for the first 21 years of the lease, thereby freeing Walkley Carnegie Library Group from the task of raising future funds for this purpose. There would be provision for the lease to be surrendered to the landlord, in the event of there being no library groups willing and able to run the library service from the property. Upon such a surrender, Forum Café Bars, or the then current owner, would pay an additional amount to the Council to reflect the value to them of having beneficial use of the library space.
- As part of the process regarding expressions of interest, the offer of the sale of the freehold was not excluded at any time of the process, and it was up to the bidders to set out in their Business Plans, how they wanted to proceed. Whilst it could not be confirmed, it was believed that there was no information in the submission documents relating to a requirement to purchase the freehold or leasehold interest.
- The main aim of the Council had been to enable a library service to be run in all areas of the City where it could no longer run a service and so, had developed a model of associate and co-delivered libraries based on what had been done elsewhere, eg Doncaster, which would be community run.

- Part of the library space would be totally separate from the licensed area, although the precise arrangements in terms of the layout was still to be decided. The entrance to the current children's library, where the library would operate, was totally separate.
- Although plans in terms of the library space had not yet been determined, the initial plans indicate that approximately one-third of the floor space would be exclusive library space, with another third of the floor space being shared – library space during the day and café/bar in the evenings. Further discussions would be held on this issue and the final arrangements concluded only when all parties were happy.
- Whilst it was not envisaged that there would be any major problems in terms of the planning application, if any issues were identified by the local Planning Authority, these would need to be fully addressed and, if necessary, the application would need to be resubmitted.
- As part of the assessment of the original Business Plans, officers had looked at what library space would be required within the building. The children's library space was acceptable as a minimum size to run the proposed library from. If the overall space currently designated as library space was not shared between the two parties, extra provision could be identified within the building as library space, which were presently not designated for library use.
- The Council was satisfied that there was no instance of any Trust being established in this case.
- The decision in terms of the proposed disposal could not have been made under any existing delegations, and needed to be made by either the Cabinet or the Leader. The decision was taken by the Leader on the basis that the Cabinet did not have a meeting arranged at the time. Also, with the Cabinet not meeting in August, there would have been too much of a delay in terms of the decision being made, particularly in the light of possible call-in. There was also concern that Forum Café Bars would not be prepared to accept further delays in waiting for the decision.
- It was likely, under the new plans, for the library space to be kept separate from the licensed area. The Council was confident that the new plans would be successful, and create a vibrant and interesting project, as well as being commercially viable. Arrangements between Forum Café Bars and the Carnegie Walkley Library Group have been developing very positively.

- As part of the Business Planning process, the Assessment Panel was given the opportunity to look at all plans submitted to the Council, based on an agreed criteria. The Panel was particularly interested in a long-term viability, as well as a sustainable plan for the recruitment and training of volunteers who would be running the library service. The Panel held a preliminary session to see if the parties met the agreed threshold, then reconvened to raise any further queries it had in terms of the bids.
- The building was not compliant with the requirements of the Equalities Act as regards disability access at the present time, and there were a number of other challenges in terms of its condition. There was no funding identified in the Council's budget to address such issues.
- The relationship, as part of the future arrangements, would predominantly be between Forum Café Bars and the Carnegie Walkley Library Group, with the Council providing ongoing advice and assistance to the Library Group.
- Forum Café Bars were looking to invest heavily in terms of the refurbishment of the building, in the region of between £300,000 and £500,000 and therefore, it had been necessary to sell the company the freehold in order for them to secure such funding.
- It had been considered that, by careful negotiation with Forum Café Bars, the period of 21 years, in respect of the surrender of the maintenance and utility costs being met by Forum Café Bars, represented a very good deal for the Council. It was not possible to extend the period beyond this term.

6.8 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the contents of the report now submitted, together with the comments now made and the responses to the questions raised; and
- (b) agrees to take no action in relation to the called-in decision, but considers that the issue regarding library services in the City in general, be added to the Work Programme 2015/16.

(NOTE: Prior to the passing of the above resolution, an alternative motion was moved by Councillor Robert Murphy and seconded by Councillor Ian Auckland, in the following form, was put to the vote and negatived:-

"That this Committee requests that the decision be deferred until the Scrutiny Committee has considered relevant issues and made

recommendations to the Executive on the grounds that the Leader's report does not contain alternative options, specifically relating to the lease of the building to other community groups in Walkley and/or putting the building on the open market").

7. WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

7.1 The Policy and Improvement Officer submitted a report attaching the draft Work Programme for 2015/16. The draft Programme set out the details of a number of topics which the Committee would be requested to prioritise in terms of their consideration at future meetings. The Programme also contained details of written briefings which would be submitted to the Committee for information only.

7.2 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes and approves the draft Work Programme for 2015/16 now submitted, subject to the suggested changes now made by Members, and any further changes suggested by Members following this meeting, to be finalised by the Chair and Deputy Chair, in consultation with the Policy and Improvement Officer, and submitted to the next meeting.

(NOTE: In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 26 of the Council's Constitution and the provisions of Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the Chair decided that the above item be considered as a matter of urgency in order that Members could agree its Work Programme for 2015/16 in connection with items to be considered at future meetings, although five clear days' notice that the item was to be considered had not been given.)

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

8.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Wednesday, 30th September 2015, at 5.00 pm, in the Town Hall.