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## REGENERATION AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in The Sapling Room, The Appleyard, Avenue of Remembrance, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 4DE on Wednesday, 9 November 2022 from 7.00 pm - 7.56 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Cameron Beart, Monique Bonney (Chair), Lloyd Bowen, Richard Darby, James Hall, Angela Harrison, James Hunt, Peter Marchington, Ben J Martin (Substitute for Councillor Eddie Thomas), Paul Stephen, Sarah Stephen (Vice-Chair), Roger Truelove, Tim Valentine and Mike Whiting.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Philippa Davies, Jay Jenkins, Joanne Johnson and Kieren Mansfield.

**OFFICERS PRESENT (Virtually):** Jo Millard.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE (Virtually):** Councillors Oliver Eakin and Tim Gibson.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Simon Clark and Eddie Thomas.

### 428 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The Chair outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

### 429 **Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

### 430 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 September 2022 (Minute Nos. 314 – 322) and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 26 September 2022 (Minute Nos. 323 – 325) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record, subject to the following amendments to Minute No. 324:

Councillor Cameron Beart declared a Disclosable Non-Pecuniary Interest in respect of Item 4 Queenborough Guildhall, as he was a member of Queenborough **Town** Council.

Councillor Richard Darby declared a Disclosable Non-Pecuniary Interest in respect of Item 4 Queenborough Guildhall, as he was a member of Queenborough **Town** Council.

### **Part B Minutes for Information**

### 431 **Masters House and 44 Trinity Road, Sheerness (Old Library) - Expressions of Interest**

The Economic Development and External Funding Manager introduced the report which set out the approach and timetable to securing tenants for Masters House and 44 Trinity Road, Sheerness. Also, to secure an income stream for the Council and to ensure that the operation would secure local economic and community benefit.

Members were invited to make comments and these included:

- Welcomed the progress achieved on this scheme;
- Masters House had been derelict and its condition had deteriorated;
- it was good to see its improved state;
- this was an important and good investment opportunity for the Isle of Sheppey;
- congratulations to the Chair and officers for their work on this scheme;
- the quality of the fit-out, by a local company, was very good;
- rental enquiries were being made;
- was this a fully repairing lease?;
- concerned with potential liabilities from the building;
- was there a duty to bring 44 Trinity Road up to standard first, or would this be carried out by the new tenant?;
- considered more discussion needed to be had with the Sheerness Dockyard Preservation Trust regarding plans for the Dockyard Church and how this fitted in with this project;
- did not agree with the principle of the decision being made with the two recommendations and considered it should be the committee deciding, not one person;
- welcomed the progress made on the scheme;
- concerned that tenants might not be found;
- in terms of the recommendations, three people should be listed to make the decisions, in both recommendations; and
- the committee could not scrutinise every operational element of the scheme, the decisions needed to be made in the most practical and pragmatic way to get the scheme completed as effectively as possible.

In response, the Economic Development and External Funding Manager confirmed that it would be a fully repairing lease and the Chair explained that it depended on what came back from the Expressions of Interest and the requirements of the lease which would be in place. She added that it was very important that the leases were monitored and well managed.

The Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property explained that the Expressions of Interest documents had stated that 44 Trinity Road had not been invested in, in the same way as Masters House. The Council was looking for prospective investors to come forward and include what investment they would bring to the building. The Chair explained that there was likely to be some initial works to 44 Trinity Road before the building was taken on by a leaseholder.

The Economic Development and External Funding Manager said that there had been longstanding conversations with the Council and the Dockyard Church Trust and they had met with some potential providers. The Trust and the Council envisaged a synergy between Masters House, with a more mature stage occupier, and the Dockyard Church with youth or start-up oriented schemes.

Councillor James Hunt moved the following amendment: That Recommendation (1) be amended to remove 'in consultation with the Chair of the Regeneration and Property Committee' and the matter comes back to the Committee. This was seconded by Councillor Lloyd Bowen. The Chair did not accept the amendment due to the financial

risk of a potential tenant withdrawing, and that the decision was needed to be made as soon as possible.

There was some discussion on the number of people involved in the recommendations in the report and the Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property explained that three officers, not just one, would be involved in the final decision as per usual procurement processes.

The Chair proposed the recommendations, and they were seconded by the Vice-Chair.

**Resolved:**

**(1) That the Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property be given delegated authority to shortlist and select the final choice of tenant for both Masters House and 44 Trinity Road Sheerness, in consultation with the Chair of the Regeneration and Property Committee.**

**(2) That the Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property be given delegated authority to negotiate and complete all necessary contracts, leases, deeds and ancillary deeds and documents as required, in consultation with the Chair of the Regeneration and Property Committee and the Head of Mid-Kent Legal Partnership.**

432 **Sheerness Modular Toilet Contract Award & Barton's Point Modular Toilet & Shower Contract Award**

The Leisure & Technical Services Manager introduced the report which confirmed the outcome of the recently undertaken tender process for the Sheerness Modular Toilet Block and Barton's Point Coastal Park Toilet and Shower Block. He gave an overview of the report and Members were invited to ask questions and make comments, as below:

- It was important that a seaside resort had toilet facilities;
- the projects looked good and would fit in well;
- these were a huge asset to the two areas;
- suggested the toilets be unisex;
- concerned that savings might have been made elsewhere to enable these facilities to be installed;
- considered this decision could have been made by officers, rather than bring to Committee;
- the financial implications section of the report outlined the funding for the projects, and this was not from revenue budget;
- more information was required on the location of the facilities at Beachfields, Sheerness; and
- concerned with costs going up once the contract had been awarded.

In response, the Leisure & Technical Services Manager explained that funding for the schemes had been secured and did not impact other projects. It could be possible to look into adjusting the set-up of the toilets so that they were unisex, and this should not affect the cost. He said the toilets at Beachfields would be sited to the left side of the grassed area, adjacent to the car park and would link into the existing pathway to the play area.

The Leisure & Technical Services Manager explained that there was a 10% contingency in case there were any deviations from the cost once the contract had been awarded.

The Head of Regeneration, Economic Development and Property explained that as the contract value was above £100,000 + VAT, the decision needed to come to the Committee, rather than be made by officers. She explained that a tender was evaluated on 60% price and 40% quality. If there were any procurement triggers after that, it would be necessary to come back to Committee.

The Chair proposed the recommendations, and these were seconded by Councillor Angela Harrison.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That the appointment of Company A for the modular toilet block in Sheerness be approved.***

***(2) That the appointment of Company A for the modular toilet & shower block in Barton's Point Coastal Park be approved.***

***(3) That the Head of Environment and Leisure, in consultation with the Chair of the Regeneration and Property Committee, be authorised to complete the required contracts for the projects.***

433 **Forward Decisions Plan**

The Chair drew attention to the tabled update for this item which included an additional report for the January 2023 meeting - UK Shared Prosperity Fund – delivery.

Members suggested an Update on Swale House refurbishment, and the Levelling-up fund be included on future Forward Decisions Plans.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That the report be noted.***

Chair

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All minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel