

Cabinet

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **14th January 2016**

Present:

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman);

Cllrs. Bennett, Mrs Blanford, Clokie, Galpin, Heyes, Miss Martin

Apologies:

Cllrs. Bell, Mrs Bell, Michael, Shorter

Also Present:

Cllrs. Bradford, Burgess, Link, Ovenden, Wedgbury

Corporate Director - Operations, Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Finance, Head of Planning and Development, Head of Health, Parking and Community Safety, Head of Environmental and Customer Services, Health, Parking and Community Safety Manager, Principal Policy Planner, Senior Economic Development Officer, Senior Communications Officer, Member Services and Scrutiny Manager.

273 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 3rd December 2015 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

274 Revenues and Benefits Recommended Write-Offs Schedule

The report proposed the formal write-off of 389 debts totalling £278,557.91. The proposals were in line with the Council's Revenues and Benefits Service Write-Off policy and the existing bad debt provisions already more than covered the sums involved.

The report also recommended an additional delegation for the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Budget and Resource Management to approve the Council's Business Rate estimate for submission to Government on an annual basis.

A Member referred to a substantial proposed write-off listed within the Exempt Appendix to the report and sought an explanation as to how that debt had risen to such a level. The Head of Finance gave details of the nature of the debt and the Chairman suggested that the Member pursue this issue outside of the meeting with the officer concerned.

Resolved:

- That (i) accounts totalling £81,719.17 that had been written off under delegated powers (Financial Regulations 11.1) be noted.**
- (ii) the write-offs listed in the Exempt Appendices to the report totalling £196,838.74 be approved.**

Recommended:

That approval of the Council's Business Rates estimate for submission to Government on an annual basis be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Budget and Resource Management.

275 Managing Freight Vehicles Through Kent – Responding to the Highways England Consultation on a Proposal to Create a Permanent Lorry Area Adjacent to the M20 at Stanford

The report advised that in response to growing concerns about the impact of Operation Stack, Highways England were currently consulting on proposals to establish a permanent lorry park close to Junction 11 on the M20 motorway. The report set out the Council's formal response to that consultation.

The Portfolio Holder said that all were well aware of the impact of Operation Stack had on the Borough and said that he welcomed plans which would help to avoid further disruption.

A Member advised that for many years in his role as Borough Councillor he had been involved with initiatives to try and identify and secure appropriate parking facilities for lorries and he said that this was the first major initiative to put such a facility in place. He also indicated that he had some comments on the consultation exercise and the Chairman asked that they be forwarded to him to ensure that they were represented in the Council's overall response.

The Chairman also explained that he had met with the Leaders of both Dover and Shepway District Councils who were united in their support for Option 1 as the proposed site was nearer the motorway and would enable facilities available at Truck Stop 24 to be accessed via a bridge.

Resolved:

- That (i) the proposal to provide a permanent lorry parking area adjacent to the M20 to tackle the problems caused by Operation Stack and to help to meet the need for overnight lorry parking be welcomed.
- (ii) detailed evaluation of the site location options is a matter primarily for Shepway District Council but the Cabinet considers that in operational terms Option 1, with its direct access to the M20, is likely to be the better option.
- (iii) support be given for the use of the site for alternative 3 which would enable it to operate as an emergency lorry holding area (with free provision for Operation Stack and Dover TAP/Eurotunnel excess traffic) but with additional chargeable basic overnight parking all year round.

276 Joint Transportation Board – 8th December 2015

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Transportation Board held on the 8th December 2015 be received and noted.

277 Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group – 9th December 2015

Resolved:

That the notes of the meeting of the Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group held on the 9th December 2015 be approved and adopted.

278 Town Centre Regeneration Board – 16th December 2015

Resolved:

That the notes of the meeting of the Town Centre Regeneration Board held on the 16th December 2015 be received and noted.

279 Schedule of Key Decisions to be Taken

Resolved:

That the latest Schedule of Key Decisions as set out within the report be received and noted.

CA
140116

(KRF/AEH)

MINS:CAXX1602

Queries concerning these Minutes? Please contact Keith Fearon:
Telephone: 01233 330564 Email: keith.fearon@ashford.gov.uk
Agendas, Reports and Minutes are available on: www.ashford.gov.uk/committees