

Cabinet

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **13th October 2016**.

Present:

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman);

Cllr. Bell (Vice-Chairman);

Cllrs. Mrs Bell, Bennett, Mrs Blanford, Bradford, Clokie, Galpin, Knowles, Shorter.

Also Present:

Cllrs. Burgess, Hicks, Link, Ovenden, Pickering, Smith, Mrs Webb, Wedgbury.

Chief Executive, Corporate Director (Law and Governance), Head of Finance, Head of Environmental and Customer Services, Head of HR, Communications and Technology, Head of Culture, Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development, Head of Health, Parking and Community Safety, Head of Housing, Policy and Performance Manager, Programme Manager, Communications Officer, Member Services Manager.

162 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 8th September 2016 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

163 Corporate Plan Update: The Corporate Delivery Programme and the Medium Term Financial Plan 2017 to 2022

The report was comprised of three sections. Part I gave an update on the Corporate Plan, Part II examined the Delivery Programme with specific updates on current progress of the projects within the Programme and Part III was the Medium Term Financial Plan and included a budget forecast together with underlying assumptions covering the five year period from 2017 to 2022 for the General Fund.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Budget and Resource Management said that he believed that the report presented a good suite of documents which focussed on the Council's forward looking strategic planning process. In terms of the delivery programme he explained that this set out the Council's agreed priorities which were in place to ensure that the Council delivered sound outcomes for the residents of the Borough. The Portfolio Holder then went through all the recommendations within the

report and he explained that they were centred upon ensuring a continuation of the Borough Council's policy to deliver a viable budget for sustainability beyond 2019/20 when the Government grant ceased. He said that the Council's borrowing and acquisition policy enabled investment in projects which would help to maintain the services for the residents of the Borough.

The Leader referred to the presentation that he and other members of the Council had attended on commercialisation and explained that many other Authorities were also investing in projects to bring in revenue. He said that he believed Ashford had a sound and vigorous treasury management process which had enabled the Council Tax to be kept at the lowest in Kent, with the Ashford element being in the region of £150.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) the general direction towards achieving the Council's Corporate Plan priorities be noted.**
 - (ii) the current Delivery Programme and progress of the projects within the programme be endorsed and noted.**
 - (iii) the forecast and underlying assumptions of the MTFP 2017–2022 be noted and accepted.**
 - (iv) the Inflation Management Strategy be re-endorsed.**
 - (v) the Borrowing and Acquisition Strategy be re-endorsed.**
 - (vi) the Closing-the-Gap Strategy 2019/20 be endorsed.**
 - (vii) authority be delegated to the Head of Finance, in conjunction with the Leader and Portfolio Holder, to agree the Council's continued participation in the Kent Business Rates Pool.**
 - (viii) the consultation responses in relation to 100% business rates retention be noted.**
 - (ix) the Government's four year settlement be accepted and the report be published as the basis of this Council's Efficiency Statement (as required by Government).**

164 Homelessness Review and Strategy

The report presented the process and outcome of the recent public consultation on the Homelessness Review and draft Homelessness Strategy.

The Portfolio Holder drew Members' attention to the detailed comments arising from the consultation process set out in the report and he said that one of the principal means to reduce homelessness would be to encourage people to remain in their

current accommodation and to also encourage Landlords to lease properties to the Borough Council.

Recommended:

- That (i) **the findings of the recent public consultation into the review and strategy be agreed.**
- (ii) **the Homelessness Review and Homelessness Strategy be adopted.**

165 Adoption of the Wye Neighbourhood Plan

The report explained the process by which the Wye Neighbourhood Plan had been produced and sought the Cabinet's endorsement of the Plan and its agreement to recommend that the Council "make the plan" as part of the Development Plan for the Borough.

The Portfolio Holder explained that this was the first Neighbourhood Plan to be adopted by the Council and he praised the work of the local community, Ward Member and the Planning Officers in bringing the document to the stage it was currently at. He explained that the Referendum vote held in Wye was overwhelmingly in favour of the proposals set out within the Plan.

The Ward Member said he wished to thank the Officers for all their hard work and assistance in taking the Neighbourhood Plan forward.

Recommended:

That Full Council "make" the Wye Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with Section 38 A (4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

166 Ashford College Campus: Use of Chief Executive's Delegated Authority

The report advised of the use by the Chief Executive of her Urgency Delegation to vary the approved Heads of Terms in order to finalise the Funding Agreements for the loan/grant to West Kent and Ashford College to deliver Phase 1 and 1A of the new Ashford College Campus on Elwick Road.

Resolved:

That it be noted that the Chief Executive had exercised Delegated Authority on the grounds of urgency (Delegation 4.9) to vary the approved Heads of Terms in order to finalise the Funding Agreement with West Kent and Ashford College and the Intercreditor Agreement with West Kent and Ashford College and its primary lender.

167 Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group – 1st September 2016

Resolved:

That the notes of the meeting of the Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group held on the 1st September 2016 be approved and adopted.

168 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.

(KRF/AEH)

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