



## To the Members of the Borough Council

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby summoned to attend a Meeting of the Ashford Borough Council to be held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent TN23 1PL on Thursday the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2014 at 7.00 pm.

Yours faithfully

T W Mortimer  
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

### Agenda

	Page Nos.
1. Apologies	
2. To consider whether any items should be dealt with in private because of the likely disclosure of Exempt or Confidential Information.	
3. <b>Declarations of Interest:-</b> To declare any interests which fall under the following categories, as explained on the attached document:	1
1. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)	
2. Other Significant Interests (OSI)	
3. Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests	
See Agenda Item 3 for further details	
4. To confirm the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2013	
5. To receive any announcements from the Mayor, Leader or other Members of the Cabinet	
6. To receive any petitions	
7. To receive any questions from, and provide answers to, the public (being resident of the Borough), which in the opinion of the Mayor are relevant to the business of the Meeting	

	<b>Page Nos.</b>
8. To receive, consider and adopt the recommendations set out in the Minutes of the Meetings of the Cabinet held on the 16 <sup>th</sup> January and 13 <sup>th</sup> February 2014 (to follow) with the following exceptions – The recommendations of the 13 <sup>th</sup> February Meeting regarding the item “Budget 2014-15” be deferred for consideration with Agenda Item No 9.	2-8
9. To consider the recommendations of the Cabinet regarding the item “Budget 2014/15” (which includes the adoption of the budget) and the report of the Deputy Chief Executive “Council Tax 2014/15 Resolutions” ( <b>NOTE:</b> report will be despatched following the Cabinet Meeting on 13 <sup>th</sup> February) and to determine the Borough Council’s precept on the Collection Fund and set the Council Tax for 2014/15. NB: Members are asked to bring with them the Agenda and report for the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 13 <sup>th</sup> February 2014.	
10. To receive, consider and adopt the Minutes of the Licensing and Health and Safety Committee held on the 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2014.	9-17
11. Programme of Meetings 2014/15 and 2015/16.	18-22
12. To consider Motions of which Notice has been given pursuant to Procedure Rule 11.	
13. Questions by Members of which Notice has been given pursuant to Procedure Rule 10.	

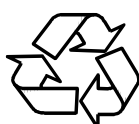
NOTE:- If debate on any item included within this Agenda gives rise to the need to exclude the press and public due to the likelihood of Exempt or Confidential information being disclosed the following resolution may be proposed and seconded and if carried, the press and public will be requested to leave the meeting for the duration of the debate.

That pursuant to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of this item as it is likely that in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure of exempt information hereinafter specified by reference to the appropriate paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Act

KRF/VS  
12<sup>th</sup> February 2014

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**Declarations of Interest (see also “Advice to Members” below)**

- (a) **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)** under the Localism Act 2011, relating to items on this agenda. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared, and the agenda item(s) to which it relates must be stated.

A Member who declares a DPI in relation to any item will need to leave the meeting for that item (unless a relevant Dispensation has been granted).

- (b) **Other Significant Interests (OSI)** under the Kent Code of Conduct as adopted by the Council on 19 July 2012, relating to items on this agenda. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared, and the agenda item(s) to which it relates must be stated.

A Member who declares an OSI in relation to any item will need to leave the meeting before the debate and vote on that item (unless a relevant Dispensation has been granted). However, prior to leaving, the Member may address the Committee in the same way that a member of the public may do so.

- (c) **Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests** not required to be disclosed under (a) and (b), i.e. announcements made for transparency reasons alone, such as:

- a. Membership of outside bodies that have made representations on agenda items, or
- b. Where a Member knows a person involved, but does not have a close association with that person, or
- c. Where an item would affect the well-being of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc. but not his/her financial position.

[Note: an effect on the financial position of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc; OR an application made by a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc, would both probably constitute either an OSI or in some cases a DPI].

**Advice to Members on Declarations of Interest:**

- (a) Government Guidance on DPI is available in DCLG’s Guide for Councillors, at [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/240134/Openness\\_and\\_transparency\\_on\\_personal\\_interests.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/240134/Openness_and_transparency_on_personal_interests.pdf) plus the link sent out to Members at part of the Weekly Update email on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2013.
- (b) The Kent Code of Conduct was adopted by the Full Council on 19 July 2012, with revisions adopted on 17.10.13, and a copy can be found in the Constitution at <http://www.ashford.gov.uk/part-5---codes-and-protocols>
- (c) If any Councillor has any doubt about the existence or nature of any DPI or OSI which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer or from other Solicitors in Legal and Democratic Services as early as possible, and in advance of the Meeting.

## Ashford Borough Council

Minutes of a Meeting of the Ashford Borough Council held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **12<sup>th</sup> December 2013**

### Present:

His Worshipful the Mayor, Cllr. D O Smith (Chairman);

Cllrs. Adley, Apps, Bartlett, Mrs Bell, Bell, Bennett, Mrs Blanford, Britcher, Buchanan, Burgess, Chilton, Clark, Clarkson, Claughton, Clokie, Davey, Davidson, Davison, Galpin, Heyes, Hicks, Hodgkinson, Howard, Link, Marriott, Miss Martin, Mrs Martin, Michael, Mortimer, Robey, Shorter, Sims, Taylor, Wedgbury, Yeo.

### Also Present:

Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Culture and Project Services, Member Services and Scrutiny Manager.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting:-

1. His Worshipful the Mayor asked Members to remain standing in silence in respect for the late Nelson Mandela who had passed away on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013.
2. The Reverend Mackenzie said prayers.
3. His Worshipful the Mayor thanked Members of the Council for paying their respects to Nelson Mandela and said that he would also wished to welcome back the Leader of the Council, Councillor Clarkson following his operation.

**Apologies:** Cllrs. Adby, Dyer, Feacey, Mrs Heyes, French, Mrs Hutchinson and Wright.

## 258 Exempt or Confidential Information

The Mayor asked whether any items should be dealt with in private because of the likely disclosure of exempt or confidential information. There were none.

## 259 Minutes

### Resolved:

**That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2013 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.**

## 260 Announcements

- (a) **His Worshipful the Mayor**

His Worshipful the Mayor advised that Ann Barnes, the Police Commissioner for Kent and Chief Inspector Hibben of Kent Police had visited the Council that day and had inspected the CCTV Monitoring Centre. He explained that they were both extremely impressed with the facility and Chief Inspector Hibben said it provided invaluable support to police officers out on the street. He also explained that a television crew had been present.

His Worshipful the Mayor also advised that as it was Christmas there would be refreshments in Committee Rooms 1 and 2 after the meeting and said that both Members of the Council and the public present at the meeting were very welcome to join him afterwards.

**(b) Deputy Leader**

The Deputy Leader said that he was sure he spoke for all Members in saying how pleased they were that the Leader was now back amongst us following his operation which he explained had gone very well. He said that the Leader was infinitely more upwardly mobile and he was continuing his recuperation with a tempered alacrity and with a daily dose of Rose Hip Syrup.

The Deputy Leader then said as 2013 drew to close he thought he would take the opportunity to reflect with colleagues on the progress seen across the Borough in the last twelve months and to mention some of the developments on the horizon. At the beginning of the year the Council had introduced a new look website to make accessing information and services easier. This had proved to be a success with residents telling us how the site looked much better. It was easier to navigate and allowed them to pay, report or apply for things on line.

The Deputy Leader explained that another major service improvement arrived in the summer which had seen the Council roll out its new recycling service. The Deputy Leader said that coming from the position the Council found itself in proved a huge communications, operational and logistical challenge, which included delivering some 200,000 bins to 52,000 properties across the Borough. There were some initial teething problems and lessons had been learnt, but he considered that overall the new service had been an outstanding success.

He explained that when the Council had consulted the community a few years ago on areas which they considered we should prioritise, the message had come back loud and clear "recycling". He therefore said he was delighted to say that not only did the Council take note of this, but it had been acted upon and subsequently delivered on that promise. Residents had embraced the new service and helped to dramatically improve recycling rates from 14% to an impressive 52% in the first few months. This had not only seen Ashford move up the league tables but would also save money and improve the environment. He considered that by anybody's standards this was a win, win situation.

The Deputy Leader said that in 2013 a number of high profile schemes had come forward. Foremost amongst these had been a new John Lewis at Home Store, the Panorama, i.e. the conversion of the old Charter House, Chilmington Green and

Finberry (its current name) at Cheesemans Green. The Deputy Leader considered that not only would they benefit the Borough in terms of its economic prosperity, but would also reinforce its growing reputation as a Borough of opportunity. In addition to those sites the Morrisons and Designer Outlet proposals indicated that the future was looking bright. He said that the Council would continue to strive to keep the town centre vibrant both by day and by night, and ensure it did all it could to make Ashford Borough the place to be, for customers and businesses alike.

Following the Council's successful Portas bid, a Town Team was now in place. Furthermore several popular events have been held in the High Street. The launch of Pop Up Britain in the town had occurred and the Council's own T-CAT Team had been launched to ensure the streets were kept clean and tidy.

The Deputy Leader said that the Council continued to make great strides in delivering much needed housing for the residents, both in terms of affordable sheltered housing, and the flagship project at Farrow Court which was a major step forward for the Borough's older residents. By its high standards it set a bench mark for future schemes of this type. Following on from that, health wise with the emphasise very much on increased life expectancy and conditions such as Dementia, the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board, which the Deputy Leader said he chaired, had a number of responsibilities including ensuring effective Local Government on health and care issues and developing a local communication engagement strategy to ensure clear lines of communication and consultation with residents, the County Council, Neighbourhood Forums and Patient/Public networks. All meetings were now held in public.

The Deputy Leader said that another string to the Council's bow, which was one in which he took particular pleasure, was in the award winning music and arts venue at Arts at St.Mary's. He said that the Council was proud to have established Revelation as a centre of excellence for the arts in the heart of Ashford and he looked forward to an even bigger and brighter cultural future with St.Mary's alongside the hugely popular Create Festival, the prestigious Jasmin Vardimon Dance Company and exciting proposals for an International Dance Academy. He said that in all its diverse forms Ashford had a wealth of artistic talent.

In summary he said that it had been a year of great challenges, but one of great achievement too. The economic climate was indeed tough but with the Council's proven track record of prudent financial management and foresight the Council had found itself in a position where it could continue to deliver quality services. With strong leadership, clear goals and the little matter of a great deal of hard work, the Council's aims and aspirations were that 2014 would prove to be a prosperous one. In conclusion he said that to those who may seek to cast aspersions he considered that promotion was infinitely preferable to demotion, and as he had shown there was much to promote in the Borough. He also wished to thank colleagues and officers for all their efforts this year. Success was often brought about by solid team work and working together and Ashford Borough Council had a staff of whom the Council could be justifiably proud. On behalf of the Council he said he wished to wish all of the residents a very happy Christmas.

**(c) Councillor Mrs Blanford, Portfolio Holder for Culture and the Environment**

Councillor Mrs Blanford explained that the bid for Stage 1 Funding to the Arts Council for the Jasmin Vardimon Company had been submitted the previous evening. Councillor Mrs Blanford referred to the Cabinet Meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013 and in particular to the decision to support the bid for the Jasmin Vardimon International Dance Academy (Minute No. 242/12/13 refers).

Councillor Mrs Blanford said that she was pleased to advise that the Kent County Council had also agreed to support the application with a funding offer as an expression of interest. From discussions with County Councillor Mike Hill and their Portfolio Holder and Officers, there was a belief that the project had a significant potential at a national and international level. She said that considerable work had gone into making the bid feasible and in the new year work would go ahead to develop concept designs to support the Stage 2 bid for funding to the Arts Council. Jasmin Vardimon not only used the Stour Centre as a performance base and a space for creative work performed internationally, but also wished to run an International Dance Academy in Ashford and to support dance education in the Borough. Councillor Mrs Blanford said that potentially there would be a space for a 300 seat multi-purpose performing space which would be available for other organisations to use. Councillor Mrs Blanford said that by supporting the Jasmin Vardimon Company it did not mean that the Council would be cutting back on the sport and leisure activities which currently took place in the building. She advised that an all member group had been set up "The Stour Centre Regeneration Steering Group", which would ensure a balanced approach, thus enabling the older parts of the Stour Centre to be given a new lease of life.

**261 Cabinet – 7<sup>th</sup> November and 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013**

**(a) 7<sup>th</sup> November 2013**

**Resolved:**

**That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2013 be received and noted.**

**(b) 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013**

**Resolved:**

**That subject to the expiry of the period by which decisions arising from the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013 may be called in, i.e. 18<sup>th</sup> December 2013**

- (i) the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013 be received and noted with the exception of Minute Nos. 235, 236, 237, 238 and 242.**
- (ii) Minute Nos. 235, 236, 237, 238 and 242 be approved and adopted.**

## **262 Audit Committee 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2013**

**Resolved:**

**That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2013 be received and noted.**

## **263 Questions by Members of which Notice had been given**

### **(a) Question from Councillor Clark to Councillor Heyes, Portfolio Holder for Transportation, Highways and Engineering**

“How many premises in the urban area of the borough presently have a licence to sell alcohol for consumption offsite, and how many of these fall within alcohol control zones?”

#### **Reply by Councillor Heyes**

“Thank you Mr Mayor. There are 134 licensed premises within the urban area of Ashford that are either licensed for off sales or on and off sales. These include all types of premises. Within the area of the Designated Public Places Order (DPPO) Zone, also referred to as the Alcohol Controlled Zone, there are 44 premises licensed for off sales.”

#### **Supplementary Question by Councillor Clark**

“Thank you Bernard for that full answer. Residents have expressed concern about plans to convert a Church in Kingsnorth Road into an Off Licence. Would you agree with residents who feel that there are enough Off Licences in the urban area, and moreover that there is a case for extending the present alcohol control zone further south?”

#### **Reply by Councillor Heyes**

“If we were to consider the extension of the DPPO there would need to be extensive consultation on its practicality and desirability. I do believe the Licensing Committee has discussed this at length but it would be a long process, but we can obviously give it due thought.”

### **(b) Question from Councillor Yeo to Councillor Clarkson, Leader of the Council**

“Several attempts have been made to bring about debate in this Chamber, why is this administration using rules of ‘debate’ that appear to be used by no other Council, including Kent County Council which openly debates important issues?”



### **Reply by Councillor Clarkson, Leader of the Council**

“Thank you Mr Mayor. I would like to thank Councillor Yeo for the question. I have assumed it is referring to the process the Council follows when dealing with Notices of Motion submitted by Members pursuant to Procedure Rule 11. There have been three such Motions submitted to the Council under this Administration. Two of those were in February this year and the most recently submitted by Councillor Clark to the meeting of the Council held on the 17<sup>th</sup> October 2013, and that was regarding the possibility of the Council submitting a proposal to Government under the Sustainable Communities Act in respect of the protection of community pubs. Members will recall quite correctly that His Worshipful the Mayor advised that once moved and seconded, the Motion should stand referred to the Cabinet without debate as the subject was a matter that was within the remit of Cabinet and therefore the debate should take place in that Forum. I can assure Members that this has been the Council’s custom and practice since the adoption of the Cabinet system of governance in 2001. Under this system the Cabinet is responsible for making decisions on most of the Council’s functions. Indeed when matters within the competency of the Cabinet are under consideration the Council is not able to make decisions itself and therefore it is entirely proper that any debate and discussion takes place in the Forum where the power lies, i.e. the Cabinet. However, and notwithstanding this His Worshipful Mayor also advised Members that Members could vote on whether they wished to debate the Motion that evening or refer it to Cabinet, but no such vote was proposed. Members ultimately decided to refer the matter to the Cabinet and it was included on the agenda for their meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> November. However, as Members can see from the Minutes of that meeting Councillor Clark did not attend to expand upon the reasons for submitting the Motion or take part in the debate. I would like to reiterate the long standing invitation extended by myself and previous Leaders of the Council that all Members are welcome to attend and contribute to the debate at Cabinet Meetings and furthermore each Cabinet Agenda has a standing item for future meetings which gives Members an opportunity to ask the Leader to consider including a specific item on the Agenda for future debate. Having said that the Members will also note from the Council’s Summons this evening that the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting are on the agenda, and indeed a Tabled Report which accompanies the Cabinet Minutes at each Council Meeting clearly states that the Minutes may be debated. It therefore follows that if Councillor Yeo wishes to have the matter debated then the correct procedure must be adopted and followed. Thank you Mr Mayor.”

### **Supplementary Question by Councillor Yeo**

“There is also one point of clarification and one comment on that. There have actually been four motions submitted, not three, and you didn’t answer why you are not using the different rules of debate. Previous debate allows Cabinet to know the feelings of Council and can enter into the debate when they have their Cabinet debate more fully when in Cabinet. It also allows the people of Ashford to see that Councillors do care about them so therefore may I ask that Cabinet look at and adopt rules for future debate to allow Ashford residents to see democracy in action.”

**Reply by Councillor Clarkson, Leader of the Council**

“Thank you Mr Mayor. We have a Constitution that has served us well thus far and if any Member wishes to propose changes to that Constitution then they can so submit, but at this stage unless I see that we have a majority in favour of change then I see no reason to do so. Thank your Mr Mayor.”

**Supplementary Question by Councillor Mrs Martin**

“Thank you Mr Mayor. Look I appreciate Councillor Yeo’s question, she wants a debate but the point is we can have a debate but the Leader is correct in saying that we cannot make decisions here. We can have the debate and then we can refer it to a particular Committee. It is not a question of stifling I understand what you are getting at. Am I right in saying that we don’t make decisions?”

**Reply by Councillor Clarkson, Leader of the Council**

“Mr Mayor, I welcome the comments from my colleague and it is quite right what is being said by the Councillor this Chamber has a remit under our Constitution and it makes the decisions that are appropriate to its Terms of Reference. The Cabinet likewise has its Terms of Reference and makes decisions accordingly. There is a format for debate but we have to use the Rules of Procedure. The fact that Kent County Council or any other Council adopts a different set of rules is neither here nor there. We don’t follow them they probably follow us and in all honesty we have had nothing mentioned of this before and it comes out of the blue. I think there is more room for debate than you imagine. You just have to know the rules I suppose. So it is a question of the right forum, use the rules and you can have all the debate you want.”

**(c) Question from Councillor Yeo to Councillor Hicks, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Services**

“The “Bedroom Tax” continues to hit people hard, especially those willing to move but who are unable to downsize due to lack of suitable housing stock, what is the Council doing to address this?”

**Reply by Councillor Hicks, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Services**

“Thank you, Councillor Yeo for asking this question. I am delighted to be able to respond as the Council’s proactive work on all aspects of reform work, not just the social size criteria to which you are referring, has been first class. The Council’s proactive work on this has seen us engage with residents, the voluntary sector, social and private landlords as well as publicising its work in the press and its own residents’ and tenants’ publications and I brought with me tonight the local parish magazine from where I am, only it’s got all this information just to prove to people how we are helping people if they want, to struggle with debts which could be as a result of social size criteria. Our proactive work before April 2013 saw us identify 513 Council tenants who were likely to be affected by the introduction of the social size criteria. Not only did we raise the awareness of this particular welfare reform

change, but we promoted solutions in order to incentivise applicants who are over the age of 50 living in family sized housing with two bedrooms more than they require. We told them about applying for assisted move. We pay £500 per bedroom that residents are downsizing if they are moving into sheltered accommodation or a bungalow and an additional £1,000 for those who move into sheltered bedsits. We continue to promote this and the latest edition of our residents' magazine, which I think you have all got in your packs today, features a quote from a lady who has moved to Wye and in turn frees up a three bedroomed house for a family who was on our housing register. We also promote mutual exchanges. These enable tenants to literally swap their homes for another with the consent of their Social Landlords. This has enabled people to swap homes with others who want a larger property. Since April 2013 87 parties have completed a mutual exchange compared with 104 for the whole of the previous year, so this promotion is having an effect. Since April 2013 we have had 22 social tenants who were under occupying that have moved to smaller accommodation. We have also helped with the discretionary housing payments working with the affected households. However, there has been an increase in applications for DHP but this was expected. For 2013 financial year we have a total budget of £170,625 to fund DHP and that is up from £63,000 which we got from the Government the year before. The greater budget is because the Government realised we would need more money to fund DHP due to the recessionary pressures and the introduction of some welfare reforms. Specifically in relation to the social size criteria we have awarded 113 DHPs with a value of over £50,000 for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> September this year. Our Welfare Intervention Officers are working hard, along with our Area Managers to assist as many people as they can and our communications continue. However, there are simply not enough 1 bedroom properties to go round. We have 1,273 one bedroom properties, compared with 1,684 two bedroom, and 1,232 three bedroom. However we are continuing to add to our housing stock and there will be a further 76 one bedroom properties that should be built between now and March 2015. Therefore we are all being extremely proactive and will continue to work with tenants and residents to help them all we can and further progress will be reported to Council Members in due course, thank you."

#### **Supplementary Question by Councillor Yeo**

"Yes I mean that was very good advertisement and eventually we got to the answer about two pages down, but it doesn't really answer the question, the one that was in my mind is a few weeks ago we had the chance to insist that two, two bedroomed disabled bungalows that were going to be built were built as one bedroom, but we didn't, we just went on building two bedrooms which allows the poor and disabled to be taxed for the benefit of our revenue stream and I would like to know why we didn't insist, yes I am getting to the question, why we didn't insist that those two properties were actually built as one bedroom, and start working away at that 76 now, and could you tell me how many of that 76 are being built specifically for disabled residents?"

#### **Reply by Councillor Hicks, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Services**

“Whilst you might think it is unnecessary to have two bedrooms, quite a few of the disabled people actually have carers and we are thinking about long term buildings here so we would continue I think to have two bedrooms in some circumstances. Of the 76 new single rooms that we are going to have, they will all be built to lifetime standards so that everybody will be able to use their disabled wheelchairs and bedrooms and things like that, thank you.”

### **Supplementary Question by Councillor Bell**

“Thank you Mr Mayor. My supplementary is to the Portfolio Holder. A simple question, I may be a bit out of date on this, but certainly out in the parishes up until a few years ago, Ashford Borough Council’s record in supplying local needs affordable housing were I think better than just about any Council in Kent, if not the whole of the south east of England and the parishes certainly appreciate that because by and large they welcome local needs affordable housing. That is certainly one of the huge measures out in the parishes and I realise that the original question comes from the town area, but does the Portfolio Holder agree that if we can keep up that sort of record it really does help out in the countryside.”

### **Reply by Councillor Hicks, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Services**

“I definitely think we should be helping everybody, particularly in the rural areas, and even in the rural areas we are also building our homes up to the lifetime standard, which again gives people with bathrooms, they have got the shower up, I forget what it is called, it is like an open shower, and all the rooms have got areas to turn wheelchairs round, so I think we are doing quite well in that respect”.

### **Supplementary Question by Councillor Clarkson, Leader of the Council**

“Could I ask the Portfolio Holder if they are alert and welcoming of comments about this issue outside the Chamber here, in the normal working routine, and if so has the questioner approached you on these issues?”

### **Reply by Councillor Hicks, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Services**

“No Leader, I haven’t heard this question before, but we are always working to inform the public so I think the public out there should know and we have employed these two extra Welfare Officers as you know, and I think they are doing fantastic work and they have taken the message forward, thank you.”

## **264 Season’s Greetings**

The Mayor wished all Members and Officers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. He also thanked Members and Officers for their support they had given to him this year and asked that the Officers present at the meeting to pass on the thanks to all their staff.

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## **Cabinet**

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **16<sup>th</sup> January 2014**.

### **Present:**

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman);

Cllr. Cloughton (Vice-Chairman);

Cllrs. Mrs Bell, Mrs Blanford, Galpin, Heyes, Hicks, Howard, Robey, Shorter.

### **Also Present:**

Cllrs. Bennett, Britcher, Burgess, Chilton, Clokie, Davison, Mrs Dyer, Marriott, Michael, Mortimer, Smith.

Chief Executive, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Customers, Homes and Property, Finance Manager, Revenues and Benefits Manager, Strategic Housing and Property Manager, Assistant Health, Parking and Community Safety Manager, Parking Maintenance Support and Abandoned Vehicles Officer, Senior Communications Officer, Member Services and Scrutiny Manager.

## **277 Minutes**

### **Resolved:**

**That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.**

## **278 Leader's Announcements**

The Leader referred to the inclement weather over the Christmas period and he said that he had great sympathy for those residents in the Borough who had lost power over the festive period. He then referred to the recent incidents of flooding and commented that whilst the Borough was nowhere near as severely affected as Maidstone, there were incidents of flooding in the Borough. He intended to meet with Officers to see what action could be taken during such emergencies prior to setting up the actual Emergency Centre.

He also explained that the town would shortly be having a new Bank in that the Co-operative Bank would be opening at a location in Bank Street.

In terms of the work undertaken by T-CAT, he said that they had assisted during the flooding in terms of coning off certain areas and in particular the Civic Centre but they had also been working on the clearance of litter from areas not normally covered by the Borough Council. Indeed he said a number of alleyways had had a thorough clean-up operation but, however, only days later the litter had returned.

The Leader said that he believed that residents had a duty to be responsible and hoped that there would be ways of looking at enforcing against littering in the future.

In conclusion, he said that whilst the consultation exercise was still in progress on the draft Budget for 2014/2015, the Government had announced positive changes in that there would be a 1% allowance included within the formula grant which would be the equivalent of 1% increase in Council Tax paid for two years. Accordingly he said that the current administration would be recommending a freeze on the level of Council Tax for the next two years which would be achieved by managing services effectively and looking at value for money and efficiency.

## **279 O & S Review of “Procurement of Energy Saving Proposal for the Civic Centre: LED Lighting and Sub-metering” Report**

The report advised that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2013 had received a report on the Procurement of Energy Saving Proposal for the Civic Centre: LED Lighting which the Committee had been asked to consider by Council in May 2013. The Committee had discussed the report and were comfortable with the procurement process that had taken place.

The Portfolio Holder explained that he was pleased that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had looked at the proposal and were happy that the scheme should proceed. He also explained that the monitoring systems associated with the scheme had been installed over the Christmas period and currently LED units were being installed on a phased basis. By March he expected to be in a position to report that all the work had been completed.

### **Resolved:**

**That it be noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered the report and endorsed the procurement proposal.**

## **280 Preliminary Budget Update – Government Grant Announcements and Business Rate Forecast**

The report provided an update on the Government announcements that had been made since the draft Budget had been prepared and set out how they affected it. Tabled at the meeting was a revised recommendation 3 and a replacement for paragraphs 38 to 46 of the report.

The Portfolio Holder explained that the formula grant for 2014/2015 was in the region of £2.8 million whereas three years ago this level had been £5.6 million. For 2015/2016, the formula grant was expected to fall to £1.9 million. In terms of the intention to take the 1% Government Grant to offset any increase in Council Tax he advised that clarification was being sought on the letter which advised of the Government's position on the Grant. He then referred to the update paper which had been tabled which dealt with the Better Care Fund and he advised that he was

aware that the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board would be considering this issue at its next meeting.

The Vice-Chairman, who was also the Chairman of the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board confirmed that an item was on the Agenda for the meeting to be held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2014 and said that Members were welcome to attend. In response to a comment from a Member that in terms of Disabled Facilities Grants, the Borough Council would need to obtain this from the Kent County Council, he said he was aware of this situation and hoped that the Kent County Council would work alongside the Borough Council in terms of making appropriate allocations.

A Member suggested it would be helpful if Members were given a “high level walk-through” of the whole budget report and process to enable them to fully appreciate the issues when voting for the Budget and Council Tax at the Full Council meeting. The Chairman said he saw no problem with this suggestion and the Portfolio Holder said he was sure that this request could be looked at.

The Portfolio Holder for Culture and Environment referred to paragraph 29 of the report and in particular to the fact that the Government would consult on measures to improve the incentive provided by the New Homes Bonus, in particular through mechanisms to withhold payment where planning approvals were made on appeal.

**Recommended:**

- That (i) the Grant announcements be noted.**
- (ii) the approval of the Council’s Business Rates estimate for submission to Government be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive and Portfolio Holder for Resource Management and Control.**
- (iii) the announcements on the Better Care Fund and the role of the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board in the development of the Local Plan for this funding be noted.**

## **281 Revenues and Benefits Recommended Write-Offs Schedule**

The report proposed the formal write-off of 348 debts totalling £160,768.07. The proposals were in line with the Council’s Revenues and Benefits Service Write-Off Policy. The existing bad debt provisions already more than covered the sums involved.

The Portfolio Holder advised that every effort was made to recover debts and said that they were only written off where they were not viable in terms of recovery. He emphasised that debts would be pursued, particularly in terms of those persons who the Council had been unable to trace if they became aware of them in the future.



In response to a question from the Chairman, the Revenues and Benefits Manager said that the Borough Council had its own thorough methods for trying to locate those debtors who had moved away from the area but if that was unsuccessful, the debt was passed to an external debt collection agency. He clarified that the debt agencies only received payment on positive results. In terms of Housing Benefit overpayments, the Revenues and Benefits Manager explained that these occurred because for the most part recipients failed to inform the Borough Council of any changes in circumstances. When the Council became aware of changes a bill was issued to them for the amount owed since the original change of circumstance. In terms of Council Tax debts, he explained that a reminder letter was sent when Council Tax was about two months in arrears and after three months a Summons would be issued. Within six months it would be possible to pass the Liability Order for the debt to the bailiffs.

The Head of Customers, Homes and Property explained that in terms of debts for housing rents, they sought Eviction Notices rather than the Liability Order process.

**Resolved:**

- That (i) accounts totalling £40,071.54 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 £120,696.53 be approved.**

## **282 Property Acquisition, Investment and Disposal Strategy**

The report sought the approval of the Property Acquisition, Investment and Disposal Strategy as set out within the report and approval of the use of Prudential Borrowing to predominantly purchase properties that met the criteria as outlined within the report. Furthermore, it was proposed that a Member Panel be established to monitor and control the release of £2 million per annum to fund investment opportunities which met the criteria in the report.

The Portfolio Holder said he was delighted that the report had come forward as it further demonstrated the Council's need to be innovative in its move towards more self-sufficiency based on the reducing Revenue Support Grant over future years. He said that decisions over individual purchases in his view needed to be taken in a timely manner and he drew attention to the flow chart which detailed the proposed investment protocol. He advised that any purchases made would be reported retrospectively as part of the Budget Monitoring report.

The Chairman clarified that the scheme was dealing with acquisitions for the General Fund and were not assets to be obtained as part of the work of the Property Company.

In response to a comment from a Member, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that there was a cost to borrowing the money but he explained that the process would require

due diligence to be undertaken before any purchases were agreed and this would include looking at the financial costs and returns associated with the acquisitions.

The Chairman advised that if the Cabinet supported the recommendations, the membership of the proposed Panel would be Councillor Shorter, Chairman; Councillor Bartlett, Vice-Chairman and Councillors Bennett, Chilton and Smith.

**Recommended:**

- That
- (i) the Property Acquisition Investment and Disposal Strategy as outlined within the report and its appendix be approved.**
  - (ii) authority be given to the Leader to establish a Member-led Panel to approve expenditure up to £2 million per annum financed by prudential borrowing if necessary for acquiring, and where necessary, carrying out adaptations to, investment opportunities which meet the criteria outlined within the report, subject to the Member Panel's proposed Terms of Reference being first reported to and approved by the Cabinet.**
  - (iii) a Budget allocation of £100,000 from reserves be approved to act as working capital to carry out site investigation works and the costs associated with the due diligence process on those properties to be acquired and/or considered for acquisition.**
  - (iv) Delegation 14.17 to the Head of Community and Housing in the Constitution be amended to read:**

**“To settle the terms for the acquisition or disposal of land or property or interests in land or property in accordance with the Property Acquisition Investment and Disposal Strategy or where the principle of the proposed acquisition or disposal has been separately approved by the Council or the Cabinet”.**
  - (v) a new delegation be granted to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to read:**

**“To execute and complete all necessary documentation to give effect to any acquisition or disposal of land or property or interests in land or property under the Property Acquisition Investment and Disposal Strategy or where the principle of the proposed acquisition or disposal has been separately approved by the Council or the Cabinet”.**

## **283 Flexible Retirement: Communities and Housing**

The report sought approval to the flexible retirement of one post in Communities and Housing and the consequential cost of a maximum of £42.4k funded from the HRA.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Services advised that the Council's Flexible Retirement Policy was already in place and that it assisted in succession planning. The Portfolio Holder for Resource Management and Control said that the proposal made financial sense and in terms of personnel it helped Officers in terms of their overall development. He also explained that at the Joint Consultative Committee meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2014, the Committee had been comfortable with the proposals.

**Recommended:**

**The early release of pension and pension contribution be approved.**

## **284 Electric Vehicle Charging Points**

The report asked Members to note the Agreement that had been signed by the Head of Customers, Homes and Property to install five double electric vehicle charging points within the Borough.

The Portfolio Holder said he was supportive of the scheme and that it would enhance the Borough Council's work in terms of climate change and carbon reduction measures.

The Vice-Chairman commented that the issue of vehicle charging points had been discussed on Radio Kent that morning and he asked whether there were sufficient vehicles in use to warrant the installation.

The Assistant Health, Parking and Community Safety Manager said at the moment it was largely a "chicken and egg" scenario and it was hoped it would succeed in promoting electric vehicles.

In response to a question as to whether a charging point could be located at the William Harvey Hospital which would be convenient for a great many users, the Assistant Health, Parking and Community Safety Manager advised that the Office of Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) had specified that the points had to be located on Council owned or leased land. The possible future installation of rapid chargers could be considered in due course.

A Member suggested that the locations should be added to the maps used by satellite navigation schemes. The Assistant Health, Parking and Community Safety Manager explained that at a future Officer meeting on this, they would be discussing how the scheme could be publicised and the issue could be raised at that point.

**Resolved:**

**The Agreement to install five double electric vehicle charging points within the Borough be noted; the points must remain in operation for a minimum of three years; The Office of Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) funding would cover the majority of the capital cost with Section 106 monies requested to cover the remaining capital cost and further three year maintenance costs.**

## **285 Schedule of Key Decisions to be Taken**

The report set out the latest Schedule of Key Decisions to be taken by the Cabinet.

**Resolved:**

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

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(KRF/AEH)

MINS:CAXX1403

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Queries concerning these Minutes? Please contact Keith Fearon:  
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**Agenda Item No:** 9  
**Report To:** FULL COUNCIL  
**Date:** 20<sup>th</sup> February 2014



**Report Title:** Budget and Council Tax Resolutions 2014/15  
**Report Author:** Paul Naylor, Deputy Chief Executive (and S151 Officer)  
Ben Lockwood, Finance Manager

**Summary:** This report presents the Cabinet's 2014-2015 General Fund Budget and Council Tax recommendations for resolution by the Full Council. It also presents the full statutory resolutions, including the requirements of the Precepting Authorities and Parish Councils, for the area covered by the Borough Council as the billing authority.

**Whilst all major preceptors have now resolved their demands, Members attention is drawn to the fact that the draft resolutions in this report are dependent on formal confirmation by Aldington and Bonnington Parish Council of its precept. The parish council has deferred consideration until 18 February, but has been informed the council must have a decision in time for the council meeting. In the event that any decision varies from the assumed position notified to the Council, it would be necessary to table revised recommendations at the Full Council Meeting. In the unlikely event that the Parish Council is unable to set a precept, this Council will use its power to anticipate a precept and set one in accordance with the regulations; the parish council has been informed accordingly.**

Excluding Parish Precepts, the Council's net revenue spending, is (1.09)% less than the budget for 2012/13. The Borough Council's element of the Council Tax at band D is to be frozen as £145.45.

On the basis of information available from the Precepting Authorities the **overall** level of Council Tax, excluding Parish Precepts, is anticipated to be £1,427.69 an increase overall of £25.04. (or 1.8%).

**Key Decision:** Not applicable

**Affected Wards:** ALL

**Recommendations: The Council is asked to:-**

- (1) Agree the Budget for 2014/15 as recommended by the Cabinet, subject to confirmation of the treatment of one matter relating to the fees and charges schedule considered at the Cabinet meeting on 13 February (see Cabinet minute 310 recommendation ii).**
- (2) Agree the formal Council Tax resolutions annexed to this Report.**

**Policy Overview:** The Budget is a matter for the Full Council to approve. Apart from the statutory requirement and status of the budget, the proposals for 2014/15 take forward the fourth year of the Council's Business Plan.

**Financial Implications:** The budget supports the Business Plan and is the result of considerable input from Members and Services over several months. It is broadly in line with our medium term financial forecasts. The recommended budget requirement (excluding parish precepts) is £13.647 million. The recommended Council Tax at Band D is £145.45, and is frozen from 2013/14. A 'freeze' grant equivalent to a 1% increase will be paid by government and rolled into future years' grant settlements.

**Risk Assessment** The report to the Cabinet contained advice about the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of the Council's reserves, as required by the Local Government Act 2003. The report concluded that while there are risks, the Council's Members and Officers understand these, but the Council has well-developed budgetary control and monitoring procedures to address these should pressures arise. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee following its review concluded that the draft budget was 'achievable, sufficient and realistic'.

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**Report Title: Budget and Council Tax Resolutions 2014/15**

**IMPORTANT  
NOTICE**

The resolutions in this report, which must include the requirements of all Precepting authorities, are based on the recommendations made to these Authorities.

However at the time of writing one Parish Council had still to finalise its precept demand. In the unlikely event that the Parish Council is unable to set a precept this Council will use its powers to anticipate a precept for them.

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To present the Cabinet Committee's 2014/15 General Fund Budget and Council Tax recommendation for resolution by the Full Council. It presents the full statutory resolutions, including the requirements of the Precepting Authorities (as known at the time of writing) and the Parish Councils, for the areas covered by the Borough Council as the Billing Authority.

**Issue to be Decided**

2. The Full Council is required to consider and approve the recommended 2014/15 Budget and the Council Tax requirement. The Full Council must also agree the statutory resolutions, which include the Precepting Authorities' requirements.

**Ashford Borough Council's General Fund Budget and Council Tax Requirement and Consultation**

3. The decisions of the Cabinet at its meeting on 14th February are set out in its Cabinet Minute 310 reported on this Agenda. Recommendation (ii) on a detailed aspect of street trading consents is subject to confirmation. A summary of the recommended budget is included as **Appendix A**. Members will also have received a link to allow them to review the full 2014/2015 Budget Book by the time of the meeting.
4. The report to the Cabinet Meeting included advice required by the Local Government Act 2003, on the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of the Councils reserves.
5. It should be noted that the period for budget consultation closes on 13<sup>th</sup> February. No responses were received from the Public and the Cabinet received a paper on the response of the JCC committee. Any further responses to the consultation will be reported to the Full Council Meeting.

**Aldington and Bonnington Precept**

6. At the time of writing the Parish has been unable to agree a precept. The resolutions contained in this report have been based upon the budget

recommended to the Parish by its Clerk. The Parish has called an extra ordinary meeting to discuss its budget on the 18<sup>th</sup> February where it is expected to finalise its budget. This Council cannot agree its resolutions without formal notification by this Parish of its precept.

7. As billing authority Ashford Borough Council may anticipate any amount it considers appropriate, up to a limit of the highest amount of the precept issued by that authority for the three immediately preceding years, increased (or reduced) by the increase (or reduction) in the RPI for the 12 month period ending in the September of the year prior to that for which the amount is being 'anticipated'. For this Parish this would mean a precept of £18,000 increased by 3.2% so £18,576. **In the unlikely event that the parish is unable to agree a precept a revised set of resolutions, based upon the 'anticipated' amount, will be tabled at the meeting.**

## Council Tax Requirement

8. The demand on the Council Tax Collection Fund for 2014/15 that flows from the recommendation of the Cabinet, and the decisions of the Precepting Bodies totals £60,882,331 analysed as follows: -

Authority	Precept/Demand		2014/2015 Band D Council Tax £	Change over 2013/2014	
	£	%		£	%
Ashford Borough Council	6,086,501	10.00%	145.45	0	0.00%
Kent County Council	44,719,146	73.45%	1068.66	20.88	1.99%
Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent	6,037,541	9.92%	144.28	2.81	1.99%
Kent and Medway Fire Authority	2,899,928	4.76%	69.3	1.35	1.99%
Parish Councils	1,139,215	1.87%	42.78	4.04	10.43%

9. Excluding Parish Precepts the overall Council Tax at Band D for 2014/15 is £1,424.69, and increase of £25.04 2013/14.
10. Attached to this report are the formal resolutions for approval by the Council as the Billing Authority. Also attached at **Appendix A and B** are details on the calculation of this Council's Budget requirement and Council Tax at Band D.



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# COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTIONS

## The Council is recommended to resolve as follows:

1. It be noted that on **05 December 2013** the Cabinet calculated
  - (a) the Council Tax Base 2014/15 for the whole Council area as **41,846.00** [Item T in the formula in Section 31B(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")] and,
  - (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as in the attached **Annex A**
2. Calculate that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2014/15 (excluding Parish precepts) is **£6,086,500.70 (Appendices A and B)**
3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2014/15 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
  - (a) £ 88,017,525 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
  - (b) (80,791,810) being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
  - (c) 7,225,715 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31A(4) of the Act).
  - (d) 172.67 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (2 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts). **(Annex C)**
  - (e) 1,139,215 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached **Annex B**).
  - (f) 145.45 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (2 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates. **(Annex D & E)**

## Annex A

Part of the Council's area (i.e. tax base for parished areas – Band D equivalent properties).

PARISH	LOCAL TAX BASE	PARISH	LOCAL TAX BASE
Aldington & Bonnington	572.00	Little Chart	120.80
Appledore	320.90	Mersham and Sevington	650.40
Bethersden	660.30	Molash	103.30
Biddenden	1,057.50	Newenden	101.70
Bilsington	147.00	Orlestone	518.90
Boughton Aluph and Eastwell	1,030.70	Pluckley	464.10
Brabourne	590.00	Rolvenden	658.20
Brook	147.10	Ruckinge	320.10
Challock	411.00	Shadoxhurst	481.00
Charing	1,165.70	Smarden	605.40
Chilham	714.80	Smeeth	341.00
Crundale (PM)	92.40	Stanhope	692.50
Egerton	499.00	Stone	195.70
Godmersham	170.90	Tenterden (TC)	3,449.80
Great Chart with Singleton	2,318.60	Warehorne	173.20
Hastingleigh	112.60	Westwell	306.30
High Halden	690.10	Wittersham	510.70
Hothfield	275.00	Woodchurch	800.90
Kenardington	104.90	Wye with Hinxhill	982.20
Kingsnorth	4,074.90		

## Annex B

PARISH	Parish Precept	PARISH	Parish Precept
Aldington & Bonnington*	<b>26,990</b>	Little Chart	6,000
Appledore	26,000	Mersham and Sevington	14,420
Bethersden	21,100	Molash	4,000
Biddenden	44,360	Newenden	4,910
Bilsington	4,000	Orlestone	18,730
Boughton Aluph and Eastwell	20,980	Pluckley	25,300
Brabourne	13,930	Rolvenden	20,598
Brook	5,000	Ruckinge	9,000
Challock	15,560	Shadoxhurst	12,270
Charing	66,980.00	Smarden	24,870
Chilham	25,060	Smeeth	10,664
Crundale (PM)	200	Stanhope	16,590
Egerton	16,484	Stone	4,250
Godmersham	4,000	Tenterden (TC)	304,650
Great Chart with Singleton	75,589	Warehorne	3,250
Hastingleigh	2,900	Westwell	14,926
High Halden	33,054	Wittersham	20,995
Hothfield	9,500	Woodchurch	20,000
Kenardington	4,180	Wye with Hinxhill	56,318
Kingsnorth	131,607		

**\*Note – at time of writing still awaiting final confirmation of precept demand**

## BILLING AUTHORITY PART OF COUNCIL TAX 2014/2015

PARISH	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E	BAND F	BAND G	BAND H
<b>Aldington &amp; Bonnington*</b>	<b>128.43</b>	<b>149.83</b>	<b>171.24</b>	<b>192.64</b>	<b>235.45</b>	<b>278.25</b>	<b>321.07</b>	<b>385.28</b>
Appledore	150.98	176.15	201.31	226.47	276.79	327.12	377.45	452.94
Bethersden	118.28	137.99	157.70	177.41	216.83	256.25	295.69	354.82
Biddenden	124.94	145.76	166.58	187.40	229.04	270.68	312.34	374.80
Bilsington	115.11	134.29	153.48	172.66	211.03	249.39	287.77	345.32
Boughton Aluph and Eastwell	110.54	128.97	147.39	165.81	202.65	239.50	276.35	331.62
Brabourne	112.71	131.49	150.28	169.06	206.63	244.19	281.77	338.12
Brook	119.63	139.57	159.50	179.44	219.31	259.19	299.07	358.88
Challock	122.21	142.58	162.94	183.31	224.04	264.78	305.52	366.62
Charing	135.28	157.82	180.37	202.91	248.00	293.09	338.19	405.82
Chilham	120.34	140.40	160.45	180.51	220.62	260.73	300.85	361.02
Crundale (PM)	98.41	114.81	131.21	147.61	180.41	213.21	246.02	295.22
Egerton	118.99	138.82	158.65	178.48	218.14	257.80	297.47	356.96
Godmersham	112.58	131.34	150.10	168.86	206.38	243.90	281.44	337.72
Great Chart with Singleton	118.70	138.49	158.27	178.05	217.61	257.18	296.75	356.10
Hastingleigh	114.14	133.16	152.18	171.20	209.24	247.28	285.34	342.40
High Halden	128.90	150.39	171.87	193.35	236.31	279.28	322.25	386.70
Hothfield	120.00	140.00	160.00	180.00	220.00	260.00	300.00	360.00
Kenardington	123.54	144.12	164.71	185.30	226.48	267.65	308.84	370.60
Kingsnorth	118.50	138.25	158.00	177.75	217.25	256.75	296.25	355.50
Little Chart	130.08	151.76	173.44	195.12	238.48	281.84	325.20	390.24
Mersham and Sevington	111.75	130.37	149.00	167.62	204.87	242.11	279.37	335.24
Molash	122.78	143.25	163.71	184.17	225.09	266.02	306.95	368.34
Newenden	129.16	150.68	172.21	193.73	236.78	279.83	322.89	387.46
Orlestone	121.04	141.21	161.38	181.55	221.89	262.23	302.59	363.10

Pluckley	133.31	155.53	177.74	199.96	244.39	288.83	333.27	399.92
Rolvenden	117.83	137.47	157.10	176.74	216.01	255.29	294.57	353.48
Ruckinge	115.72	135.00	154.29	173.57	212.14	250.71	289.29	347.14
Shadoxhurst	113.98	132.97	151.97	170.96	208.95	246.94	284.94	341.92
Smarden	124.36	145.08	165.81	186.53	227.98	269.43	310.89	373.06
Smeeth	117.82	137.45	157.09	176.72	215.99	255.26	294.54	353.44
Stanhope	112.94	131.77	150.59	169.41	207.05	244.70	282.35	338.82
Stone	111.45	130.02	148.60	167.17	204.32	241.46	278.62	334.34
Tenterden (TC)	155.84	181.82	207.79	233.76	285.70	337.65	389.60	467.52
Warehorne	109.48	127.72	145.97	164.21	200.70	237.19	273.69	328.42
Westwell	129.46	151.03	172.61	194.18	237.33	280.48	323.64	388.36
Wittersham	124.38	145.10	165.83	186.56	228.02	269.47	310.94	373.12
Woodchurch	113.62	132.55	151.49	170.42	208.29	246.16	284.04	340.84
Wye with Hinxhill	135.20	157.73	180.26	202.79	247.85	292.91	337.99	405.58
Unparished Area	96.97	113.13	129.29	145.45	177.77	210.09	242.42	290.90

**\*Note – at time of writing still awaiting final confirmation of precept demand**

**TOTAL COUNCIL TAX 2014/2015**

PARISH	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E	BAND F	BAND G	BAND H
Aldington & Bonnington*	983.26	1,147.13	1,311.01	1,474.88	1,802.63	2,130.37	2,458.14	2,949.76
Appledore	1,005.81	1,173.45	1,341.08	1,508.71	1,843.97	2,179.24	2,514.52	3,017.42
Bethersden	973.11	1,135.29	1,297.47	1,459.65	1,784.01	2,108.37	2,432.76	2,919.30
Biddenden	979.77	1,143.06	1,306.35	1,469.64	1,796.22	2,122.80	2,449.41	2,939.28
Bilsington	969.94	1,131.59	1,293.25	1,454.90	1,778.21	2,101.51	2,424.84	2,909.80
Boughton Aluph and Eastwell	965.37	1,126.27	1,287.16	1,448.05	1,769.83	2,091.62	2,413.42	2,896.10
Brabourne	967.54	1,128.79	1,290.05	1,451.30	1,773.81	2,096.31	2,418.84	2,902.60
Brook	974.46	1,136.87	1,299.27	1,461.68	1,786.49	2,111.31	2,436.14	2,923.36
Challock	977.04	1,139.88	1,302.71	1,465.55	1,791.22	2,116.90	2,442.59	2,931.10
Charing	990.11	1,155.12	1,320.14	1,485.15	1,815.18	2,145.21	2,475.26	2,970.30
Chilham	975.17	1,137.70	1,300.22	1,462.75	1,787.80	2,112.85	2,437.92	2,925.50
Crundale (PM)	953.24	1,112.11	1,270.98	1,429.85	1,747.59	2,065.33	2,383.09	2,859.70
Egerton	973.82	1,136.12	1,298.42	1,460.72	1,785.32	2,109.92	2,434.54	2,921.44
Godmersham	967.41	1,128.64	1,289.87	1,451.10	1,773.56	2,096.02	2,418.51	2,902.20
Great Chart with Singleton	973.53	1,135.79	1,298.04	1,460.29	1,784.79	2,109.30	2,433.82	2,920.58
Hastingleigh	968.97	1,130.46	1,291.95	1,453.44	1,776.42	2,099.40	2,422.41	2,906.88
High Halden	983.73	1,147.69	1,311.64	1,475.59	1,803.49	2,131.40	2,459.32	2,951.18
Hothfield	974.83	1,137.30	1,299.77	1,462.24	1,787.18	2,112.12	2,437.07	2,924.48
Kenardington	978.37	1,141.42	1,304.48	1,467.54	1,793.66	2,119.77	2,445.91	2,935.08
Kingsnorth	973.33	1,135.55	1,297.77	1,459.99	1,784.43	2,108.87	2,433.32	2,919.98
Little Chart	984.91	1,149.06	1,313.21	1,477.36	1,805.66	2,133.96	2,462.27	2,954.72
Mersham and Sevington	966.58	1,127.67	1,288.77	1,449.86	1,772.05	2,094.23	2,416.44	2,899.72
Molash	977.61	1,140.55	1,303.48	1,466.41	1,792.27	2,118.14	2,444.02	2,932.82

Newenden	983.99	1,147.98	1,311.98	1,475.97	1,803.96	2,131.95	2,459.96	2,951.94
Orlestone	975.87	1,138.51	1,301.15	1,463.79	1,789.07	2,114.35	2,439.66	2,927.58
Pluckley	988.14	1,152.83	1,317.51	1,482.20	1,811.57	2,140.95	2,470.34	2,964.40
Rolvenden	972.66	1,134.77	1,296.87	1,458.98	1,783.19	2,107.41	2,431.64	2,917.96
Ruckinge	970.55	1,132.30	1,294.06	1,455.81	1,779.32	2,102.83	2,426.36	2,911.62
Shadoxhurst	968.81	1,130.27	1,291.74	1,453.20	1,776.13	2,099.06	2,422.01	2,906.40
Smarden	979.19	1,142.38	1,305.58	1,468.77	1,795.16	2,121.55	2,447.96	2,937.54
Smeeth	972.65	1,134.75	1,296.86	1,458.96	1,783.17	2,107.38	2,431.61	2,917.92
Stanhope	967.77	1,129.07	1,290.36	1,451.65	1,774.23	2,096.82	2,419.42	2,903.30
Stone	966.28	1,127.32	1,288.37	1,449.41	1,771.50	2,093.58	2,415.69	2,898.82
Tenterden (TC)	1,010.67	1,179.12	1,347.56	1,516.00	1,852.88	2,189.77	2,526.67	3,032.00
Warehorne	964.31	1,125.02	1,285.74	1,446.45	1,767.88	2,089.31	2,410.76	2,892.90
Westwell	984.29	1,148.33	1,312.38	1,476.42	1,804.51	2,132.60	2,460.71	2,952.84
Wittersham	979.21	1,142.40	1,305.60	1,468.80	1,795.20	2,121.59	2,448.01	2,937.60
Woodchurch	968.45	1,129.85	1,291.26	1,452.66	1,775.47	2,098.28	2,421.11	2,905.32
Wye with Hinxhill	990.03	1,155.03	1,320.03	1,485.03	1,815.03	2,145.03	2,475.06	2,970.06
Unparished Area	951.80	1,110.43	1,269.06	1,427.69	1,744.95	2,062.21	2,379.49	2,855.38

**\*Note – at time of writing still awaiting final confirmation of precept demand**



## Council Tax Schedule 2014/15

Precepting Authority	VALUATION BANDS							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Ashford Borough Council	96.97	113.13	129.29	145.45	177.77	210.09	242.42	290.90
Kent County Council	712.44	831.18	949.92	1,068.66	1,306.14	1,543.62	1,781.10	2,137.32
Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent	96.19	112.22	128.25	144.28	176.34	208.40	240.47	288.56
Kent and Medway Towns Fire Authority	46.20	53.90	61.60	69.30	84.70	100.10	115.50	138.60

## APPENDIX A

<b>CALCULATION OF THE BUDGET REQUIREMENT AND COUNCIL TAX AT BAND D</b>		
	£	£
Gross Expenditure - General Fund	57,232,310	
Gross Expenditure - HRA	29,646,000	
Parish Precepts	<u>1,139,215</u>	88,017,525
Less Gross Income	(73,169,790)	(73,169,790)
<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>		<b>14,847,735</b>
Add Deficit Distribution from Collection Fund	0	
New Homes Bonus	(1,878,000)	
Retained Business Rates	(2,457,510)	
Government Grant (RSG and S31 grants)	<u>(3,286,510)</u>	(7,622,020)
<b>BUDGET REQUIREMENT</b>		<b>7,225,715</b>
Less Parish Precepts		(1,139,215)
<b>Council Tax Requirement</b>		<b>6,086,500</b>
Council Tax Base		41,846.00
Band 'D' Council Tax		145.45
Average including Parishes		172.67

**APPENDIX B**

**SUMMARY**

<b>ACTUALS</b>	<b>ESTIMATE</b>	<b>PROJECTED</b>	<b>DETAIL</b>	<b>ESTIMATE</b>
<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>OUTTURN</b>		<b>2014/15</b>
<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>2013/14</b>		<b>£</b>
<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>		<b>£</b>
1,825,249	1,639,060	1,823,640	<b>Corporate, Strategy &amp; Personnel</b>	1,844,470
1,173,433	1,250,300	1,251,700	<b>Legal &amp; Democratic</b>	1,310,750
1,490,229	1,462,340	1,610,370	<b>Planning &amp; Development</b>	1,810,300
1,235,530	2,189,360	2,206,660	<b>Financial Services</b>	2,055,760
284,271	297,470	324,470	<b>Communications &amp; Technology</b>	340,150
744,706	952,630	1,112,030	<b>Community &amp; Housing</b>	1,046,190
8,606,203	7,702,360	8,052,430	<b>Culture &amp; the Environment</b>	7,074,780
<b>15,359,620</b>	<b>15,493,520</b>	<b>16,381,300</b>	<b>SERVICE EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>15,482,400</b>
(1,974,718)	(1,905,520)	(1,905,520)	Capital Charges	(1,762,880)
753,878	(319,450)	(319,450)	Net Interest	(375,880)
66,350	60,520	60,520	Concurrent Functions Grant	50,350
240,624	235,210	235,210	Drainage Board Levies	241,000
1,138,937	233,220	118,150	Contribution to Balances	12,030
<b>15,584,691</b>	<b>13,797,500</b>	<b>14,570,210</b>	<b>ABC BUDGET REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>13,647,020</b>
			<b>INCOME</b>	
(7,628,107)	(3,778,800)	(3,778,800)	Government Grant	(2,942,520)
	(2,707,970)	(2,707,970)	Retained Business Rates	(2,457,510)
			Business Rates S31 Grants	(343,990)
	(8,100)	(8,100)	Parish CTS Payment	61,500
(1,437,684)	(1,313,000)	(1,907,000)	New Homes Bonus	(1,878,000)
(6,518,900)	(5,989,630)	(5,989,629)	<b>Council Tax</b>	(6,086,500)
<b>(0)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>178,711</b>	<b>Budget Gap</b>	<b>0</b>

## Licensing and Health and Safety Committee

Minutes of a Meeting of the Licensing and Health and Safety Committee held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **20<sup>th</sup> January 2014**.

### Present:

Cllr. Feacey (Chairman);  
Cllr. Galpin (Vice-Chairman);  
Cllrs. Adby, Apps, Mrs Bell, Davey, Marriott, Miss Martin, Shorter, Sims.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2 (iii) Councillor Miss Martin attended as a Substitute Member for Councillor Mrs Martin.

### Apologies:

Cllrs. Hodgkinson, Mrs Martin.

### Also Present:

Assistant Health, Parking & Community Safety Manager, Legal Advisor, Senior Member Services & Scrutiny Support Officer.

## 292 Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Interest	Minute No.
Adby	Announced an 'Other Interest' as he knew Ms Singer from a previous job.	294
Feacey	Announced an 'Other Interest' as he was the Managing Director of Energyshift who worked with members of the taxi trade.	295, 296
Galpin	Announced an 'Other Interest' as he knew Ms Singer through her involvement in the Portas Pilot consultation.	294

## 293 Minutes

### Resolved:

**That the Minutes of the Meeting of this Committee held on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2013 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.**

## **294 Xanadu at 32 High Street, Ashford, TN24 8TE – Application for the Variation of a Condition of a Sex Shop Licence**

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed all those present. He explained the procedure to be followed at the meeting and confirmed that Members had read the papers relating to the application.

The Assistant Health, Parking & Community Safety Manager then gave a brief summary of the report. He said Members were asked to consider the application to vary a sex shop licence and at the conclusion of the hearing to either allow or refuse the application. A sex establishment licence for Xanadu, 32 High Street, Ashford had first been issued in September 2010 and had been renewed annually. A copy of the current licence and conditions were attached at Appendix A to the report. An application had been received from Ms Singer to vary her licence by seeking to remove Condition 20 which stated; “Windows and openings to the premises other than entrances shall have suspended behind them, in a position and at an altitude approved by the Council, opaque screens or blinds of a type and size approved by the Council, so as to prevent the interior of the premises being seen by passers-by.” Ms Singer wished to remove the screen restricting the view of the interior of the premises from the left hand window. The removal of this screen would allow the passing public an unrestricted view to the front part of the premises. Ms Singer had stated that this area would only contain lingerie and all toys and R18 DVDs would be positioned behind a wall at the rear of the shop which would have restricted access. The Assistant Health, Parking & Community Safety Manager advised that the Committee could either: - allow the variation, refuse the variation or allow the variation with conditions as Members saw fit. The licences were granted for 12 months and reviewed annually. If there were no objections at that stage the Officers had delegated authority to permit. He further clarified that the photographs in the report had been taken by Licensing Officers.

Ms Singer spoke in support of the application. She said that the variation had been sought to help develop her business. She said she had previously been involved in the business known as Pillow Talk in Castle Street, Ashford which had operated under a sex establishment licence for 14 years with no complaints. In September 2010 they had moved to 32 High Street and made a new application for a sex establishment licence. This had been granted and the business name changed to Xanadu with herself as the sole owner. The economy in the High Street was difficult. There was poor footfall and arrangements for traffic and coupled with the impact of internet sales this had made the business very different. The spilt in her sales from 2000 – 2014 had changed greatly and moved much more towards lingerie and away from the R18 DVDs. General attitudes towards sex and adult entertainment had also changed greatly over that time as had her clientele. She wanted to move away from the more ‘seedy and behind closed doors image’ that such shops had and embrace the lingerie aspects as shops such as Ann Summers had been able to do. Xanadu had a look and feel more like an Ann Summers shop, but was also licenced to sell extra items. There was no intention to open up the whole shop to view as she wanted to remain sensitive, but she did want potential customers to be able to see her range of lingerie. The simple change she was asking for would not cause complaints and would show potential customers that they had nothing to fear by entering her shop. She would be careful and mindful about what was displayed in the

windows and she would welcome an annual review from the Council to keep the matter in check.

In response to questions from Members, Ms Singer clarified the following points: - the R18 DVDs would be in a separate partitioned part of the shop and could not be seen from the outside of the shop or from the windows. Customers would have to make a conscious decision to go to this part of the shop and it would be made clear what was there; Under 18s were never allowed in to any part of the shop; she did not currently have TVs or LCD screens in the shop to display moving images; and the accessories mentioned to be displayed in the window included hen night novelties such as tiaras, banners etc. She said that if granted, the variation would make a difference to her custom and living. It was important that more people felt comfortable coming into the shop. It was obviously her livelihood at stake, but she wanted people to see the shop as a lingerie store that they could use without stigma.

The Chairman thanked Ms Singer for her comments. Ms Singer and the Assistant Health, Parking & Community Safety Manager then left the Council Chamber whilst the Committee retired to make its decision.

On return the Legal Advisor read out the decision.

**Resolved:**

- That (i) the Committee reminds the Licence Holder that Condition 15 on the licence applies in full and that the showing of any film or video, even a clip, would be in breach of this condition.**
- (ii) the Committee also reminds the Licence Holder that the Council will use Condition 17 on the licence to ensure that nothing is visible from outside the premises that could be deemed inappropriate.**
- (iii) in order to achieve a fair balance between the Licence Holder's right to trade and the protection of Under 18s, the Committee approve the application to remove Condition 20 from the licence, based in particular on the Licence Holder's assurance that only lingerie and accessories will be visible to passers-by.**

## **295 Proposed Fee Levels for 2014/15 Applications**

The Assistant Health, Parking & Community Safety Manager introduced the report which recommended the proposed fees for licences for the financial year 2014/15. It covered: - Gambling Related Fees; Sex Establishment Fees; Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Fees; Scrap Metal Dealers Fees; as well as summary of licences and permissions issued between 1<sup>st</sup> December 2012 and 30<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

### **Gambling Related Fees**

The report recommended an average increase of 2.5% be made to the fees, which was in line with inflation. There had been no fee increase since 2007 when the fees were first set. The Assistant Health, Parking & Community Safety Manager reiterated that there were no plans for a casino in the Borough.

In response to questions from Members, the Assistant Health, Parking & Community Safety Manager advised that the Gambling Act allowed Licensing Authorities to set their fees upon a cost recovery basis only.

### **Sex Establishment Fees**

A recent High Court case had confirmed that it was unlawful for a Local Authority to charge lawful licensees for the cost of enforcement action against unlicensed operators. In addition the judgment contained an important decision relating to the setting of sex establishment application fees, stating that licensing authorities cannot simply roll over its licensing fees. It was proposed that an average increase of 2.5% be made to the fees, which was in line with inflation.

### **Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Fees**

In 2007/8 and 2008/9 fees were increased by 3%, which was below the relevant rate of inflation. The fees for 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12 were unchanged due to an increase in the number of drivers ensuring that inflationary costs were covered by increased income. In 2013/14 most of the fees remained unchanged, with some minor exceptions that saw a slight fall. Licenced drivers and proprietors now had up to five additional costs to pay in relation to the annual licensing process; Disclosure and Barring Service checks; vehicle compliance checks; medicals; the knowledge test for hackney carriage drivers and the Driver Standards Agency Taxi Test. It was proposed to increase the overall fees by an average of 2.5% (the first increase in since 2008/9). The report also recommended that the hackney carriage drivers test be increased from £30 to £45, the fee for transfer of licence and replacement internal and external plate be increased from £20 to £25; and replacement badge/licence fees be reduced from £15 to £10.50.

In response to questions from Members, the Assistant Health, Parking & Community Safety Manager advised that the proposal to reduce the fee to increase the number of vehicles licenced during the duration of a licence had been taken so as to not disadvantage a company wishing to expand their business and there was no charge for vehicle inspection missed appointments as these were set by contract and the contractor made no charge for this.

### **Scrap Metal Dealers Fees**

As a result of their timing part way through a year, the initial fees for a three year licence under the new Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 were set by the Council in October 2013 and these were based on estimated costs as it was a new licensing regime. As a result of the processes involved and time taken, these had been recalculated and set out in the report.

### **Recommended:**

- (i) that the fees used for gambling applications and notices as given below be approved.**

**RECOMMENDED GAMBLING RELATED LICENCE FEES FOR 2014/15**

<b>Premises Type</b>	<b>New Application (£)</b>	<b>Annual Fee (£)</b>
New Small Casino	6442	3664
New Large Casino	7729	7395
Regional Casino	12177	11419
Bingo Club	2214	690
Betting Premises (excluding Tracks)	2250	445
Tracks	1732	687
Family Entertainment Centres	1732	687
Adult Gaming Centre	1732	690
Temporary Use Notices	200	N/A

	<b>Application to Vary</b>	<b>Application to Transfer</b>	<b>Application for Re-Instatement</b>	<b>Application for Provisional Statement</b>	<b>Licence Application (provisional Statement holders)</b>	<b>Copy Licence</b>	<b>Notification of Change</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
New Small Casino	2645	1538	1295	6442	296	25	50
New large Casino	3495	1804	2035	7729	3793	25	50
Regional Casino	5709	4156	4156	12177	5930	25	50
Bingo Club	1512	841	841	2214	912	25	50
Betting Premises (excluding Tracks)	1276	841	841	2214	912	25	50
Tracks	1158	841	841	1732	912	25	50
Family Entertainment Centres	779	841	841	1690	735	25	50
Adult Gaming Centre	760	820	820	1732	753	25	50
Temporary Use Notices	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	25	N/A

(ii) that the sex establishment fees as given below be approved.

**RECOMMENDED SEX ESTABLISHMENT LICENCE FEES FOR 2014/15**

Current Fees:

Grant: £3,095

Transfer: £565

Renewal: £565



Taking into account the above, the recommended fee levels for sex establishments for 2014/15 are as follows:

Grant: **£3,172**

Transfer: **£579**

Renewal: **£579**

- (iii) that the hackney carriage, private hire and operator applications licence fees as given below be approved for the purposes of public consultation.

**PROPOSED HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING FEES  
2014/15**

	CURRENT FEES	PROPOSED FEES
	2013/14	2014/15
Private Hire & Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence (for 1 year)	£49.00	<b>£49.00</b>
Private Hire & Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence (for 3 years)	£75.00	<b>£75.00</b>
Additional driver's licence (adding a licence)	£20.00	<b>£20.00</b>
Hackney Carriage Knowledge Test & Re-test	£30.00	<b>£45.00</b>
Replacement badge/Licence	£15.00	<b>£10.50</b>
Vehicle Licence - New or Renewal (including vehicle plate) for 1 year	£290.00 - New £270.00 - Renewal	<b>£300.00 – New</b> <b>£280.00 - Renewal</b>
Vehicle Plate Internal/External	£20.00	<b>£25.00</b>
Transfer of Vehicle Licence (with or without vehicle plate)	£20.00	<b>£25.00</b>
<i>Vehicle Inspection - Test Fee (set by contract)</i>	<i>Max £28.00</i>	<b><i>Max £28.00</i></b>
<i>Vehicle Inspection - Missed Appointment (set by contract)</i>	<i>No charge</i>	<b><i>No charge</i></b>
Private Hire Operators Licence - New or Renewal (for 3 years)	1-3 vehicles : £73 4-10 vehicles : £240 11-20 vehicles : £480	<b>1-3 vehicles : £75</b> <b>4-10 vehicles : £250</b> <b>11-20 vehicles : £500</b>
To increase number of vehicles licensed during duration of Operators Licence	1-3 to 4-10 : £237 4-10 to 10-20: £310	<b>1-3 to 4-10 : £175</b> <b>4-10 to 10-20: £250</b>
Fee for Returned (Bounced) Cheques	£16.00	<b>£16.00</b>

- (iv) that the scrap metal, site and collectors fees as given below be approved.

	CURRENT FEES 2013/14	PROPOSED FEES 2014/15
Grant Site Licence	£240	£300
Grant Collectors Licence	£180	£200
Renewal Site Licence	N/A	£200
Renewal Collectors Licence	N/A	£100
Variation	£75	£75
Minor Variation	£20	£20

## 296 Review of the Hackney Carriage Fare Scale 2014/15

The Assistant Health, Parking & Community Safety Manager introduced the report which set out a number of options for the hackney carriage fare scale for 2014/15. The recommendations had arisen following debate at the September 2013 Taxi Forum, a subsequent questionnaire of hackney carriage drivers and operators and were discussed again at the November 2013 Taxi Forum.

The three options proposed were: - no change to the current tariff; an increase of 10p to the starting fare (drop rate) and an additional 3% overall; and an increase of 10p to the starting fare (drop rate) and an additional 5% overall. The rough implications for the cost of a journey for various distances on the basis of each of these options were outlined in the report. The responses of the trade were set out within the papers and a majority would prefer an increase of 10p to the drop rate and an additional 5% overall.

In terms of other costs, as of October 2013, the average price per litre of unleaded fuel in the South East was 132 pence – a decrease of 7 pence on the previous year. Over the same period diesel prices had decreased by approximately 5 pence, inflation had reduced as had the cost of general car insurance.

League tables of hackney carriage fares, based on a two mile journey placed Ashford 34<sup>th</sup> highest out of 364 Districts nationally, and 34<sup>th</sup> of 103 in the South of England.

It was agreed that the price of LPG would be reflected in future reports.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.3, Mrs Whybrow attended and addressed the Committee. She reminded Members that any fare increase would be the maximum that drivers could charge. They could charge less if they wanted and some did. She said it was important to take into account the needs of smaller fleets and individual drivers who had very different working patterns. She also promoted the case for an increase in fares for larger vehicles (6 or more passengers). Such vehicles had much higher overheads and maintenance costs, and often only ran 6-8 people on relatively short journeys. She proposed rate and a half for 6 or more passengers.

The Committee considered there was some merit in the point about larger vehicles and asked Officers to have a further look at this and ask drivers specific questions on whether they had the larger vehicles in their fleet and if the fare for 6+ passengers

should be at 1.5 rate. Some Members said they were surprised that this was not already the case. Another Member said that it was important to encourage people to use these types of taxi rather than taking three or four cars somewhere so there was a need to be pragmatic. It was agreed that the fares should be set as proposed from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014, but this issue was something that should be looked at during the year and perhaps an extra meeting of this Committee would be needed later in 2014 to consider this issue.

Members generally considered Ashford's fares were quite high relative to other areas and said they felt uncomfortable recommending an increase at a time when other costs for drivers were reducing.

**Recommended:**

- That (i) the hackney carriage licence fees structure as given in the table below be approved.**
- (ii) Officers examine the issue of charging a 1.5 rate for six or more passengers and report back to the Committee during 2014/15.**

In accordance with Procedure Rule 15.5 Councillor Apps requested that it be recorded he had voted against recommendation (i).

**DELIBERATLY LEFT BLANK**

**PROPOSED FARES FOR 2014/15****(a) Fares for distance or time**

	<u>£</u>
<b><u>Rate 1</u></b>	
If the distance does not exceed 700 yards, for the whole distance or for the first 220.5 seconds of waiting time	2.80
For each subsequent 171.8 yards or uncompleted part thereof	0.20
Or for each subsequent period of 54.5 seconds of waiting time or uncompleted part thereof	0.20

**(b) Surcharges for certain times and days:-****Rate 2**

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| a) For each hire commenced between 12 midnight and 7 am   | 1½ x Rate 1 |
| b) For each hire undertaken on <b>GOOD FRIDAY, EASTER MONDAY, MAY DAY, SPRING BANK HOLIDAY, SUMMER BANK HOLIDAY</b> or any other specifically declared Bank Holiday only. | 1½ x Rate 1 |

**Rate 3**

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| c) For each hire undertaken on a <b>CHRISTMAS DAY, BOXING DAY</b> or <b>NEW YEARS DAY</b><br>Note: When the holiday charge (b) or (c) is payable the Night Charge (a) is <b>NOT</b> payable. | 2 x Rate 1 |
|--|------------|

**Extras** - up to a maximum of £1.20

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| d) for each person (excluding infants in arms) carried in excess of two persons (two children under 10 years of age count as one person) irrespective of distance. | 0.20 |
|--|------|

**Note: For the purposes of counting the number of persons that the vehicle is licensed to carry, children under 10 years of age should each be counted as a person. A babe in arms should not be counted as a person.**

- |   |      |
|---|------|
| e) for each article of luggage conveyed outside the passenger compartment of the carriage | 0.05 |
| f) for perambulators  | 0.05 |
| g) for dogs   | 0.10 |

Queries concerning these minutes? Please contact Danny Sheppard:  
Telephone: 01233 330349 Email: danny.sheppard@ashford.gov.uk  
Agendas, Reports and Minutes are available on: [www.ashford.gov.uk/committees](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/committees)

**Agenda Item No:** 11  
**Report To:** COUNCIL  
**Date:** 20<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2014



**Report Title:** PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2014/15  
AND 2015/16

**Report Author:** Senior Member Services & Scrutiny Support Officer

<b>Summary:</b>	To agree the programme of meetings for 2014/15 and 2015/16
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**Key Decision:** NO

**Affected Wards:** N/A

**Recommendations:** **The Council is asked to agree the programme of meetings for 2014/15 and 2015/16**

**Policy Overview:** The programmes reflect the monthly Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny cycle as agreed by the Executive at its meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2010 (Minute No 379/1/10 refers). This generally provides for a Cabinet meeting on the second Thursday of every month and a Planning Committee meeting every four weeks. Overview & Scrutiny meetings are programmed in line with the timetable for call-in of items from the Cabinet and will generally fall on the fourth Tuesday of the month.

**Financial Implications:** N/A

**Other Material Implications:** N/A

**Exemption Clauses:** N/A

**Background Papers:** None

**Contacts:** danny.sheppard@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: 01233 330349

**DATES OF MEETINGS MAY 2014 - MAY 2015**

Meetings are usually held at the Civic Centre and start at 7.00pm unless otherwise stated

**MAY 2014**

Th 1 JCC 2.30pm  
 F 2  
 M 5 **BANK HOLIDAY**  
 Tu 6 Selection & CR  
 W 7  
 Th 8 Cabinet  
 F 9  
 M 12  
 Tu 13  
 W 14 Planning Council  
 Th 15  
 F 16  
 M 19  
 Tu 20 O&S  
 W 21  
 Th 22  
 F 23  
 M 26 **BANK HOLIDAY**  
 Tu 27  
 W 28  
 Th 29  
 F 30

F 11 THEAC 9.30am  
 M 14  
 Tu 15  
 W 16 Planning Council  
 Th 17  
 F 18  
 M 21  
 Tu 22 O&S  
 W 23 Parish Forum  
 Th 24  
 F 25  
 M 28  
 T 29  
 W 30 SGGP 10am  
 Th 31

Tu 23 O&S  
 W 24  
 Th 25 Audit  
 F 26  
 M 29  
 Tu 30

**OCTOBER 2014**

W 1  
 Th 2  
 F 3  
 M 6  
 Tu 7  
 W 8 SGGP 10am Cabinet  
 Th 9  
 F 10  
 M 13  
 Tu 14  
 W 15 Planning Council  
 Th 16  
 F 17  
 M 20  
 Tu 21  
 W 22 Parish Forum  
 Th 23  
 F 24  
 M 27 THEAC  
 Tu 28 O&S  
 W 29  
 Th 30  
 F 31

**AUGUST 2014**

F 1  
 M 4  
 Tu 5  
 W 6  
 Th 7  
 F 8  
 M 11  
 Tu 12  
 W 13  
 Th 14 Cabinet  
 F 15  
 M 18  
 Tu 19 O&S  
 W 20 Planning  
 Th 21  
 F 22  
 M 25 **BANK HOLIDAY**  
 Tu 26  
 W 27  
 Th 28  
 F 29

**SEPTEMBER 2014**

M 1  
 Tu 2  
 W 3  
 Th 4 JCC 2.30pm EN&C Forum 3pm  
 F 5  
 M 8  
 Tu 9 Joint Transportation  
 W 10  
 Th 11 Cabinet  
 F 12  
 M 15  
 Tu 16  
 W 17 Planning  
 Th 18  
 F 19  
 M 22

**JUNE 2014**

M 2  
 Tu 3  
 W 4  
 Th 5  
 F 6  
 M 9  
 Tu 10 Joint Transportation  
 W 11  
 Th 12 Cabinet  
 F 13  
 M 16  
 Tu 17  
 W 18 Planning EN&C Forum 3pm  
 Th 19  
 F 20  
 M 23  
 T 24 O&S  
 W 25  
 Th 26 Audit  
 F 27  
 M 30  
**JULY 2014**  
 Tu 1 Standards  
 W 2  
 Th 3 JCC 2.30pm  
 F 4  
 M 7  
 Tu 8  
 W 9  
 Th 10 Cabinet

**NOVEMBER 2014**

M 3  
 Tu 4  
 W 5  
 Th 6 JCC 2.30pm EN&C Forum 3pm  
 F 7  
 M 10  
 Tu 11  
 W 12  
 Th 13 Cabinet  
 F 14  
 M 17  
 Tu 18  
 W 19 Planning  
 Th 20  
 F 21  
 M 24  
 Tu 25 O&S  
 W 26  
 Th 27  
 F 28

**DECEMBER 2014**

M 1  
 Tu 2 Audit  
 W 3  
 Th 4 Cabinet  
 F 5  
  
 M 8  
 Tu 9 Joint Transportation  
 W 10  
 Th 11 Council  
 F 12

M 15  
 Tu 16 O&S  
 W 17 Planning  
 Th 18  
 F 19

M 22  
 Tu 23  
 W 24  
 Th 25 **CHRISTMAS DAY**  
 F 26 **BOXING DAY**

M 29  
 Tu 30  
 W 31

**JANUARY 2015**

Th 1 **NEW YEAR'S DAY**  
 F 2

M 5  
 Tu 6  
 W 7  
 Th 8 JCC 2.30pm  
 F 10

M 12  
 Tu 13  
 W 14 Planning  
 Th 15 Cabinet  
 F 16 THEAC 9.30am

M 19 Licensing & H&S 10am  
 Tu 20  
 W 21  
 Th 22  
 F 23

M 26  
 Tu 27 O&S  
 W 28  
 Th 29  
 F 30

**FEBRUARY 2015**

M 2  
 Tu 3  
 W 4 Planning  
 Th 5  
 F 6

M 9  
 Tu 10  
 W 11  
 Th 12 Cabinet  
 F 13

M 16  
 Tu 17  
 W 18  
 Th 19 Council (C Tax)  
 F 20

M 23  
 Tu 24 O&S  
 W 25  
 Th 26  
 F 27

**MARCH 2015**

M 2  
 Tu 3 Audit  
 W 4 Planning  
 Th 5 JCC 2.30pm  
 F 6

M 9  
 Tu 10 Joint Transportation  
 W 11  
 Th 12 Cabinet  
 F 13

M 16  
 Tu 17  
 W 18  
 Th 19  
 F 20

M 23  
 Tu 24 O&S  
 W 25  
 Th 26  
 F 27

M 30  
 Tu 31

**APRIL 2015**

W 1 Planning  
 Th 2  
 F 3 **GOOD FRIDAY**

M 6 **EASTER MONDAY**  
 Tu 7  
 W 8  
 Th 9 Cabinet  
 F 10

M 13  
 Tu 14  
 W 15  
 Th 16 Council  
 F 17

M 20  
 Tu 21  
 W 22  
 Th 23  
 F 24

M 27 THEAC  
 T 28 O&S  
 W 29 Planning  
 Th 30

**MAY 2015**


F 1  
  
 M 4 **BANK HOLIDAY**  
 Tu 5  
 W 6  
 Th 7 ABC Elections  
 F 8

M 11  
 Tu 12  
 W 13  
 Th 14  
 F 15

M 18  
 Tu 19  
 W 20  
 Th 21 Selection & CR  
 F 22

M 25 **BANK HOLIDAY**  
 Tu 26  
 W 27  
 Th 28 Council  
 F 29

**KEY**

- O&S - Overview and Scrutiny
- JCC - Joint Consultative Committee
- EN&C - Environment, Nature & Conservation
- THEAC - Transportation, Highways & Engineering Advisory Committee
- SGGP - Single Grants Gateway Panel
-  = School Holidays

**DATES OF MEETINGS MAY 2015 - MAY 2016**

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**MAY 2015**

F 1  
M 4 **BANK HOLIDAY**  
Tu 5  
W 6  
Th 7 ABC Elections  
F 8  
  
M 11  
Tu 12  
W 13  
Th 14  
F 15  
  
M 18  
Tu 19  
W 20  
Th 21 Selection & CR  
F 22  
  
M 25 **BANK HOLIDAY**  
Tu 26  
W 27  
Th 28 Council  
F 29

M 13  
Tu 14  
W 15  
Th 16 Council  
F 17  
  
M 20  
Tu 21 O&S  
W 22  
Th 23  
F 24  
  
M 27  
T 28  
W 29 Planning  
Th 30  
F 31

Th 24  
F 25  
  
M 28  
Tu 29 Audit  
W 30

**OCTOBER 2015**

Th 1  
F 2  
  
M 5  
Tu 6  
W 7  
Th 8 Cabinet  
F 9

**AUGUST 2015**

M 3  
Tu 4  
W 5  
Th 6  
F 7  
  
M 10  
Tu 11  
W 12  
Th 13 Cabinet  
F 14  
  
M 17  
Tu 18  
W 19  
Th 20  
F 21  
  
M 24  
Tu 25 O&S  
W 26 Planning  
Th 27  
F 28

M 12  
Tu 13  
W 14  
Th 15 Council  
F 16  
  
M 19  
Tu 20  
W 21 Planning  
Th 22  
F 23

**JUNE 2015**

M 1  
Tu 2  
W 3 Planning  
Th 4  
F 5  
  
M 8  
Tu 9 Joint Transportation  
W 10  
Th 11 Cabinet  
F 12  
  
M 15  
Tu 16  
W 17  
Th 18  
F 19

**SEPTEMBER 2015**

Tu 1  
W 2  
Th 3 JCC 2.30pm  
F 4  
  
M 7  
Tu 8 Joint Transportation  
W 9  
Th 10 Cabinet  
F 11

M 26 THEAC  
Tu 27 O&S  
W 28  
Th 29  
F 30

**NOVEMBER 2015**

M 2  
Tu 3  
W 4  
Th 5 JCC 2.30pm  
F 6  
  
M 9  
Tu 10  
W 11  
Th 12 Cabinet  
F 13

**JULY 2015**

W 1 Planning  
Th 2 JCC 2.30pm  
F 3  
  
M 6  
Tu 7 Standards  
W 8  
Th 9 Cabinet  
F 10 THEAC 9.30am

M 14  
Tu 15  
W 16  
Th 17  
F 18  
  
M 21  
Tu 22 O&S  
W 23 Planning

M 16  
Tu 17  
W 18 Planning  
Th 19  
F 20  
  
M 23  
Tu 24 O&S  
W 25  
Th 26  
F 27  
  
M 30



**DECEMBER 2015**

Tu 1 Audit  
 W 2  
 Th 3 Cabinet  
 F 4  
  
 M 7  
 Tu 8 Joint Transportation  
 W 9  
 Th 10 Council  
 F 11

M 14  
 Tu 15 O&S  
 W 16 Planning  
 Th 17  
 F 18

M 21  
 Tu 22  
 W 23  
 Th 24  
 F 25 **CHRISTMAS DAY**

M 28  
 Tu 29  
 W 30  
 Th 31

**JANUARY 2016**

F 1 **NEW YEAR'S DAY**

M 4  
 Tu 5  
 W 6  
 Th 7 JCC 2.30pm  
 F 8

M 11  
 Tu 12  
 W 13  
 Th 14 Cabinet  
 F 15 THEAC 9.30am

M 18 Licensing & H&S 10am  
 Tu 19  
 W 20 Planning  
 Th 21  
 F 22

M 25  
 Tu 26 O&S  
 W 27  
 Th 28  
 F 29

**FEBRUARY 2016**

M 1  
 Tu 2  
 W 3  
 Th 4  
 F 5

M 8  
 Tu 9  
 W 10  
 Th 11 Cabinet  
 F 12

M 15  
 Tu 16  
 W 17 Planning  
 Th 18 Council (C Tax)  
 F 19

M 22  
 Tu 23 O&S  
 W 24  
 Th 25  
 F 26

M 29

**MARCH 2016**

Tu 1  
 W 2  
 Th 3 JCC 2.30pm  
 F 4

M 7  
 Tu 8 Joint Transportation  
 W 9  
 Th 10 Cabinet  
 F 11

M 14  
 Tu 15 Audit  
 W 16 Planning  
 Th 17  
 F 18

M 21  
 Tu 22 O&S  
 W 23  
 Th 24  
 F 25 **GOOD FRIDAY**

M 28 **EASTER MONDAY**  
 Tu 29  
 W 30  
 Th 31

**APRIL 2016**

F 1  
  
 M 4  
 Tu 5  
 W 6  
 Th 7  
 F 8

M 11  
 Tu 12  
 W 13  
 Th 14 Cabinet  
 F 15

M 18  
 Tu 19  
 W 20 Planning  
 Th 21 Council  
 F 22

M 25 THEAC  
 T 26 O&S  
 W 27  
 Th 28  
 F 29

**MAY 2016**

M 2 **BANK HOLIDAY**  
 Tu 3 Selection & CR  
 W 4  
 Th 5 JCC 2.30pm  
 F 6

M 9  
 Tu 10  
 W 11  
 Th 12 Cabinet  
 F 13

M 16  
 Tu 17  
 W 18 Planning  
 Th 19 Council  
 F 20

M 23  
 Tu 24 O&S  
 W 25  
 Th 26  
 F 27

M 30 **BANK HOLIDAY**  
 Tu 31

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