



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 24th April 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. Declarations of Interest:- To declare any interests which fall under the following categories, as explained on the attached document:	1
a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)	
b) Other Significant Interests (OSI)	
c) Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests	
See Agenda Item 3 for further details	
4. To confirm the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on the 20 th February 2014	
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	
8. To receive, consider and adopt the recommendations set out in the Minutes of the Meetings of the Cabinet held on the 13 March and 10 April 2014 (to follow).	3 – 10

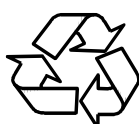
	Page Nos.
9. To receive, consider and adopt the recommendations set out in the Minutes of the Selection and Constitutional Review Committee held on the 16 th January 2014.	11 – 13
10. To receive the Minutes of the Appeals Committee held on the 10 th March 2014.	15 – 16
11. To receive the Minutes of the Audit Committee held on the 18 th March 2014.	17 – 25
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/KL
14th April 2014

Queries concerning this agenda? Please contact Keith Fearon:
Telephone: 01233 330564 Email: keith.fearon@ashford.gov.uk
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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 plus the link sent out to Members at part of the Weekly Update email on the 3rd 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 **20th February 2014**.

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, Davison, Feacey, Heyes, Mrs Heyes, Hicks, Hodgkinson, Howard, Mrs Hutchinson, Link, Marriott, Miss Martin, Mrs Martin, Michael, Mortimer, Robey, Shorter, Sims, Taylor, Wedgbury, Yeo.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Reverend Mackenzie said prayers.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Aaby, Davidson, French, Galpin.

Also Present:

Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Cultural and Project Services, Head of Community and Housing, Finance Manager, Principal Solicitor (Property and Projects), Senior Member Services and Scrutiny Support Officer.

323 Exempt or Confidential Items

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.

324 Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Interest	Minute No.
Burgess	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as the Council's appointed representative on the Romney Marshes Area Internal Drainage Board.	329
Claughton	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as a Council appointed representative on the Ashford Almshouses and Parochial Charities.	329
Feacey	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as Chairman of the Ashford Volunteer Bureau.	329
Heyes	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as a Council appointed representative on the Ashford	329

Almshouses and Parochial Charities.

Hicks	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as a Council appointed representative on the Ashford Leisure Trust and the River Stour (Kent) Internal Drainage Board.	329
Hodgkinson	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as a Council appointed representative for the Singleton Environment Centre and the Ashford Almshouses and Parochial Charities as well as her involvement with the Ashford Food Bank.	329
Miss Martin	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as a Council appointed representative for the Ashford Almshouses and Parochial Charities and for her involvement with the Brook Agricultural Museum.	329
Mrs Martin	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as a Council appointed representative on the River Stour (Kent) Internal Drainage Board.	329
Sims	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as a Council appointed representative on the Kennington Parochial Charities.	329
Smith	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as a Council appointed representative on the River Stour (Kent) Internal Drainage Board and the SWAN Community Centre Trust.	329

325 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 12th December 2013 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

326 Announcements

(a) The Mayor

The Mayor said he wanted to address the Council's response to the flooding situation that had occurred in Ashford over recent weeks. He had experienced problems in his own area, South Willesborough, and had been extremely impressed that the Chief Executive and other staff had made themselves available to support the people of the area on at least two separate occasions. The Mayor said he wanted to express his thanks to the Chief Executive, Della Fackrell and the rest of the team. He said he had personally found it very helpful to have an Officer specifically seconded to his area which was at risk of flooding. Fortunately flooding of

properties did not come to fruition with only roads being flooded, but they were prepared, the right places were sandbagged and credit must be given to the staff for that.

On a related note, the Mayor said that the flooding had caused problems for horses in fields along the Romney Marsh Road. He again had been tremendously impressed with the way that the Chief Executive and the Leader had taken decisive action to move the horses to safety. Sheila Davison had then pulled together a small team who did a superb job to ensure there were no more fatalities and he asked the Chief Executive to pass on the thanks of the Council to both the flooding team and the team who dealt with the horses.

The Mayor also wished to acknowledge Councillor Jim Wedgbury who had now served 30 years as a fireman. He passed on congratulations for this achievement on behalf of the Council. He joked that he had been elated to hear a rumour that Councillor Wedgbury was soon to stand down, but understood this related to his role as a fireman rather than a Councillor! At least he would be able to assist in the event of a fire drill in the Council Chamber!

(b) Leader

The Leader said he would like to take this opportunity to update Members on some recent developments and positive news in the Borough. He said Ashford had just come through a protracted period of inclement weather. The Borough Council had been prepared and discharged its duty to residents in an exemplary way and he wished to publicly thank all those involved. The Council had received a public acknowledgement from Ashford's MP Damian Green on the way in which they had handled the situation. Interestingly, although there was plenty of surface water over Ashford, in terms of new build homes he was delighted to say that they had coped well with the weather and there had been no known serious flooding of any household or any business in Ashford. However, that did not mean the Council was going to be complacent. They were going to review all emergency arrangements in due course with particular reference to surface water and flooding.

The Leader said that last week the Cabinet gave permission for Ashford Borough Council to purchase International House and the former Crouch's garage site. This would pave the way for the Council to drive forward its bold plans for a comprehensive redevelopment of the Commercial Quarter, bringing a potential 4000 new jobs and significant spending power to the town centre. Not only would this generate new employment opportunities locally, but it would be a valuable asset for the Council. By moving forward with these purchases and plans for the Commercial Quarter they were looking at the long-term financial stability of the Council, securing services for residents and the Borough as a whole. It was vital that in these challenging times the Council looked at its revenue budget position and looked at alternative revenue streams, which these acquisitions would deliver.

This week Ashford had received significant media attention for the vast improvements it had made in terms of recycling by featuring on a regional radio broadcast and a prime time television programme. That past Monday morning the Portfolio Holder for the Environment, Councillor Jessamy Blanford, had been interviewed by Radio Kent and then on the same evening, the BBC's *InsideOut* programme, which aired at 7.30pm. They had focused on Ashford's journey from the

worst to one of the best recycling authorities in the country and he personally wanted to congratulate Councillor Mrs Blanford on her portrayal of Ashford's position which had done the Authority proud. He also knew that colleagues would receive an update from Councillor Mrs Blanford herself after his announcement.

The Leader said he was also pleased to provide an update on the Conningbrook Lakes Country Park. The Council had been working closely with stakeholders including Brett's, Kent Wildlife Trust, Ashford Leisure Trust and water sports clubs to be in a position to provide access to local people within the very near future. Currently, that target was that water sports clubs would be able to start using the lake in late spring and they hoped to finalise an opening date with partners shortly and this would be widely publicised. It was hoped that works would be able to commence on site in April, subject to weather conditions, for the construction of an access road from the Julie Rose Stadium, and the installation of a floating pontoon, storage facilities, signage and safety equipment such as life buoys. He was delighted to also announce that they had been able to achieve the authority for a new road which would follow later when some of the housing had come on stream. Once the park was open people would also be able to walk around the main lake and see the wonderful natural setting. He said he had toured around the proposed parkland last summer and was amazed by the wonderful beauty of the lakes and parkland which created a wildlife sanctuary and a gateway to the Stour Valley. This would be a new country park that residents would benefit from for many years to come. The 200 acre park was actually on lease to the Council for 500 years.

The Leader advised that another exciting development on the horizon was the idea of an International Model Railway Education Centre in Ashford. This would be a Centre of Excellence that would stand both as an important heritage site and also a real legacy project for future generations. The proposals included a 30,000 square foot building on the old Klondyke Works site, comprising of a display and demonstration theatre, a specialist model shop, a first floor cafeteria overlooking Ashford Works and a second floor observation deck enabling visitors to watch the Eurostar trains traveling over the viaduct at 160mph. In addition an active model railway would operate around the site.

Colleagues would have no doubt noticed great strides being made on two current prominent town centre buildings – Charter House (now known as Panorama) and Ashdown Court – which were being transformed before their very eyes. He was also informed a planning application for the proposed 6000 square metre Morrison's store was expected in the next few months. These developments would revitalise the landscape, help provide much needed accommodation, help stimulate the town centre and provide a boost to Ashford's economy. In terms of economic growth there was much to be proud of. Ashford had the largest number of apprenticeships in Kent – 1300, larger than any other District and they also had the highest employment growth in Kent – 3.6%, twice the national average of 1.8%. He was also confident that the Minister would shortly be making an announcement on the Ashford International College. The Leader said he wanted to put on record his thanks to all Members of the Council, Officers and Management Team for working hard to boost the local economy and make the Borough a better place for residents.

Finally, the Leader said he wanted to thank Group Leaders particularly for transcending party politics to make a stance to join with him and this Administration

to deliver real economic growth and tangible cultural and legacy facilities for the benefit of the Borough.

(c) Cllr Mrs Blanford – Portfolio Holder for Culture and the Environment

Councillor Mrs Blanford said that the announcement she wished to make would also cover one of the questions Councillor Bell had submitted for later in the Meeting so she wondered if both could be covered by one address. Councillor Bell agreed that this would be sensible.

Councillor Mrs Blanford said she was pleased to announce that the new Waste and Recycling contract was operating well, with recycling performance regularly exceeding 50% month on month since its introduction in July 2013. To date they had recycled 5513 tonnes of dry mixed recyclables, 1417 tonnes of garden waste and 2493 tonnes of food waste – a total of 9423 tonnes to date. These figures were extremely encouraging, even better than expected and she said she would like to thank residents for embracing the new service so positively. They could now say with confidence that Ashford had gone from being the worst recycler in the country to amongst the best. She was also pleased to say that the Council's assisted service, which formerly helped 438 households, now assisted 1317, thus the Council was able to give more support to elderly and disabled residents. The initial roll out of the new service did not include communal developments, some 4000 residences, but during September 2013 and January 2014 a number of communal developments were successfully converted to the alternate weekly service, where wheeled bins were able to be accommodated. The Council's next step was to be able to provide a recycling service to a further 2000 homes by the end of March 2014. Many of these households were to be found in blocks of flats where waste produced was taken to communal collection points. The Council would now be providing, where practicable, additional containers for the dry mixed recyclables. As the Leader had just said, over the last few weeks there had been considerable interest from the media in Ashford's success. There had been several interviews on Radio Kent, newspapers and last Monday on BBC1's *InsideOut* programme, which showed Ashford in a very good light.

Councillor Mrs Blanford said that the Council would continue to monitor and review its service and continue to enable as many households as possible the opportunity to participate in recycling from their homes. A leaflet would be going out to all Council Tax payers encouraging residents to recycle and highlighting again the range of items which could be included. She said that she would like to stress that the materials sent to the Material Recycling Facility (MRF) in Edmonton was sold on to a range of different companies for re-use and none of it went to landfill. She put the Council's success down to an easy to manage system, good communications and the enthusiasm expressed by residents to adopt the new service.

The Mayor said that the point about nothing going to landfill was key and he thought there were still a lot of residents who did not realise that so it would be important to get that message out.

327 Questions from Members of the Public

In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.3, Mr Relf, a local resident, said that he had two questions he wished to ask. Mr Relf asked how many properties paying Council Tax still had not returned their voter registration forms.

Councillor Shorter, Portfolio Holder for Resource Management and Control, said that there were 2185 forms outstanding. That related to properties where there was a Council Tax liability and was currently a 96% return rate.

Mr Relf then asked how many Ashfordians were involved with the Jasmin Vardimon Company, which was supported by Ashford Borough Council, and he asked if other dance organisations would get similar support from Ashford Borough Council.

The Leader said that he thought Mr Relf had actually added to his question as submitted. His original question was how many Ashfordians were involved with the Jasmin Vardimon Company, and he thought that this was a matter for the Company itself. If, however, Mr Relf wished to know any other information, including perhaps the Council's participation with the events of Jasmin Vardimon, he would be happy to have him write in to the Council and he was sure they would give him a written reply.

328 Cabinet – 16th January and 13th February 2014

The report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, which had been tabled, clarified the procedure for consideration of the Cabinet minutes.

(a) Cabinet – 16th January 2014

In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.3 Mr Relf, a local resident said he wished to speak on Minute No. 278. Referring to benefit fraud, he said that £38m a year for a 30 month period, equated to £95m given out in benefits. The Government had made it clear they allowed 1% for fraudulent claims which would be £900,000. At the moment the Council's Fraud Department was spending around £250,000 over a 30 month period and had recovered £280,000. How did this fit in with the Leader's statement that that there would be a recommended freeze on the level of Council Tax by managing services effectively and looking at value for money and efficiency.

His Worshipful the Mayor advised the Leader that he should respond to the question as submitted by Mr Relf rather than what had just been said.

The Leader said he was confident that the Council's budget provision would provide a balanced budget, he was sure that efficiencies would continue so that the Council could continue to serve the population of Ashford in a meaningful and effective way and as to fraud, he was satisfied that the Fraud Department at the Council took all due measures and exercised due diligence in dealing with fraud.

Resolved:

That (i) the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 16th January 2014 be received and noted with the exception of Minute Nos. 280, 282 and 283.

(ii) Minute Nos. 280, 282 and 283 be approved and adopted.

(b) Cabinet 13th February 2014

Resolved:

That (i) the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 13th February 2014 be received and noted with the exception of Minute Nos. 305, 306, 307 and 310.

(ii) Minute Nos. 305, 306 and 307 be approved and adopted.

(iii) the recommendations in Minute No. 310 be deferred for consideration as part of the agenda item dealing with the Budget and Council Tax Resolutions 2014/15.

329 Budget and Council Tax Resolutions 2014/15 and Minute Number 310

Prior to moving the budget the Leader drew attention to the tabled Addendum Paper which included an addendum to Cabinet Minute 310, Recommendation (ii) on Street Trading Consents and an amended set of Council Tax Resolutions.

The Leader of the Council moved

“That the budget recommendations as set out in Minute No. 310 of the Cabinet and the formal Council Tax resolutions for 2014/15 be approved”

This was seconded.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 15.4 the Leader asked that a recorded vote be taken on the budget recommendations.

This was supported by six other Members (i.e. a total of seven) who showed their support by standing.

The Mayor then invited the Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to report on that Committee’s scrutiny of the Cabinet’s initial budget proposals. Councillor Chilton said he wanted to thank Councillors Apps, Burgess, Mrs Martin and Mortimer for the hard work they had put in sitting with him scrutinising the budget over many hours. He also wanted to thank Officers, in particular the Finance Team, who had been very helpful throughout the process. The Task Group had found the budget to be achievable and the risks were laid before Members. The Task Group had been very pleased that Portfolio Holders had been able to attend and answer questions from Members. The Task Group also wanted to draw the Council’s attention to the suggestion that a budget assumptions briefing might be useful in building the budget to assist Members in their knowledge and understanding of the budget. Attention was also drawn to the Task Group’s recommendation regarding New Homes Bonus and the need to ensure that funds had a lasting legacy in the Borough. Councillor Chilton said he wished to make a general comment on Local

Government Finance in that Local Government was being asked to do more and more with less and less support from Central Government and the Council's dependency on the charitable and voluntary sector was increasing and thanks should be given to those organisations who assisted and enhanced the work of the Council. As the budget papers showed, the future looked quite bleak for Local Government in terms of support from Central Government, and he considered it was crucial that everyone continued to work together to steer through what he called "Mr Pickles' Storm".

In response the Leader said the Government were attempting to ensure a good economic recovery and he was sure all would need to play a part and that's why this Council was working through it as it was.

A recorded vote was then taken on the motion and the Members voted as follows: -

For:	Councillors Apps, Bartlett, Mrs Bell, Bell, Bennett, Mrs Blanford, Buchanan, Burgess, Clarkson, Claughton, Clokie, Davey, Davison, Feacey, Heyes, Mrs Heyes, Hicks, Hodgkinson, Howard, Mrs Hutchinson, Link, Marriott, Miss Martin, Mrs Martin, Michael, Mortimer, Robey, Shorter, Sims, Smith, Taylor, Wedgbury.	Votes For	32
Against:	None	Votes Against	0
Abstentions:	Councillors Adley, Britcher, Chilton, Clark, Yeo.	Abstentions	5

Resolved:

That (i) the Budget for 2014/15 as recommended by the Cabinet in Minute No. 310 be approved.

(ii) the formal Council Tax resolutions set out below be approved.

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 **Table 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 (Tables F and G)**
3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2014/15 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:

- £
- (a) 88,013,035 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) 7,221,225 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) 172.57 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).**(Table C)**
- (e) 1,134,725 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached **Table 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.**(Tables D & E)**

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Table 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		

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Table B

PARISH	Parish Precept	PARISH	Parish Precept
Aldington & Bonnington	22,500	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		

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Table C

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
Aldington & Bonnington	123.20	143.73	164.26	184.79	225.85	266.91	307.99	369.58
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

Table D

TOTAL COUNCIL TAX 2014/2015 PARISH	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E	BAND F	BAND G	BAND H
Aldington & Bonnington	978.03	1,141.03	1,304.03	1,467.03	1,793.03	2,119.03	2,445.06	2,934.06
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

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

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Table F

CALCULATION OF THE BUDGET REQUIREMENT AND COUNCIL TAX AT BAND D		
	£	£
Gross Expenditure - General Fund	57,232,310	
Gross Expenditure - HRA	29,646,000	
Parish Precepts	<u>1,134,725</u>	88,013,035
Less Gross Income	(73,169,790)	<u>(73,169,790)</u>
NET EXPENDITURE		14,843,245
Add Deficit Distribution from Collection Fund	<u>0</u>	
New Homes Bonus	(1,878,000)	
Retained Business Rates	(2,457,510)	
Government Grant (RSG and S31 grants)	(3,286,510)	<u>(7,622,020)</u>
BUDGET REQUIREMENT		<u>7,221,225</u>
Less Parish Precepts		<u>(1,134,725)</u>
Council Tax Requirement		6,086,500
Band 'D' Council Tax		145.45
Average including Parishes		172.57

Table G

REVENUE BUDGET

SUMMARY

ACTUALS	ESTIMATE	PROJECTED	DETAIL	ESTIMATE
2012/13	2013/14	OUTTURN		2014/15
£	£	2013/14		2014/15
£	£	£		£
1,825,249	1,639,060	1,823,640	Corporate, Strategy & Personnel	1,844,470
1,173,433	1,250,300	1,251,700	Legal & Democratic	1,310,750
1,490,229	1,462,340	1,610,370	Planning & Development	1,810,300
1,235,530	2,189,360	2,206,660	Financial Services	2,055,760
284,271	297,470	324,470	Communications & Technology	340,150
744,706	952,630	1,112,030	Community & Housing	1,046,190
8,606,203	7,702,360	8,052,430	Culture & the Environment	7,074,780
15,359,620	15,493,520	16,381,300	SERVICE EXPENDITURE	15,482,400
(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
15,584,691	13,797,500	14,570,210	ABC BUDGET REQUIREMENT	13,647,020
			INCOME	
(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)	Council Tax	(6,086,500)
(0)	0	178,711	Budget Gap	0

330 Licensing and Health and Safety Committee – 20th January 2014

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Licensing and Health and Safety Committee held on the 20th January 2014 be approved and adopted.

331 Programme of Meetings 2014/15 and 2015/16

Resolved:

That the Programme of Meetings for 2014/15 and 2015/16 as appended to these Minutes be adopted.

332 Questions by Members of which Notice had been Given

(a) Question from Councillor Bell to Councillor Shorter, Portfolio Holder for Resource Management and Control

“How does Ashford’s Council Tax charge compare with those of other Councils, particularly those Districts and Boroughs in Kent?”

Reply by Councillor Shorter

“Thank you to Councillor Bell and I’m delighted to say we have an Addendum paper which is with everyone this evening showing the figures. The simple answer is that Ashford Borough Council is the lowest preceptor in Kent by some £10. I will not read all of the details but they are with you tonight. What I will say is that this is the Band D Council Tax levels, excluding the Parish precepts, but the Parish precept details are also attached with the papers so that information can also be gained”.

Supplementary Question by Councillor Bell

“Will the Portfolio Holder accept my thanks for freezing the Council Tax? It is very important for a number of residents. In many ways it is quite a pernicious tax so will he accept my thanks on that basis?”

Reply by Councillor Shorter

“Duly noted, thank you very much.”

Supplementary Question by Councillor Hodgkinson

“Aldington and Bonnington Parish Council submitted their precept to the Council late and I was wondering if it was possible for there to be a cut off point for Parishes to submit their precept to the Council so that when it comes to this Meeting we have had a chance to properly read the papers and are not given new figures?”

Reply by Councillor Shorter

“The simple answer to the question is that they did use the time available to them and the information we got was effectively just in time and could be accommodated within the figures we have in front of us, but the comments are noted.”

(b) Question from Councillor Bell to Councillor Mrs Blanford, Portfolio Holder for Culture and the Environment

“Could the relevant Portfolio Holder please give an update on how the new recycling scheme is progressing?”

A response to this question was given as part of the earlier item ‘Announcements’. The Mayor asked Members if there were any supplementary questions on this topic and there were none.

C
200214

(DS)

MINS:CXXX1308

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

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

Appendix 2

DATES OF MEETINGS MAY 2015 - MAY 2016

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

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

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

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 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

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 31 BANK HOLIDAY

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 14
Tu 15
W 16
Th 17
F 18

M 21
Tu 22 O&S
W 23 Planning

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

M 12
Tu 13
W 14
Th 15 Council
F 16

M 19
Tu 20
W 21 Planning
Th 22
F 23

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

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

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

Cabinet

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **13th March 2014**.

Present:

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman);

Cllr. Cloughton (Vice-Chairman);

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

Apologies:

Cllrs. Mrs Bell, Marriott, Michael.

Also Present:

Cllrs. Bennett, Burgess, Chilton, Clokie, Davison, Mortimer, Sims, Smith, Wedgbury, Yeo.

Chief Executive, Head of Legal & Democratic Services, Head of Cultural and Project Services, Head of Communications and Technology, Finance Manager, Housing Improvement Manager, Policy Manager, Cultural Projects Manager, Sports Facilities Manager, Assistant Communications Officer, Member Services and Scrutiny Manager.

356 Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Interest	Minute No.
Clarkson	Made a "Voluntary Announcement" in respect of Agenda Item No. 8 as he was an ex-National Service conscript and Member of the Honorary Artillery Company in London	361
Hicks	Made a "Voluntary Announcement" in respect of Agenda Item No. 10 as she had been appointed by the Council to the Ashford Leisure Trust. She made a statement and then left the meeting and took no part in the further discussion or voting thereon.	363
	Made a "Voluntary Announcement" in respect of Agenda Item No. 9 as she lived near the Chilmington Green area and was the Ward Member for part of the area.	362

Mortimer Made a “Voluntary Announcement” in respect of 361
Agenda Item No. 8 as he was retired Armed
Forces personnel.

357 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 13th February 2014 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

358 Leader’s Announcements

The Leader said he wished congratulate Councillor Noel Ovenden upon his election in the Wye By-election held on the 6th March 2014.

359 Tenants’ Panel Report into Tenants’ Own Improvements

The Tenants’ Panel Report set out the findings of the Council’s Tenants’ Panel Scrutiny Role into how the Housing Service dealt with tenant’s own improvements to their own homes and made a number of recommendations for how the service might better deal with such tenant improvements in the future.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Services advised that this report was the first formal piece of work carried out by the new Tenants’ Panel and for that reason she was keen that Members were made aware of their work and the context in which they were undertaking their scrutiny. She explained that the Housing Service needed to be seen as supportive of the scrutiny role the Panel were now expected to perform. The Portfolio Holder then explained that as part of the HCA’s regulatory framework, all registered providers of housing were measured over a range of factors including tenant involvement and empowerment. The Panel could make recommendations as to how the service could improve and the report essentially called for better advice to tenants before any works commenced and highlighted the fact that there could be consequences for those carrying out unauthorised works. The Panel’s detailed recommendations were set out on pages 12 and 13 of the Agenda.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) the contents of the Tenant’s Panel Report be noted.**
 - (ii) the recommendations in the report to the Head of Community and Housing be endorsed and support be offered to the Panel with their future involvement in helping improve the housing service.**

360 Establishing a Locally Defined Village “Envelope” for Challock

The report advised that adopted Planning Policy limited new housing in Challock to sites within the built-up confines of the village as defined in the Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD. As part of this exercise, Challock Parish Council had facilitated a review of the village with the aim of identifying a locally defined village envelope which could be used to help inform future planning decisions for minor new housing developments in the village.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development advised that the planning review undertaken by Councillor Clarkson had made a recommendation that a pilot project be undertaken to consider the issue of village envelopes. He explained that there had always been a definition of what would constitute development within a village envelope but this was not shown as a line on a map. In terms of the Challock proposals, he explained that this had been a long process and had involved a large group of local people which he believed demonstrated localism in action. He said that he wished to thank the local people and the Clerk of Challock Parish Council for the work they had undertaken upon the village pilot. He explained that an update report would be presented to the Cabinet in the summer of 2015.

A Member suggested that the word “appropriate” in the first recommendation should be deleted as in his view it was open to misinterpretation.

In response the Policy Manager said that the use of the word “appropriate” was entirely appropriate in the circumstances and stressed that in any event Officers and the Planning Committee had to treat each planning application on its own merits.

The Portfolio Holder for Resource Management and Control said the exercise demonstrated a real opportunity to develop a tool kit which could be used by other settlements or villages which would enable the process to be undertaken more quickly.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) the conclusions of the pilot exercise be noted and it be agreed that that the local defined village envelope boundary contained in the report be given appropriate weight in reaching decisions on planning applications for new dwellings in Challock, as set out in the report.**
 - (ii) Challock Parish Council and the Members of the village envelope working group be thanked for their efforts in bringing this pilot study to a conclusion.**
 - (iii) the outcomes of the implementation of the use of the locally defined village envelope boundary in decision making be the subject of an update report to the Cabinet in summer 2015.**

361 Adoption of Armed Forces Community Covenant

The report introduced the Armed Forces Covenant and set out the arrangements to be put in place for Ashford Borough Council to introduce a Covenant for the Borough of Ashford.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Services referred to comments made at the weekend by the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament which highlighted the plight of some soldiers returning home from Afghanistan. She said that Ashford was not able to influence the Queen's Speech, but what Ashford could do was acknowledge that Local Authorities and their partners had an important role to play with integration and support. The Armed Forces were an integral part of the nation and an inspiration to all and it was therefore imperative that local government did all it could to support them. She explained that the report set out the process by which the Council would commission this Covenant which would be signed in May when the Freedom of the Borough/March Past took place and Officers would be engaging with all organisations that offered services to ex-Armed Servicemen to ensure that Ashford's assistance and guidance was kept up to date.

The Deputy Leader said that he was sure that all were proud of the Armed Forces and he believed that this report was particularly relevant given that events associated with the commemoration of the outbreak of World War I which were due to take place later in the year. This Covenant would acknowledge support to be given to service personnel and veterans, and their families.

The Portfolio Holder for the Young and Elderly said that there was a lot of support for the initiative within the community and residents and groups would have opportunities to show their support to the Covenant by signing an electronic document which would sit alongside the Covenant. He considered an important role the Council could play would be for signposting assistance in terms of housing, education and to also help returning service personnel to re-integrate into the community.

A Member welcomed the proposed "light touch" in taking this forward and referred to the significant amount of work currently undertaken by the Ministry of Defence and Charities on service and ex-service personnel's behalf. He said there was a need to be aware of the target audience and to be sensitive to them.

The Leader explained that he had been in correspondence with the Cabinet Office who had indicated that LIBOR fines of £100m would be allocated to charities on the basis of £90m for Armed Forces Charities and £10m for Emergency Service Charities which he thought was a fitting way of using the fines.

The Portfolio Holder for Culture and the Environment explained that as part of the commemorations of the start of World War I she had been working with representatives from REME and the Royal British Legion and advised that the REME had offered to remove and refurbish the Tank at their own expense, which was currently placed on the roundabout in Chart Road. Thereafter the TCAT Team would ensure that the roundabout was kept in a good condition.

Recommended:

- That (i) the Borough Council adopt the Armed Forces Community Covenant.**
- (ii) the Mayor, Leader and Chief Executive sign the Covenant on behalf of the Ashford Borough Council.**

362 Priority Projects

The report sought the Cabinet's endorsement of the inclusion of two more projects on the list of Council priorities, as monitored by the Ashford Strategic Delivery Board. These were the Ashford International Station and Chilmington Green.

The Chairman considered it was appropriate to add both schemes to the list and in terms of the station, he advised that out of 2,563, Ashford Station was 134th in terms of the number of passengers who used it to access rail services. The total footfall was in the region of 3.3m, which he considered was a very significant figure. He believed the station would become even busier on a demand led basis and also following the introduction of other services from Europe.

In response to a question the Chairman advised that the Department of Transport were currently deliberating in terms of the solution to the signalling system issue, which he hoped would be resolved in the next eighteen months or so.

In terms of the proposals to add Chilmington Green, a Member, who was one of the Ward Members for the Chilmington Green area, explained that at a recent meeting he had attended with Shadoxhurst Parish Council, it was believed that in the region of 85% of residents in that area were opposed to the Chilmington Green development.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet endorse the inclusion of the Ashford International Station and Chilmington Green projects as part of the priority programme of projects listed as integral to the growth and economic development of the Borough.

363 Leisure Management Procurement Proposals

The report dealt with the current and future management services and lease of the Stour Centre and Julie Rose Stadium as currently managed by Ashford Leisure Trust on behalf of the Council. The report also explained the current challenges faced by the Council and the market context in which the current management arrangements and performance of the Trust had been considered.

The Portfolio Holder for Culture and the Environment explained that the Council were proposing significant changes to the older part of the Stour Centre, in association with the Jasmin Vardimon Dance Company, which made preparing a new procurement specification difficult at the present point in time. Ashford Leisure Trust

was operationally very successful and the Portfolio Holder said it seemed sensible to offer an extension to them.

The Portfolio for Housing and Customer Services advised that she was the Council's representative on the Ashford Leisure Trust and she would declare an interest and leave the meeting after she had made a statement in her role as Trustee.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Services advised that her interest was non-pecuniary as ALT was a Charitable Trust Company set up at the instigation of the Council. All Trustees (herself included) were unpaid by the Trust and invariably they did not claim expenses. She said she did attend all ALT meetings and therefore she was aware of the Trust's position. She explained that all Trustees of any Charitable Trust were under a legal obligation to protect the interests of the Trust, including its assets. Easily the most valuable of those assets (apart from its loyal and hardworking staff), was the Lease ALT entered into in good faith with the Council for the Stour Centre in 2009. She said that probably the main reason that a lease was such a valuable asset to the Trust was because no steps were required or taken at the time by the Council to remove the statutory business tenancy protection of the Landlord and Tenants Act 1954 as amended. The lease which lasted until 2030 with 5 year break clauses therefore had the full protection of that Act and the Courts. She said that she had indicated that each ALT Trustee was under a personal statutory duty to ensure that this protection remained and to keep it in place, by legal means if necessary, because it had very significant asset value to ALT as a Charitable Trust.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Services said that Trustees believed that they were under a personal statutory duty to maintain that protection, along with 5 year break clauses for the integrity of the whole of ALT's business. She said she now believed she had discharged what she believed to be her responsibility as the Council's representative on the Ashford Leisure Trust to explain the true position as she understood it. She advised that she would now leave the meeting, but said that before a final decision was reached she would urge the Council to await the final FMG report and to take detailed independent advice on all of the points she had mentioned. She said it was a fact that the Council had saved literally millions of pounds by its wise creation of ALT and it would be a serious error to put future savings, staff and operations at risk without considering the consequences very carefully indeed.

A Member referred to the Conningbrook Country Park and Lakes Project and said that he had expressed concerns previously that if ALT took over the management of the facilities, whether they had the appropriate level of knowledge and experience in dealing with water sports. He understood that one additional member of staff did have experience and he stressed that it was important to get the management of the facilities right. The Chairman advised that Cabinet was being asked to consider a further 3 year lease of the Julie Rose Stadium with the Trust and to negotiate amendments to the Stour Centre lease to provide for a variation of a break clause to 31st March 2017.

In response to comments made earlier in the meeting regarding the experience needed in terms of managing the water sports facilities the Head of Cultural and

Project Services expressed his gratitude to Councillor Davison for the significant help and advice he had given on water sports. He explained that he had spoken to all regional water sports organisations and in particular he said he believed Ashford had the best canoe club in all of Kent. He also explained that Ashford Leisure Trust had been working for two years on the proposed water sports facilities, and he said that personally he had managed three water sport facilities in the past. He hoped that access to the site would be available for sporting organisations from the 31st May 2014.

A Member said that it was important to highlight for schools what future water sports facilities would be available.

Resolved:

- That (i) **the support of the Stour Centre Regeneration Member Steering Group for the recommendation to negotiate a variation to the Stour Centre lease, and a three year lease of the Julie Rose Stadium operating arrangements as set out within the report be noted.**
- (ii) **the appropriate Heads of Service be authorised to agree the Terms and Conditions of:-**
- (a) **the variation of the lease of the Stour Centre;**
 - (b) **a three year lease of the Julie Rose Stadium;**
 - (c) **contract and service specifications in conjunction with relevant Portfolio Holders, and**
 - (d) **execute and complete all necessary negotiations and documentation to give effect to the recommendations.**
- (iii) **the appropriate Heads of Service prepare a further report to Cabinet setting out a procurement process timetable and Heads of Terms for Management of appropriate leisure facilities to enable the Council to consider commercial tender and investment proposals in the future.**

364 Ashford Strategic Delivery Board

Resolved:

That the Notes of the Meeting of the Ashford Strategic Delivery Board held on the 30th January 2014 be received and noted.

365 Tenterden 1 Task Group

Resolved:

That the Notes of the Meeting of the Tenterden 1 Task Group held on the 10th February 2014 be received and noted.

366 Planning Task Group

Resolved:

That the Notes of the Planning Task Group held on the 12th February 2014 be received and noted.

367 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.

(KRF/VS)
MINS: CAXX1411

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Cabinet

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **10th April 2014**.

Present:

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman);

Cllr. Cloughton (Vice-Chairman);

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

Apologies:

Cllrs. Chilton, Howard

Also Present:

Cllrs. Bennett, Britcher, Burgess, Clokie, Davey, Davison, Michael, Mortimer, Ovenden, Smith

Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Planning and Development, Head of Communities and Housing, Policy Manager, Personnel Officer, Policy and Performance Officer, Senior Communications Officer, Member Services and Scrutiny Manager.

390 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 13th March 2014 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

391 Joint Transportation Board – 11th March 2014

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Transportation Board held on the 11th March 2014 be received and noted.

392 Amendments to the Council's Community Right to Challenge Procedure and Officer Delegations

The report sought approval to implement amendments to the Council's policy and procedure for responding to expressions of interest submitted pursuant to the Community Right to Challenge to tie in more closely with contractual time frames and offer increased flexibility when responding.

Recommended:

The amendments to the Council's Community Right to Challenge policy and procedure as set out below be approved:-

For multi-year contracted services of two years or more

- (i) The time frame during which Ashford Borough Council will accept the submission of an Expression of Interest will be a one month period ending 18 months before the date of the end of the contract (ignoring any extension to the contract granted under its terms).**
- (ii) The maximum time within which Ashford Borough Council will make a decision on whether to accept or reject an Expression of Interest and notify the part that has submitted that Expression of Interest will be six months from the date of the end of the one month period during which the Council will accept the submission of an Expression of Interest.**
- (iii) The minimum and maximum period of time before any relevant procurement exercise begins will be from the date of the acceptance of an Expression of Interest to the date of the end of the contract (including any extension to the contract granted under its terms).**
- (iv) That the decision on whether to accept, reject or modify an Expression of Interest should be delegated to the relevant Head of Service, in consultation with the Council's Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder**

For contracted services where the contract term is between 10 months and one day and two years

- (v) The time frame during which Ashford Borough Council will accept the submission of an Expression of Interest will be a one month period ending nine months before the date of the end of the contract. (ignoring any extension to the contract granted under its terms).**
- (vi) The maximum time within which Ashford Borough Council will make a decision on whether to accept or reject an Expression of Interest and notify the party that has submitted that Expression of Interest will be six months from the date of the end of the one month period during which the Council will accept the submission of an Expression of Interest.**
- (vii) The minimum and maximum period of time before any relevant procurement exercise begins will be from the date of the acceptance of an Expression of Interest to the date of the end of the contract (including any extension to the contract granted under its terms).**
- (viii) That the decision on whether to accept, reject or modify an Expression of Interest should be delegated to the relevant Head of Service, in consultation with the Council's Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder.**

For non-contracted services and contracts of ten months or less

- (ix) The time frame during which Ashford Borough Council will accept the submission of an Expression of Interest will be a one month period for the month of June every five years beginning 1 June 2019.
- (x) The maximum time within which Ashford Borough Council will make a decision on whether to accept or reject an Expression of Interest and notify the party that has submitted that Expression of Interest will be three months from the date of the end of the one month period during which the Council will accept the submission of an Expression of Interest.
- (xi) The minimum and maximum period of time before any relevant procurement exercise begins will be from the date of acceptance of an Expression of Interest to 12 months thereafter.
- (xii) That the decision on whether to accept, reject or modify an Expression of Interest should be delegated to the relevant Head of Service, in consultation with the Council's Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder.

General

- (xiii) To delegate authority to the Head of Community and Housing to prepare, publish (including publication on the Council's website) and maintain the Council's Contracts Register which will include details of the time frames when expressions of interest may be submitted in relation to a service covered by a Council contracts. This will ensure that those thinking of using the Right to Challenge know when they can submit an expression of interest.
- (xiv) To delegate authority to the relevant Head of Service in consultation with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to refuse to consider and Expression of Interest submitted outside of the Council's published time frames for the acceptance of the submission of an Expression of Interest.
- (xv) To amend the terms of reference of the Appeals Committee so as to exclude appeals in relation to the rejection of expressions of interest. This is because there is no requirement in the Localism Act to offer any right of appeal.

393 Pay Policy Statement - Annual Review of Ashford Living Wage and Review of Discretionary Compensation Policy

The report provided Members with an updated Pay Policy Statement for approval in line with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, together with an updated Discretionary Compensation Policy which would apply the provisions of the supplementary guidance on "Openness and Accountability in Local Pay" 2013. The report also recommended that the rate for the Ashford Living Wage Allowance which

would meet the Council's commitment for this to be better than the National Living Wage rate.

The Portfolio Holder explained that the guidance stipulated that severance packages totalling over £100,000 had to be approved by Full Council but for situations which fell below this figure, the report proposed arrangements by which the Chief Executive would be granted delegated authority to agree settlement levels subject to the concurrence of the Leader based on the recommendation of the Portfolio Holder. He also explained that the Joint Consultative Committee had been content with the proposals set out within the report.

The Chairman said that despite the fact that staff numbers had reduced over recent years, he considered that Ashford had staff who worked very hard and with a great deal of commitment. He also said it was important to look after the lower end of the pay scale and he was pleased that the Council was able to pay higher than the National Living Wage Rate.

Recommended

- That
- (i) the provisions of the supplementary guidance on "Openness and Accountability in Local Pay" 2013 in respect of referring severance packages of £100,000 or more to Full Council for their approval be accepted.**
 - (ii) the increase of the Ashford Living Wage Allowance to £7.80 per hour with effect from 1st April 2014 for all employees in receipt of an hourly rate less than this be agreed.**
 - (iii) the Pay Policy Statement attached at Appendix A to the report be approved.**
 - (iv) the Discretionary Compensation Policy attached at Appendix B to the report be approved.**

394 Affordable Homes Programme 2015-18

The report provided an outline of the forthcoming funding programme administered by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) for 2015-18 and detailed a proposed bid to continue the Council's successful house building programme through this period to deliver a further 106 homes.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Services explained that the Housing Department had the opportunity to bid for further funding from the HCA and this report was asking for permission to pursue that funding. She advised that some discussion had already taken place with the HCA and she believed that the Council was in a strong position to deliver their objectives. The bid would help the Council to secure capital to provide 60 homes for affordable rent over three years and 46 units of sheltered housing scheme refurbishment. Some of the care homes were rather tired and only provided small units of accommodation which were not up to modern standards and peoples' expectations.

The Portfolio Holder said that she wished to highlight that the Council currently had over 1,400 households on the Housing Register and a predicted need of 368 per

annum in the future. In recommending the report, the Portfolio Holder drew attention to the fact that the Head of Communities and Housing would report back to Cabinet with a more detailed plan once the outcome of the bidding process was known.

Resolved:

- That (i) it be agreed that further funding should be sought through the Affordable Homes Programme 2015-18 to enable the continued development, by the Council, of affordable housing in the Borough.**
- (ii) the Head of Community and Housing be authorised to submit a bid to the AHP 2015-18 for grant funding as detailed in the report.**
- (iii) a programme of conversions in the Council housing stock from social rent to affordable rent to support the delivery of new affordable homes commencing in April 2014 be agreed.**

395 Short Stay Accommodation Provision

The report provided information regarding progress on the proposal to convert 1a Christchurch Road into a short stay accommodation facility, together with details of the necessary budget. It also set out the arrangements for the management of the facility including proposals to appoint staff to assist in the management of the building.

Tabled at the meeting were further updates and a revision to Recommendation (i) including a revised Appendix 1. The views of the Portfolio Holder for Resource Management and Control were also tabled.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Services said that even with the higher than expected tender costs, the costs for this project were still within that original figure. She explained that the scheme would create savings of £50,000 to the General Fund every year. She further explained that Officers were working hard to try and reduce the tender costs but said there was a decision to be made as to whether to go for cheaper materials which would need replacing earlier or to go from the outset for tough, robust materials which would withstand the high churn of families. The Portfolio Holder believed that the Council should go for the more durable option as rooms would be offered predominantly to households with families. Such households would be granted a non-secure licence as interim accommodation for people claiming homelessness. This short term tenure enabled good management of the property and should any issues arise, they could be addressed quickly.

The Portfolio Holder then referred to paragraph 21 of the report and said that this report sought permission to employ two building superintendents. It also referred to the furnishings which would be purchased.

In response to a question from a Member, the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Services confirmed that tenders had been received. She also gave details of how the scheme could be value engineered to reduce the overall costs.

The Portfolio Holder for Resource Management and Control said he supported the process of value engineering but he agreed that the asset must be of high quality and fit for purpose. He believed that the scheme would not only save money for the Borough Council but would provide a much improved option compared to Bed and Breakfast accommodation. He also confirmed that the £50,000 saving to the General Fund would be on a year on year basis.

The Deputy Chief Executive referred to the tabled paper (which advised of revised costs) and explained that the figures within the third bullet point were incorrect and the original overall budget should be shown as £530,000 and not £750,000. He also said that the word "expected" in the second bullet point should have read "unexpected".

In response to a question about the overall borrowing figure, the Deputy Chief Executive said that it was based on the original costs of the scheme plus the additional £120,000 sought within the revised recommendation.

Resolved:

- That (i) the Capital and Revenue Budgets for 1A Christchurch Road set out in the Appendix 1 tabled at the meeting with an increased cost of £120,000 be approved.**
- (ii) the Head of Community and Housing be authorised to enter into a contract for the conversion of the property subject to the outcome of the tender process.**
- (iii) the Head of Community and Housing be authorised to proceed with the recruitment of two part-time Superintendent Posts on Grade SCP14-17 and to secure arrangements to provide an out of hours monitoring of the scheme.**

396 Proposed Response to Dealing with the Duty to Co-operate in Local Plan Making

The report outlined a possible approach to tackling the Duty to Co-operate and suggested a co-ordinated approach with other East Kent Local Authorities and other Partners.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development explained that the duty required Local Authorities to co-operate with neighbours on planning issues and in particular on the provision of housing. He said if there was a gap in an Authority's ability to comply with their Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, the duty stated that the Authority should approach neighbouring Authorities to see whether they were able to bridge that gap. He advised that the report set out a protocol on how it was proposed to be dealt with in conjunction with other East Kent Districts.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Customer Services said that in view of the Government's desire that Local Councils should ascertain their housing numbers and economic predictions it was essential that Ashford had a conversation with neighbouring Authorities. She explained that it would not be, for example, sufficient for Ashford to say that it didn't want to accommodate other areas' housing numbers. Furthermore there would be financial implications if the new Local Plan was found

“unsound” and she said that one of the ways to ensure a successful plan was to commence an early dialogue with other Districts in East Kent.

In response to a question from a Member as to how wide the word “neighbour” extended, the Chairman advised that it even included parts of London.

A Member referred to his understanding that the Maidstone Local Plan showed a shortage of 2,500 homes and asked whether work was in process to assess what capacity Ashford had. The Chairman confirmed that capacity figures were being examined.

Resolved:

- That (i) the proposed approach and draft protocol as set out within the report be approved and the draft protocol be shared with the East Kent Authorities for their comments.**
- (ii) the Chief Executive be granted delegated authority in consultation with the Leader to make minor amendments to the draft protocol in response to comments made by other Authorities.**

397 M20 Junction 10A

The report considered the pro’s and cons of the available options for the delivery of a new motorway junction and to establish a Cabinet position on the subject to inform future discussions with the Highways Agency, Kent County Council and developers as well as potential funding agencies such as the South East LEP.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development confirmed that Junction 10A was one of the “Big Eight” proposals prioritised by the Council and was vital for the development in South East Ashford. He said that Highway Agency modelling indicated that the proposal could provide traffic capacity up to 2030 with a potential opening date of 2018.

The Portfolio Holder for Tourism and the Rural Economy considered the report dealt too heavily on the “pro’s” rather than the “cons” of the proposal and suggested that there was a need to look further into the future. She considered that the new Junction might mean that Ashford had to increase the overall number of houses it would have to supply within its Local Plan and therefore she would have liked to see the information in the report challenged. She referred to the financial implications section of the report and drew attention to the fact that if any direct financial consequences arose for this Council, there could be a potential impact on the general revenue fund.

The Chairman explained that proposals for Junction 10A had been around for quite a while and confirmed that Kent County Council would be the Planning Authority. He said that the proposal was being developed by Kent County Council working with the Highways Agency and would involve detailed traffic modelling of the Junction. He emphasised that Cabinet was being asked to support in principle the Junction making no assumptions about future planning decisions which would be taken on their merits and at the appropriate time.

A Member, whilst accepting the need for a Junction 10A, said that it was important that it was the right one for Ashford. He said that he had concerns during the recent presentation by a representative of the Highways Agency on the current proposal.

The Chairman explained that one of the reasons behind establishing Ashford's Strategic Delivery Board was that it was comprised of all partners who would be associated with the delivery of the Junction and he said that he would emphasise at meetings that it was vitally important that the Junction worked in practice.

The Portfolio Holder for Transportation, Highways and Engineering said he had concerns over the proposed design of the Junction and was extremely worried that it could cause congestion in other areas of the Town.

The Head of Planning and Development explained that £20 million was available through LEP Funding but he said Kent County Council would be spending much of the forthcoming year working on a detailed business case. The LEP would need to be convinced that this was realistic. The Junction would only have Folkestone facing slip roads because of its proximity to Junction 10 and he commented that the interim scheme was the only option available at the present time.

The Portfolio Holder for Resource Management and Control referred to the recommendations in the report and confirmed that support was being sought in principle as a way to move forward. In terms of any future financial implications, he said that these would obviously need to be considered in terms of the potential benefits of the Junction in terms of the commercial impact on the Town Centre.

Resolved:

- That (i) support be given in principle to the delivery of the SELEP's funded scheme for Junction 10A by 2019.**
- (ii) support in principle be given to the subsequent delivery of an enhanced SELEP scheme to create a new, all movements Junction 10A in the same location when funding permits.**

398 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.

(KRF/AEH)

MINS:CAXX1415

Selection and Constitutional Review Committee

Minutes of a Meeting of the Selection and Constitutional Review Committee held in Committee Room No. 2 (Bad Münstereifel Room), Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the 16th January 2014.

Present:

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman);

Cllr. Claughton (Vice-Chairman);

Cllrs. Bennett, Mrs Blanford, Chilton, Davison, Mrs Dyer, Galpin, Howard, Robey, Smith.

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

Apologies:

Cllrs. Davidson, Mrs Martin

Also Present:

Member Services and Scrutiny Manager.

272 Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Interest	Minute No.
Davison	Made a "Voluntary Announcement" as he knew the current Chairman of the Kent Association of Local Councils (Ashford Branch).	276

273 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on the 10th October 2013 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

274 Terms of Reference of the Environment and Nature Conservation Forum

The report advised that at the inaugural meeting of the Environment and Nature Conservation Forum on the 24th October 2013, a Mission Statement and Terms of Reference had been presented for agreement. They were a combination of the two

previous fora (Nature Conservation Forum and Environmental Forum). The amended version of the Mission Statement and Terms of Reference were appended to the report for approval by the Committee.

Recommended:

That the Mission Statement and Terms of Reference, attached as an appendix to the report, for the Environment and Nature Conservation Forum be approved and be incorporated into the Council's Constitution.

275 Representatives on Outside Bodies/Organisations

The report advised of the need to make two nominations to the Ashford Almshouses and Parochial Charities for the period to 30th November 2016.

The Chairman advised that he intended to arrange for the list of outside bodies/organisations the Council appointed representatives to, to be examined to assess whether they were still relevant in terms of the Borough Council's activities and furthermore he was also aware that some of the organisations no longer met.

Resolved:

That Councillors Hodgkinson and Miss Martin be appointed to sit on the Ashford Almshouses and Parochial Charities to 30th November 2016.

276 Constitutional Issues

The report dealt with changes the Leader of the Council wished to make to the Conservative Group nominations on the Parish Forum and also the appointment of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman and the ex-officio position. The report also noted the change in membership of the Education and Vocational Skills Advisory Committee in terms of the Labour Group's nomination as Councillor Britcher had taken the seat which had previously been held by Councillor Chilton.

Tabled at the meeting was an update report which explained that the Leader wished to nominate the Chairman of the Ashford Local Branch of the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) to be appointed as the Vice-Chairman of the Parish Forum. It was also proposed that the ex-officio position be taken by the Leader of the Council.

A Member explained that two Parish Councils within the Borough area were not members of the Kent Association of Local Councils which included in his own Ward, Orlestone Parish Council. The Chairman advised that he had raised with the Chief Executive all the points the Member had made previously and indicated that those Parish Councils would be invited to future rural conferences.

In response to a comment about having a non-elected Borough Council Member as the Vice-Chairman of the Parish Forum, the Chairman emphasised that the Parish Forum did not have any executive powers and any recommendations would need to be considered by the Cabinet and therefore he did not see that this was an issue.

Recommended:

- That**
- (i) it be noted that Councillors Mrs Bell and Burgess will take the Conservative Group's seats on the Parish Forum.**
 - (ii) Councillor Mrs Bell be appointed Chairman of the Parish Forum and the Chairman of the Local Branch of the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) (currently Mr John Rivers) be appointed as Vice-Chairman.**
 - (iii) the Terms of Reference of the Parish Forum be amended to those appended to the update paper.**
 - (iv) it be noted that Councillor Britcher will take the Labour Group seat on the Education and Vocational Skills Advisory Committee.**

(KRF/AEH)

MINS:SCRX1403

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Appeals Committee

Minutes of a Meeting of the Appeals Committee held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **10th March 2014**.

Present:

Cllr. Burgess (Chairman);

Cllrs. Bennett, Britcher

Also Present:

Cllr. Mortimer (Reserve)

Appellant.

Licensing Manager, Licensing Officer, Legal Advisor, Member Services & Scrutiny Support Officer.

338 Election of Chairman

Resolved:

That Councillor Burgess be elected as Chairman for this meeting of the Appeals Committee.

339 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of this Committee held on the 4th October 2012 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

340 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved:

That pursuant to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item, namely 'Appeal Against the refusal to grant a Private Hire Drivers Licence' as it is likely 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 paragraphs 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

341 Appeal against the Refusal to grant a Private Hire Drivers Licence

The Chairman explained the procedure to be followed.

The Licensing Manager had submitted a report which outlined the case. He went through the case and explained the decision to refuse to grant the Appellant a Private Hire Drivers licence.

The Appellant then put his case to the Committee.

The Appellant, Licensing Manager, Licensing Officer and Cllr Mortimer then left the meeting and the Committee retired to make its decision.

The Appellant, Licensing Manager, Licensing Officer and Cllr Mortimer then returned as the Committee wished to put some questions to both the Appellant and Licensing Manager.

The Appellant, Licensing Manager, Licensing Officer and Cllr Mortimer then left the meeting and the Committee retired to make its decision.

The Appellant, Licensing Manager, Licensing Officer and Cllr Mortimer then returned to be advised of the decision.

Resolved:

The Committee allowed the appeal and that the Appellant be granted a 1 year Private Hire Drivers Licence.

The Legal Advisor advised the Appellant that if he received any further convictions or breached the Private Hire Driver Conditions, his licence may be revoked and any subsequent Appeal would likely be upheld.

The Chairman reiterated to the Appellant that the Committee expected him to maintain a clean record and this would be checked and monitored by Officers.

Audit Committee

Minutes of a Meeting of the Audit Committee held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **18th March 2014**.

Present:

Cllr. Clokie (Chairman);
Cllr. Link (Vice-Chairman);
Cllrs. Michael, Shorter, Smith, Taylor.

Apology:

Cllr. Marriott.

Also Present:

Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Audit Partnership, Incoming Head of Audit Partnership, Audit Partnership Manager, Principal Accountant, Policy & Performance Officer, Senior Member Services & Scrutiny Support Officer.

Andy Mack, Lisa Robertson - Grant Thornton.

368 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of this Committee held on the 3rd December 2013 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

369 The Local Code of Corporate Governance

The Policy & Performance Officer introduced the report and advised that the Council had produced its own Local Code of Corporate Governance back in 2008. The publication of and updated CIPFA and SOLACE Delivering Good Governance Framework in late 2012, together with an acknowledgement within the 2012/13 Annual Governance Statement, made it timely for Ashford to refresh its own local code. The report summarised the changes in governance since the Council last agreed a Local Code, and the impact of this on the Council's Local Code. The report also sought agreement to an updated Local Code of Corporate Governance for 2014.

The Portfolio Holder said he welcomed the updated document and was pleased to see references in the report to the new ways the Council was operating (service delivery through trading companies etc.)

The Chairman said that paragraph 25 of the report needed to be amended to make it clear that the earlier interaction over Cabinet reports related to Cabinet Members only and not all Members.

Resolved:

- That (i) the changes in governance, both externally and internally, since the 2008 Local Code was agreed, be noted.**
- (ii) the new Local Code of Corporate Governance for 2014 be agreed.**

370 Certification of Grant Claims – Annual Report

Mrs Robertson introduced the report which summarised Grant Thornton's overall assessment of the Council's management arrangements in respect of the certification process for 2012/13 and drew attention to significant matters in relation to individual claims.

Members asked if there was any provision to enable the auditors to decide that where errors were so minor in the overall scheme of things that there was no value in pursuing them. Considering the sums involved (errors of £26 and £727 from an overall expenditure of £84.2m) it did seem excessive that the Council had been rated as amber for accuracy of claim forms. Mrs Robertson advised that this was an area where the guidance was set by the Government and was not based on materiality or controls and any error no matter how small had to be marked as such. Mr Mack added that the External Auditors were similarly frustrated by the lack of flexibility and would be sympathetic to the Council making representations to the relevant Government department on this matter.

In response to a question about the certification fees Mrs Robertson advised that the fee was set centrally by the Audit Commission. They had set an indicative scale fee based on 2010/11 certification fees for each audited body. An additional fee variation had also been proposed and agreed with Officers to reflect the additional work that had to be undertaken on the housing benefit claim.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.

371 Annual Governance Statement – Progress on Remediating Exceptions

The report was the latest update of progress against the areas for continued work which were included in the Annual Governance Statement agreed by the Committee in June 2013. It highlighted the following matters: - the Leader's wish that there be a refocusing of Council priorities and further cultural development to consolidate the direction that was currently set out in the business plan and Cabinet's previous position statement; the Leader's proposal for a further review of some aspects of the constitution to reinforce the principle of inclusivity and to clarify delegations; production of an Annual Report; updating the 2008 Code of Corporate Governance; and a procurement strategy review. The Policy & Performance Officer explained that following the agreement of the updated Code of Corporate Governance earlier at this

meeting, three of the five areas had now been completed, with work on the review of the constitution and the production of an annual report to continue.

Resolved:

That the Committee note the progress to date on resolving the governance exceptions identified in the 2012/2013 Annual Governance Statement.

372 Presentation of Financial Statements

In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.3 Mr Relf, a local resident had applied to speak on this item and to a letter he had referred to the Council's External Auditor. He said he was concerned about the annual accounts of the Council and wanted to bring some issues that he thought were relevant to the attention of the Committee. He referred to the TV programme 'Benefits Street' and the benefits debates that were held while the series was running. He was aware that during one of the Council's benefit fraud initiative weeks 15 claimants had been picked at random and eight had been found to be incorrect (overpayment or fraudulent claims). He considered this gave an indication that benefit fraud in Ashford was approximately 50% of the total paid out yearly. Being a service provider himself, Mr Relf said he considered there was a prolific amount of fraud going on. He commented on the income of the Council's Benefit Fraud department which he thought only just covered the running costs. He also said that at the last Council meeting he had been told that 2000 people had not returned their electoral registration forms, which was a legal requirement and meant that many people would not be on the Electoral Roll, which he assumed was due to benefit fraud. Mr Relf said if recorded data was kept more up to date and correct, money could be saved on fraudulent benefit claims. He therefore said he would like to object to the Council's accounts on the grounds of departmental failures. He referred to other projects the Council was involved in when he thought more money could be made available to tackle benefit fraud in a constructive way thus making more money available to be spent on more meaningful projects for the people of Ashford. He said he was more than willing to meet with any member of the Audit Team to point out specific individuals and residences that contained omissions on the Electoral Register.

Mr Mack thanked Mr Relf for his comments. He explained that the Council's Statement of Accounts would be published around the 30th June after which Grant Thornton's audit work would take place, with a report back to this Committee in September. It was therefore not possible to accept an objection to the accounts at this stage, but he had received Mr Relf's comments in writing and he would be in touch with him at the appropriate time to address the points he had raised.

The Principal Accountant introduced the report which advised that the Council was required to follow statutory guidance for the publication of its accounts. Each year the guidance was reviewed and updated. The report looked at the impact of these updates on the Council's accounts for 2013/14. In addition, the report reviewed the lessons learnt from the accounts process for 2012/13. She also advised that the Council had completed a review of its accounting policies that would be used for the production of the statement of accounts.

A Member said he was disappointed that the non-return of related party declaration forms by Councillors was still an issue. Was it not possible to 'name and shame'? The Chairman asked to be advised of any outstanding forms before the April Council meeting so it could be mentioned when moving the Minutes. The Deputy Chief Executive said Officers would look at ways of combining data from other forms and potentially giving Members less to fill in, but advised that there were differences between this and other Interests forms.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted and the accounting policies for the 2013/14 accounts appended to the report be approved.

373 Financial Statements for Year Ended 31st March 2014 – Assurance Statement

The Deputy Chief Executive tabled a letter from Grant Thornton advising of the need for the Council's External Auditors to annually refresh their understanding of how both the Audit Committee and Management Team gained assurance over management processes and arrangements. He apologised for not circulating anything in advance of the meeting. The response to Grant Thornton needed to give a full reply to each of the points raised in their letter and would be quite similar in content to last year's response. He asked if the Committee were happy for him to draft a response, in consultation with Members by email and then return to Grant Thornton. Members said they would be happy with this approach.

Resolved:

That the Deputy Chief Executive produce the Audit Committee response letter, in consultation with Committee Members.

374 Strategic Risk Management – Six Monthly Update

The report set out the current position in respect of the Council's strategic risk management arrangements.

The Chairman said that the Committee had asked that the Chilmington development be included as a standalone risk within the register, but this had not yet happened. The Deputy Chief Executive advised that the Committee's previous discussions on this had been held confidentially and as the issue was still quite sensitive it was not yet correct to include this publically within the Register. He would take advice about when was the right time, but assured the Members it would be included in the future and that Officers were discussing this and related issues and risks routinely on a weekly and sometimes daily basis.

The Committee ran through the Management Action Plans for the risks one by one and the following comments were made: -

Risk 1a – Economic Growth

Noted and agreed to leave score at 4/3 (Significant/Severe).

Risk 1b – Mix and Quality of Housing

Noted and agreed to leave score at 4/3 (Significant/Severe).

Risk 2 – Volatile Income Streams

The proposal was to reduce this from a score of 6/3 (Very High/Severe) to 5/2 (High/Medium). The Chairman said he still had concerns over the risks associated with the Council having to borrow significant amounts of money. The Portfolio Holder said it was a question of judgment. All loans were entered into with full due diligence and the new Trading and Enterprise Board would provide extra checks and balances to those already in place. The Deputy Chief Executive said it had been his proposal to reduce this score. Whilst not denying that the financial context was difficult, or that the risk was high, the Council now had in place a number of formal and informal processes to manage the risks and whilst the Council could not change the financial context he felt there was now a better understanding of it and a clear understanding of the risks and of the actions needed, with a number already actioned. The Committee agreed to reduce the score to 5/2 (High/Medium).

Risk 3a – Community Demands

Noted and agreed to leave score at 3/2 (Low/Medium).

Risk 3b – Consequences of Welfare Reform

The proposal was to reduce this from a score of 4/3 (Significant/Severe) to 3/3 (Low/Severe). The Deputy Chief Executive said there was actually a good account to present here, with an awful lot of work undertaken on Council Tax Support and Welfare Reform. There was still considerable uncertainty over Universal Credit so it remained a risk, but he felt as a Council they were preparing for it well. The Portfolio Holder said the key was that the Council had been pro-active throughout which had enabled Members and Officers a better understanding of these issues and to be able to make informed decisions in the future. The Committee agreed to reduce the score to 3/3 (Low/Severe).

Risk 4 – Opportunities for Localism

Noted and agreed to leave score at 3/3 (Low/Severe).

Risk 5 – Workforce Planning

The proposal was to reduce this from a score of 4/3 (Significant/Severe) to 3/3 (Low/Severe) as good foundations were now set with a clear focus. In response to a question the Deputy Chief Executive advised that given the management age profile, this was chiefly about succession planning and developing a more flexible workforce with the appropriate skills and capacity to tackle a more complex future context. The Committee agreed to reduce the score to 3/3 (Low/Severe).

Risk 6 – Members Skills, Capacity and Experience

The Chairman said that this was an area where he considered there were still issues. There was some discussion about the overall member training budget and whether it was sufficient and the Portfolio Holder said that the question was a fair one, but any budget should be based on need rather than simply arbitrarily

increasing it. A number of courses had been held internally, led by both Council Officers and external providers and money was available for external courses if appropriate. Plans were also already underway for the induction arrangements for the new Council in 2015. The Committee re-iterated that they would like to continue their tradition of the pre-Audit Committee briefings. Given tonight's discussion a future session of understanding risk appetite and risk management was considered useful. The Committee agreed to leave the score at 3/2 (Low/Medium)

Risk 7 – Business Planning

Noted and agreed to leave score at 4/3 (Significant/Severe).

Risk 8 - Housing

The proposal was to reduce this from a score of 4/3 (Significant/Severe) to 3/3 (Low/Severe). The Deputy Chief Executive explained that this related chiefly to the risk within the HRA of managing the debt from the significant loan the Council had taken on (relating to the statutory housing subsidy buyout), along with the impacts of welfare reform. A year ago this had been a very sizeable issue, but there were now appropriate safeguards and processes in place to manage and consider the implications of the debt for the HRA's long term business plan, including Overview & Scrutiny routinely reviewing the HRA. The Committee agreed to reduce the score to 3/3 (Low/Severe).

Risk 9 – Infrastructure

Noted and agreed to leave score at 6/3 (Very High/Severe).

Resolved:

- That (i) **the changes to the strategic risk scores in terms of 'likelihood' and 'impact' as noted above be agreed.**
- (ii) **the actions that are being taken to manage the risks as shown in the appendix to the report be noted and the Committee confirms that it is satisfied with the actions.**

375 Internal Audit Operational Plan 2014/15

The Head of Audit Partnership introduced the report which set out the one year Internal Audit Operational Plan for 2014/15 and asked that the Committee review and approve the plan. He explained that the plan had been prepared in consultation with Heads of Service and there would be ongoing dialogue with them throughout the year. He also took the opportunity to introduce Rich Clarke who would be taking over as the Head of Audit Partnership from 1st April 2014 following his retirement. The Chairman welcomed Rich to Ashford and his new role.

The item was opened up for discussion and the following responses were given to questions/comments: -

- It was important External Audit could place reliance on the work of Internal Audit and that the controls work Internal Audit did ahead of the external audit work provided that assurance.

- Internal Audit did not look at the budget papers or the MTFP in any great depth. This was more for External Audit in terms of its value for money assurance, with the Cabinet, supported by the Deputy Chief Executive and the finance team responsible for ongoing management.
- It was confirmed that in the event of minimal or limited controls being found, that the Head of Service would be expected to attend the next meeting to explain what action would be taken to address the control weaknesses.
- The total of 24 audit projects in the plan was based on available auditor resources and it was important to prioritise work where the risks were higher and where they could add value.
- The number of audit days allocated to each subject in the plan was an estimate and these could vary in practice.

Resolved:

That the contents of the one year Internal Audit Operational Plan 2014/15 (shown at Appendix 1 to the report) be approved.

376 Internal Audit – External Quality Assessment against Public Sector Internal Audit Standards

The Head of Audit Partnership introduced the report which set out the results of the External Quality Assessment of conformance by Internal Audit against the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and the responses from the Incoming Head of Audit Partnership to the recommendations made by the assessors. The report provided assurance to the Committee that Internal Audit was meeting the vast majority of the standards and that full conformance could be achieved. The Head of Audit Partnership said he was pleased with the outcome. The process had involved both the Chairman and the Deputy Chief Executive and a lot of time and effort had been put in, but it was considered worthwhile and provided a good platform for the new Head of Audit Partnership and the future of Mid Kent Audit.

The Portfolio Holder said he was happy with the report and pleased to see reference to 'risk appetite' as he considered the understanding of risk would be key for the Council going forward and for its future success. It also fit well with the suggestion for a future briefing on the subject.

Continuing with the theme of risk management, the Vice-Chairman asked how the recommendation to reflect upon how this could be applied in operational areas could be taken forward in practice. The Head of Audit Partnership said in his view Heads of Service should undertake an annual risk process, perhaps discussing with staff what they wanted to achieve in a year and the risks that may impact that. It could then be kept under review throughout the year and, if done properly, needn't be bureaucratic.

The Committee considered that the results of the assessment reflected a good achievement on behalf of Internal Audit and asked that their congratulations be recorded.

Resolved:

That the outcomes of the External Quality Assessment and the action that would be taken to ensure full conformance be noted.

377 Internal Audit – External Audit Protocol

The report advised that a protocol had been developed in order to set out the key principles and procedures underpinning the working relationship between Mid Kent Audit and the Council's External Auditors Grant Thornton. The protocol was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

Resolved:

That the protocol between Internal Audit and External Audit be noted.

378 Grant Thornton's Audit Plan and Audit Committee Update

Mr Mack introduced the two reports from Grant Thornton which were designed to bring Members up to date with their progress as the Council's External Auditor and to outline their programme of work for the coming months. The reports contained a number of questions for Members to consider and the covering report produced by the Council sought to add some context to those issues. Mr Mack drew particular attention to the austerity work that would continue with difficult times remaining ahead and the latest with the Local Audit and Accountability Act and the ability for Councils to choose their External Auditors in the future.

In response to a question the Deputy Chief Executive advised that the good practice checklist proposed by Grant Thornton on 'Tipping Point' had been completed last year and brought to the Committee and they would consider when it was appropriate to do so again, either to the Committee or a pre-Committee briefing session.

Resolved:

That Grant Thornton's Audit Plan and Audit Committee Update be received and noted.

379 Report Tracker and Future Meetings

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.

380 Brian Parsons

The Chairman advised that this was the last Audit Committee Meeting for Brian Parsons, Head of Audit Partnership, before his retirement. On behalf of the Committee he said he would like to thank Brian for all his hard work in guiding the Committee and the Internal Audit Partnership throughout the years. He wished him well in his retirement. Brian said he had enjoyed his nine years working with Ashford and was thankful for the good working relationship he had enjoyed with both Officers and Members.

DS

Queries concerning these Minutes? Please contact Danny Sheppard:
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