



To the Members of the Borough Council

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby summoned to attend the Annual Meeting of the Ashford Borough Council to be held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent TN23 1PL on Thursday the 19th May 2016 at 7.00 pm when the following business is proposed to be transacted.

Yours faithfully

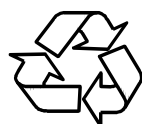
T W Mortimer
Corporate Director (Law and Governance)

Agenda

1. Election of Mayor
2. Declaration of Acceptance of Office by the Mayor
3. Appointment of Mayor's Chaplain
4. Vote of thanks by the Mayor for his Election
5. Vote of thanks to the Retiring Mayor and Mayors Escort
6. Response by the Retiring Mayor
7. Election and Appointment of Deputy Mayor
8. Declaration of Acceptance of Office by the Deputy Mayor
9. Apologies for Absence
10. Declarations of Interest
11. To consider the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council on the 21st April 2016
12. To receive any announcements from the Mayor
13. Confirmation of Cabinet Arrangements for 2016/17 by the Leader of the Council
14. To consider the Minutes of the Meeting of the Selection and Constitutional Review Committee held on the 3rd May 2016
15. To consider the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 12th May 2016 (to follow)

11th May 2016

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



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
- (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 Corporate Director (Law and Governance) 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 **21st April 2016**.

Present:

Her Worshipful the Mayor, Cllr. Mrs G A Dyer (Chairman);

Cllrs. Apps, Barrett, Bartlett, Mrs Bell, Bell, Bennett, Bradford, Britcher, Buchanan, Burgess, Chilton, Clarkson, Clokie, Dehnel, Feacey, Galpin, Heyes, Mrs Heyes, Hicks, A Howard, W Howard, Koowaree, Krause, Link, Miss Martin, Mrs Martin, Michael, Shorter, Sims, Smith, Waters, Mrs Webb, Wedgbury, White.

Also Present:

Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Law & Governance, Director of Development, Head of Finance, Head of Environmental & Customer Services, Head of Health, Parking & Community Safety, Principal Solicitor – Strategic Development, Senior Commercial Development Manager, Senior Environmental Health Officer, Senior Member Services and Scrutiny Support Officer.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting: -

- (i) The Reverend Catherine Wilson said prayers.
- (ii) Her Worshipful the Mayor asked Members to remain standing in silence in respect of the late Barry Forsyth Wright who was the Member for the Tenterden St Michaels Ward between 1995 and 1999 and the late Mrs Susan Heaton who was Member for the Highfield (Ashford) Ward between 2007 and 2011.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Adby, Mrs Blanford, Farrell, Knowles, Ovenden, Pickering, Powell.

394 Exempt or Confidential Information

The Mayor asked whether any items should be dealt with in private because of the likely disclosure of exempt or confidential information. The Director of Law & Governance advised that there were some exempt appendices to the report on Elwick Place that went to the Cabinet on 14th April 2016 and also some exempt tabled papers for this meeting in respect of Minutes on the same issue. There would be a need to pass the resolution to exclude the press and public if Members wanted to discuss exempt information.

395 Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Interest	Minute No.
Chilton	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as a Trustee of the Ashford Volunteer Centre.	403, 405, 407

Feacey	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as Chairman of the Ashford Volunteer Centre.	403, 405, 407
Sims	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as a Trustee of the Ashford Volunteer Centre.	403, 405, 407

396 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 18th February 2016 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

397 Announcements

(a) Queen's Birthday

The Mayor advised that today marked the Queen's actual birthday and she was turning 90. She proposed that she send a card on behalf of the Council for her 'official' birthday on the 11th June.

(b) Fundraising Day

The Mayor advised that on the 16th May she would be hosting a fundraising day, beginning at Chapel Down for a tour and wine tasting, followed by a two course lunch at London Beach Golf Club and then in the afternoon a tour of the unique Stevenson Brothers Rocking Horse manufacturing emporium. She said it would be her last fundraising event and it would be great if some of the Councillors were able to attend. More details could be obtained by contacting her PA, Andrea Collard.

(c) Leader of the Council

The Leader said that there were a few recent and current developments he would like to bring to colleagues' attention.

As colleagues had already heard, today was Her Majesty the Queen's actual 90th Birthday and he was sure that colleagues would join him in wishing Her Majesty many happy returns. They had been blessed with a Monarch who, over a very long period of reign, had been an outstanding example to all. Many of the Borough's villages were tonight lighting beacons as a gesture of their respect and celebration of that long reign. Many Members had used their Grants to assist in the various activities going on to mark this milestone in both rural and urban areas.

The Council had supported Keep Britain Tidy in its 'Clean for the Queen' campaign, with litter picking events taking place at Singleton Lakes, Victoria Park and Bowens Field. A staff litter picking event on North Park and Queen Mother Park was planned for June and all Parish Councils had been offered support with their own litter picking events, with the Council's contractor Biffa offering to bear the cost of removing all the litter collected. There would also be a short programme of concerts at the Ashford Town Centre bandstand. The concerts had been organised in partnership with Revelation St Mary's and would take place on Saturday 14th May followed by a final concert on Saturday June 11th, the Queen's official birthday and the Day of the Trooping of the Colour. Both concerts would take place between 11am and 2pm and

he hoped colleagues would be able to attend these events. The Council were continuing to look at how, in May or early June, it may add to these events to further mark this amazing milestone and he said he would share details with colleagues in due course.

The Leader advised that Ashford could become the model railway centre of the country after the Council approved plans to create the Ashford International Model Railway Education Centre on the historic Klondyke railway works site. The model railway centre was expected to become a very popular visitor attraction and act as a boost to Kent's tourism economy. Whilst the Planning Committee was pleased to approve this exciting attraction and many of the visitors would come by train, the Council was getting on with vital road improvements and improving off road parking provision. Ashford had a long and proud railway heritage and this centre would showcase this history to visitors through displaying railway models and other exhibits from the past, present and the future.

Ashford's growth and innovation had been highlighted this month with two full double page spreads in Kent's leading business publications, *Kent Business* and the Kent Invicta Chamber magazine called *Thinking Business*. The media coverage followed on the heels of the government praising Ashford's approach to affordable housing and highlighted the Big 8 projects that were attracting investment and providing opportunities for businesses who wanted to operate in the Borough. UK chief executive Richard Wise of Regus, the global shared-office company who had opened a new location at the Panorama building, was quoted in *Kent Business* as saying "*We always look at what local government wants to do and were impressed with what Ashford Borough Council was able to articulate about its vision for the town for the future.*" *Thinking Business* honed in on the £8 million Axiom Scheme bringing seven industrial units and warehouses ready for occupation soon at Orbital Park. It also detailed the hard work the Council had put into supporting independent traders and start-up companies at Park Mall shopping centre as part of its regeneration plans.

Another boost for the town could come in the form of leading property regeneration company U+I, who were looking to bring forward proposals for £180 million of investment close to the town centre, near to Victoria Park. The two new schemes across 14 acres along Victoria Way would bring more homes and over 200 jobs to the Town Centre, subject of course to them meeting all Ashford's standards and securing the appropriate planning approvals. With U+I, Stanhope PLC, Kent Space, Regus, Recursive Media and many others recognising the attractiveness of Ashford as a place to invest and for businesses to thrive and prosper, Ashford's reputation as the number one business location in Kent was clearly continuing to grow as evidenced by the double page spread that Members had been provided with at the meeting.

Finally, as they moved towards the summer, the Leader said he looked forward to seeing an increased planting of flowers to brighten up the Borough. He considered in the summer the 'dalek' type planters looked delightful and he understood that this year they were going to be doubled in number.

398 Cabinet – 10th March 2016

The report of the Director of Law & Governance, which had been tabled, clarified the procedure for consideration of the Cabinet minutes.

(a) Cabinet – 10th March 2016

Resolved:

That (i) the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 10th March 2016 be received and noted with the exception of Minute Nos. 364 and 368.

(ii) Minute Nos. 364 and 368 be approved and adopted.

(b) Cabinet 14th April 2016

Resolved:

That subject to the expiry of the period by which decisions arising from the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 14th April 2016 may be called in, i.e. 27th April 2016: -

(i) the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 14th April be received and noted with the exception of Minute Nos. 381, 384, 389 and 391.

(ii) Minute Nos. 381 and 384 be approved and adopted.

(iii) Minute Nos. 389 and 391 be deferred for consideration later in the meeting.

399 Appeals Committee – 15th February 2016

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Appeals Committee held on the 15th February 2016 be received and noted.

400 Audit Committee – 15th March 2016

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit Committee held on the 15th March 2016 be received and noted.

401 Electoral Review Ashford Borough – Draft Submission to Local Government Boundary Commission on Council Size

The Mayor drew the Council's attention to the tabled paper which set out an additional recommendation.

Resolved:

That the recommendations as set out in the report, and as amended by the additional recommendation set out in the tabled paper, be approved.

402 Committee of the Whole Council

The Leader proposed that “General Procedure Rule 12 (r) be applied and the meeting become a Committee of the Council.” This was seconded, put to the vote and carried.

Resolved:

That the meeting become a Committee of the Council in accordance with General Procedure Rule 12 (r).

403 Minute Nos. 389 and 391 – Elwick Place Development

The Mayor directed the Council’s attention to the tabled papers in respect of these Minutes, which included supporting comments from Councillors Adby, Knowles and Ovenden.

Councillor Bartlett said that he was grateful to Officers for the help they had given in resolving some of the issues he had raised. One of the main issues he had with this project was to do with the financial issues and as such he considered that the matters he wanted to refer to should be raised in exempt session and he would wait until that point in the meeting to raise them.

Councillor Shorter, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Budget & Resource Management, said that whilst the Portfolio Holder for Town Centres Focus & Business Dynamics would deal with the primary economic regeneration benefits, he wanted to reflect on the finance side of why the present Cabinet was recommending this proposal to Council. As long ago as 2011/12 it was envisaged by this Council that Central Government’s revenue grant to Local Councils would be significantly reduced as part of the austerity measures being introduced. From that time, along with a major efficiency and cost-saving exercise and a streamlining in service delivery, it was clear that further measures were necessary for the Council to continue to deliver services to the Borough at large that were expected by residents. During the development of the Medium Term Financial Planning process from 2012/13, the presumption was that the Government grant would reduce to zero by 2018/19. Recent governmental announcements had proven this judgement to be correct, despite the cessation of the grant actually now occurring in 2019/20. As such the Council agreed it should adopt a more entrepreneurial and commercial approach to securing the capability (money) to deliver services to the Borough’s residents. This had been a fundamental plank of the financial policy of this Council since that time and had routinely been reported as such. He said that the acquisition of International House, Wilko’s and Park Mall, as well as entering in to partnerships with developers to deliver new offices at the Commercial Quarter, were all manifestations of this commercial style of operation. However, to further return a revenue stream to the Council in line with the reducing grant, circa £750k per year every year, more opportunities had to be identified and delivered. Cabinet, supported by Officers, now put this scheme in front of Council with a recommendation that this would go a long way to providing additional revenue year on year, whilst also accelerating the delivery of a major project that would enhance the town centre, increase footfall and therefore provide local businesses with an opportunity to develop and grow. Significant detail of the structure, delivery and safeguards of this project were included within the exempt papers. The wider benefits not directly costed as part of

the paper would be an increase in business rate returns, a more vibrant town centre via increased footfall and a clear demonstration to external investors that Ashford was a modern, forward thinking town looking to grow its economy for the benefits of the Borough as a whole.

In terms of the proposal itself, Councillor Shorter said that many comments were circulating that details of the proposal were being kept quiet for any number of reasons. He said there was only one reason and that was that any commercial negotiations needed to remain confidential so that the maximum benefit could be gained by the relevant parties, without another organisation either benefiting or spoiling the deal. This commercial arena was the world that Ashford Borough Council now operated in and they had to adopt the industry's practices in such cases. To be clear, he advised that Ashford Borough Council owned the land to be developed. The proposal was that the developer would be providing the built facilities of a cinema, hotel, seven main eateries and a smaller food outlet and a car park. What was now on the table was an opportunity to fund the construction of the cinema complex in an advantageous way that would provide the Council with a financial return on the initial investment. This funding would be secured against the asset and financed within the normal treasury management systems for which the Council had existing and industry leading advisors. A final payment would be made to the developer, Stanhope, on completion of the build, including their profit, less an element of interest on payments already made. The development would then be owned by Ashford Borough Council. The Council would then receive the rental incomes from the tenants. Due diligence work was in hand. A number of industry experts including asset valuers, legal advisors, financial probity and treasury advisors had been commissioned to provide this due diligence and Officers had provided all Members on e-mail with the information available to date. He wanted to acknowledge the input of a number of Members who had particular knowledge in the sphere of finance, commerce and property development and all such issues raised by them had been responded to, other than one area awaiting the due diligence process to conclude. This was why the recommendation was *"subject to the final issues on due diligence being satisfactorily answered the Chief Executive, in conjunction with identified Portfolio Holders, be permitted to agree to this proposal"*. If further material risks were identified as part of the due diligence findings and not capable of reasonable mitigation, then a further report to Cabinet would be necessary. Councillor Shorter said he invited all Members to consider the papers before them and seek any reassurance they may require on the proposals so that the Council could agree, in an informed manner, to embark on this exciting opportunity for the Borough of Ashford.

Councillor Galpin said he was very reassured by the statement made by Councillor Shorter and he continued to be reassured as the due diligence progressed. He also wanted to touch upon the broader regeneration aspects and the necessity of this project. People who had lived in Ashford for some time would remember the 'false dawns' and phantom 'growth town' statements of the past and wince when reflecting upon that. He considered the Council owed it to the people and traders who lived and worked in and around Ashford to bring this to a conclusion and bring this spark of regeneration to the bottom of Bank Street and Elwick Place. County Square and Debenhams in particular had shown great patience and unwavering faith in some development ultimately coming through in this area and it was to their credit and Ashford's fortune that they had decided to stay. He said he was not sure for how much longer they would continue to do so if barriers were put in front of this particular project. He understood the concerns about property in Bank Street, but he

had been reliably told by one of the leading commercial local estate agents that property in Bank Street had become a premium product and people were queuing up to procure it. So this development was already having a catalytic effect and if it was taken away he considered Ashford would languish. A lot of work had gone in to making Ashford a better town and they needed to close the deal now on this particular project. He said it was important to do this and to do it promptly and bring it forward without further delay. This did not mean that proper due diligence should not take place, and this would be done as described, but he considered it would be important not to create additional barriers.

404 Exclusion of the Public

A member of the press lodged an objection to the public being excluded from the meeting at this point. The Director of Law & Governance read out to Members the statement of objection by one of the press representatives and advised Members that the press were correct to observe that the passing of a resolution to exclude the public on one of the statutory grounds (in this case paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A information relating to the financial or business affairs of a person including the Council) should only take place where Members were satisfied that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing it. The press objection had set out reasons why they considered the exemption should not be maintained and the Director of Law & Governance re-iterated the reasons why Officers had advised that the exemption should be maintained in the public interest.

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 items 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 paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Act, where in the circumstances the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

405 Minute Nos. 389 and 391 – Elwick Place Development

The Minutes of the Cabinet of 14th April 2016 made seven recommendations to Council. Approval of these recommendations had been deferred to allow for Members to consider and ask questions on the confidential appendices. Various Members made statements and asked questions on the exempt papers.

Recommended:

That the recommendations set out in Minute No. 391 of the Cabinet on 14th April 2016 be approved.

406 Meeting of the Council

The Leader of the Council proposed that “General Procedure Rule 12(s) be applied and the meeting of the Council be resumed”. This was seconded, put to the vote and carried.

Resolved:

That the meeting of the Council be resumed in accordance with General Procedure Rule 12 (s).

407 Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Council

The Leader of the Council proposed that “the recommendations of the Committee of the Whole Council as contained in Minute No. 405 be approved”. This was seconded.

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

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

A recorded vote was then taken on Minute No. 405 and the Members voted as follows: -

For: Councillors Apps, Barrett, Bartlett, Mrs Bell, Bell, Bennett, Bradford, Britcher, Buchanan, Burgess, Chilton, Clarkson, Clokie, Dehnel, Mrs Dyer, Feacey, Galpin, Heyes, Mrs Heyes, Hicks, A Howard, W Howard, Koowaree, Krause, Link, Miss Martin, Mrs Martin, Michael, Shorter, Sims, Waters, Mrs Webb, Wedgbury.

Votes For - 33

Against: Councillor Smith.

Votes Against - 1

Abstentions: Councillor White.

Abstentions - 1

Resolved:

That the recommendations of the Committee of the Whole Council as contained in Minute No. 405 be approved and adopted.

(DS)

MINS:

Selection & Constitutional Review Committee

Minutes of a Meeting of the Selection & Constitutional Review Committee held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **3rd May 2016**

Present:

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman);
Cllr. Bell (Vice-Chairman);
Cllrs. Bennett, Mrs Blanford, Burgess, Chilton, Clokie, Galpin, Link, Ovenden, Shorter.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2 (iii) Councillors Clokie and Link attended as Substitute Members for Councillors Mrs Bell and A Howard respectively.

Apologies:

Cllr. Mrs Bell, A Howard, Mrs Martin.

Also Present:

Cllr. Smith.

Senior Member Services & Scrutiny Support Officer.

412 Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Interest	Minute No.
Clarkson	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as he was a Director of the 'A Better Choice for Property Company'.	414
Galpin	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as his son held a senior role at the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce.	414, 415
Shorter	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as he was a Director of Kent Play Clubs and the 'A Better Choice for Building Consultancy Company'.	414

413 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of this Committee held on the 11th February 2016 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

414 Background and Principles of Political Balance and Administrative Structure

The Senior Member Services & Scrutiny Support Officer introduced the report which presented the Political Balance for the Authority and sought to agree a number of other constitutional matters which needed to be recommended to the Annual Meeting of the Council on the 19th May 2016. The agreed Political Balance is contained at Appendix A to these Minutes.

The Chairman directed Members attention to the tabled papers which included some minor changes and additions to the report following further discussions. He ran through the report page by page and the points in the tabled paper one by one, explaining the rationale behind the proposed changes. He advised that following the May 2015 Elections, the Council had returned approximately one third of newly elected Members. It had always been his intention to let those individuals settle in to their roles for the first year of the Administration before beginning to consider more senior appointments going forward. He considered now was the correct time to do that.

In response to questions about the proposed Superfast Broadband – Hard to Reach Panel, the Chairman advised that this area was something that had been added to the Information, Technology & Communications Portfolio and he had set up a small Panel, Chaired by the Deputy Leader and to include Group Leaders and the Portfolio Holder, to oversee the aspiration of superfast broadband across the entire Borough. There would need to be liaison with KCC, broadband providers, local businesses and planning officers amongst others.

A Member referred to the Compliance & Enforcement Board and the importance of protecting areas against unauthorised occupation by gypsies and travellers. This was particularly important for the Council's own land as protection in advance was often more cost effective than the costs of clearing up afterwards. A survey of Members' Wards had been commissioned by a former Housing Officer some years ago to identify vulnerable sites, and the Portfolio Holder said he would look in to the possibility of reissuing this survey.

The Chairman ran through the membership of Committees, Groups and Forums one by one. With input from Members, the membership for 2016/17 was completed including the nominations for Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen. This is contained at Appendix B to these Minutes.

Recommended:

That (i) the Political Balance of the Authority as contained at Appendix A to these Minutes be adopted, subject to the Council agreeing that the requirements of the Political Balance Regulations be not applied to the Membership of the Joint Transportation Board, Appeals Panels, Standards Committee, the Investigation and Disciplinary Committee (and its Panels) and the Sub-Committee of

the Licensing and Health and Safety Committee established under the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005.

- (ii) the following Committees be constituted for the Municipal Year as detailed in Part 3 of the Constitution:**

**Audit
Appointments
Appeals
Investigation and Disciplinary
Joint Arrangements – Joint Transportation Board
Licensing and Health and Safety
Overview and Scrutiny
Planning
Selection and Constitutional Review
Standards**

NB: Details of Members appointed to Membership of each Committee etc by Group Leaders is shown at Appendix B to these Minutes. Note: This may be subject to amendments from Group Leaders.

- (iii) seats on the following Committees be allocated to the Members indicated: -**

**Planning Committee – Cllr Murphy
Appointments Committee – Cllr Koowaree**

- (iv) the revised Cabinet Member Portfolio Responsibilities as attached at Appendix C to the report and outlined in the tabled papers be received and noted.**
- (v) the Lead Member Appointments for 2016/17 as set out in Section 5 of the report and the tabled papers be approved.**
- (vi) the changes in respect of Task Groups, Boards and Steering Groups as outlined in Section 6 of the report be noted.**

415 Representatives on Outside Bodies/Organisations

The report of the Corporate Director (Law & Governance) gave details of those organisations or outside bodies to which the Council appointed or nominated representatives, and the names of the Members of the Council and others who currently served in this capacity. Details of attendance by the Council's appointed representatives at meetings of the organisations during the past year (where known) and retirement dates were also shown. The covering report and the tabled paper also provided additional information about current vacancies, attendance and Annual Reports.

The Chairman advised that a separate wider review of all of the appointments in terms of effectiveness and benefit to the Council had commenced, but had been placed on hold. He intended to pick that issue up again in 2016/17.

Resolved:

That the names of the persons to be appointed or nominated as Members or Substitute Members (as the case may be) to the organisations listed in Appendix C to these Minutes be agreed.

416 Annual Meeting – Order of Proceedings

The Committee considered the Order of Proceedings for the Annual Meeting of the Council including the movers and seconders of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the vote of thanks to the retiring Mayor.

Resolved:

That the Corporate Director (Law and Governance) prepare the Order of Proceedings for the Annual Meeting of the Council on the basis of the advice of this Committee.

DS

APPENDIX A
(Minute No. 414/5/16 refers)

THE POLITICAL BALANCE CALCULATION
MAY 2016

A All Committees to which balance applies

	Committee	Seats/Committee		Total Seats
1 x 12	Overview and Scrutiny	12	=	12
1 x 17	Planning	17	=	17
1 x 13	Licensing and Health & Safety	13	=	13
1 x 12	Selection	12	=	12
1 x 8	Audit	8	=	8
1 x 5	Appointments	5	=	5
Total				<u>67</u>

B. Percentage of group in relation to total membership of the authority

43 members =		%
35 Conservative	=	81.39534
3 Labour	=	6.97674
3 Ashford Independent	=	6.97674
<u>Note:</u> 1 Liberal Democrat	=	2.32558
1 UKIP	=	2.32558
		<u>99.99998</u>

C.1 Allocation of Seats on Committees in proportion to Group strength

Committee	Con	Lab	AI	Allocated	Total
1 x 12 O&S	10	1	1		12
1 x 17 Planning	14	1	1	1*	17
1 x 12 Selection	10	1	1		12
1 x 13 Licensing, Health & Safety	11	1	1		13
1 x 8 Audit	6	1	1		8
1 x 5 Appointments	4	0	0	1*	5
Totals	55 (54.538)	5 (4.604)	5 (4.604)	2	67

*Under the draft calculation all Groups had received their allocations on the above Committees, and when taken collectively their overall entitlement to seats across all Committees, however one seat remains to be allocated on the Planning and Appointments Committees. Group Leaders have recommended that Cllr. Koowaree be allocated the seat on the Appointments Committee and Cllr. Murphy allocated the seat on the Planning Committee.

C.2 Allocation of seats on all ordinary Committees to achieve overall proportionality

Political Group entitlement in relation to all seats: 66

Conservative	54.538	=	55
Labour	4.604651	=	5
Ashford Independent	4.604651	=	5
			<hr/> 65
1 Liberal Democrat			
1 UKIP		=	2
			<hr/> 67
Total			<hr/> 67

D. Committees etc. to which balance cannot apply or will not apply either as a direct result of joint arrangements or the Council agreeing, i.e. no member votes against this arrangement, on each occasion the Council adopts a revised political balance for the Authority.

*1 x 3	Appeals (3 Member Panels)	3 Members per meeting drawn on rota from a Panel of 15 Members (which does not meet as a Committee)	=	3
* 1 x 7	Joint Transportation Board		=	7
1 x 3	Licensing Sub- Committee (3 Member Panels)	3 Members per meeting drawn on rota from a Panel of 13 Members (which does meet as a Committee so is itself balanced)	=	3
1 x 3	Investigation & Disciplinary Committee	3 Members to meet as a Committee from an overall membership of 15	=	3

* Standards – broadly politically balanced as part of membership based on posts.

x Due to the Joint Arrangements and the manner in which seats are allocated by the Kent County Council, it is impossible to have an overall balanced allocation of seats.

Committee	Con	Lab	AI	Others	Total
*1 x 15 Appeals	12	1	1	1	15
1 x 15 Investigation and Disciplinary Committee	12	1	1	1	15
*1 x 7 Joint Transportation	6	1	0	0	7
*Standards	6	Plus Chair, Vice-Chair O&S			8

APPENDIX B
(Minute No. 414/5/16 refers)

SELECTION AND CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

3RD MAY 2016

**MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES, GROUPS AND FORUMS,
INCLUDING CHAIRMEN AND VICE-CHAIRMEN**

On the basis of the draft Political Balance Calculation agreed with Group Leaders the entitlement to seats is set out below.

The Committee may wish to propose the identity of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of each Committee, for appointment in accordance with the Constitution, by the Full Council.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee (12 Members)

Members of the Cabinet may not be appointed to this Committee

Conservative (10)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Burgess	Chilton (Ch)	Michael (VCh)		
Feacey				
Hicks				
A Howard				
W Howard				
Krause				
Link				
Mrs Martin				
Sims				
Wedgbury				

Audit Committee (8 Members)

Conservative (6)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Buchanan (VCh)	Farrell	Smith		
Link				
Powell				
Shorter				
Waters (Ch)				
White				

Planning Committee (17 Members) (plus 1 ex officio)

Conservative (14)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (1)
Apps	Chilton	Ovenden		Murphy
Bennett				
Mrs Blanford				
Bradford				
Burgess (Ch)				
Clarkson (EO)				
Clokier				
Dehnel				
Galpin				
Heyes				
Krause				
Link (VCh)				
Powell				
Waters				
Wedgbury				

Selection & Constitutional Review Committee (12 Members)

Conservative (10)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Bell (VCh)	Chilton	Ovenden		
Mrs Bell				
Bennett				
Mrs Blanford				
Burgess				
Clarkson (Ch)				
Galpin				
A Howard				
Mrs Martin				
Shorter				

Licensing and Health and Safety Committee (13 Members)

Group Leaders are reminded of the importance of nominating Members who are available to attend day-time hearings of the Licensing Sub-Committee.

Conservative (11)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Adby	Britcher	Smith		
Apps				
Bennett				
Bradford (VCh)				
Feacey (Ch)				
Mrs Heyes				
Krause				
Pickering				
Shorter				
Sims				
Mrs Webb				

Appointments Committee (5 Members)

Conservative (4)	Labour (0)	Ashford Independent (0)	Liberal Democrat (1)	UKIP (0)
Bell (VCh)	Chilton (invited non- voting)	Ovenden (invited non- voting)	Koowaree	
Clarkson (Ch)				
Clokier				
Powell				

Appeals (15 Members – 3 Members to be drawn per meeting)

Members should not be a Member of the Cabinet. Group Leaders are reminded of the importance of nominating Members who are available to attend day-time meetings.

Conservative (12)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (1)	UKIP (0)
Aldby	Britcher	Michael	Koowaree	
Apps				
Barrett				
Mrs Dyer				
Mrs Heyes				
Hicks				
A Howard				
W Howard				
Pickering				
Waters				
Wedgbury				
White				

Investigation & Disciplinary Committee (15 Members – 3 Members to be drawn per meeting)

To include at least one Member of the Cabinet, Group Leaders and the Chairmen of the Overview & Scrutiny and Audit Committees

Conservative (12)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (1)	UKIP (0)
Adby	Chilton	Ovenden	Koowaree	
Mrs Bell				
Bradford				
Buchanan				
Clarkson				
Dehnel				
Feacey				
Heyes				
Knowles				
Powell				
Waters				
White				

Standards Committee (8 Members)

Based on 6 Conservative Members plus the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Conservative (6)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Mrs Bell (VCh)	Chilton	Michael		
Dehnel (Ch)				
Mrs Dyer				
Feacey				
Hicks				
Knowles				

Joint Transportation Board (7 Members)

Conservative (6)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (0)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Bartlett (VCh)	Chilton			
Bradford				
Burgess				
Feacey				
Mrs Martin				
Mrs Webb				

Community Grants Panel (7 Members including the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Environment & Heritage)

Conservative (6)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (0)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Apps (VCh)	Farrell			
Mrs Blanford (PH)				
Mrs Dyer				
Link (Ch)				
Sims				
Mrs Webb				

Joint Consultative Committee (6 Members) – At least one Member from each Group – the remainder from the administration.

Membership is to include the Leader and/or appropriate Portfolio Holder.

Conservative (4)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Knowles (Ch)	Britcher	Smith		
Krause				
Shorter				
Wedgbury				

Member Training Panel (8 Members)

Conservative (6)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Mrs Dyer (VCh)	Farrell	Smith		
A Howard				
W Howard				
Krause				
Link				
Wedgbury (Ch)				

Local Government and Polling Districts Task Group (10 Members)

Conservative (8)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Barrett	Chilton	Michael		
Bell (Ch)				
Mrs Bell				
Clokie				
Dehnel				
Galpin				
Heyes				
W Howard				

Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group (10 Members)

Conservative (8)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Bennett (VCh)	Chilton	Michael		
Mrs Blanford				
Clarkson (Ch)				
Clokie				
Galpin				
Heyes				
Shorter				
Wedgbury				

Electoral Review Task Group (5 Members)

Membership is to include the 3 Group Leaders and the Portfolio Holder/Deputy Leader.

Conservative (3)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Bell (VCh)	Chilton	Ovenden		
Clarkson (Ch)				
Clokie				

MEMBERSHIP OF CABINET BOARDS, STEERING GROUPS AND TASK GROUPS FOR 2016/17

The following are set out for information only and are for ratification by the Cabinet at a future meeting. There are some recommended changes to the current year's arrangements.

Boards

Ashford Health & Wellbeing Board (1 Member)

Conservative
(1)
Bradford

Trading and Enterprise Board (4 Members and 1 Observer)

Conservative
(4)
Bell (Ch)
Bennett
Mrs Blanford
Galpin

* Councillor Powell to be appointed as Observer.

** Councillor Bell (as Chairman) to be the Shareholder Representative under the Articles of Association of the Trading Companies.

Ashford Strategic Delivery Board (3 Members)

Conservative
(3)
Clarkson (Ch)
Bennett
Galpin

Economic Regeneration & Investment Board (4 Members)

Conservative (3)	Labour (0)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Clarkson (Ch)		Ovenden		
Galpin				
Shorter				

Compliance & Enforcement Board (4 Members)

Conservative (3)	Labour (0)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Bradford		Michael		
Bennett				
Dehnel (Ch)				

Steering Groups

Development of Conningbrook Lakes Country Park & Victoria Park Steering Group (5 Members)

Conservative (4)	Labour (0)	Ashford Independent (0)	Liberal Democrat (1)	UKIP (0)
Mrs Blanford (Ch)			Koowaree	
Aaby				
Apps				
Mrs Martin				

Stour Centre Redevelopment & Leisure Management Steering Group (4 Members)

Conservative (3)	Labour (0)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Apps		Smith		
Pickering				
White (Ch)				

Task Groups

Public & Voluntary Transport Liaison Task Group (4 Members)

Conservative (3)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (0)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Bradford (Ch)	Farrell			
Feacey				
Pickering				

Council Tax & Welfare Reform Task Group (4 Members)

Conservative (3)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (0)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Shorter (Ch)	Britcher			
Clokier				
Mrs Webb				

Environment, Conservation & Heritage Task Group (4 Members)

Conservative (3)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (0)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Mrs Blanford (Ch)	Britcher			
Hicks				
Sims				

Housing Aims & Objectives Task Group (4 Members)

Conservative (3)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (0)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Clokier (Ch)	Britcher			
Krause				
White				

Ground Water Management & Flood Protection Task Group (4 Members)

Conservative (3)	Labour (0)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Burgess		Smith		
Hicks (Ch)				
Miss Martin				

Panels

Broadband – Hard to Reach Panel (4 Members)

To include the Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder and Opposition Group Leaders

Conservative (3)	Labour (1)	Ashford Independent (1)	Liberal Democrat (0)	UKIP (0)
Bell (Ch)	Chilton	Ovenden		
Knowles				

APPENDIX C
(Minute No. 415/5/16 refers)

ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

APPOINTMENT/NOMINATION TO OUTSIDE BODIES/ORGANISATIONS

NAME OF BODY	NEW REPRESENTATIVES/ NOMINEES	RETIREMENT DATE (UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED – ANNUAL MEETING 2017)
Action With Communities in Rural Kent	Cllr. Burgess Substitute: Cllr Mrs Blanford	
Ashford Almshouses & Parochial Charities	Cllr Krause Cllr Miss Martin Cllr Galpin Cllr Heyes	3 year period expiring 30/11/16 5 year period expiring 31/5/19
Ashford Choral Society	The Mayor – President	Ongoing
Ashford College Business Advisory Council	Cllr Clokie	
Ashford Community Arts Trust	Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Environment & Heritage	Ongoing
Ashford Community Safety Partnership	Portfolio Holder for Highways, Wellbeing & Safety	Ongoing
Ashford Federation of the Arts	Cllr Mrs Blanford	
Ashford Mediation Service – Management Committee	Cllr Krause Patron: The Mayor	Ongoing
Ashford Museum Committee	Cllr Apps	
Ashford Winkle Club	The Mayor (Honorary Member)	Ongoing
Ashford Youth Forum Trustees	Cllr Howard (Trustee) Cllr Chilton (Council Rep)	
Citizens' Advice Bureau Ashford Branch Management Committee	Cllr Britcher Cllr Clokie	
Dungeness Power Station Site Stakeholder Group	Cllr Burgess	

NAME OF BODY	NEW REPRESENTATIVES/ NOMINEES	RETIREMENT DATE (UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED – ANNUAL MEETING 2017)
East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust – Council of Governors	Cllr Miss Martin	3 year period expiring 28/2/2018
Elwick Club	Mayor & Mayoress (Honorary Members)	Ongoing
Headcorn Aerodrome Consultative Committee	Member from the Weald North Ward (Cllr Mrs Dyer)	Ongoing
High Weald (AONB) Joint Advisory Group	Cllr Pickering	
Home Improvement Agency Support Group	Cllr Britcher	
Home-Start, Ashford: Management Committee	Cllr Mrs Webb	
Kennington Parochial Charities (Two Nominative Trustees)	Cllr Buchanan Cllr Sims	Annual Meeting 2020 (4 year period) Annual Meeting 2018 (2 year period)
Kent County Playing Fields Association	Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Environment & Heritage	Ongoing
Kent Downs (AONB) Joint Advisory Committee and Executive Committee	Cllr Dehnel	
Kent Downs and Marshes Leader Project	Cllr Burgess	
Kent Flood Risk Management Committee	Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Environment & Heritage	Ongoing
Kent Invicta Chamber – Economic Development Group	Cllr Galpin	
Kent & Medway Police & Crime Panel	Cllr Clokie	
Local Government Association General Assembly	Cllr Galpin	
Marshlink Steering Group	Cllr Burgess	

NAME OF BODY	NEW REPRESENTATIVES/ NOMINEES	RETIREMENT DATE (UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED – ANNUAL MEETING 2017)
Mid Kent Downs Steering Group	Cllr Mrs Blanford	
National Council on Inland Transport – Executive Committee	Cllr Burgess	
Parochial Church of St Mary's the Virgin Ashford Arts & Arts Development Sub-Committee	Cllr Apps	
PATROL – Joint Committee	Portfolio Holder for Highways, Wellbeing & Safety	Ongoing
River Stour Internal Drainage Board	Cllr Burgess Cllr Hicks Cllr Mrs Martin Cllr Sims Cllr Smith	
Romney Marshes Area Internal Drainage Board	Cllr Burgess	
Sandyacres Trust	Cllr Michael	
Singleton Environment Centre Management Advisory Board	Member for the Singleton South Ward (Cllr Barrett)	Annual Meeting 2019 (4 year period)
South Ashford Youth Club – Management Committee	Cllr W Howard	
South East Employers	Cllr Shorter	
SWAN Site Management Committee	Cllr Smith	
Tenterden Folk Day Trust	Cllr Link	
Tenterden Leisure Centre Trust	Cllr Bennett	
Tenterden Town Council – Tourism & Business Committee	Portfolio Holder for Public Interaction & Borough Presentation	Ongoing
Volunteering Ashford	Cllr Feacey	
Willesborough Windmill Trust Limited	Cllr Koowaree	
Wye Rural Museum Trust	Cllr Miss Martin	31 st May 2019

MEMBER CHAMPIONS

TOPIC	REPRESENTATIVE
Media	Cllr Bennett
Military Covenant	Cllr Dehnel
Safeguarding	Cllr Mrs Dyer
Twinning	Cllr Bennett

Cabinet

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **12th May 2016**.

Present:

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman);

Cllr. Bell (Vice-Chairman);

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

Apologies:

Cllrs. Bradford, Britcher, Hicks.

Also Present:

Cllrs. Heyes, A Howard, W Howard, Krause, Michael, Sims, Smith, Wedgbury.

Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate Director (Law and Governance), Director of Development, Head of Finance, Head of Health, Parking and Community Safety, Environmental Contracts and Operations Manager, Health, Parking and Community Safety Manager, Community Safety Operational Support Officer, Head of Culture, Tourism, Heritage and Nature Conservation Manager, Facilities Development Manager, Policy and Performance Officer, Head of Housing, Principal Solicitor – Strategic Development, Senior Communications Officer, Member Services and Scrutiny Manager.

Dan Anderson – Fourth Street.

423 Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Interest	Minute No.
Smith	Made a “Voluntary Announcement” as the Treasurer of the South Willesborough and Newtown Community Group which had opposed the AIMREC Planning Application.	432
Wedgbury	Made a “Voluntary Announcement” as he was a member of the Kent County Council	431

424 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 14th April 2016 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

425 Petitions

In accordance with Procedure Rule 9 Mr Hickmott, Chairman of Brabourne Parish Council presented a petition containing nearly 600 signatories objecting to a planning application for 125 houses on land adjoining Lees Road and Canterbury Road, Brabourne Lees.

Mr Hickmott explained that the application site was in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and if approved would increase the population of the village of Brabourne by 30% which he believed to be unprecedented. He advised that Kent County Council had concerns in respect of the narrow roads which linked the village to the A20 and also in terms of the level of increased traffic that such a development would create in terms of movements in and out of the village. He explained that both village schools were nearly full and the development would see the loss of valuable agricultural land. Mr Hickmott also explained that in the region of 250 objections had been lodged on the Planning website and he therefore asked that the Borough Council refuse the planning application when it was considered.

Mr Hickmott handed the petition to the Chairman.

The Chairman advised that the Cabinet had no locus in terms of dealing with planning applications and explained that he would refer the petition to the Joint Development Control Managers/Head of Development, Strategic Sites and Design.

426 Leader's Announcements

The Leader of the Council advised that he had made two changes to the membership of the Cabinet for the 2016/17 Municipal Year and explained that Councillors Bradford and Knowles had joined the Cabinet. He also explained that this year would see the continuation of the Borough Council's work to strengthen enforcement activity across all of the Council's activities and said that further information on this issue would be discussed later in the meeting.

The Leader also said that Ashford was the largest land mass borough in Kent and he therefore believed it was important to secure super fast broadband for all areas of the Borough.

427 Review of the Council Tax Support Scheme

The report sought the Cabinet's approval to consult on the proposed Council Tax Support Scheme as recommended by the Council Tax and Welfare Reform Task Group.

The Portfolio Holder advised that the scheme was not a totally new scheme but had been modified during discussions with the Council Tax and Welfare Reform Task Group who had considered options to modify the current Council Tax reduction scheme, details of which were set out in recommendation (ii) (a) to (g). He drew

Members' attention to the Equalities Impact Assessment and he asked the Cabinet to consider this before approving the scheme.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) the recommendation that any new Council Tax Reduction Scheme should be based on the current scheme but with a series of potential modifications upon which the Council should consult be noted;**
 - (ii) a consultation on the potential introduction of a range of modifications to the current Council Tax Reduction Scheme for working age claimants be launched as follows:**
 - a. Increasing the minimum contribution rate for working age claimants between 10% and up to 20%;**
 - b. Introducing a band cap at a band D;**
 - c. Removing Second Adult Rebate;**
 - d. Reducing the capital limit to £6,000;**
 - e. Introducing a standard non-dependant deduction of £10 per week;**
 - f. Introducing a Minimum Income Floor for self-employed claimants (based upon the Statutory National Living Wage at 35 hours per week for full time or 16 hours a week for part-time workers);and**
 - g. Aligning regulations of the current Council Tax Reduction scheme with Housing Benefit and (prescribed) Pension Age Council Tax Reduction scheme.**
 - (iii) through the consultation, views be sought as to whether an Exceptional Hardship Policy should be incorporated as part of the scheme.**
 - (iv) through the consultation, views be sought on other ways of meeting the demands highlighted through the report other than changing the existing Council Tax Reduction Scheme (as set out in paragraph 24 of the report).**
 - (v) the 'first stage' Equality Impact Assessment be noted;**
 - (vi) the proposed arrangements in respect of consultation be agreed and delegated authority be given to the Head of Finance, in conjunction with the Communications team and Portfolio Holder to agree the final version of the material.**

428 Public Toilet Provision via a Community Toilet Scheme

The report considered the potential future provision of public toilet facilities in and around Ashford Town Centre which involved moving away from offering facilities in

the ownership of the Borough Council to facilities owned and operated by third parties, with the support of Ashford Borough Council.

The Portfolio Holder referred to the tabled papers which contained an additional recommendation which provided for the New Rents toilets to remain open and be included in the review of the new scheme in due course. The Portfolio Holder said that she believed that the scheme would offer more choice of facilities particularly in the Town Centre and advised that 17 businesses had currently signed up for the scheme.

A Member advised that he was pleased to see the additional recommendation regarding the retention of the New Rents public toilets and he also considered that in terms of the community toilet scheme the provision of appropriate signage was very important.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) the development of a Community Toilet Scheme for Ashford Town Centre be approved.**
 - (ii) the Head of Environmental and Customer Services commence the implementation of a Community Toilet Scheme in support of Priority 4 of the Corporate Plan.**
 - (iii) the New Rents toilets remain open and be included in the review of the new scheme in due course.**

429 Equalities Objectives

The report set out a revised set of Equalities Objectives which laid out how the Council would further the general aims of the Equality Act 2010.

In response to a question, the Policy and Performance Officer advised that the Council had a dedicated Policy for dealing with Freedom of Information requests and considered that there was perhaps a need to cross reference that document with other related documents.

Resolved:

That the revised Equalities Objectives be approved.

430 The Council's Enforcement Policy and the Local Enforcement Plan for Planning

The report sought the Cabinet's endorsement of an overarching policy statement on enforcement and a service specific plan for planning enforcement.

Tabled at the meeting was an amendment to the recommendation, together with a letter dated 9 May 2016 from Mr Cooper and the response from the Director of Development dated 12 May 2016.

The Chairman drew attention to the tabled papers and advised that the suggested amendment to the recommendation and EIA stemmed from comments made in the

letter submitted by Mr Cooper regarding gypsies and travellers. The Chairman also advised that all Cabinet Members had been given a letter and photographs in respect of a particular site within the Borough and he advised that this issue would be dealt with by the Planning Officers in due course.

The Portfolio Holder explained that the report stemmed from the Policy and Compliance Task Group and their work with Officers to examine ways to strengthen the Council's response to enforcement issues and to make them more robust. He advised that residents of the Borough had expectations that the Borough Council would act in response to breaches in respect of planning, litter and dog fouling.

A Member referred to issues regarding planning and advised that four areas in his particular Ward involved matters covered by the approved Inspectors and not by ABC Building Control.

The Chairman drew attention to the work the Borough Council had undertaken in terms of developing the Space Standards and he also explained that the implementation of planning permissions would be inspected and furthermore the Borough Council would remove any further Permitted Development rights where this was justified when planning permissions were granted.

In response to a question, the Director of Development explained the online reporting and monitoring of enforcement matters would be available in due course.

Recommended:

That "The Borough Council's Policy on the Use of Enforcement Powers" and the "Local Enforcement Plan for Planning" be adopted subject to the Director of Development being authorised to include further information regarding monitoring and implementation of planning permissions and to make other minor drafting amendments in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

431 Council Owned Amenity and Footway Lighting

The report sought approval for up to £1 million capital investment to undertake lighting designs, replace lighting columns and upgrade to KCC's specification in order to allow the transfer of as many of the Borough Council assets as possible to KCC.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Budget and Resource Management, emphasised the refurbishment and updating elements of the project but also advised that this was an "Invest to Save" initiative and the investment of £1 million would, after the payback period, assist in the Council achieving net savings. The need for a policy for new developments was also highlighted as important. He also explained that the option would also exist for Parish Councils to take over responsibility for lighting within their areas that were considered outside the suggested criteria for replacement.

In response to a question from a Member, the Chairman advised that as and when the lighting was handed over to KCC, they may wish to investigate the provision of interactive lighting.

Recommended:

- That**
- (i) a £1 million capital investment be funded through borrowing to upgrade or replace as appropriate Council-owned amenity and footway lighting and transfer agreed necessary lighting columns to KCC.**
 - (ii) the removal of amenity and footway lighting be agreed where deemed not necessary by KCC and/or the Borough Council and subject to any alternative adoption eg by a Parish Council; delegated powers be given to the Head of Service in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to make this decision.**
 - (iii) the need for a Policy to be devised on the criteria on when street lights were required for new developments be supported and a jointly created protocol between KCC and ABC be devised as part of the District Deal and be brought back to the Cabinet to consider.**

432 Support for the Ashford International Model Railway Education Centre (AIMREC)

The report sought the support of Members to provide a mortgage loan to the Ashford Model Railway Museum (AIMREC) for the purchase of a site on terms set out in the Exempt Appendix to the report.

The Portfolio Holder welcomed representatives from AIMREC and also Dan Anderson who was the Borough Council's Technical Adviser from Fourth Street who had reviewed AIMREC's Business Plan. The Portfolio Holder said that she believed this was a very exciting project and would boost tourism in the whole of the Borough.

A Member asked why the Borough Council was considering granting the mortgage loan when from the Business Plan the scheme looked viable and therefore funding could be obtained externally. The Member also asked why the term of the loan was 50 years.

In response, the Chairman explained that when an organisation such as AIMREC tried to raise funds they generally sought support from the National Heritage Lottery Fund and if the hosting Authority had already demonstrated their support this helped support the organisations application. The Chairman also said that there was an option for AIMREC to repay the loan early if they so wished.

Another Member said that he considered that the Borough Council should use their funds to support the older buildings within the Town Centre and also the cluster of buildings on the former Newtown Railway Works.

The Chairman explained that the Borough Council, in terms of the Elwick Place scheme were using Public Works Loan Board finance and would be achieving a return on the investment. This would help keep the overall Council Tax rate lower and help the Council to be financially independent.

The Ward Member said he had some concerns regarding the effect of parking on areas within his Ward and he also believed that AIMREC should be encouraged to

pay back the loan earlier than the full term. The Chairman acknowledged that the issue of parking needed to be considered.

Dan Anderson, representing Fourth Street said that his Company believed that the model village concept had proven very successful over the years as parts of other attractions in the country. He believed that the scheme would also benefit Ashford in terms of a retail destination and in particular with its close proximity to the Designer Outlet. In terms of a comment raised earlier in terms of private sector funding, Dan Anderson explained that traditional private sector lenders did not generally understand the nature of tourism ventures and it was for this reason that the funding was being sought from the Borough Council. Following the purchase of the land, AIMREC intended to make a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund and he said he was confident that AIMREC would raise the appropriate funding to allow the development to proceed.

Resolved:

That support be given to the Ashford International Model Railway Education Centre (AIMREC).

Recommended:

- That**
- (i) a mortgage loan be granted on the broad terms and up to the maximum sum specified in the Exempt Appendix C to the report to the Ashford Model Railway Museum to enable their purchase of land at the former Klondyke Railway Works.**
 - (ii) authority be given to the Heads of Culture, Finance and the Director of Law and Governance, in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holders, to approve the finalised Business Plan and any amendments or subsequent documents and to agree final terms and conditions and to make variations to terms in Appendix C to the report if they consider it prudent to do so.**
 - (iii) authority be given to the Director of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Heads of Finance and Culture to effect and complete all necessary documentation to action the above.**

**433 Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group –
31st March and 13th April 2016**

Resolved:

That the notes of the meetings of the Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group held on the 31st March and 13th April 2016 be approved and adopted.

434 Ashford Strategic Delivery Board – 22nd April 2016

Resolved:

That the notes of the meeting of the Ashford Strategic Delivery Board held on the 22nd April 2016 be received and noted.

435 Schedule of Key Decisions to be Taken

Resolved:

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

436 Items for Future Meetings

A Member referred to the slight downturn in terms of overall recycling figures and asked whether it would be appropriate to consider producing additional promotional material or providing new guidance stickers for placement on the various recycling bins.

The Portfolio Holder advised that leaflets were produced and in due course a “wheel of waste” would be sent to residents and a community programme would be developed.

The Member expressed a hope that the material sent to residents did not form part of the normal bulk delivery of promotional material etc which the Post Office delivered in one bundle.

The Chairman said he was sure that the Portfolio Holder would take the comments expressed by the Member on board and would report back to the Cabinet in due course.

(KRF/AEH)
MINS:CAXX1619