



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 16th February 2017 at 7.00 pm

Yours faithfully

T W Mortimer
Corporate Director (Law and Governance)

Agenda

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|---|--------------|
| 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: | (i) |
| 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 15 th December 2016 | |
| 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 Minutes of the Licensing and Health and Safety Committee held on the 16 th January 2017 | 1-8 |
| 9. To receive, consider and adopt the recommendations set out in the Minutes of the Meetings of the Cabinet held on the 12 th January and 9 th February 2017 (to follow) with the following exception – The recommendations of the 9 th February Meeting regarding the item “Budget 2017/18” be deferred for consideration with Agenda Item No. 10 | 9-12 |

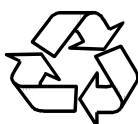
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| 10. | To consider the recommendations of the Cabinet regarding the item “Budget 2017/18” (which includes the adoption of the budget) and the report “Council Tax 2017/18 Resolutions”. (NOTE: report will be despatched following the Cabinet Meeting on 9 th February) and to determine the Borough Council’s precept on the Collection Fund and set the Council Tax for 2017/18. NB: Members are asked to bring with them the Agenda and report for the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 9 th February 2017 | |
| 11. | To receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Appointments Committee held on the 21 st December 2016 | 13-14 |
| 12. | To receive the Minutes of the Standards Committee held on the 31 st January 2017 | 15-17 |
| 13. | Annual Report of the Council’s Monitoring Officer – 2016 | 19-31 |
| 14. | Programme of Meetings 2017/18 and 2018/19 | 33-38 |
| 15. | Change to Committee Membership – Appointments Committee | 39 |
| 16. | To consider Motions of which Notice has been given pursuant to Procedure Rule 11 | |
| 17. | 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 to the Act, where in the circumstances the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

KRF/AEH
8th February 2017

Queries concerning this agenda? Please contact Keith Fearon:
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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
- (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 **15th December 2016**.

Present:

His Worshipful the Mayor, Cllr. S J G Koowaree (Chairman);

Cllrs. Apps, Bartlett, Bennett, Mrs Blanford, Bradford, Burgess, Chilton, Clarkson, Clokie, Dehnel, Farrell, Feacey, Heyes, Hicks, A Howard, W Howard, Knowles, Link, Miss Martin, Mrs Martin, Michael, Shorter, Waters, Wedgbury, White.

Also Present:

Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate Director (Law and Governance), Head of Finance, Senior Member Services Officer.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting: -

- (i) The Reverend Alan Dinnie said prayers.
- (ii) His Worshipful the Mayor asked Members to remain standing in silence in respect of Mr David Sharp, who served as the Council's Borough Recreation Officer from the late 1970s to 1989, who had passed away recently.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Adby, Barrett, Bell, Mrs Bell, Buchanan, Mrs Dyer, Galpin, Mrs Heyes, Krause, Macpherson, Murphy, Ovenden, Pickering, Powell, Sims. Smith, Mrs Webb.

244 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 Corporate Director (Law and Governance) advised that there were none.

245 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 20th October 2016 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

246 Announcements

(a) The Mayor's Charity

The Mayor said he firstly wanted to thank all those Members who had attended his recent charity curry night. It had been a fantastic night and he had been really pleased and grateful to see so many Members there. He advised that he was hosting

a Shirley Bassey Tribute evening for his charities on Friday the 27th January at London Beach Golf Club, Tenterden and again all Members were welcome to attend.

(b) Leader of the Council

The Leader said that as 2016 drew to a close he thought he would take the opportunity to reflect with colleagues on the progress they had seen across the Borough in the last twelve months.

When they took office in May 2015, he said that this administration had made a number of promises. One of those was to take a firm stance against the minority who flouted the rules and behaved in a manner that caused distress to the vast majority of law abiding citizens. Another promise they had made was to make sure that Ashford remained the lowest Council taxing Local Authority in Kent. This meant that the Council would have to be more business-like and generate revenues, as encouraged by Central Government. In October 2015 the Council had adopted its new Corporate Plan - setting out a clear direction and priorities for the next five years. There were just four clear priority areas: -

- Enterprising Ashford - Economic investment and growth;
- Living Ashford - Quality housing and homes for all;
- Active and Creative Ashford - Healthy choices through physical, cultural and leisure engagement;
- Attractive Ashford - Countryside and townscape, heritage and conservation.

These priorities had been set to underpin and strengthen the Council's aspiration to remain a well-resourced Council, with effective governance, that provided high quality services, good communications, safe surroundings and demonstrated good compliance and high standards. The last twelve months had seen significant progress made in delivering on each of the priority areas.

In terms of Enterprising Ashford there had been a flurry of planning approvals given this year, including Elwick Place (the cinema, hotel and eateries), the Cineworld IMAX extension, town centre apartments and the Chapel Down Brewery, Aldi superstore and hotel all along Victoria Way. The town centre was bucking the national trend as footfall rose and shop vacancy rates fell to an historic low of 8.9%, compared to 19% in 2013 and for the first time below the national average of 10.2%. Additionally, Ashford's visitor economy continued to thrive with a 6% increase in attraction spend. Visits to the district rose to 4.3 million trips and the total number of jobs supported by tourism rose by 3.54% to 5,482 - this equated to approximately 1 in 10 of all jobs in Ashford. The total value of tourism across the Borough, including all visitor spend, as well as associated and indirect spending was £278 million. Ashford's thriving visitor economy and the value of tourism in the Borough could not be underestimated. Ashford accounted for thousands of jobs and contributed significantly to Kent's economy.

With regard to the second priority, Living Ashford, this year had seen phase one of the exemplar sheltered housing scheme at Farrow Court completed with phase two under construction. Just last night the Chief Executive had accepted an award at the Kent County Council Architectural Awards for the best quality design of residential accommodation for Farrow Court. Planning permission had now been agreed for the Danemore scheme and they continued to work with Housing Associations who were also delivering housing care for the elderly like Quarry House in Aldington. The year

had also seen many affordable homes built, providing new homes for local families. Chilmington Green should soon be under construction and the Council was working hard to review its Local Plan which would be considered during the coming year. They had also set out the Council's tougher line on compliance across the board including new enforcement policies and an online reporting system. In addition the Leader advised that he would soon be signing the document to agree the 300 homes at Conningbrook which would release money for Conningbrook Country Park and other contributions.

Turning to the third priority of Active and Creative Ashford, the Leader advised that the Ashford International Model Railway Education Centre had received planning approval this year, the new Spearpoint Pavilion now provided excellent facilities for sports clubs and the local community, the new cricket pavilion at Charing had been officially opened by England Cricket Coach Paul Farbrace and the Mayor and work had now started on another community facility at Repton Park. Revelation St Mary's continued to provide a platform for music both at the Church and the new town centre bandstand. The Jasmin Vardimon Company, in conjunction with KCC, seemed set to secure a new Dance Academy Studio to be built in Ashford. The Council had launched an activity programme aimed at the over 60s and the Create Festival once again entertained the crowds at Victoria Park. This was one of the largest free music festivals in the South East. With the new Ashford College preparing to accept nearly 1000 students from September 2017 there would be a growing interest in creative activities.

In terms of the final priority, Attractive Ashford, this had been addressed by the Council in October, bringing the responsibility for grounds maintenance across the Borough back in-house, under the name Aspire Landscape Management. 20 KCC staff had been transferred in and put on the payroll. This initiative was a key part of delivering the adopted Land Management Improvement Plan, which aimed to make the Borough a pleasant and enjoyable place to live, work, visit and enjoy. By enhancing Ashford's overall appearance and attractiveness this would raise civic pride and make the Borough more attractive for residents, visitors and businesses. The Leader said he was sure that colleagues would agree that Aspire had already made a marked improvement to the appearance of the Borough as a whole. In addition, new signage had been introduced in Ashford town centre and a Heritage Trail launched, while the Tenterden Tourist Information Centre had relocated to the Town Hall. They had also brought in the litter enforcement scheme, which had seen over 900 Fixed Penalty Notices issued by Kingdom wardens between 7th September and 30th November. That did show the scale of the litter dropping problem that was occurring in Ashford.

The Leader advised that the Corporate Plan set out the positive direction this Council was taking to help the Borough to grow, thrive and prosper in the coming years. It was pleasing to see such progress being made against the strategic priorities. Whilst core plans had to be implemented, there was much more going on both in service delivery and support for the community – and that meant people. This included Officers and Elected Members but also many others, including volunteers, who all had a positive part to play. He was sure that everyone involved had the best interest of the Borough at heart. Of course there was a great deal more to be done but he thought all could take a degree of comfort from the significant amount of improvements the Council had made thus far and they would continue to focus on exciting opportunities for economic growth, providing business and leisure facilities,

building quality homes and press on promoting Ashford as a clean and pleasant place to live, work and visit.

Finally, the Leader said he would like to thank colleagues and Officers for their efforts this year, and on behalf of the Council, to wish them all, and indeed the Borough's residents and businesses, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The Mayor said it was pleasing to note how well the Borough was progressing generally and he also wanted to add his congratulations to those responsible for winning the award for Farrow Court.

247 Cabinet – 10th November and 8th December 2016

The report of the Corporate Director (Law and Governance), which had been tabled, clarified the procedure for consideration of the Cabinet Minutes.

(a) Cabinet – 10th November 2016

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 10th November 2016 be received and noted.

(b) Cabinet – 8th December 2016

Resolved:

That subject to the expiry of the period by which decisions arising from the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 8th December 2016 may be called in, i.e. 21st December 2016:-

- (i) the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 8th December 2016 be received and noted with the exception of Minute Nos. 222, 224, 225, 226 and 227.**
- (ii) Minute Nos. 222, 224, 225, 226 and 227 be approved and adopted.**

248 Audit Committee – 6th December 2016

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit Committee held on the 6th December 2016 be approved and adopted.

249 Selection and Constitutional Review Committee – 8th December 2016

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Selection and Constitutional Review Committee held on the 8th December 2016 be approved and adopted.

250 Seasons Greetings

Councillor Mrs Martin said she wanted to take the opportunity to thank all of those who had helped her with the problems she had experienced this year. She wanted to thank the Mayor, Members and Officers in every department but in particular wanted to mention Councillors Chilton, Smith, Michael, Bartlett, Mrs Webb and of course her own daughter Councillor Jane Martin. The kindness and consideration shown really did go a long way and she wanted to reflect on that, especially at this time of year and wish everybody a Happy Christmas.

The Mayor said he also wanted to wish everybody a good Christmas with their families, a Happy New Year and invite everybody present to join him in the Committee Rooms after the meeting for some Christmas refreshments.

(DS)

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Licensing and Health and Safety Committee

Minutes of a Meeting of the Licensing and Health and Safety Committee held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **16th January 2017**

Present:

Cllr. Feacey (Chairman);
Cllr. Bradford (Vice-Chairman);
Cllrs. Bennett, Miss Martin, Shorter, Sims, Mrs Webb

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

Apologies:

Cllrs. Apps, Mrs Heyes, Krause, Pickering.

Also Present:

Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader, Senior Member Services Officer.

262 Declarations of Interest

| Councillor | Interest | Minute No. |
|------------|---|------------|
| Feacey | Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as he was the Managing Director of Energyshift who worked with members of the taxi trade, he was on the Management Committee of UK LPG and was Chairman of the Ashford Volunteer Bureau who ran its own cars. | 264, 265 |

263 Minutes

As the full Committee only met on an annual basis the Chairman said he would like to update on a couple of issues raised at the last meeting. With regard to the call for evidence and detail from the trade when proposing increases to the fares, he advised that this point had been made on a number of occasions throughout the year and the quality of the evidence received had been disappointing. He advised that he and the Vice-Chairman would go back to the trade and explain what was needed more clearly and how the Committee would like it presented.

On the subject of scrap metal dealers and the request to supply some sort of badge for their vehicles, the Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader advised that they did require dealers to display their licence with their vehicles and this was the legal minimum. They did also supply the dealers themselves with an ID badge which was above and beyond, but this was not a legal requirement so its wearing could not be enforced. A Member said she would be interested in seeing the actual figures for those who had contravened the requirement to display their licence on

their vehicle and how many had been taken to task. A true and proper record would be useful.

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of this Committee held on the 25th January 2016 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

264 Proposed Fee Levels for 2017/18 Applications

The Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader introduced the report which recommended the proposed fees for licences for the financial year 2017/18. It covered: - Gambling Related Fees; Sex Establishment Fees; Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Fees; Scrap Metal Site and Collectors Fees; as well as summary of licences and permissions issued between 1st January and 31st December 2016. He advised there had been a general increase to the fares in line with inflation, with a couple of exceptions due to taking in to account efficiency savings and a review of the work involved.

Gambling Related Fees

The report recommended that the fees remained the same as the costs of processing these licences had not increased.

Sex Establishment Fees

The report proposed that a small increase of 1% be made to the fee for grant of licence this year but the fees for renewal or transfer of licence be decreased to £300 as this process was predominantly administrative and did not usually require a site visit.

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Fees

The report recommended small increases as follows: - drivers licences by £1; vehicle licence grant and renewals by £3; private hire operators licences by between £1 and £8, depending on the number of vehicles held on the licence; transfer of vehicle licences by £1 due to increased administrative requirements over the replacement plate fee which was proposed to remain at the same fee of £25; and additional vehicles on operators licences by 0.95% and 1.03% in accordance with vehicle numbers.

The Chairman advised that five years ago this Committee had recommended reducing the Transfer of Vehicle Licence fee to £20, with a view to further reducing and eventually abolishing it because they wanted to incentivise companies to bring newer and cleaner vehicles in to their fleets. However he had noticed that the fee had increased again over the last two years and was now proposed to increase again to £26. He asked for this to again be reduced to £20 for 2017/18 with a view to abolishing it in the future. This was supported by the Committee.

Scrap Metal Dealers Fees

The report recommended an increase of 0.98% to 1.3% be made to fees this year.

Licensing Annual Summary

The Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader drew the Committee's attention to a 'Licensing Summary' for 2016 summarising the licences/permissions issued from 1st January to 31st December 2016 and a list of the new Premises Licences issued.

The following responses were given to questions/comments: -

- Licenses for 'skin piercing etc.' related to skin piercing, tattooing, semi-permanent make-up and other disciplines in the beauty sector. The issue of whether the Council could limit the number of similar establishments in any one area had been discussed before and it was noted that trade could not be restricted in this way.
- It was not anticipated that the extra checks necessary under the Immigration Act 2016 would have an impact on costs for the Licensing team. The Council already routinely undertook many of the checks in question therefore it was not expected to cause substantial extra work.
- The Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader would check the status of the licence issued at Homelands Stadium, as it was queried whether this was a new premises licence as it was understood that they previously held a licence.

Post Meeting Note: A premises licence was held but was closed when the prior company dissolved. As such a new licence was applied for and issued in 2016 to the new operators.

Recommended:

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

RECOMMENDED GAMBLING RELATED LICENCE FEES FOR 2017/18

| Premises Type | New Application (£) | Annual Fee (£) |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| New Small Casino | 6570 | 3730 |
| New Large Casino | 7860 | 7520 |
| Regional Casino | 12380 | 11610 |
| Bingo Club | 2250 | 700 |
| Betting Premises (excluding Tracks) | 2290 | 455 |
| Tracks | 1760 | 700 |
| Family Entertainment Centres | 1760 | 605 |
| Adult Gaming Centre | 1760 | 705 |
| Temporary Use Notices | 204 | N/A |

| | Application to Vary £ | Application to Transfer £ | Application for Re-Instatement £ | Application for Provisional Statement £ | Licence Application (provisional Statement holders) £ | Copy Licence £ | Notification of Change £ |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| New Small Casino | 2690 | 1564 | 1314 | 6570 | 2335 | 25 | 50 |
| New large Casino | 3555 | 1835 | 2070 | 7860 | 3860 | 25 | 50 |
| Regional Casino | 5800 | 4230 | 4230 | 12380 | 6030 | 25 | 50 |
| Bingo Club | 1540 | 855 | 855 | 2250 | 930 | 25 | 50 |
| Betting Premises (excluding Tracks) | 1300 | 855 | 855 | 2250 | 930 | 25 | 50 |
| Tracks | 1180 | 855 | 855 | 1760 | 930 | 25 | 50 |
| Family Entertainment Centres | 795 | 855 | 855 | 1760 | 770 | 25 | 50 |
| Adult Gaming Centre | 795 | 855 | 855 | 1760 | 930 | 25 | 50 |
| Temporary Use Notices | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 25 | N/A |

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

RECOMMENDED SEX ESTABLISHMENT LICENCE FEES FOR 2017/18

| | CURRENT FEES 2016/17 | PROPOSED FEES 2017/18 |
|----------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Grant | £3204 | £3236 |
| Transfer | £350 | £300 |
| Renewal | £350 | £300 |

- (iii) that the Hackney Carriage, Private Hire and Operator applications licence fees as given below be approved for the purposes of public consultation.

**PROPOSED HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENSING FEES
2017/18**

| | CURRENT FEES | PROPOSED FEES |
|--|---|---|
| | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| Private Hire & Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence (for 1 year) | £50.00 | £50.00 |
| Private Hire & Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence (for 3 years) | £100.00 | £100.00 |
| Additional driver's licence (adding a licence) | £20.00 | £20.00 |
| Hackney Carriage Knowledge Test & Re-test | £50.00 | £50.00 |
| Replacement badge/Licence | £11.00 | £11.00 |
| Vehicle Licence - New (including vehicle plate) for 1 year | £305.00 | £308.00 |
| Vehicle Licence - Renewal (including vehicle plate) for 1 year | £285.00 | £288.00 |
| Vehicle Plate Internal/External | £25.00 | £25.00 |
| Transfer of Vehicle Licence (with or without vehicle plate) | £25.00 | £20.00 |
| <i>Vehicle Inspection - Test Fee (set by contract)</i> | <i>Max £28.00</i> | <i>Max £28.00</i> |
| <i>Vehicle Inspection - Missed Appointment (set by contract)</i> | <i>No charge</i> | <i>No charge</i> |
| Private Hire Operators Licence - New or Renewal (for 3 years) | 1-3 vehicles : £125 4-10 vehicles : £420 11-20 vehicles : £840 | 1-3 vehicles : £126 4-10 vehicles : £424 11-20 vehicles : £848 |
| To increase number of vehicles licensed during duration of Operators Licence | 1-3 to 4-10 : £290 4-10 to 10-20: £420 | 1-3 to 4-10 : £293 4-10 to 10-20: £424 |
| Fee for Returned (Bounced) Cheques | £16.00 | £16.00 |

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

| | CURRENT FEES 2016/17 | PROPOSED FEES 2017/18 |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Grant Site Licence | £305 | £308 |
| Grant Collectors Licence | £205 | £207 |
| Renewal Site Licence | £205 | £207 |
| Renewal Collectors Licence | £102 | £103 |
| Variation | £77 | £78 |
| Replacement Licence | £11 | £11 |

- (v) that the annual licensing summary be received and noted.

265 Review of the Hackney Carriage Fare Scale 2017/18

The Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader introduced the report which set out two different options for the Hackney Carriage fare scale for 2017/18. In December 1996 the Council had agreed that the Hackney Carriage fare scale would be reviewed annually. This year's process had started in September 2016 with consultation and discussion with the trade via the Taxi Forum and a subsequent internet based survey of drivers and operators. This survey had generated a 13% response rate, although one of those representations had been on behalf of an operator of a fleet of 20 Hackney vehicles, so the response had been better than it first appeared.

The two options proposed were either no change to the current tariff or an increase of 3% to the overall tariff. The rough implications for the cost of a journey for various distances on the basis of each of these options were outlined in the report. The responses of the trade were set out within the papers and there was overwhelming support for the 3% increase (92% of respondents).

In terms of other costs, as of November 2016, the average price per litre of unleaded fuel in the South East was 117.1 pence – a increase of 5.8 pence on the previous year. Diesel had been 119 pence per litre and LPG 55.9 pence and usually sat around 40% of the cost of unleaded petrol. These figures had generally increased month on month since February 2016 and it was noted that they were continuing to rise in to 2017.

The Portfolio Holder advised that he supported the 3% rise in taxi fares. This was based on Ashford's growing need for a reliable and professional transport system, including Hackney Carriage provision. The increase would also ensure that the fares were reflective of increased costs incurred by the trade. They had not had an increase for the last three years and it would enable the trade to continue improving the service they provided. He did want to point out that although the situation was improving and there were a number of examples where the Council was working more pro-actively with the trade, there was still quite a bit of apathy and he agreed with the Chairman that the evidence supplied this year had not been what was required and they would need to have further discussions with them during this year. A Member said that if drivers were not engaging with the process year after year, perhaps there was more onus on the Council to review the way they consulted with them and provide them with assistance in gathering their evidence if the Committee

needed it in a particular format. The Chairman said although he could not disagree with what had been said and he would be happy to engage further, this Council already went above and beyond and undertook a lot more consultation with the trade than many other Local Authorities. He considered that the comments about apathy were also fair.

A Member said that this had been an ongoing issue for the last two or three years and this Committee had always said that any case for an increase in fares should be backed up with firm details and evidence. Ashford already sat firmly in the top quartile nationally in terms of its fares and he did not consider it a high cost area so in his view any proposal for an increase needed a clear justification. Notwithstanding the fact that fuel and insurance costs had clearly increased, the low response rate from the trade and the lack of any good quality evidence of day to day cost increases, meant that he found it difficult to support a raise in fares – a cost that would ultimately be passed on to residents. Another Member agreed and said that in his view there was simply not enough evidence to support a 3% rise in fares.

Other Members said that they supported the proposed rise in fares due to increased fuel and insurance costs and a desire to work more constructively with the trade on an improved overall service. It should also be noted that the fares only set an upper limit and drivers could charge less or negotiate with passengers if they wished. A Member said that she regularly used taxis and would be happy to pay 3% more in order to maintain and enhance the already good service that the majority provided.

The Committee agreed to recommend a 3% increase to the overall tariff but requested that Officers, the Chairman and the Portfolio Holder continued to work with the trade and clearly explain to them what evidence was required ahead of making a decision next year.

Recommended:

That the Hackney Carriage fare scale for 2017/18 as given in the table below be approved for the purpose of issuing a public notice.

PROPOSED FARES FOR 2017/18

FARES FOR DISTANCE OR TIME

| | <u>£</u> |
|--|----------|
| <u>Rate 1</u> | |
| If the distance does not exceed 680 yards, for the whole distance or for the first 216 seconds of waiting time | 2.80 |
| For each subsequent 166.7 yards or uncompleted part thereof | 0.20 |
| Or for each subsequent period of 52.9 seconds of waiting time or uncompleted part thereof | 0.20 |

SURCHARGES FOR CERTAIN TIMES AND DAYS:-

Rate 2

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

Rate 3

- | | |
|---|------------|
| c) For each hire undertaken on a CHRISTMAS DAY, BOXING DAY or NEW YEARS DAY | 2 x Rate 1 |
|---|------------|

Note: When the holiday charge (b) or (c) is payable the Night Charge (a) is **NOT** payable.

Guide to Average Expected Fares for Journey Lengths

| | | |
|-----------------|---|---------------|
| 2 miles | - | £6.40 |
| 5 miles | - | £12.60 |
| 10 miles | - | £23.20 |

Extras - up to a maximum of £1.20

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

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

- | | |
|---|------|
| b) for each article of luggage conveyed outside the passenger compartment of the carriage | 0.05 |
| c) for perambulators | 0.05 |
| d) for dogs | 0.10 |

After the conclusion of the Meeting the Committee discussed the potential of Uber and similar companies operating in the Borough and the impact that may have on the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade and the Council's Licensing function. The Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader advised that legislation had not completely kept up to date with what was actually happening on the ground and this was something the Council and this Committee would need to keep a close eye on in the coming years.

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Cabinet

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **12th January 2017**

Present:

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman);

Cllr. Bell (Vice-Chairman);

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

Also Present:

Cllrs. Burgess, Hicks, Link, Miss Martin, Wedgbury.

Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate Director (Law and Governance), Head of Finance, Environmental Contracts and Operations Manager, Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader, Health, Parking and Community Safety Manager (JF), Health, Parking and Community Safety Manager (JH), Civil Enforcement Officer Supervisor, National Management Graduate, Communications and Marketing Manager, Member Services Manager.

255 Minutes

Resolved:

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

256 A Targeted and Costed Forward Education and Promotion Strategy, including Forward Recycling Options and Targets

The report sought approval and funding for a new targeted recycling and waste education and communication plan.

The Portfolio Holder advised that a recent DEFRA report had identified Ashford as the best Authority in Kent in terms of recycling, however, she considered that there was still a need to improve. The Portfolio Holder drew attention to the proposed communication plan set out within paragraph 23 of the report and she said that she was grateful for the work undertaken by the National Management Graduate in terms of analysing the information and producing the report.

In response to a question as to how the expected improvements to recycling would be achieved, the National Management Graduate explained that the figures had

been produced after analysing the waste composition analysis together with the up to date information on content and material included within household waste. This had been considered in conjunction with the improvement figures achieved by other Authorities (with similar demographics) who had undertaken a similar exercise to the one being proposed in the report.

In response to a further question, the Environmental Contracts and Operations Manager confirmed that the use of social media was part of her service's communications plan and she explained that it was proposed to circulate leaflets to households as the Council did not have a database of individual properties' email addresses. The Communications and Marketing Manager also confirmed that the Borough Council's website already had a recycling video which could be viewed and his team regularly used social media to issue various Council messages. The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Budget and Resource Management said he also wished to congratulate the report author on the presentation of the report.

Resolved:

That the recommended communications and education plan for recycling as detailed within the report, as well as the associated funding, be approved.

257 Fixed Penalty Notices for Fly Tipping

The report explained the provisions for Fixed Penalty Notices for fly tipping which became available in 2016 and asked the Cabinet to agree to set a fine level for the Borough. The Portfolio Holder explained that it was proposed that the Fixed Penalty be set at £400 and said that it was encouraging that other Councils were also setting their fines at the same level.

Recommended:

- That**
- (i) the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices for small scale fly tipping offences contrary to Section 33 (1) (a) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 be approved.**
 - (ii) the maximum Fixed Penalty be set at £400 without the ability to pay a reduced fee.**

258 Film Classification Policy and Procedure

The report advised of the Council's responsibilities in relation to the classification of films and set out an appropriate policy, procedure, guidance and fees. The Portfolio Holder advised that the Council did not currently have a policy and therefore it was prudent to put one in place. He also thanked the Environmental Protection and Licensing Team Leader for producing the document.

Recommended:

- That (i) the policy and procedure for dealing with the classification of films be approved.
- (ii) the guidance issued by the British Board of Film Classification be adopted to assist in the classification of films.
- (iii) the Council's scheme of delegation be amended in line with the proposed policy, including delegated responsibility for the classification of films to the Head of Service and to permit authorisation of other Officers as appropriate.
- (iv) the level of fee for the classification of films be £75, plus £1 per minute of the full length of the submitted work; this fee to be revised annually as part of the Council's normal fee setting process.

259 Sex Shops, Sex Cinemas and Sexual Entertainment Venue Policy

The report presented a revised Licensing Policy which had been prepared in accordance with the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982.

Recommended:

- That (i) the revised "Sex Shops, Sex Cinemas and Sexual Entertainment Venue Policy" be approved.
- (ii) the Council's scheme of delegation be amended in line with the revised policy.

260 Parking Enforcement Review

The report reviewed the current level of Parking Enforcement required to ensure that the team could deliver enforcement in line with current restrictions and priorities including lorry parking, whilst working proactively to ensure the free flow of traffic across the Borough. The increase in resource recommended would allow for the continued delivery of the Council's schools education programmes and support across other Council services.

The Portfolio Holder advised that it was proposed that the number of Civil Enforcement Officers be increased from 8.5 FTE to 12.5 FTE plus other help and also the purchase of four electric bicycles. He explained that since 2000 the workload had increased considerably and the number of Traffic Regulation Orders produced had increased tenfold.

In response to a question, the Health, Parking and Community Safety Manager (JF) advised that all CEO's had hand-held devices which contained trackers and

therefore it was possible to identify the various locations visited by the Officers as part of their duties.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) an increase in the number of Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO) from 8.5 FTE to 12.5 FTE be approved.**
 - (ii) a review be undertaken of the Civil Enforcement Officers' core working hours in order to ensure fit with current enforcement priorities.**
 - (iii) a further increase in support to the parking service by 1.5 FTE, namely 1 FTE Appeals and Representations Officer and 0.5 Business Administration Support Officer be approved.**
 - (iv) the purchase of four electric bicycles be approved.**

261 Schedule of Key Decisions to be Taken

Resolved:

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

(KRF/AEH)

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Published 14th February 2017

Decisions effective from the 22nd February 2017 unless they are called in or are recommended to the Council for approval

Cabinet

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **9th February 2017**.

Present:

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman);

Cllr. Bell (Vice-Chairman);

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

Apologies:

Cllrs. Michael, Ovenden, Smith.

Also Present:

Cllrs. Bartlett, Buchanan, Burgess, Chilton, Heyes, Hicks, Link, Wedgbury.

Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Corporate Director (Law and Governance), Head of Finance, Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development, Cultural Projects Manager, Facility Development Manager, Corporate Scrutiny and Overview Officer, Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator, Accountancy Manager, Head of Housing, Head of Health, Parking and Community Safety, Health, Parking and Community Safety Manager (JH), Senior Policy Performance and Scrutiny Officer, Senior Communications Officer, Member Services Manager.

283 Declarations of Interest

| Councillor | Interest | Minute No. |
|------------|---|------------|
| Bartlett | Made a "Voluntary Announcement" as he lived near Junction 10 of the M20 and | 290 |
| | Made a "Voluntary Announcement" as he was a Governor on the East Kent Hospitals University NHS Trust; a member of the Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust and a member of the SECAMB NHS Foundation Trust. | 293 |
| Clarkson | Made a "Voluntary Announcement" as Chairman and Director of a Better Choice for Property Company. | 286 |

| Councillor | Interest | Minute No. |
|-------------------|---|-------------------|
| Wedgbury | Made a "Voluntary Announcement" as a member of Kingsnorth Parish Council. | 288 |

284 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 12th January 2017 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

285 Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Report of the Budget Scrutiny Task Group

The report presented the findings of the Budget Scrutiny Task Group following scrutiny of the Council's Draft Budget for 2017/18. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had debated the report and was satisfied that the Budget was legal and achievable. The Committee had brought forward eight recommendations for the Cabinet to consider.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised that the current year's Budget Scrutiny process had been very intense but he believed it had worked well. He advised that the key issue which had been raised during the process was the increasing pressure on staff and staff resources. He thanked Members of the Task Group and Officers who had supported the Task Group and he also thanked the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Budget and Resource Management who had attended all of the Task Group meetings.

The Portfolio Holder said that he would also wish to thank members of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group and Officers for their support on the process undertaken this year.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) it be noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee regards the Council's Draft 2017/18 Budget as legal and achievable.**
 - (ii) the Service Plans and Registers for each Service be endorsed.**
 - (iii) Services be requested to include staff resource as a separate and individual risk within the Risk Register for each Service.**
 - (iv) the consideration of staffing within the Strategic Risk Register be enhanced.**
 - (v) the PID process be endorsed as a compulsory first step for determining the viability of all new and proposed Council projects.**

- (vi) **an overview of progress made in delivering the Council's project programme be added as a regular item to the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees' agendas.**
- (vii) **the need for further consideration of cross service and strategic interdependencies to be taken forward by Management Team in liaison with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be agreed.**
- (viii) **the existing apprenticeship and graduate schemes in place across the Council be continued and extended where these were possible.**

286 Budget 2017/18

The report presented the final Draft 2017/18 Budget which would be recommended to the Full Council for approval. The Budget supported the Corporate Plan's key themes reported to Council in October 2015.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Budget and Resource Management drew attention to the tabled paper which set out details of a response to the budget consultation exercise with the general public. The Portfolio Holder also drew attention to Table 1 in the report which showed that Ashford was still the lowest Council Tax in Kent and he also referred to the fact that in 2021/22 there would be a budget pressure due to the loss of formula grant and therefore there was a need for the Borough to continue with its investment policy.

The Chairman said that the Budget demonstrated the prudent management of the Council and whilst delivering the lowest Council Tax level in Kent, the Authority also strove to improve services. He referred to the Council's initiatives at Park Mall which was now virtually fully occupied and to a recent MORI survey which indicated that footfall in Ashford was up 1.6%. He also referred to work undertaken by Aspire in terms of grounds maintenance and landscaping work.

A Member referred to paragraph 88 of the report regarding the ratio of financing costs and said he had concerns about the overall level of debt the Council was accruing.

The Chairman confirmed that the Cabinet were content with the level of debt and advised that the borrowing was for the purpose of investing in property which increased in value. The Head of Finance advised that he was comfortable with the information set out within the report and explained that it was based on a forecast as decisions over future funding of projects had yet to be taken by the Cabinet.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) **the Budget context and MTFP position be noted.**
 - (ii) **it be noted that the Council Tax Support Scheme adopted is as reported to Cabinet in December 2016.**

- (iii) the Chief Finance Officer be delegated powers to establish local discounts in Business Rates in accordance with Government policy.
- (iv) the reserve summary as set out in paragraphs 54 – 58 of the report – Table 6 (Appendix C refers) be noted.
- (v) the Equality Impact Assessment as set out in Appendix E to the report be noted.
- (vi) the Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2017/18 be approved.
- (vii) the estimated average rent decrease of 1% in accordance with Government guidelines be approved and that the rent setting for the future continues to follow movements in the “limit rent” set by the Government (paragraphs 67 – 70 of the report refer).

Recommended:

- That
- (i) the Revenue Budget 2017/18 including the net Budget requirement of £15,248,991 (excluding Parish Precepts) be approved.
 - (ii) the level of Discretionary Fees to be levied from 1st April 2017 (as set out in Appendix D to the report) be approved.
 - (iii) Band D Council Tax be set at £154.
 - (iv) the Capital Budget for 2017/18 (as set out in Appendix G to the report) be approved.
 - (v) the Prudential Indicators and MRP policy as set out in Appendix H to the report and the Treasury Management Strategy Statement at Appendix I to the report be approved.
 - (vi) the Accountancy Manager be appointed as the Deputy Section 151 Officer in addition to the Deputy Chief Executive.
 - (vii) the Risk Based Verification Policy as outlined in Appendix J to the report be approved.

287 An Independent Business Case to Examine the Feasibility of Establishing a New Single Council in East Kent

The report advised that in July 2016 the Cabinet had approved a Statement of Intent to explore a potential merger of the five East Kent District Councils. A Business Case was jointly commissioned to examine the advantages, disadvantages and feasibility of forming a single East Kent District Council. A full copy of the Business Case was appended to the report.

The Chairman advised that the Council had approached the potential merger with an open mind, however, it had become apparent that the rise in Council Tax for Ashford would be substantial and therefore it was more beneficial for the other four Authorities if Ashford decided not to proceed. The Chairman said, however, that this would not prohibit the Council working with the other Authorities if opportunities arose.

A Member said that he supported the recommendations in the report and commented that any rise in the Council Tax would be unacceptable. In his view the Council should work better with the Kent County Council. The Chairman advised that Ashford was the only District in Kent with a district deal with the Kent County Council.

Recommended:

- That**
- (i) the potential implications of the Business Case, as measured against the Council's current financial position, and its long term vision to become more commercially minded and self-sufficient from Central Government funding be noted.**
 - (ii) based on the content of the Business Case, the Council does not pursue a merger with the other four East Kent District Councils.**
 - (iii) sufficient flexibility be retained to enable ABC to work with other authorities and partners throughout Kent and outside the County.**
 - (iv) the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Directors be authorised to agree a Memorandum of Understanding as a basis for Ashford's future working relationship with a new single Council.**

288 Kingsnorth Recreation Centre: Section 106 Expenditure

The report sought approval for the release of Section 106 Contributions from Park Farm South and East Developments to be used for the enhancement of Kingsnorth Recreation Centre as detailed in the plans attached to the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Environment and Heritage said the initiative reflected one of the overall aims of the Borough Council to improve and support leisure facilities in the Borough. She explained that the scheme had been developed in conjunction with the Kingsnorth Parish Council and she advised that she understood that the Ward Member supported the proposal.

A Member (who was also the Ward Member) said that the current facility was starting to look a little dated and therefore the proposed scheme would help to improve it. There was also an option in the future for the Ashford Bowling Club to relocate next to the site. Another Member said he had concerns in terms of the effect of the Section 106 funds allocated to this project and the potential development of the proposed Bridgefield Park. He asked whether after taking this scheme into account together with the money already spent on the MUGA, would

there be sufficient funds to progress the park? He sought an assurance that this scheme would not affect the funding for the park.

The Portfolio Holder advised that the planning application for the proposed Bridgefield Park would be considered at the next Planning Committee and subject to planning approval, the scheme would then progress. The Chairman also advised that if there was indeed a shortfall in funding for Bridgefield, steps would be taken to identify funding to meet that shortfall.

Resolved:

- That
- (i) the release of Section 106 Contributions of £128,574.84 be approved, subject to indexation, for the enhancement of Kingsnorth Recreation Centre to Kingsnorth Parish Council subject to signing of a S106 Funding Agreement between the Council and the Parish Council.**
 - (ii) the Head of Culture and the Director of Law and Governance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Environment and Heritage be authorised to take any further actions required to give effect to the recommendations.**
 - (iii) the approach by the Parish Council to support the development of the site be welcomed including the entrance park, as a leisure and community hub.**

289 Conningbrook Lakes Country Park – Water Quality

The report presented a case for introducing a range of measures to improve the quality of the water at Conningbrook Lakes Country Park to enable the ongoing establishment of the lake as a key water sport facility for the Borough.

The Portfolio Holder drew attention to the report and in particular to the steps identified by Laguna Science which would help improve the quality of the water at the Country Park.

Resolved:

- That
- (i) the introduction of a range of measures aimed at reducing the levels of active blue green algae and invasive aquatic weed in the lake be approved.**
 - (ii) forward funding of up to £150,000, to be drawn down on a phased approach over the next two years, be approved.**
 - (iii) the Head of Culture and the Head of Finance be delegated authority, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Environment and Heritage to take any further actions required to deliver the recommendations.**

290 M20 Junction 10A – Allocation of Capital Spend

The report advised that in order to assist in the delivery of Highways England's proposal for the new M20 Junction 10A, the Department of Communities and Local Government had agreed to provide the Council with a fund of £16 million to spend in 2016/17 on capital projects subject to the Council agreeing to repay the money from developer contributions to the Homes and Communities Agency. The report asked the Cabinet to make such a recommendation to full Council.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Enforcement explained the strategic importance of the provision of the Junction 10A scheme.

In response to a question from a Member, the Chairman advised that paragraph 8 of the report explained that the Funding Agreement with the HCA did not require the Council to underwrite any of the sum or place the Council at any financial risk in the event that the development did not come forward. The Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development said that the Agreement required that the amount be repaid by 2030 by developer contributions although it was considered that the sum would be repaid before that date. He confirmed that the developer contributions being used to fund the Junction were proportionate in relation to the overall level of contributions being sought from the various developments from which the funds were to be drawn down from.

Recommended:

That the £16m capital spend made available by the DCLG on the proposed scheme for M20 Junction 10A be approved.

291 Revenues and Benefits Recommended Write-Offs Schedule

The report proposed the formal write-off of 446 debts totalling £332,469.31. The proposals were in line with the Council's Revenues and Benefits Service Write-Off Policy and existing bad debt provisions already more than covered the sums involved.

The Portfolio Holder explained that if the Council became aware of the location of any of the persons identified as untraceable, the debts set out within the report would be pursued. He also advised that an issue associated with a housing benefit payment write-off had been raised with the relevant Government Minister.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) accounts totalling £56,216.86 that had been written-off under delegated powers (Financial Regulations 11.1) be noted.**
 - (ii) the write-offs listed in the Exempt Appendices to the report totalling £276,252.45 be approved.**

292 Domestic Abuse Annual Report

The report highlighted the key achievements the Council and its partners had made on projects relating to domestic abuse over the past 12 months.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways, Wellbeing and Safety said he believed that the £50,000 of funding provided annually by the Council towards domestic abuse work had proved a success and he referred to the increasing referral rates to the One Stop Shop as evidence of confidence in the systems put in place.

The Committee also considered it would be appropriate to send a letter of thanks to the Chairman of the Ashford Domestic Abuse Forum thanking her and the Forum for their work on the issue.

In response to a suggestion from a Member as to whether the Borough Council should consider setting up refuge facilities for male victims of domestic abuse, the Chairman said that he was sure that Officers would look into this matter.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) the work of the Independent Domestic Violence Advisers and Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator be noted.**
 - (ii) the work of partners in tackling domestic abuse be endorsed.**
 - (iii) the partnership approach in working with domestic abuse charities and neighbouring local authorities to apply for additional resources to tackle domestic abuse be supported.**
 - (iv) the continued funding for domestic abuse work in the Borough and the making permanent of the post of Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator be agreed.**
 - (v) the Chairman of the Ashford Domestic Abuse Forum be thanked for her work, and for the work of the Forum on domestic abuse.**

293 Transforming Health and Social Care in Kent and Medway

The report provided additional information to that provided by the CCG in the Kent and Medway Health and Social Care Sustainable Transformation Plan. Prior to the meeting a presentation had been given to Council Members by Matthew Kershaw of East Kent Hospitals Trust and Navin Kumta, Chairman of the CCG.

The report also encouraged Members to participate and influence the ongoing process of transforming the local health and social care service.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways, Wellbeing and Safety referred to the presentation held prior to the meeting and highlighted the report's recommendation that encouraged Members to engage with the Community Networks.

A Member said he wished to draw attention to the listening event planned to be held at the Julie Rose Stadium on Friday 17th February at 1.00 pm which all Members were welcome to attend. He also promoted membership of the hospital trust as well as the Community Networks.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) the information provided on the Health and Social Care Sustainable Transformation Plan (STP) for Kent and Medway be noted.**
 - (ii) Members be encouraged to participate and influence the ongoing process of transforming the local health and social care service.**
 - (iii) Members be encouraged to engage with their local community networks.**
 - (iv) support be given for the direction of travel proposed within the STP and the aspiration to provide support for better health and wellbeing, better standards of care and better use of staff and funds.**

294 Budget Monitoring – Quarter 3, 2016/17

The report presented an assessment of the outturn position for the financial year based on the first three quarters of the year for the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account and the Collection Fund. Current forecasting on the General Fund showed an overall favourable variance of £121,000, however, it needed to be noted that Quarter 1 underspends had been transferred to reserves. The Housing Revenue Account was projecting an overall deficit of £444,000 which was lower than the budgeted position.

Resolved:

That the Budget Monitoring position as at 31st December 2016 be noted.

295 Ashford Borough Council's Performance – Quarter 3, 2016/17

The report provided an update on the performance of the Council against its Corporate Plan during Quarter 3, 2016/17. This included information on what the Cabinet had achieved through its decision-making, key performance data and consideration of the wider Borough picture which impacted upon the Council's work.

Resolved:

That the Council's performance against the Corporate Plan in Quarter 3 of 2016/17 be noted.

296 Member Training Panel – 6th December 2016

The Chairman of the Member Training Panel explained that he had been the driver behind the recommendations set out within the report and said that he believed that training increased public confidence in how Members undertook their roles. In terms of future training, be advised that Officers were looking at working with the Kent Association of Local Councils and Kent County Council in terms of the joint provision of training courses.

Resolved:

That the notes of the meeting of the Member Training Panel held on the 6th December 2016 be received and noted.

297 Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group – 22nd December 2016

Resolved:

That the notes of the meeting of the Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group held on the 22nd December 2016 be received and noted.

298 Economic Regeneration and Investment Board – 21st December 2016

Resolved:

That the notes of the meeting of the Economic Regeneration and Investment Board held on the 21st December 2016 be received and noted.

299 Schedule of Key Decisions to be Taken

Resolved:

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

(KRF/AEH)

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Agenda Item No: 10
Report To: Full Council
Date of Meeting: 16 February 2017
Report Title: Budget and Council Tax Resolutions 2017/18
Report Author & Job Title: Maria Seddon – Accountancy Manager
Portfolio Holder Cllr. Shorter
Portfolio Holder for: Finance & Budget, Resource Management and Procurement



Summary: This report presents the Cabinet's 2017/18 General Fund Budget and Council Tax recommendations for resolution by the Full Council. It also presents the full statutory resolutions, including the requirements of the Precepting Authorities and Parish Councils, for the area covered by the Borough Council as the billing authority.

Excluding Parish Precepts, the Council's net revenue spending, is £15,248,990 for 2017/18. The Borough Council's element of the Council Tax at band D is to be increased by 2.67% to £154.

On the basis of information available from the Precepting Authorities the overall level of Council Tax, excluding Parish Precepts, is anticipated to be £1,563.32 an increase overall of £55.62 (or 3.69%).

The detailed Council Tax amounts by band are subject to validation within our billing system. If amendments are needed they will be tabled at the meeting.

Key Decision: YES

Significantly Affected Wards: All

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

- I. Agree the budget for 2017/18 as recommended by the Cabinet**
- II. Agree the formal Council Tax resolution annexed to this report**

Policy Overview: The budget is a matter for the Full Council to approve. Apart from the statutory requirement and status of the budget, the proposals for 2017/18 work towards delivering the Council's priorities in the Corporate Plan.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Financial Implications: | The budget supports the Corporate Plan and is the result of considerable input from Members and services over several months. It is broadly in line with the medium term financial plan. The recommended budget requirement (excluding parish precepts) is £15,248,990 .The recommended Council Tax at Band D is £154, an increase of £4 from 2016/17. |
| Legal Implications | The council tax needs to be set in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992. |
| Equalities Impact Assessment | Please see the Final Budget Report |
| Other Material Implications: | |
| Exempt from Publication: | NO |
| Background Papers: | |
| Contact: | Maria.seddon@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: (01233) 330547 |

Report Title: Budget and Council Tax Resolution 2017/18

Important notice

1. The resolution in this report, which must include the requirements of all precepting authorities, are based on the recommendations made to these authorities.

Proposal/Current Position

2. To present the Cabinet Committee's 2017/18 General Fund Budget and Council Tax recommendation for resolution by the Full Council. It presents the full statutory resolutions, including the requirements of the Precepting Authorities (as known at the time of writing) and the Parish Councils, for the areas covered by the Borough Council as the Billing Authority.

Issues to be decided

3. The Full Council is required to consider and approve the recommended 2017/18 Budget and the Council Tax requirement. The Full Council must also agree the statutory resolutions, which include the Precepting Authorities' requirements.

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

4. The decisions of the Cabinet at its meeting on 9 February are set out in its Cabinet Minute reported on this Agenda. A summary of the recommended budget is included as **Appendix A**. Members will also have received a link to allow them to review the full 2017/18 Budget Book by the time of the meeting.
5. The report to the Cabinet Meeting included advice required by the Local Government Act 2003, on the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of the Councils reserves.
6. It should be noted that the period for budget consultation closes on 8 February. The public response received was reported to cabinet, and cabinet received a paper on the response of the Overview and Scrutiny committee. Any further responses to the consultation will be reported to the Full Council Meeting.

Council Tax Requirement

7. The demand on the Council Tax Collection Fund for 2017/18 that flows from the recommendation of the Cabinet, and the decisions of the Precepting Bodies totals £71,270,041.56, analysed as follows: -

| Authority | Precept/Demand | | 2017/18 Band D Council Tax | Change over 2016/17 | |
|---|----------------|-------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|------|
| | £ | % | £ | £ | % |
| Ashford Borough Council | 6,879,437.18 | 9.65 | 154.00 | 4.00 | 2.67 |
| Kent County Council | 52,659,858.03 | 73.89 | 1178.82 | 45.27 | 3.99 |
| Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent | 7,020,152.94 | 9.85 | 157.15 | 5.00 | 3.29 |
| Kent and Medway Fire Authority | 3,276,666.99 | 4.60 | 73.35 | 1.35 | 1.88 |
| Parish Councils | 1,433,926.42 | 2.01 | 31.89 | 0.01 | 0.00 |

8. Excluding Parish Precepts the overall Council Tax at Band D for 2017/18 is £1,563.32, and increase of £55.62 on 2016/17.
9. Attached to this report are the formal resolutions for approval by the Council as the Billing Authority. Also attached at **Appendix A and B** are details on the calculation of this Council's Budget requirement and Council Tax at Band D.

Contact and Email

10. Maria Seddon – maria.seddon@ashford.gov.uk

Council Tax Resolution

The Council is recommended to resolve as follows:

1. It be noted that on **8 December 2016** the Cabinet calculated:
 - a. The Council Tax Base 2017/18 for the whole Council area as 44,671.7 (Item T in the formula in Section 31B(3) of the Local Government Act 1992, as amended (the "Act")) and,
 - b. for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates as in the attached **Annex A**.
2. Calculation that the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2017/18 (excluding Parish precepts) is **£6,879,437.18 (Appendices A and B)**.
3. That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2017/17 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:

| | | |
|-----|---------------|---|
| | £ | |
| (a) | 99,688,422.60 | 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) | 91,375,059.00 | being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act. |
| (c) | 8,313,363.60 | 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) | 186.10 | being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (2 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).(Annex C) |
| (e) | 1,433,926.42 | being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Annex B). |
| (f) | 154.00 | being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (2 above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.(Annex D & E) |

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 | 594.45 | Little Chart | 128.76 |
| Appledore | 338.65 | Mersham and Sevington | 740.49 |
| Bethersden | 702.48 | Molash | 108.07 |
| Biddenden | 1,095.73 | Newenden | 101.97 |
| Bilsington | 145.62 | Orlestone | 597.25 |
| Boughton Aluph and Eastwell | 1,067.44 | Pluckley | 475.69 |
| Brabourne | 597.06 | Rolvenden | 681.00 |
| Brook | 155.02 | Ruckinge | 335.44 |
| Challock | 452.89 | Shadoxhurst | 543.13 |
| Charing | 1,306.17 | Smarden | 640.56 |
| Chilham | 746.22 | Smeeth | 360.06 |
| Crundale (PM) | 93.16 | Stanhope | 776.75 |
| Egerton | 501.20 | Stone | 201.76 |
| Godmersham | 172.62 | Tenterden (TC) | 3,533.93 |
| Great Chart with Singleton | 2,414.65 | Warehorne | 174.86 |
| Hastingleigh | 114.17 | Westwell | 324.58 |
| High Halden | 716.09 | Wittersham | 529.40 |
| Hothfield | 264.02 | Woodchurch | 834.75 |
| Kenardington | 107.35 | Wye with Hinxhill | 1,024.70 |
| Kingsnorth | 4,434.76 | | |

Parish Council Precepts

| PARISH | PRECEPT | PARISH | PRECEPT |
|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Aldington & Bonnington | 28,515.00 | Little Chart | 6,000.00 |
| Appledore | 26,000.00 | Mersham and Sevington | 15,046.80 |
| Bethersden | 22,760.00 | Molash | 4,000.00 |
| Biddenden | 51,283.00 | Newenden | 5,020.00 |
| Bilsington | 4,230.00 | Orlestone | 20,390.00 |
| Boughton Aluph and Eastwell | 26,280.00 | Pluckley | 46,200.00 |
| Brabourne | 34,000.00 | Rolvenden | 25,146.62 |
| Brook | 7,070.00 | Ruckinge | 10,000.00 |
| Challock | 15,770.00 | Shadoxhurst | 15,000.00 |
| Charing | 87,098.00 | Smarden | 28,640.00 |
| Chilham | 26,498.00 | Smeeth | 22,376.00 |
| Crundale (PM) | 200.00 | Stanhope | 16,018.00 |
| Egerton | 18,331.00 | Stone | 5,500.00 |
| Godmersham | 5,430.00 | Tenterden (TC) | 335,700.00 |
| Great Chart with Singleton | 174,821.00 | Warehorne | 4,449.00 |
| Hastingleigh | 3,010.00 | Westwell | 15,759.00 |
| High Halden | 33,054.00 | Wittersham | 24,035.00 |
| Hothfield | 9,500.00 | Woodchurch | 22,800.00 |
| Kenardington | 4,850.00 | Wye with Hinxhill | 87,662.00 |
| Kingsnorth | 145,484.00 | | |

Billing Authority share of Council Tax

| PARISH | BAND A | BAND B | BAND C | BAND D | BAND E | BAND F | BAND G | BAND H |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Aldington & Bonnington | 134.65 | 157.09 | 179.53 | 201.97 | 246.85 | 291.73 | 336.62 | 403.94 |
| Appledore | 153.86 | 179.50 | 205.14 | 230.78 | 282.06 | 333.34 | 384.64 | 461.56 |
| Bethersden | 124.27 | 144.98 | 165.69 | 186.40 | 227.82 | 269.24 | 310.67 | 372.80 |
| Biddenden | 133.87 | 156.18 | 178.49 | 200.80 | 245.42 | 290.04 | 334.67 | 401.60 |
| Bilsington | 122.03 | 142.37 | 162.71 | 183.05 | 223.73 | 264.41 | 305.08 | 366.10 |
| Boughton Aluph and Eastwell | 119.08 | 138.93 | 158.77 | 178.62 | 218.31 | 258.01 | 297.70 | 357.24 |
| Brabourne | 140.63 | 164.07 | 187.51 | 210.95 | 257.83 | 304.71 | 351.58 | 421.90 |
| Brook | 133.07 | 155.25 | 177.43 | 199.61 | 243.97 | 288.33 | 332.68 | 399.22 |
| Challock | 125.88 | 146.86 | 167.84 | 188.82 | 230.78 | 272.74 | 314.70 | 377.64 |
| Charing | 147.12 | 171.64 | 196.16 | 220.68 | 269.72 | 318.76 | 367.80 | 441.36 |
| Chilham | 126.34 | 147.40 | 168.45 | 189.51 | 231.62 | 273.74 | 315.85 | 379.02 |
| Crundale (PM) | 104.10 | 121.45 | 138.80 | 156.15 | 190.85 | 225.55 | 260.25 | 312.30 |
| Egerton | 127.05 | 148.22 | 169.40 | 190.57 | 232.92 | 275.27 | 317.62 | 381.14 |
| Godmersham | 123.64 | 144.25 | 164.85 | 185.46 | 226.67 | 267.89 | 309.10 | 370.92 |
| Great Chart with Singleton | 150.93 | 176.09 | 201.24 | 226.40 | 276.71 | 327.02 | 377.33 | 452.80 |
| Hastingleigh | 120.24 | 140.28 | 160.32 | 180.36 | 220.44 | 260.52 | 300.60 | 360.72 |
| High Halden | 133.44 | 155.68 | 177.92 | 200.16 | 244.64 | 289.12 | 333.60 | 400.32 |
| Hothfield | 126.65 | 147.76 | 168.87 | 189.98 | 232.20 | 274.42 | 316.63 | 379.96 |
| Kenardington | 132.79 | 154.92 | 177.05 | 199.18 | 243.44 | 287.70 | 331.97 | 398.36 |
| Kingsnorth | 124.54 | 145.30 | 166.05 | 186.81 | 228.32 | 269.84 | 311.35 | 373.62 |
| Little Chart | 133.73 | 156.02 | 178.31 | 200.60 | 245.18 | 289.76 | 334.33 | 401.20 |
| Mersham and Sevington | 116.21 | 135.58 | 154.95 | 174.32 | 213.06 | 251.80 | 290.53 | 348.64 |
| Molash | 127.34 | 148.56 | 169.79 | 191.01 | 233.46 | 275.90 | 318.35 | 382.02 |
| Newenden | 135.49 | 158.07 | 180.65 | 203.23 | 248.39 | 293.55 | 338.72 | 406.46 |
| Orlestone | 125.43 | 146.33 | 167.24 | 188.14 | 229.95 | 271.75 | 313.57 | 376.28 |
| Pluckley | 167.41 | 195.32 | 223.22 | 251.12 | 306.92 | 362.73 | 418.53 | 502.24 |
| Rolvenden | 127.29 | 148.50 | 169.72 | 190.93 | 233.36 | 275.78 | 318.22 | 381.86 |
| Ruckinge | 122.54 | 142.97 | 163.39 | 183.81 | 224.65 | 265.50 | 306.35 | 367.62 |
| Shadoxhurst | 121.08 | 141.26 | 161.44 | 181.62 | 221.98 | 262.34 | 302.70 | 363.24 |
| Smarden | 132.47 | 154.55 | 176.63 | 198.71 | 242.87 | 287.03 | 331.18 | 397.42 |
| Smeeth | 144.10 | 168.11 | 192.13 | 216.14 | 264.17 | 312.20 | 360.24 | 432.28 |
| Stanhope | 116.41 | 135.82 | 155.22 | 174.62 | 213.42 | 252.23 | 291.03 | 349.24 |
| Stone | 120.84 | 140.98 | 161.12 | 181.26 | 221.54 | 261.82 | 302.10 | 362.52 |
| Tenterden (TC) | 166.00 | 193.66 | 221.33 | 248.99 | 304.32 | 359.65 | 414.99 | 497.98 |
| Warehorne | 119.63 | 139.57 | 159.50 | 179.44 | 219.31 | 259.19 | 299.07 | 358.88 |
| Westwell | 135.03 | 157.54 | 180.04 | 202.55 | 247.56 | 292.57 | 337.58 | 405.10 |
| Wittersham | 132.94 | 155.09 | 177.25 | 199.40 | 243.71 | 288.02 | 332.34 | 398.80 |
| Woodchurch | 120.88 | 141.02 | 161.17 | 181.31 | 221.60 | 261.89 | 302.19 | 362.62 |
| Wye with Hinxhill | 159.70 | 186.32 | 212.93 | 239.55 | 292.78 | 346.01 | 399.25 | 479.10 |
| Unparished Area | 102.67 | 119.78 | 136.89 | 154.00 | 188.22 | 222.44 | 256.67 | 308.00 |

Council Tax Charge per Band

| PARISH | BAND A | BAND B | BAND C | BAND D | BAND E | BAND F | BAND G | BAND H |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Aldington & Bonnington | 1,074.20 | 1,253.23 | 1,432.26 | 1,611.29 | 1,969.35 | 2,327.41 | 2,685.49 | 3,222.58 |
| Appledore | 1,093.41 | 1,275.64 | 1,457.87 | 1,640.10 | 2,004.56 | 2,369.02 | 2,733.51 | 3,280.20 |
| Bethersden | 1,063.82 | 1,241.12 | 1,418.42 | 1,595.72 | 1,950.32 | 2,304.92 | 2,659.54 | 3,191.44 |
| Biddenden | 1,073.42 | 1,252.32 | 1,431.22 | 1,610.12 | 1,967.92 | 2,325.72 | 2,683.54 | 3,220.24 |
| Bilsington | 1,061.59 | 1,238.51 | 1,415.44 | 1,592.37 | 1,946.23 | 2,300.08 | 2,653.96 | 3,184.74 |
| Boughton Aluph and Eastwell | 1,058.63 | 1,235.07 | 1,411.50 | 1,587.94 | 1,940.81 | 2,293.68 | 2,646.57 | 3,175.88 |
| Brabourne | 1,080.19 | 1,260.21 | 1,440.24 | 1,620.27 | 1,980.33 | 2,340.38 | 2,700.46 | 3,240.54 |
| Brook | 1,072.63 | 1,251.39 | 1,430.16 | 1,608.93 | 1,966.47 | 2,324.00 | 2,681.56 | 3,217.86 |
| Challock | 1,065.43 | 1,243.00 | 1,420.57 | 1,598.14 | 1,953.28 | 2,308.42 | 2,663.57 | 3,196.28 |
| Charing | 1,086.67 | 1,267.78 | 1,448.89 | 1,630.00 | 1,992.22 | 2,354.44 | 2,716.67 | 3,260.00 |
| Chilham | 1,065.89 | 1,243.54 | 1,421.18 | 1,598.83 | 1,954.12 | 2,309.41 | 2,664.72 | 3,197.66 |
| Crundale (PM) | 1,043.65 | 1,217.59 | 1,391.53 | 1,565.47 | 1,913.35 | 2,261.23 | 2,609.12 | 3,130.94 |
| Egerton | 1,066.60 | 1,244.36 | 1,422.13 | 1,599.89 | 1,955.42 | 2,310.94 | 2,666.49 | 3,199.78 |
| Godmersham | 1,063.19 | 1,240.39 | 1,417.58 | 1,594.78 | 1,949.17 | 2,303.56 | 2,657.97 | 3,189.56 |
| Great Chart with Singleton | 1,090.49 | 1,272.23 | 1,453.98 | 1,635.72 | 1,999.21 | 2,362.70 | 2,726.21 | 3,271.44 |
| Hastingleigh | 1,059.79 | 1,236.42 | 1,413.05 | 1,589.68 | 1,942.94 | 2,296.20 | 2,649.47 | 3,179.36 |
| High Halden | 1,072.99 | 1,251.82 | 1,430.65 | 1,609.48 | 1,967.14 | 2,324.80 | 2,682.47 | 3,218.96 |
| Hothfield | 1,066.21 | 1,243.90 | 1,421.60 | 1,599.30 | 1,954.70 | 2,310.09 | 2,665.51 | 3,198.60 |
| Kenardington | 1,072.34 | 1,251.06 | 1,429.78 | 1,608.50 | 1,965.94 | 2,323.38 | 2,680.84 | 3,217.00 |
| Kingsnorth | 1,064.09 | 1,241.44 | 1,418.78 | 1,596.13 | 1,950.82 | 2,305.51 | 2,660.22 | 3,192.26 |
| Little Chart | 1,073.29 | 1,252.16 | 1,431.04 | 1,609.92 | 1,967.68 | 2,325.43 | 2,683.21 | 3,219.84 |
| Mersham and Sevington | 1,055.77 | 1,231.72 | 1,407.68 | 1,583.64 | 1,935.56 | 2,287.47 | 2,639.41 | 3,167.28 |
| Molash | 1,066.89 | 1,244.71 | 1,422.52 | 1,600.33 | 1,955.95 | 2,311.58 | 2,667.22 | 3,200.66 |
| Newenden | 1,075.04 | 1,254.21 | 1,433.38 | 1,612.55 | 1,970.89 | 2,329.23 | 2,687.59 | 3,225.10 |
| Orlestone | 1,064.98 | 1,242.47 | 1,419.97 | 1,597.46 | 1,952.45 | 2,307.43 | 2,662.44 | 3,194.92 |
| Pluckley | 1,106.97 | 1,291.46 | 1,475.95 | 1,660.44 | 2,029.42 | 2,398.40 | 2,767.41 | 3,320.88 |
| Rolvenden | 1,066.84 | 1,244.64 | 1,422.45 | 1,600.25 | 1,955.86 | 2,311.46 | 2,667.09 | 3,200.50 |
| Ruckinge | 1,062.09 | 1,239.11 | 1,416.12 | 1,593.13 | 1,947.15 | 2,301.18 | 2,655.22 | 3,186.26 |
| Shadoxhurst | 1,060.63 | 1,237.40 | 1,414.17 | 1,590.94 | 1,944.48 | 2,298.02 | 2,651.57 | 3,181.88 |
| Smarden | 1,072.03 | 1,250.69 | 1,429.36 | 1,608.03 | 1,965.37 | 2,322.70 | 2,680.06 | 3,216.06 |
| Smeeth | 1,083.65 | 1,264.25 | 1,444.86 | 1,625.46 | 1,986.67 | 2,347.88 | 2,709.11 | 3,250.92 |
| Stanhope | 1,055.96 | 1,231.96 | 1,407.95 | 1,583.94 | 1,935.92 | 2,287.90 | 2,639.91 | 3,167.88 |
| Stone | 1,060.39 | 1,237.12 | 1,413.85 | 1,590.58 | 1,944.04 | 2,297.50 | 2,650.97 | 3,181.16 |
| Tenterden (TC) | 1,105.55 | 1,289.80 | 1,474.06 | 1,658.31 | 2,026.82 | 2,395.33 | 2,763.86 | 3,316.62 |
| Warehorne | 1,059.18 | 1,235.71 | 1,412.23 | 1,588.76 | 1,941.81 | 2,294.87 | 2,647.94 | 3,177.52 |
| Westwell | 1,074.59 | 1,253.68 | 1,432.78 | 1,611.87 | 1,970.06 | 2,328.25 | 2,686.46 | 3,223.74 |
| Wittersham | 1,072.49 | 1,251.23 | 1,429.98 | 1,608.72 | 1,966.21 | 2,323.70 | 2,681.21 | 3,217.44 |
| Woodchurch | 1,060.43 | 1,237.16 | 1,413.90 | 1,590.63 | 1,944.10 | 2,297.57 | 2,651.06 | 3,181.26 |
| Wye with Hinxhill | 1,099.25 | 1,282.46 | 1,465.66 | 1,648.87 | 2,015.28 | 2,381.69 | 2,748.12 | 3,297.74 |
| Unparished Area | 1,042.22 | 1,215.92 | 1,389.62 | 1,563.32 | 1,910.72 | 2,258.12 | 2,605.54 | 3,126.64 |

Breakdown of Council Tax per Authority

| Precepting Authority | BAND A | BAND B | BAND C | BAND D | BAND E | BAND F | BAND G | BAND H |
|---|--------|--------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Ashford Borough Council | 102.67 | 119.78 | 136.89 | 154.00 | 188.22 | 222.44 | 256.67 | 308.00 |
| Kent County Council | 785.88 | 916.86 | 1,047.84 | 1,178.82 | 1,440.78 | 1,702.74 | 1,964.70 | 2,357.64 |
| Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent | 104.77 | 122.23 | 139.69 | 157.15 | 192.07 | 226.99 | 261.92 | 314.30 |
| Kent and Medway Towns Fire Authority | 48.90 | 57.05 | 65.20 | 73.35 | 89.65 | 105.95 | 122.25 | 146.70 |

Appendix A

| CALCULATION OF THE BUDGET REQUIREMENT AND COUNCIL TAX AT BAND D | | |
|--|-----------------|----------------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Gross Expenditure - General Fund | 64,778,246.18 | |
| Gross Expenditure - HRA | 33,476,250.00 | |
| Parish Precepts | 1,433,926.42 | 99,688,422.60 |
| Less Gross Income | (82,964,610.00) | (82,964,610.00) |
| NET EXPENDITURE | | 16,723,812.60 |
| Surplus Distribution from Collection Fund | (200,000.00) | |
| New Homes Bonus | (3,394,889.00) | |
| Retained Business Rates | (3,666,600.00) | |
| Government Grant (RSG and S31 grants) | (1,148,960.00) | (8,410,449.00) |
| BUDGET REQUIREMENT | | 8,313,363.60 |
| Less Parish Precepts | | (1,433,926.42) |
| Council Tax Requirement | | 6,879,437.18 |
| Council Tax Base | | 44,671.67 |
| Band 'D' Council Tax | | 154.00 |
| Average including Parishes | | 186.10 |

Appendix B

| REVENUE BUDGET | | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| SUMMARY | | | | |
| Actuals 2015/16 £ | Budget 2016/17 £ | Projected Outturn 2016/17 £ | Detail | Estimate 2017/18 £ |
| 1,257,747 | 1,270,720 | 1,360,180 | Corporate & Strategy | 1,375,250 |
| 1,237,036 | 1,380,320 | 1,449,310 | Legal & Democratic | 1,361,440 |
| 2,128,990 | 1,983,050 | 1,886,620 | Planning & Development | 1,937,930 |
| 845,169 | 2,554,620 | 2,538,580 | Financial Services | 2,643,320 |
| 181,637 | 291,010 | 351,990 | HR, Communications and Technology | 433,210 |
| 769,142 | 915,720 | 823,770 | Housing Services | 654,790 |
| 393,553 | 838,400 | 671,340 | Health, Parking & Community Safety | 516,490 |
| 4,714,705 | 4,963,150 | 4,736,900 | Environment and Customer Services | 4,909,440 |
| (1,375,820) | (1,500,070) | (1,336,680) | Corporate Property & Projects | (1,399,390) |
| 3,095,743 | 2,713,130 | 2,839,460 | Cultural Services | 2,972,040 |
| 13,247,902 | 15,410,050 | 15,321,470 | Service Expenditure | 15,404,520 |
| (2,340,864) | (1,475,830) | (2,058,080) | Capital Charges & Net Interest | (2,032,910) |
| 40,190 | 30,260 | 30,260 | Concurrent Functions Grant | 30,260 |
| 241,098 | 241,000 | 241,000 | Levies | 250,000 |
| 3,632,509 | 1,316,670 | 1,991,670 | Contribution to Balances | 1,319,041 |
| 14,820,834 | 15,522,150 | 15,526,320 | ABC Budget Requirement | 14,970,911 |
| | | | Income | |
| (2,114,651) | (1,269,920) | (1,269,920) | Government Grant | (615,360) |
| (2,281,862) | (3,410,410) | (3,410,410) | Retained Business Rates | (3,422,120) |
| (933,921) | (538,000) | (538,000) | Business Rates S31 Grants | (500,000) |
| (3,150,387) | (3,782,820) | (3,782,820) | New Homes Bonus | (3,394,891) |
| 41,280 | 41,500 | 41,500 | Parish CTS Payment | 40,900 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | Collection Fund Surplus | (200,000) |
| (6,352,539) | (6,562,500) | (6,562,500) | Council Tax | (6,879,440) |
| 28,754 | 0 | 4,170 | Budget Gap | 0 |

Appointments Committee

Minutes of a Meeting of the Appointments Committee held in Committee Room No.1, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **21st December 2016**

Present:

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman);

Cllrs. Clokie, Koowaree

Apologies:

Cllrs. Bell, Mrs Bell, Ovenden, Powell

Also Present:

Chief Executive, Head of HR, Communications and Technology, Member Services Manager

251 Declarations of Interest

| Councillor | Interest | Minute No. |
|-----------------|--|------------|
| Clarkson | Made a "Voluntary Announcement" as Chairman and Director of A Better Choice for Property Company | 254 |
| Chief Executive | Made a "Voluntary Announcement" as Director of A Better Choice for Property Company | 254 |

252 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on the 24th July 2009 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

253 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 the Post of Head of Environmental Services, 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 Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act where in the circumstances the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

254 Appointment of the Head of Environmental Services

The Committee received the report of the Head of HR, Communications & Technology which advised upon the process for carrying out the recruitment for the post of Head of Environmental Services. The report sought approval to the recruitment process, timetable, job description, person specification and salary package.

The Committee agreed proposals set out within the report subject to the job advertisement being also placed in the Guardian newspaper and other minor changes noted by the Head of HR, Communications & Technology.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) the job description, person specification and job advertisement for the Head of Environmental Services be approved, subject to the minor changes made at the meeting and including an increase in the relocation package for this post from £5,000 to £10,000.**
 - (ii) the job be advertised in the Municipal Journal, on the CIWM on-line jobs boards, the Guardian newspaper, as well as the Council's website and other cost free online sites as considered appropriate by the Chief Executive.**
 - (iii) the remuneration package and conditions of employment as outlined in the report be approved.**
 - (iv) the recruitment process and timetable be approved.**
 - (v) the Chairman of the Appointments Committee together with the Chief Executive 'sign off' the final recruitment advertisement for publication.**
 - (vi) the shortlisting meeting be held on Thursday 9 February 2017 at 4.00pm in Committee Room 1 (Fougères Room)**

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

Standards Committee

Minutes of a Meeting of the Standards Committee held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **31st January 2017**.

Present:

Cllr. Dehnel (Chairman);
Cllr. Mrs Bell (Vice-Chairman)
Cllrs. Chilton, Mrs Dyer, Feacey, Hicks, Mrs Webb.

Mrs C Vant – Independent Person
Mr R Brasier – Parish Council Representative.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2(iii) Councillor Mrs Webb attended as Substitute Member for Councillor Knowles.

Apology:

Cllr. Knowles.

Also Present:

Monitoring Officer, Senior Member Services Officer.

276 Minutes

The Chairman advised that actions from the last meeting regarding the review of governance arrangements at Chilham Parish Council and the appointment of a Deputy Monitoring Officer would be covered later in the meeting as part of the Annual Report. He also advised that the Committee's previous recommendation to make an addition to Article 2.03 (vi) of the Constitution regarding attendance at training events had been actioned.

The Committee then discussed the wider the topic of Member Training. The Chairman considered that the Standards Committee was generally a very reactive Committee and he would like it to be a bit more pro-active. Whilst the Committee did not determine the actual training programme and could only encourage attendance, he said he was interested in 'outputs' and what tools were necessary to enable a Councillor to display good standards in terms of probity, conduct and professionalism. Other Members said that it was important to properly equip Councillors to do their job and there was perhaps some scope to suggest that training on certain subjects was made compulsory for new Members. The Vice-Chairman said she had reservations about some of the proposals for training – both from the Member Training Panel and those mentioned at this meeting. She considered there was a danger of 'over-training' as Councillors were elected to represent their residents, and too much Officer led training could affect the flexibility and independence with which the role was undertaken. She would personally resist too much compulsory training. She understood that the Member Training Panel had

made its proposals, and they would now be considered by the Cabinet on the 9th February. The Committee noted that this whole subject was something that would need further discussion after consideration by the Cabinet although it was not directly in the remit of the Standards Committee.

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of this Committee held on the 25th January 2016 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

277 Annual Report of the Council's Monitoring Officer 2016

The Monitoring Officer introduced his annual report to be presented to the Council on the 16th February 2017. The report assessed activity in probity matters, in particular in relation to formal complaints about alleged breaches of protocols and codes of conduct by Borough and Parish Councillors for the calendar year 2016. The report also included data on Ombudsman complaints as these were also handled by the Monitoring Officer and his staff. The relevant period related to the most recent data provided by the Ombudsman, namely 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016. He said that the report was a pleasing one to present with very little negative activity.

With regard to Code of Conduct Complaints, there had been no new complaints made this year. Three cases were referred to in the report – two had been carried over from last year and determined this year whilst one, albeit on the required complaint form, was in effect a complaint about service delivery. The complainant was therefore advised to pursue it as a service complaint. In relation to Ombudsman Complaints the Monitoring Officer said there had been eight resolved by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) which was a reduction on the previous year. Only two of these complaints had been upheld and only one had been ruled as maladministration with injustice.

Whilst Code of Conduct complaint activity in Ashford remained low, the Monitoring Officer said it was also worth drawing attention to matters relating to declarations of interest, the Council's constitution and Member training, all of which were outlined in the report. He also updated on the independent review of governance undertaken at Chilham Parish Council which had seen a pleasing outcome. The problems that had beset the previous Parish Council appeared to have been resolved and they had moved from an extremely dysfunctional Council to one which operated effectively and efficiently. With regard to the appointment of a Deputy Monitoring Officer he advised that the previous post holder had in fact returned on a part time basis up to Christmas 2016 so there had not been a need to make an appointment up until now. He would now look to appoint a Deputy(s) in the near future.

The Chairman said he wanted to echo the comments about Chilham Parish Council. As Ward Member for the area he had seen the Parish Council move from dysfunctional to outstanding in the last 18 months. There had been a total replacement of the previous membership and they had got their act together, were producing good quality work and the local community were happy. The output of the

independent review and subsequent action plan should also be acknowledged. He encouraged all Members to make every effort to attend the Parish Council meetings in their Wards.

The Chairman considered that the low number of complaints received by and decided against the Council spoke a great deal about the quality of its Officers. The Committee agreed to record a vote of thanks and congratulations to the Officers of the Council for their quality and professionalism.

Resolved:

- That
- (i) the Annual Report of the Monitoring Officer 2016 be received, noted and forwarded to Full Council for approval.**
 - (ii) the Monitoring Officer continue to offer support and guidance to Chilham Parish Council in completion of the review of their action plan.**
 - (iii) the Committee record a vote of thanks to the Council's Officers for the low number of complaints received which, in the Committee's view, reflected the quality and professionalism of the Council's staff.**
-

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

Council
16 February 2017

Annual Report Of The Council's
Monitoring Officer - 2016

Introduction

1. The principal purpose of my Annual Report is to assess activity in probity matters, in particular in relation to formal complaints about alleged breaches of protocols and codes of conduct by borough and parish councillors. The report provides an opportunity to review the effectiveness of current procedures based on real data. This report deals with the calendar year 2016 in relation to these matters. The Standards Committee considered this report at its meeting on the 31st January 2017.
2. The Council's current code of conduct for councillors was adopted on 20 July 2012 and has since been the subject of minor amendments. This code is based on Localism Act principles and was developed as a collaborative project by Kent Monitoring Officers in consultation with task groups of councillors within individual councils. The vast majority of district and parish councils in Kent have adopted this "Kent Model Code of Conduct".
3. When it adopted the Code of Conduct in 2012, the Council also adopted new procedural "Arrangements" for handling code of conduct complaints. Again this was developed on a Kent-wide basis with the objective of simplifying procedures and removing unnecessary bureaucracy which had beset the previous standards regime.
4. The Council has also adopted a "Good Practice Protocol for Councillors Dealing with Planning Matters". This sets out detailed best practice rules for this specialist and sensitive area of the Council's work which go beyond the general rules set out in the code of conduct.
5. My Annual Report also includes data on Ombudsman complaints as these are also handled by the Monitoring Officer and his staff. The Standards Committee monitors any issues of probity raised in Ombudsman investigations. In terms of Ombudsman complaints the relevant period relates to the most recent data provided by the Ombudsman namely that for the period 1st April 2015 to 31 March 2016.

Code of Conduct and Related Matters 2016

6. Complaint activity in Ashford has been very low since adoption of the new code of conduct in 2012. During 2016 no new formal complaints were submitted. Of the three cases referred to in TABLE 1 attached, two were carried over from last year and determined this year whilst one, albeit on the required complaint form, was in effect a complaint about service delivery and the complainant was advised to pursue it as such cases where complaint forms were provided to potential complainants, but have not been completed and returned, are not included in these figures. Nor are cases where intended

complaints have been resolved or are still being resolved prior to submission of a formal complaint. There is only one matter in the latter category.

7. Whilst 2015 was a year of considerable activity in relation to probity matters (full Disclosable Pecuniary Interest procedures for ABC and all parishes following local elections, substantial revision of Good Practice Planning Protocol, code training event etc) 2016 has been relatively uneventful. The following matters are worthy of note however:
 - All ABC meeting agenda do now include an early item seeking declarations of interest and this item has been updated to assist members who may need to declare different types of interest. Ad hoc advice on interests is regularly sought from the Monitoring Officer and his staff by borough councillors and parish clerks/councillors particularly in relation to Planning Committee matters. This process continues to demonstrate a good general level of understanding by borough councillors and a desire to comply with the code of conduct.
 - Also during the course of the year the Monitoring Officer has provided detailed written advice to borough councillors regarding the approach to declaration of interests on the “call for sites” and local plan preparation process currently being undertaken.
 - In terms of general constitutional matters, it is worth drawing attention to the fact that significant changes have been made to the training requirements for membership of the specialist regulatory committees on Licensing and Planning. The Constitution now enshrines a formal training pre-condition to membership of both Committees and a requirement that such training is refreshed every 4 years.
 - The Council’s Training Panel has recently decided that several new areas of member training should be provided during 2017. A number of the topics have significant relevance to probity, good governance and general code of conduct compliance, including data protection, equality and diversity and planning as a ward member.
8. Taking all the above matters into account. I am satisfied that the Borough Council’s code of conduct is generally well understood and widely observed.

Chilham Parish Council

9. I am now in a position to update members in relation to the independent review of governance undertaken at Chilham Parish Council shortly before the 2015 elections. The Borough Council had funded an independent review by specialist consultants following complaints about poor councillor working relations and disruption of meetings and other business. A report back to Borough Council members was agreed once a minimum period of 1 year had passed since the election of a new council.
10. The election of the new parish council in May 2015 and subsequent elections/co-options has resulted in total replacement of the previous membership. A summary of the current status of the Parish Council’s work on the recommendations in the report is set out in the attached TABLE 2.

11. The Parish clerk has confirmed that the problems which beset the previous parish council – largely due to personality clashes – have been resolved and the council now undertakes its duties and holds meetings in a professional and respectful environment with good levels of public engagement. Meetings are chaired effectively.
12. Inevitably, the parish council has had to focus its attention on those recommendations which it regarded as the greatest priorities in its new form. The council has only one part-time officer and most of the administrative burden falls upon him, as in most local councils. Accordingly some actions regarded as less important by the council remain outstanding to some extent but excellent progress has been made on the higher priority recommendations.
13. It is recommended that the Monitoring Officer continues to liaise with the parish clerk and offer assistance or guidance if required in order to complete work on the action plan.

Ombudsman Complaints 2015/2016

14. Since April 2013, complaints about social housing have been dealt with by the Housing Ombudsman (HO) and not the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). The LGO's annual letter and report are attached.
15. For Members' information the analysis of the complaints resolved by the LGO in 2015/16 are attached (appendix A). The number of cases (8) represents a reduction from the previous year's total of 10.
16. The LGO has changed the way its decisions are described and now uses the term 'maladministration' to indicate administrative fault. Only two decisions involved such a finding and only one of these found that the complainant had suffered injustice as a result.

Recommendations

1. That the report of the Monitoring Officer be received and noted.
2. That the Monitoring Officer continue to offer support and guidance to Chilham PC in completion of the review action plan.
3. It be noted that following consideration of the report, the Standards Committee asked that a vote of thanks be recorded to the Council's Officers for the low number of complaints received which, in the Committee's view, reflected the quality and professionalism of the Council's staff.

T W MORTIMER
Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer
January 2017

TABLE 1

| VALID CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS MADE OR RESOLVED | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| COUNCIL/CASE REF | ALLEGATION | DECISION | COMMENTS |
| ABC/15/04 ABC/15/06 ASHFORD BC | Bullying/Disrepute | Resolved by way of apologies under informal resolution procedure | This complaint was unresolved at the time of the last annual report in January 2016 |
| ABC/16/02 ASHFORD BC | Failure to take effective enforcement action | Complainant advised to pursue as a service complaint | |

TABLE 2**REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS CHILHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

| RECOMMENDATION | CURRENT POSITION |
|---|---|
| R1. CPC should consider how it will run meetings up to May 2015 | This is now historic. Only one meeting took place between report and election in any event. |
| R2. Adopt a policy on how grievance and disciplinary matters against staff or by staff against members are handled. | This has been given lower priority in the new Council as the tensions giving rise to the urgent need ceased after the election. However work on this including consideration of various examples from other councils, has now progressed to a point where a policy is expected to be adopted by the end of the financial year or soon after. |
| R3. Review the 'need to know' policy to clarify entitlement to information. | As above. |
| R4. In the interests of transparency, future agendas should include greater detail about specific issues to be dealt with under general agenda items. | With effect from late Summer 2015, CPC introduced a process whereby agenda items are accompanied by a short paper, identifying the issues for consideration and options available. These papers are available publicly with the agenda at least a week before a meeting. This particularly assists transparency in relation to planning items to be considered. |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>R5. Introduce a specific agenda item to hear ABC ward member views.</p> | <p>This has been implemented. Periodic invitations to the county councillor are also made.</p> |
| <p>R6/7. Agree a training and induction package for the new Council and the need for ongoing councillor development.</p> | <p>This recommendation has not been fully implemented. However a KALC training policy and plan is now being considered for adoption. CPC is fortunate to have a chairman with considerable experience of local government practice and this has proved a significant benefit to the parish council. CPC regarded “meeting etiquette” as particularly important in this regard and the role of the Chairman has been significant in achieving major improvements since the election.</p> |
| <p>R8/9/10. CPC should consider introducing protocols about better working and engaging with the community to explain its work, encourage participation understand the priorities of its community and adopt a strategic plan to guide its work.</p> | <p>CPC arranged consultative “Question Time” forums within the community during early 2016 and subsequently adopted a strategic plan in October, identifying projects and work streams the parish council will prioritise in its term of office. This is an innovative step taken by the Parish Council and in March the community engagement exercise is to be refreshed and the Strategic Plan updated. The plan has been distributed to all households in the parish and identifies the Taylors Hill toilets refurbishment scheme for example as a priority. Other schemes are identified for achievement with other partners.</p> |
| <p>R11/12 The Council chair and clerk should share best practice and seek quality parish’ status at an appropriate stage.</p> | <p>The parish council is actively working towards achieving the local council foundation award scheme which replaced the Quality Council Scheme. The clerk’s professional development requirement is expected to be achieved in the first half of the year which would place CPC in a strong position to achieve the award.</p> |

Appendix A – Analysis of Ombudsman Complaints

The Ombudsman investigates complaints about Council services to remedy personal injustice caused by maladministration (or “fault”) or service failure.

Between 1st April 2015 and 31st March 2016 the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) received 23 complaints and enquiries, and made 22 decisions on these. 8 of these cases were referred to the Council by the Ombudsman for further investigation, prior to being resolved by the LGO as set out in the table overleaf. There were no Housing Ombudsman cases in this period.

For comparison, in 2014/15 the LGO resolved 10 complaints and there were no Housing Ombudsman complaints for this period.

In the LGO’s annual report the figures for the number of complaints received by the LGO about this Council may differ from the figures for the number of complaints the Council received from the LGO. For example, the LGO may have received a premature complaint which was referred back to the complainant with the advice that the complaint needed to be taken up with the Council, but the complainant may not have pursued the complaint.

When the LGO has issued a report on a completed investigation, these are generally published in the Complaints Outcomes section of the LGO website www.lgo.org.uk.

Since 1st April 2013, the LGO has published all its decision statements on its website. The published information does not name the complainant or any individual involved with the complaint. Decision statements are published no earlier than three months after the date of the final decision.

The decision outcomes received by the Council are recorded below and how they related to the changed LGO decision reasons are indicated where appropriate.

The LGO’s decisions were grouped in accordance with the following headings:

| Decision Reasons from 1 April 2013 | What changed in February 2014 | Annual Letter categorisation |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| <i>Not in jurisdiction (OJ) and no discretion</i> | <i>No Change</i> | <i>Closed after initial enquiries</i> |
| <i>Not in jurisdiction (OJ) and discretion not exercised</i> | | |
| <i>Not investigated</i> | | |
| <i>To discontinue investigation</i> | | <i>Not upheld</i> |
| <i>To discontinue investigation (for those cases where a remedy is agreed with an authority without LGO making a finding of maladministration or fault)</i> | | <i>Upheld</i> |
| <i>Investigation complete and satisfied with authority actions or proposed actions and not appropriate to issue report S30(1B)</i> | <i>Investigation complete: Maladministration and Injustice</i> | <i>Upheld</i> |
| | <i>Investigation complete: Maladministration, No Injustice</i> | |
| | <i>Investigation complete: No Maladministration</i> | <i>Not Upheld</i> |
| <i>Investigation complete and appropriate to issue a report S30(1)</i> | <i>Investigation complete and report issued: Maladministration and Injustice</i> | <i>Upheld</i> |
| | <i>Investigation complete and report issued: Maladministration, No Injustice</i> | |
| | <i>Investigation complete and report issued: No Maladministration</i> | <i>Not upheld</i> |

The outcomes of the 8 complaints to this Council resolved by the LGO in 2015/16 are detailed below:-

| | |
|---|----------|
| Closed after initial enquiries – out of jurisdiction | 4 |
| Closed after initial enquiries – no further action | 1 |
| Not upheld; no further action | - |
| Upheld: Maladministration & Injustice | 1 |
| Upheld: Maladministration, No Injustice | 1 |
| Not upheld: No Maladministration | 1 |
| Investigation complete: No Maladministration | - |
| Report issued: Upheld; maladministration and injustice | - |
| Report issued: Upheld; maladministration, no injustice | - |
| Report issued: Not upheld; no maladministration | - |
| Total | 8 |

Attached at Appendix 1 is a table of LGO complaints, together with details and outcome.

I have also attached the Ombudsman's Annual Review letter 2015/16 (Appendix 2).

Appendix 1 – Local Government Complaints 1st April 2015 – 31st March 2016

There are 8 complaints here, referred to the Council by the LGO, all of which have been resolved.

The decision reasons used by the LGO from 1st April 2013 were changed in February 2014 and again on 1st April 2014.

The decisions given on this table are those given in the LGO's decision letter.

The number of complaints resolved has decreased since last year, and there was only one decision of injustice by this Council.

| ABC ref no | ABC Dept | Complaint Details | LGO decision | LGO conclusion |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|---|--|--|
| 1620 | Planning | Neighbour's comments on ABC website | Closed – no further action | |
| 1608 | Finance | Re Council's decision to end HB and CT support | Closed after initial enquiries – out of jurisdiction | |
| 1609 | Finance | Re Council's decision on HB and bedroom tax | Closed after initial enquiries – out of jurisdiction | |
| 1610 | Environmental Services/Housing | Damage to car in Council garage | Closed after initial enquiries – out of jurisdiction | |
| 1365 | Housing | Complaint re B&B accommodation for young person | Maladministration and injustice – cost payable of £250 | The Council was not at fault in how it decided D's homeless application or how it allocated her an unfurnished property. It was wrong to keep D and her baby in B&B accommodation for longer than the law allows |

| ABC ref no | ABC Dept | Complaint Details | LGO decision | LGO conclusion |
|------------|----------|--|--|--|
| | | | | (6 weeks). On the direction of the LGO, the Council apologised to D and paid her £250 in recognition of injustice. The Council reviewed its provision of self-contained accommodation and how it moves families into more suitable emergency accommodation. Christchurch House was established to facilitate a better quality service and ensure no recurrence of this incident. |
| 1643 | Planning | Council did not advise how to access report on planapp | Upheld: maladministration, no injustice | No significant injustice through fault by the Council. |
| 1683 | Finance | Re the Council applying for a charging order for Council Tax arrears | Not upheld: no maladministration | No fault |
| 1611 | Planning | Re the way the Council determined a planning application | Closed after initial enquiries – out of jurisdiction | |

Appendix 2

LGO Annual Review Letter and Local Authority Report

1st April 2015 – 31st March 2016

21 July 2016

By email

Tracey Kerly
Chief Executive
Ashford Borough Council

Dear Tracey Kerly,

Annual Review Letter 2016

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) about your authority for the year ended 31 March 2016.

The enclosed tables present the number of complaints and enquiries received and the decisions we made about your authority during the period. I hope that this information will prove helpful in assessing your authority's performance in handling complaints.

Last year we provided information on the number of complaints upheld and not upheld for the first time. In response to council feedback, this year we are providing additional information to focus the statistics more on the outcome from complaints rather than just the amounts received.

We provide a breakdown of the upheld investigations to show how they were remedied. This includes the number of cases where our recommendations remedied the fault and the number of cases where we decided your authority had offered a satisfactory remedy during the local complaints process. In these latter cases we provide reassurance that your authority had satisfactorily attempted to resolve the complaint before the person came to us. In addition, we provide a compliance rate for implementing our recommendations to remedy a fault.

I want to emphasise that these statistics comprise the data we hold, and may not necessarily align with the data your authority holds. For example, our numbers include enquiries from people we signpost back to the authority, but who may never contact you.

In line with usual practice, we are publishing our annual data for all authorities on our website, alongside an annual review of local government complaints. The aim of this is to be transparent and provide information that aids the scrutiny of local services.

Effective accountability for devolved authorities

Local government is going through perhaps some of the biggest changes since the LGO was set up more than 40 years ago. The creation of combined authorities and an increase in the number of elected mayors will hugely affect the way local services are held to account. We have already started working with the early combined authorities to help develop principles for effective and accessible complaints systems.

We have also reviewed how we structure our casework teams to provide insight across the emerging combined authority structures. Responding to council feedback, this included reconfirming the Assistant Ombudsman responsible for relationship management with each authority, which we recently communicated to Link Officers through distribution of our manual for working with the LGO.

Supporting local scrutiny

Our corporate strategy is based upon the twin pillars of remedying injustice and improving local public services. The numbers in our annual report demonstrate that we continue to improve the quality of our service in achieving swift redress.

To measure our progress against the objective to improve local services, in March we issued a survey to all councils. I was encouraged to find that 98% of respondents believed that our investigations have had an impact on improving local public services. I am confident that the continued publication of our decisions (alongside an improved facility to browse for them on our website), focus reports on key themes and the data in these annual review letters is helping the sector to learn from its mistakes and support better services for citizens.

The survey also demonstrated a significant proportion of councils are sharing the information we provide with elected members and scrutiny committees. I welcome this approach, and want to take this opportunity to encourage others to do so.

Complaint handling training

We recently refreshed our Effective Complaint Handling courses for local authorities and introduced a new course for independent care providers. We trained over 700 people last year and feedback shows a 96% increase in the number of participants who felt confident in dealing with complaints following the course. To find out more, visit www.lgo.org.uk/training.

Ombudsman reform

You will no doubt be aware that the government has announced the intention to produce draft legislation for the creation of a single ombudsman for public services in England. This is something we support, as it will provide the public with a clearer route to redress in an increasingly complex environment of public service delivery.

We will continue to support government in the realisation of the public service ombudsman, and are advising on the importance of maintaining our 40 years plus experience of working with local government and our understanding its unique accountability structures.

This will also be the last time I write with your annual review. My seven-year term of office as Local Government Ombudsman comes to an end in January 2017. The LGO has gone through extensive change since I took up post in 2010, becoming a much leaner and more focused organisation, and I am confident that it is well prepared for the challenges ahead.

Yours sincerely

Dr Jane Martin
Local Government Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Local Authority Report: Ashford Borough Council
 For the Period Ending: 31/03/2016

For further information on how to interpret our statistics, please visit our website:
<http://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/reports/annual-review-reports/interpreting-local-authority-statistics>

Complaints and enquiries received

| Adult Care Services | Benefits and Tax | Corporate and Other Services | Education and Children's Services | Environment Services | Highways and Transport | Housing | Planning and Development | Other | Total |
|---------------------|------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------|--------------------------|-------|-------|
| 0 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 0 | 23 |

Decisions made

| | | | | Detailed Investigations | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--------|-------------|-------|--|
| Incomplete or Invalid | Advice Given | Referred back for Local Resolution | Closed After Initial Enquiries | Not Upheld | Upheld | Uphold Rate | Total | |
| 2 | 1 | 11 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 67% | 22 | |

Notes

Our uphold rate is calculated in relation to the total number of detailed investigations.

The number of remedied complaints may not equal the number of upheld complaints. This is because, while we may uphold a complaint because we find fault, we may not always find grounds to say that fault caused injustice that ought to be remedied.

The compliance rate is the proportion of remedied complaints where our recommendations are believed to have been implemented.

Complaints Remedied

| by LGO | Satisfactorily by Authority before LGO Involvement | Compliance Rate |
|--------|--|-----------------|
| 1 | 0 | 100% |

Agenda Item No: 14
Report To: Council
Date of Meeting: 16th February 2017
Report Title: Programme of Meetings 2017/18 and 2018/19
Report Author & Job Title: Danny Sheppard – Senior Member Services Officer
Portfolio Holder Cllr. Clarkson
Portfolio Holder for: Leader of the Council

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Summary: | To agree the programme of meetings for 2017/18 and 2018/19 |
|-----------------|--|

Key Decision: NO

Significantly Affected Wards: None specifically

Recommendations: **The Council is asked to agree the programme of meetings for 2017/18 and 2018/19**

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

Equalities Impact Assessment Not Required

Exempt from Publication: NO

Contact: danny.sheppard@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: (01233) 330349

DATES OF MEETINGS MAY 2017 - MAY 2018

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

MAY 2017

M 1 **BANK HOLIDAY**
 Tu 2 Selection & CR
 7.30pm
 W 3
 Th 4 **KCC ELECTIONS**
 F 5
 M 8
 Tu 9
 W 10
 Th 11 Cabinet
 F 12
 M 15
 Tu 16
 W 17 Planning
 Council
 Th 18
 F 19

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

M 29 **BANK HOLIDAY**
 Tu 30
 W 31

JUNE 2017

Th 1
 F 2
 M 5
 Tu 6
 W 7
 Th 8 Cabinet
 F 9
 M 12
 Tu 13 Joint Transportation
 W 14
 Th 15 Audit
 F 16
 M 19
 T 20
 W 21 Planning
 Th 22
 F 23
 M 26
 T 27 O&S
 W 28
 Th 29
 F 30

M 19
 T 20
 W 21 Planning
 Th 22
 F 23

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

JULY 2017

M 3
 Tu 4
 W 5
 Th 6 JCC 2.30pm
 F 7
 M 10

Tu 11 Audit
 W 12
 Th 13 Cabinet
 F 14
 M 17
 Tu 18
 W 19 Planning
 Council
 Th 20
 F 21

M 24
 T 25 O&S
 W 26
 Th 27
 F 28

M 31

AUGUST 2017

Tu 1
 W 2
 Th 3
 F 4

M 7
 Tu 8
 W 9
 Th 10 Cabinet
 F 11

M 14
 Tu 15
 W 16 Planning
 Th 17
 F 18

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

M 28 **BANK HOLIDAY**
 Tu 29
 W 30
 Th 31

SEPTEMBER 2017

F 1
 M 4
 Tu 5
 W 6
 Th 7 JCC 2.30pm
 F 8

M 11
 Tu 12 Joint Transportation
 W 13
 Th 14 Cabinet
 F 15
 M 18
 Tu 19
 W 20 Planning
 Th 21

F 22
 M 25
 Tu 26 O&S
 W 27
 Th 28 Audit
 F 29

OCTOBER 2017

M 2
 Tu 3
 W 4
 Th 5
 F 6

M 9
 Tu 10
 W 11
 Th 12 Cabinet
 F 13

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

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

M 30
 Tu 31

NOVEMBER 2017

W 1
 Th 2 JCC 2.30pm
 F 3

M 6
 Tu 7
 W 8
 Th 9 Cabinet
 F 10

M 13
 Tu 14
 W 15 Planning
 Th 16
 F 17

M 20
 Tu 21
 W 22
 Th 23
 F 24

M 27
 Tu 28 O&S
 W 29
 Th 30

DECEMBER 2017

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

 M 11
 Tu 12 Joint Transportation
 W 13 Planning
 Th 14 Council
 F 15

 M 18
 Tu 19 O&S
 W 20
 Th 21
 F 22

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

JANUARY 2018

M 1 **BANK HOLIDAY**
 Tu 2
 W 3
 Th 4 JCC 2.30pm
 F 5

 M 8
 Tu 9
 W 10
 Th 11 Cabinet
 F 12

 M 15
 Tu 16 Licensing & H&S 10am
 W 17 Planning
 Th 18
 F 19

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

 M 29
 Tu 30
 W 31

FEBRUARY 2018

Th 1
 F 2

 M 5
 Tu 6 Standards
 W 7
 Th 8 Cabinet
 F 9

 M 12
 Tu 13
 W 14 Planning
 Th 15 Council (C Tax)

F 16

M 19
 Tu 20
 W 21
 Th 22
 F 23

 M 26
 Tu 27 O&S
 W 28

MARCH 2018

Th 1 JCC 2.30pm
 F 2

 M 5
 Tu 6
 W 7
 Th 8 Cabinet
 F 9

 M 12
 Tu 13 Joint Transportation
 W 14 Planning
 Th 15
 F 16

M 19
 Tu 20 Audit
 W 21
 Th 22
 F 23

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

APRIL 2018

M 2 **EASTER MONDAY**
 Tu 3
 W 4
 Th 5
 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

MAY 2018

Tu 1 Selection & CR
 W 2
 Th 3 JCC 2.30pm
 F 4

BANK HOLIDAY

M 7
 Tu 8
 W 9
 Th 10 Cabinet
 F 11

M 14
 Tu 15
 W 16
 Th 17 Council
 F 18

M 21
 Tu 22 O&S
 W 23 Planning
 Th 24
 F 25


BANK HOLIDAY

M 28
 Tu 29
 W 30
 Th 31

KEY

O&S - Overview and Scrutiny

JCC - Joint Consultative Committee

 = School Holidays

DATES OF MEETINGS MAY 2018 - MAY 2019

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

MAY 2018

Tu 1 Selection & CR
W 2
Th 3 JCC 2.30pm
F 4

MAY 2018

M 7 **BANK HOLIDAY**
Tu 8
W 9
Th 10 Cabinet
F 11

M 14
Tu 15
W 16
Th 17 Council
F 18

M 21
Tu 22 O&S
W 23 Planning
Th 24
F 25

M 28 **BANK HOLIDAY**
Tu 29
W 30
Th 31

JUNE 2018

F 1

M 4
Tu 5
W 6
Th 7
F 8

M 11
Tu 12 Joint Transportation
W 13
Th 14 Cabinet
F 15

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

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

JULY 2018

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

M 9
Tu 10 Audit

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
T 31

AUGUST 2018

W 1
Th 2
F 3

M 6
Tu 7
W 8
Th 9 Cabinet
F 10

M 13
Tu 14
W 15 Planning
Th 16
F 17

M 20
Tu 21
W 22
Th 23
F 24

M 27 **BANK HOLIDAY**
Tu 28 O&S
W 29
Th 30
F 31

SEPTEMBER 2018

M 3
Tu 4
W 5
Th 6 JCC 2.30pm
F 7

M 10
Tu 11 Joint Transportation
W 12
Th 13 Cabinet
F 14

M 17
Tu 18
W 19 Planning
Th 20
F 21

M 24
Tu 25 O&S
W 26
Th 27 Audit
F 28

OCTOBER 2018

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
F 19

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

M 29
Tu 30
W 31

NOVEMBER 2018

Th 1 JCC 2.30pm
F 2

M 5
Tu 6
W 7
Th 8 Cabinet
F 9

M 12
Tu 13
W 14 Planning
Th 15
F 16

M 19
Tu 20
W 21
Th 22
F 23

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

DECEMBER 2018

M 3
 Tu 4 Audit
 W 5
 Th 6 Cabinet
 F 7

 M 10
 Tu 11 Joint Transportation
 W 12 Planning
 Th 13 Council
 F 14

M 17
 Tu 18 O&S
 W 19
 Th 20
 F 21

M 24 OFFICES CLOSED
 Tu 25 **CHRISTMAS DAY**
 W 26 **BOXING DAY**
 Th 27
 F 28

M 31

JANUARY 2019

Tu 1 **BANK HOLIDAY**
 W 2
 Th 3 JCC 2.30pm
 F 4

M 7
 Tu 8
 W 9
 Th 10 Cabinet
 F 11

M 14
 Tu 15 Licensing & H&S 10am
 W 16 Planning
 Th 17
 F 18

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

M 28
 Tu 29
 W 30
 Th 31

FEBRUARY 2019

F 1

 M 4
 Tu 5 Standards
 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 (C Tax)
 F 22

M 25
 Tu 26 O&S
 W 27
 Th 28

MARCH 2019

F 1

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

M 11
 Tu 12 Joint Transportation
 W 13
 Th 14 Cabinet
 F 15

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

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

APRIL 2019

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
 F 19 **GOOD FRIDAY**

M 22 **EASTER MONDAY**
 Tu 23
 W 24
 Th 25 Council
 F 26

M 29
 T 30 O&S

MAY 2019

W 1
 Th 2 **ABC Elections**
 F 3


M 6 **BANK HOLIDAY**
 Tu 7
 W 8
 Th 9
 F 10

M 13
 Tu 14
 W 15
 Th 16
 F 17

M 20
 Tu 21 Selection & CR
 W 22
 Th 23
 F 24

M 27 **BANK HOLIDAY**
 Tu 28
 W 29
 Th 30 Council
 F 31

| KEY | |
|-----|--------------------------------|
| O&S | - Overview and Scrutiny |
| JCC | - Joint Consultative Committee |

 School Holidays

Council – 16th February 2017

Report of the Corporate Director (Law and Governance)

Change to Committee Membership – Appointments Committee

The Leader of the Council has advised of his intention to appoint Councillor Mrs Dyer to the Appointments Committee with effect from this meeting. Councillor Mrs Dyer will replace Councillor Powell who has agreed to stand down from the Committee.

Recommended

That Council agree to the proposed change in membership of the Appointments Committee as set out in this report.

T W Mortimer
Corporate Director (Law and Governance)