Cabinet

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

Present:

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman);
Cllr. Bell (Vice-Chairman);

Cllrs. Mrs Bell, Bennett, Bradford, Clokie, Galpin, Pickering, Shorter, White.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Hicks, Link.

Also Present:

Cllrs. Buchanan, Burgess, Dehnel, Howard-Smith, Knowles, Miss Martin, Wedgbury.

Chief Executive, Director of Law and Governance, Director of Place and Space, Director of Finance and Economy, Head of Corporate Policy, Economic Development and Communications, Head of Corporate Property and Projects, Head of Environment and Land Management, Head of Housing, Head of HR and Customer Services, Accountancy Manager, Customer Service Manager, Environmental Contracts and Enforcement Manager, Facility Development Manager, Health, Parking and Community Safety Manager, Senior Policy, Performance and Scrutiny Officer, Commercial Development and Regeneration Officer, Corporate Scrutiny and Overview Officer, Environmental Health Officer, Open Space Planning Development Officer, Communications and Marketing Manager, Senior Member Services Officer.

212 Minutes

Resolved:

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

213 Leader's Announcements

The Leader advised that the pilot scheme for an experimental overnight parking and clamping trial for HGVs on the A20 had commenced and seemed to be working well at this early stage. The Truck Stop appeared to be coping with the extra demand and the mobile app advising of the number of available spaces was being well used. He had checked before the meeting and at that stage there had been 89 free spaces. The Leader said he looked forward to both the Ashford and Shepway Truck Stops increasing their capacities in the near future.

214 Ashford Borough Council's Performance – Quarter 2 - 2017/18

The report updated Members and the public on the performance of the Council against its Corporate Plan for Quarter 2 - 2017/18. 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.

The Portfolio Holder re-iterated that the data belonged to the whole Council and he hoped all Members would look and take an interest in it. Information on the Council's performance would be available to the public via the Council's website imminently. He advised that the number of residents needing temporary Bed and Breakfast accommodation continued to increase which was unfortunate. Whilst this was a national issue, the Council was active in looking to respond and a report on the forthcoming Homelessness Reduction Act would be coming to the Cabinet in December.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Property drew attention to town centre vacancy rates which, at 7.9%, were at their lowest since rates were first recorded in 2008. These figures also did not yet reflect the new shops that had opened in recent weeks or were due to open before the end of this month. He said he would like to publically thank Jo Wynn-Carter, the Council's Town Centre Regeneration Manager, who had done a fantastic job in reducing those rates and would be missed when she left the Council next month.

Resolved:

That the Council's performance against the Corporate Plan in Quarter 2 of 2017/18 be noted.

215 Financial Monitoring – Quarter 2 – 2017/18

The report presented an assessment of the outturn based on the first half of the financial year, including the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account and the Collection Fund. The General Fund was projecting an overspend against original budget with an overall movement from last quarter of £14,000. There were a number of variances affecting this position detailed within the report, however it should be noted that during the last quarter £100,000 of the service contingency was utilised and this had now been removed from the forecast. The Housing Revenue Account was projecting an underspend of £78,000, and there were again a number of variances affecting the position that were detailed in the report. He considered this was a good achievement in the current climate and applauded those involved. The report also asked Members to delegate authority to the Director of Place and Space, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, to increase Planning Fees in line with statutory fee increases.

Resolved:

That (i) the outturn position for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and the Collection Fund be noted.

(ii) the update to the HRA Business Plan to include the purchase of off plan dwellings be noted (Paragraphs 20 – 22 of the report refer).

Recommended:

That (i) the Council delegate authority to the Director of Place and Space, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, to increase Planning fees in line with statutory fee increases (Paragraphs 10 – 12 of the report refer).

(ii) the Council approve the transfer of the Section 151 functions to the Director of Finance and Economy, which were previously held by the Head of Finance and IT (Paragraph 13 of the report refers).

216 Medium Term Financial Plan 2018-2023

The report presented the Medium Term Financial Plan, a budget forecast including underlying assumptions, covering a five year period from 2018 to 2023. This was for the General Fund and a Business Plan for the Housing Revenue Account would be covered separately in a report to the December Cabinet. The Plan highlighted a budget gap from 2020/21 and the proposed measures to close that gap, including the Inflation Management Strategy.

Both the Leader and the Portfolio Holder drew attention to paragraphs 53 – 55 of the report on development of future income streams, which was all part of the Council's wider strategy to improve the quality of services, whilst at the same time limiting the burden on Council tax payers and the reliance on Government subsidies.

Resolved:

That (i) the forecast be noted and underlying assumptions accepted.

(ii) the Inflation Management Strategy be endorsed.

(iii) it be noted that this is the third year of the four year settlement.

(iv) the one year change to the New Homes Bonus policy be noted.

(v) authority be delegated to the Director of Finance and Economy in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and IT to agree the Council's continued participation in the Kent Business Rates pool.

217 Mid Kent Joint Waste Partnership – Ashford's Progress

The report examined the Council's progress in the Mid Kent Joint Waste Partnership and asked the Cabinet to agree to continue with the same collection methodology until re-procurement began in 2019/20 as well as making some slight adjustments to non-statutory services to cover costs and encourage digital service participation.

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and emphasised the ongoing positive picture. She addressed concerns about a possible increase in fly-tipping and the measures the Council was taking to mitigate those concerns including jointly funding with other Kent Authorities, (for a two year trial), an Intelligence officer who would be dedicated to the detection of, and data sharing on, waste crime, to enable possible prosecutions. Additionally, they would be exploring the possibility of mobile camera fly-tipping enforcement. She endorsed the recommendations in the report and thanked the Borough's residents for their continued support.

Resolved:

That (i) the positive progress on the contract to date be noted.

(ii) in the life of this contract, Ashford Borough Council would continue with the same collection methodology (subject to no legislative/regulatory changes that indicate to the contrary).

(iii) in 2018/19 the Council engage with residents to achieve, as far as is practicable, a future quality household waste collection service, that residents demand and continue to understand and support.

(iv) adjustments to non-statutory services be supported to cover costs from the next financial year and encourage digital service participation.

218 Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy

The report advised that both of these strategies had been produced by external consultants Max Associates, to assess current and future demand for indoor and outdoor sports facilities. They both supported the emerging Local Plan and would address the Borough's qualitative and quantitative needs. The report sought endorsement of the draft strategies and authority to adopt them following public consultation. Copies of both strategies could be found in the Members Room and on the Ashford Borough Council website.

Resolved:

That (i) the responses made against the draft Playing Pitch and Indoor Sports Facilities Strategies following consultation be noted.

(ii) the Playing Pitch and Indoor Sports Facilities Strategies be approved and authorised for adoption.

(iii) authority be delegated to the Director of Place and Space, in consultation with the necessary Portfolio Holders, to put in place all actions necessary to implement both Strategies.

219 Open Space Strategy - Adoption

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report which advised that the Open Space Strategy had been produced to detail how the Council, in partnership with a range of organisations, planned to protect, enhance and provide open spaces to 2030 and

helped inform relevant sections of the emerging Local Plan. Following formal consultation on the draft Open Space Strategy, a number of comments had been received and these were contained at Appendix 1 to the report. These had resulted in a few updates to certain parts of the strategy. The report sought endorsement of the final strategy, a copy of which could be found in the Members Room and on the Ashford Borough Council website.

Resolved:

That (i) the representations made against the draft Open Space Strategy following consultation be noted.

(ii) the final Open Space Strategy be approved and endorsed for adoption.

(iii) authority be delegated to the Director of Place and Space, in consultation with the necessary Portfolio Holders, to agree final formatting and minor editing.

220 Digital Transformation Strategy

The Portfolio Holder introduced the Strategy which set out how the Council would go about developing greater on-line service delivery to provide customers with the widest choice of ways to access services and to improve efficiency of service provision. The report recommended that Cabinet approve and adopt the Strategy and associated action plans, and delegate the Member level monitoring of delivery of the Strategy to the IT and Digital Transformation Advisory Committee.

Resolved:

That (i) the Digital Transformation Strategy be approved and adopted.

(ii) the Member level monitoring of the delivery of the Strategy and action plans be delegated to the IT and Digital Transformation Advisory Committee.

221 Garage Commercialisation Strategy

The report sought Cabinet approval to implement the Garage Commercialisation Strategy which would improve revenues from existing garages and provide improved parking and landscaping in and adjacent to the Council's estates. The Strategy would also identify sites suitable for development or alternative uses.

Members expressed their general support for the proposals and the principle of allowing more flexibility around garage sites. One Member asked about the reference to 'development potential' and whether that would allow for the development of Council or local needs housing? She also hoped that in view of the lack of parking in the urban areas, all opportunities to create extra parking areas for residents would be explored. The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Property responded that each site would be looked at on a case by case basis, but generally they had already been assessed as too small for housing potential when they were originally part of the Housing Revenue Account. The Leader agreed that any opportunities to improve parking

provision should be examined. The Deputy Leader advised that in Biddenden, redundant garages had been transformed in to local needs bungalows, so there was already a precedent for this type of development.

In response to a question the Chairman responded that there would certainly be consultation over sites with relevant Ward Members and that was reflected within the recommendations.

Resolved:

That (i) the development of the Garage Commercialisation Strategy be noted.

(ii) the Head of Corporate Property and Projects be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Corporate Property and Finance and IT, and following consultation with relevant Ward Members, to approve alternative usage of garage sites to maximise the value of such sites to the Council.

(iii) the Head of Corporate Property and Projects be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Corporate Property and Finance and IT and the Director of Finance and Economy, to approve any revised pricing strategy developed as part of the implementation of the Garage Commercialisation Strategy.

222 Primary Authority Partnerships

The report sought delegated authority for the Head of Health, Parking and Community Safety to enter into Primary Authority partnerships with suitable businesses. It explained that Primary Authority partnerships described an arrangement between businesses and regulators which improved the sharing of advice and guidance on regulatory matters relating to food hygiene, health and safety and licensing.

The Portfolio Holder endorsed the contents of the report and wanted to publically thank the Environmental Health Officer for the hard work she had undertaken to make some sense of this report and bring it to the Cabinet.

Resolved:

That authority be delegated to the Head of Health, Parking and Community Safety to enter into Primary Authority partnerships under the provisions of Section 25 of the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008, as amended by The Enterprise Act 2016 and the Co-ordination of Regulatory Enforcement Regulations 2017.

223 The Armed Forces Covenant

The Member Champion for the Military Covenant and Ceremonial Liaison introduced the report which advised that the Armed Forces Covenant was a promise from the Nation, ensuring that those who served or had served in the Armed Forces, and their families, were treated fairly. This commitment was made in recognition of the sacrifices they made on behalf of the Country. The Covenant was not designed to

give Armed Forces, Veterans and their families preferential treatment compared to other citizens, but it should ensure that they got a fair deal and were not disadvantaged because of their service. He gave some practical examples of where this principle had been put in place to achieve a favourable outcome. The report outlined an action plan for delivering the Council's commitments under the Armed Forces Covenant and strengthening support for the Armed Forces community. The Member Champion advised that he was looking forward to working with the newly appointed Head of Corporate Policy, Economic Development and Communications on the action plan and chairing a new Civilian Military Partnership Board, which would work to bring in representatives of all of the relevant agencies to support the Council's Officers and the Armed Forces community.

The Member Champion further explained that a lot of work had been undertaken recently to revamp the Remembrance Sunday event which would be taking place that coming weekend and on an event at the Ashford Tank to mark the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Cambrai on the 17th November. He hoped that both of these projects would further demonstrate the Council's commitment to Ashford's Armed Forces community.

The Leader said he fully supported the report and said that it further demonstrated this Council's desire to be an exemplar Authority and a leader on a number of issues. They had been recognised as a national pioneer for their work on resettling Syrian refugees, they were one of the most improved Authorities in the UK on waste and recycling and earlier that day Ashford Borough Council had been shortlisted in the prestigious Local Government Chronicle Awards, in both the entrepreneurial Council of the Year and overall Council of the Year categories. This was all an indication of the direction in which the Council was heading.

Resolved:

That (i) the action plan outlined at paragraphs 16 – 18 and Appendix 2 to the report be approved.

(ii) the appointment of the Head of Corporate Policy, Economic Development and Communications to the role of Lead Officer for the Armed Forces Covenant be noted.

(iii) the Cabinet's support for the Armed Forces Covenant be re-affirmed.

224 'Planning For The Right Homes in The Right Places' – Response to DCLG Consultation

The report set out the Council's proposed response to the current consultation document from the Department of Communities and Local Government entitled 'Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places'. The Portfolio Holder directed Members attention to the tabled paper which contained a revised version of the proposed response. He said this was an extremely important document and he hoped the DCLG would take on board the Council's comments.

The Leader advised that the Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group had spent a considerable amount of time going through each of the questions and helping Officers

to formulate the final response. A Member asked if the responses would have any bearing on the emerging Local Plan and if the Council had undertaken any lobbying of Government to have the numbers changed for the current period? The Leader said that Officers would be able to advise on the issue of lobbying, but he knew the Government faced a large housing shortfall and Ashford would have to play its role. The Deputy Leader said that rather than lobbying, at this stage the focus should be on completing the Local Plan process and getting that in place as soon as possible, in order to protect the Borough and its residents.

Resolved:

That the proposed responses to the consultation questions set out in the tabled Appendix to the report be endorsed.

225 Economic Regeneration and Investment Board – 27th September 2017

Resolved:

That the notes of the meeting of the Economic Regeneration and Investment Board held on the 27th September 2017 be received and noted.

226 Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group – 13th September and 5th October 2017

Resolved:

That the notes of the meetings of the Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group held on the 13th September and 5th October 2017 be received and noted.

227 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.

DS

Cabinet

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **7th December 2017.**

Present:

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman);
Cllr. Bell (Vice-Chairman);

Cllrs. Mrs Bell, Bennett, Bradford, Clokie, Pickering, Shorter, White.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Burgess, Chilton, Galpin, Hicks, Knowles

Also Present:

Cllrs. Barrett, Buchanan, Dehnel, Mrs Dyer, Howard-Smith, Link, Miss Martin, Ovenden, Smith, Wedgbury.

Chief Executive, Director of Law and Governance, Director of Place and Space, Director of Finance and Economy, Head of Corporate Policy, Economic Development and Communications, Head of Health, Parking and Community Safety, Head of Housing, Head of Planning and Development, Interim Head of Finance, Health, Parking and Community Safety Manager (JF), Chilmington Community Management Organisation Project Manager, Economic Development Manager, Policy Manager, Principal Solicitor (Strategic Development), Senior Accountant (JS), Senior Accountant (LF), Senior Accountant (MH), Communications Officer, Senior Member Services Officer.

At the commencement of the meeting the Chairman advised of a change of order to that contained within the Agenda.

259 Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Interest	Minute No.
Clarkson	Declared an Other Significant Interest as a Director of A Better Choice for Property Limited and would leave the meeting for the debate and vote on this item.	277
Chief Executive	Declared an Other Significant Interest as a Director of A Better Choice for Property Limited and would leave the meeting for the debate and vote on this item.	277

Interim Head of Finance	Declared an Other Significant Interest as a Director of A Better Choice for Property Limited and would leave the meeting for the debate and vote on this item.	277

260 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 9th November 2017 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

261 Leader's Announcements

The Leader advised that he had recently made some further changes to the Deputy Portfolio Holders and would like to bring these to Members' attention this evening. Councillor Andrew Buchanan had moved to Deputy Portfolio Holder for Culture, a position which had been vacant and Councillor Mrs Jenny Webb had replaced Cllr Buchanan as Deputy Portfolio Holder for Health, Parking and Community Safety.

262 Submission Version of the Ashford Borough Local Plan 2030

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report which asked Cabinet to approve the final submission version of the Local Plan to 2030 and recommend that Full Council approves the submission of the Plan for public examination. He wanted to thank all of those involved in getting the Plan to this stage and all of the residents who had been involved in the extensive consultation that had taken place. With this Plan in place, and M20 Junction 10a now getting the go ahead, Ashford would be able to fulfil its five year land supply and be in a better position to protect itself against unscrupulous and speculative development. He endorsed the recommendations.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 9.3 Mr Tomkins, Chairman of Brook Parish Council spoke on this item. He said he wanted to thank Ashford Borough Council Members for their help and support over the years, but he said that he could not understand why they were now proposing to build on a site in their village which was in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and one that had been previously rejected as unsuitable for development. The reasons remained: - the village was a ribbon or linear development and there was no backfilling in Brook as this particular site would be; drainage and sewerage was an issue in Brook and more households would make the problem worse; Brook had no public transport and KCC appeared to be withdrawing support for the Dial A Bus service; and the roads were already busy and dangerous and there was a huge parking problem at picking up and dropping off time at the local school – if there was to be development in the village perhaps a car park for the school should be considered. Furthermore, the village had no infrastructure, public services or shops. People in the village understood the need for growth in the Borough, but at no time had anyone from the Planning Department engaged with people in the village and asked them what they wanted. The Council appeared to have excluded Bonnington from development because it would be affected by nearby development in Aldington, and he asked them to do the same for Brook as it would already be affected by proposed development in Wye and close to the William Harvey

Hospital. For those reasons, he asked for Brook to be removed from the Plan and for the impacts on smaller villages and rural communities to be further considered.

The Leader responded that the Council did understand the concerns of the villages. The Plan going forward was the result of over four years of work and they had been at pains to ensure that as much development as possible took place on brownfield sites. They had been out to public consultation on two occasions and there would be another opportunity for the public to raise their concerns at the Examination in Public with the Planning Inspector. They were talking about relatively modest numbers of new housing in the area (10 dwellings in Brook and 30 in Aldington) and if approved, this would protect against far larger numbers potentially coming forward from predatory developers. Further to questions about the Examination in Public process, it was explained that the Inspector would consider all representations previously made and could invite individuals to address the Examination at his discretion.

One of the Ward Members for Saxon Shore said that she accepted it was difficult to make changes to the Plan at this late stage, but Members needed to accept that there were concerns and whilst they may only be talking about relatively small numbers of additional dwellings, this was on top of over-delivering with significant numbers in the previous plan and represented numbers that could surely be absorbed within existing brownfield sites. People in her Ward did feel let down and that promises had not been kept. They understood the Council's need to deliver housing, but the concern was a lack of discussion with them and that comments made in the public consultation had not been taken account of. She also referred to Policy HOU1 and asked if social rented accommodation should be restricted to the urban areas, rather than rural villages with limited services and if conditions could potentially be put on planning applications to control HGV traffic on rural roads.

The Leader said he would refute the suggestion that promises had not been kept. With the housing situation as it was, the Council had not been in a position to make promises of any kind. The Portfolio Holder said that villages did have to grow from time to time to avoid stagnation. With regard to affordable housing, he said that there were already a large number within the urban area and there was a feeling that some should be provided in the villages. This had been the result of much discussion over the years.

The Deputy Leader said that as a rural Councillor he very much supported and welcomed the Local Plan. As previously mentioned, the Plan was actually the best protection that could be afforded to the villages and any alternative would potentially be far worse.

Resolved:

That (i) the schedule of responses to the public consultation on the proposed 'Main Changes' to the Regulation 19 draft Local Plan to 2030 (published in July 2017), as attached as Appendix 2 to the report, be approved.

(ii) the proposed further minor amendments to the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan to 2030, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report, be agreed.

Recommended:

That (i) the Council authorise the Head of Planning and Development to submit the Local Plan to 2030, attached as Appendix 1 to the report (and as amended by the further minor amendments at Appendix 3 to the report), to the Secretary of State for independent public examination.

(ii) the Council grant delegated authority to the Head of Planning and Development to: -

(a) make any further modifications he considers necessary or desirable before or during the Examination.

(b) ask the Inspector to recommend modifications to the draft Local Plan under Section 20 (7C) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, if such modifications are considered necessary to make the Plan sound and/or compliant with legal requirements; and,

(c) take any action he deems necessary to progress the draft Local Plan through the examination process.

263 Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Housing Framework Annual Report

The report presented recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee following its consideration of the Housing Framework Annual Report. The Portfolio Holder for Housing advised that the recommendations were duly noted, but he considered they were already firmly part of the Service's thinking and plans.

The Leader advised that the Council had previously examined credit unions and decided not to promote them at this time, although this position would be kept under review.

In response to a question about modular housing, the Portfolio Holder advised that whilst it was too early to go public on the details, they were currently examining and financially modelling a scheme as a means to accelerate the delivery of lower cost housing for key workers.

Resolved:

That (i) the report be noted and formally published on the Council's website.

(ii) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's request for Officer research into the following areas be noted and (resource permitting) taken forward: -

(a) The viability of schemes to encourage capital investment into social housing provision by landlords.

(b) The viability of modular housing homes as a means to accelerate the delivery of less costly social housing.

(c) The viability of self-build as an additional housing delivery option.

(d) The role and promotion of credit unions operating in the Borough.

264 Draft Budget 2018/19

The report presented the draft budget for 2018/19 for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account. The Portfolio Holder advised that the report was the culmination of a significant amount of work, which he thanked Officers for, and would now go forward for scrutiny via the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and budget consultation. The proposals had been predicated on decisions made some four years ago to take a more commercial approach and provide income streams for the Council, in response to reducing Government grant. In the New Year the Cabinet would be looking to extend the Commercial Investment Strategy and further proposals would come forward at that time.

The Leader said that over the last ten years this Council had delivered a balanced budget year on year and continued to deliver the lowest Council Tax in Kent and one of the lowest in the Country. This was at the same time as being one of the financially soundest Local Authorities in the Country and delivering on this Administration's pledges which included not only maintaining services, but enhancing them.

Recommended:

That (i) the budget context be noted.

(ii) the draft budget for 2018/19 be approved.

(iii) the draft Housing Revenue Account budget for 2018/19 be approved.

(iv) the report be used as the basis for budget consultation with the public, the business community, Parish Councils and staff.

(v) the draft budget as set out in the report be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Budget Task Group for formal scrutiny.

(vi) an increase to the long-term empty homes premium for Council Tax from 50% to 100% be approved.

265 Council Tax Base 2018/19

The report advised that the Council was required to approve the tax base used to calculate the level of Council Tax for 2018/19. The tax base had been calculated at

45,680 Band D properties, an increase of 1008 (or 2.26%) on the current year. The Portfolio Holder also directed Members attention to references to the Council Tax Support Scheme.

Recommended:

That (i) the 2018/19 'net' tax base of 45,680 Band D equivalent properties be agreed.

(ii) the distribution across parished areas of the proposed grant to Parish Councils to help compensate for the negative impact caused by the Council Tax Support Scheme on Parish Council's tax bases (Appendix D to the report totalling £40,900 refers) be agreed.

(iii) the possibility of further Cabinet and Council decisions being required before the end of January, should any material change in the tax base be required as a consequence of any further relevant funding announcements from Government, be noted.

DELIBERATELY LEFT BLANK

TAX BASE 2018/19
LOCAL TAX BASE (WHOLE/PART AREAS)

LOCAL TAX BASE 2017/18	WHOLE AREA	BAND D EQUIVALENT	NEW OCCUPATIONS	0.75% PROVISION	Less discounts Council Tax Support	LOCAL TAX BASE 2018/19
		48,719	658.00	(337)	(4,368)	44,672
	PARISH					
594	Aldington & Bonnington	652	17	(6)	(56)	607
339	Appledore	384	3	(3)	(46)	338
702	Bethersden	774	7	(7)	(68)	706
1,096	Biddenden	1,186	22	(11)	(88)	1,109
146	Bilsington	155	1	(1)	(11)	144
1,067	Boughton Aluph and Eastwell	1,117	2	(11)	(66)	1,042
597	Brabourne	618	2	(6)	(24)	590
155	Brook	157	8	(2)	(2)	161
453	Challock	460	43	(5)	(12)	486
1,306	Charing	1,421	24	(13)	(149)	1,283
746	Chilham	818	18	(8)	(75)	753
93	Crundale (PM)	94	0	(1)	(1)	92
501	Egerton	523	14	(5)	(27)	505
173	Godmersham	176	0	(2)	(5)	169
2,415	Great Chart with Singleton	2,629	47	(24)	(227)	2,425
114	Hastingleigh	120	0	(1)	(7)	112
716	High Halden	790	15	(7)	(64)	734
264	Hothfield	327	21	(3)	(75)	270
107	Kenardington	117	4	(1)	(12)	108
4,435	Kingsnorth	4,625	4	(44)	(244)	4,341
129	Little Chart	132	2	(1)	(3)	130
740	Mersham and Sevington	859	19	(8)	(41)	829
108	Molash	119	0	(1)	(10)	108
102	Newenden	108	0	(1)	(6)	101
597	Orlestone	649	0	(6)	(58)	585
476	Pluckley	513	21	(5)	(43)	486
681	Rolvenden	731	30	(7)	(68)	686
335	Ruckinge	350	5	(3)	(17)	335
543	Shadoxhurst	559	23	(5)	(38)	539
641	Smarden	669	34	(7)	(43)	653
360	Smeeth	398	4	(4)	(36)	362
777	Stanhope	1,043	0	(8)	(284)	751
202	Stone	224	0	(2)	(20)	202
3,534	Tenterden (TC)	3,767	177	(36)	(315)	3,593
175	Warehorne	179	1	(2)	(6)	172
325	Westwell	344	1	(3)	(16)	326
529	Wittersham	584	3	(5)	(56)	526
835	Woodchurch	904	17	(9)	(66)	846
1,025	Wye with Hinxhill	1,125	26	(10)	(113)	1,028
16,539	Unparished Area	18,789	1,268	(175)	(2,435)	17,447
44,672		**49,189**	**1,883**	**(459)**	**(4,933)**	**45,680**

266 Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2017-2047

The report provided an annual update on the financial projections associated with the HRA Business Plan. The Portfolio Holder thanked Officers for their hard work in putting the plan together and advised that it appeared the bid to the DCLG for an increase in the HRA debt cap had been unsuccessful at this time. He advised that the Council would bid again in 2019, when it was considered there was a higher chance of success.

Resolved:

That (i) the updated HRA Business Plan and financial projections be agreed.

(ii) it be noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was required to review the HRA Business Plan financial projections as part of the budget scrutiny process.

267 Chilmington Green Community Development Strategy

The Portfolio Holder for Culture introduced the report which advised that adoption of the strategy would enable an early approach to educating, engaging and empowering new residents and the growing population of Chilmington Green and set a framework for community development activity for a wide range of delivery partners. Houses would begin to be built next year and it was about creating a living community, above and beyond a traditional housing estate and producing something truly innovative for the South East of England. It would also place management control firmly in the hands of residents. Substantial community consultation had taken place, with the Strategy amended to reflect this. This was the culmination of three years of hard work and thanks were given to the Project Manager and all those individuals involved.

Resolved:

That the consultation and its outcomes be noted and the approach be endorsed.

Recommended:

That (i) the Early Community Development Strategy for Chilmington Green be adopted.

(ii) the Director of Place and Space, in consultation with relevant Directors, be authorised to put in place a legal contract with the Chilmington Green Community Management Organisation, to lead and co-ordinate delivery of community development action, using as appropriate the relevant Section 106 contribution.

268 Discretionary Business Rates Relief Scheme

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report which presented an amended Discretionary Business Rates Relief Scheme, in response to the consultation on the criteria of the scheme and detailed financial modelling. This was a fully funded scheme for the next three years and honouring the pledge to support local businesses made back in 2015.

The Leader said that the proposals were indicative of the notice taken of consultation feedback by this Council.

Resolved:

That the amended scheme as outlined in the report be adopted.

269 East Kent Growth Framework 2017 - 2027

The report summarised the East Kent Growth Framework 2017 – 2027, as prepared for the East Kent Growth Board by Litchfields, alongside an Officer Working Group from the six East Kent Local Authorities. This was an important piece of strategic work, updating the 2013 East Kent Growth Plan and setting out an overarching strategic approach for identifying investment priorities to achieve long term economic growth across East Kent for the next ten years. The Leader directed attention to two important projects in particular – M20 Junction 10A and the Ashford International Station Signalling, which were taking place in the Borough, but were vital for the development of East Kent as a whole.

Resolved:

That (i) the contents of the East Kent Growth Framework and associated documents be noted.

(ii) the East Kent Growth Framework be endorsed as the strategic document setting out the key investment priorities for the growth of East Kent.

270 Short Stay Accommodation

The report advised that the purchase of 112 Beaver Road had been approved in May 2017 and a capital budget was now sought to convert the property into the Council's second short stay accommodation facility. This was following the successful development of Christchurch House for a similar purpose.

The Leader said that success of Christchurch House as an innovative scheme, which had actually saved the tax payer money against Bed and Breakfast costs, had been widely recognised. It also meant that this proposal made sense as well as being something to be proud of. A Member agreed and said that the facility would also provide a significantly safer option for families than being placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation.

Recommended:

That a capital budget of £500,000 be allocated to enable conversion works at 112 Beaver Road, to create a short stay accommodation facility.

271 Smoke Free Civic and Stour Centre Grounds

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report which sought Cabinet's support for the introduction of a trial scheme to promote the Civic and Stour Centre as smoke-free grounds. This formed part of the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board's work programme which was helping to create a healthy environment for the Borough's residents, visitors and employees. It supported both the Council's and Stour Centre's wellbeing initiatives. He advised that in a recent consultation 70% of respondents were fully in favour of the proposals.

Resolved:

That the introduction of a trial scheme to promote the Civic and Stour Centre as smoke free grounds be supported.

272 Trading and Enterprise Board – 6th November 2017

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Trading and Enterprise Board held on the 6th November 2017 be received and noted.

273 Ashford Strategic Delivery Board – 27th October 2017

Resolved:

That the notes of the meeting of the Ashford Strategic Delivery Board held on the 27th October 2017 be received and noted.

274 Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group – 3rd November 2017

Resolved:

That the notes of the meeting of the Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group held on the 3rd November 2017 be received and noted.

275 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.

276 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 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 3 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.

277 Victoria Quarter Development (Jemmett Road)

The Vice-Chairman directed Members attention to the tabled paper which updated the Cabinet following consideration of this report by the Trading and Enterprise Board on the 4th December 2017. He also thanked those individuals who had worked so hard to bring these proposals forward for the Property Company.

Recommended:

That (i) the outline Business Case for the proposed development as detailed in the report be approved.

(ii) the Council delegate responsibility to the Head of Legal and Democracy and Director of Finance and Economy, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and IT and the Deputy Leader, for signing off the final business case and making available to the Company the necessary funds for the proposed development.

(iii) the Council delegate authority to the Head of Legal and Democracy and Director of Finance and Economy, to draft and enter into the loan agreements between Ashford Borough Council and A Better Choice for Property Limited.

DS