

Cabinet

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **15th December 2022**.

Present:

Cllr. Bartlett (Vice-Chairman in the Chair);

Cllrs. Buchanan, Feacey, Forest, Iliffe, Pickering, Shorter.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Bell, Clarkson.

Also Present:

Cllrs. Barrett, Harman, Nilsson, Sparks, Wright.

In attendance:

Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Place, Space and Leisure, Director of Health and Wellbeing, Assistant Director of Planning and Development, Assistant Director of Environment, Property and Recreation, Assistant Director of Housing, Environmental Contracts and Enforcement Manager, Development Partnership Manager, Principal Accountant, Principal Solicitor (Strategic Development), Principal Litigator, Communications Officer, Member Services Manager.

263 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 24th November 2022 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

264 Deputy Leader's Announcements

The Deputy Leader advised that he had recently contacted the Integrated Care Partnership following up on the bid for £460m capital funding for East Kent Hospitals. They had responded that they were in the process of reviewing expressions of interest and were looking to make a final decision by "the end of the year". They had also advised that the programme remained a key priority for the Government. Whilst he remained unsure of the exact timeframes, it did sound relatively promising.

265 Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2022-2053

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report which was the latest annual report from both Housing and Finance, setting out the Business Plan to 2053. It had been compiled at against an extremely challenging background of great political and economic uncertainty and he thanked Officers for their hard work.

In response to a question, the Assistant Director of Housing advised that the target date for the Henwood Scheme was November/December 2023.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) the priorities of the HRA, as set out in the Business Plan report, the updated HRA Business Plan, and the financial projections be agreed and it be noted that the HRA Business Plan will be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Budget Task Group, as part of the budget scrutiny process.**
 - (ii) dwelling rents be increased to the formula rent value on re-let.**
 - (iii) decisions for acquisitions be taken on a case-by-case basis within the existing delegations by the Assistant Director of Housing, giving due regard to the HRA Business Plan and its priorities.**
 - (iv) the Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer be authorised to negotiate, finalise and complete necessary legal agreements and other documents to effect the above.**

266 Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Service – Contract Award

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report which identified the evaluation of the new contract, the costs, key changes and benefits that would occur and presented the opportunity to further reduce service costs in the longer term beyond this contract through the potential development of a Council owned depot. The report also recommended the preferred bidder for Members consideration. He directed Members attention to the tabled paper which included re-worded recommendation to provide clarity and re-iterated that elements of this report would need to remain confidential until the standstill period had been completed.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) the award of the 8-year waste and recycling collection and street cleansing contract to bidder A (identified in the exempt appendix) be approved, subject to a satisfactory outcome from the application of the standstill period.**
 - (ii) approval be given to proceed in principle towards the development of a depot for service provision, subject to a future**

decision following the outcome of investigations currently underway.

- (iii) the Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer be authorised to negotiate, finalise and complete all necessary legal agreements and other documents to give effect to the above.**

Recommended

That capital spend in the region of £6.2m be approved to acquire the fleet for the new contract, to be made available to the new contractor on appropriate terms.

267 Climate Change Guidance for Development Management

The Assistant Director of Planning and Development introduced the report which sought approval to publish guidance entitled 'Climate Change Guidance for Development Management' and to treat it as a material consideration for the purpose of decision making for planning decisions. He re-iterated that this was the first step on a journey to better recognise and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) the content of the Climate Change Guidance for Development Management, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved, subject to any changes to be made under (ii) below.**
 - (ii) responsibility for the final contents of the Climate Change Guidance for Development Management be delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning and Development, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development.**
 - (iii) the final Climate Change Guidance for Development Management be adopted as a material consideration for the purpose of making planning decisions.**

268 Private Sector Housing Strategy

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report which outlined the proposed strategy and explained how it outlined the Council's approach to ensuring that residents across the Borough lived in homes that were safe, well maintained and met required standards.

Resolved:

That the Private Sector Housing Strategy, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

269 Disabled Facilities Grants and Disabled Adaptations

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report which set out the findings of a review into the Council's processes for administering Disabled Facilities Grants and disabled adaptations in the Council housing stock. The review followed a Motion passed at Full Council on the 20th October 2022 and focused on the application process. The outcome of the review confirmed that the Council was working within the scope of the legislation and guidance. However, some best practice recommendations had been identified to further improve service delivery, and these would be adopted.

Resolved:

- That (i) **the responses to the issues raised at Full Council on the 20th October 2022, and the outcome of the review into processing applications for Disabled Facilities Grants and adaptations in the Council Housing Stock as set out in the report, be noted.**
- (ii) **the recommendations set out in the Foundations report, at Appendix 3 to the report, be agreed.**

270 Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group – Notes of 4th November 2022

Resolved:

That the Notes of the Meeting of the Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group held on the 4th November 2022 be received and noted.

271 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.

Queries concerning these minutes? Please contact Member Services
Telephone: (01233) 330349 Email: membersservices@ashford.gov.uk
Agendas, Reports and Minutes are available on: www.ashford.moderngov.co.uk