

Cabinet

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **31st March 2022**.

Present:

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

Cllrs. Bell, Clokie, Feacey, Forest, Iliffe, Shorter

Apologies:

Cllrs. Buchanan, Pickering, Sparks.

Also Present:

Cllrs. Burgess, Harman.

In attendance:

Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer, Head of Planning and Development, Cultural Projects Manager, Web and Communications Assistant, Member Services Manager.

348 Minutes

Resolved:

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

349 Leader's Announcements

The Leader said there were a couple of matters he wanted to mention this evening. Firstly, he always stressed that this Borough had the best climate in the UK, but today's weather had seen a bit of everything – wind, rain, sunshine, hail, sleet and even snow! It was particularly unseasonal, but he knew the Council would continue to monitor for any knock on effects for residents.

Secondly, regarding recent proposed bus cuts from KCC, he, along with colleagues, he had met with senior representatives from Stagecoach East Kent and was pleased to advise that they had agreed not to discontinue the G-Line Service and that this would be extended for a further year. This was an important service for the town centre and surrounding areas and there had been a strong desire from the public to

retain it, so it was hoped that the extra year would give time to encourage greater use. It would be an hourly rather than half hourly service going forwards, but this was a good outcome for the Authority and the Borough.

350 Stodmarsh Mitigation Framework

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report which set out the progress to date and sought the Cabinet's agreement to adopt an Operational Statement as a means of informing the development industry, stakeholders and the public of important principles relating to the progression of new wetlands in the Borough. He referred to the excellent update that Members had received from Officers prior to this meeting and reiterated that this was an issue that had a knock on effect for the whole Borough.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) progress on the project to date be noted.**
 - (ii) the Operational Statement appended to the report be adopted as a document that informs the public and other stakeholders of material considerations likely to be reflected in the Council's decision making on relevant planning applications, and to that end to be published on the Council's website.**
 - (iii) the Head of Planning & Development, in consultation with the Portfolio-Holder for Planning & Development, be authorised to make or agree to non-strategic changes or updates to the Operational Statement as may be required, in liaison with the other signing bodies.**

351 Greater Ashford Borough Environment and Land Mapping Commission – Notes of 8th February 2022

The Chairman of the Commission advised that this was another work stream being undertaken by this Council in order to try and protect the Borough from inappropriate development.

Resolved:

That the Notes of the Meeting of the Great Ashford Borough Environment and Land Management Commission held on the 8th February 2022 be received and noted.

352 Joint Transportation Board – 1st March 2022

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Joint Transportation Board held on the 1st March 2022 be received and noted.

353 Trading and Enterprise Board – 22nd February 2022

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Trading and Enterprise Board held on the 22nd February 2022 be received and noted.

354 Civic and Ceremonial Programme Board – 25th February 2022

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Civic and Ceremonial Programme Board held on the 25th February 2022 be received and noted.

355 Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group – 25th February 2022

Resolved:

That the Notes of the Meeting of the Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group held on the 25th February 2022 be received and noted.

356 Member Training Panel – 23rd February 2022

Resolved:

That the Notes of the Meeting of the Member Training Panel held on the 23rd February 2022 be received and noted.

357 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.

358 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 Paragraphs 1, 3 and 5 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.

359 Victoria Park Project Update

The Portfolio Holder introduced the exempt report which updated on progress securing tenders for the Victoria Park and Watercress Fields Refurbishment Project and advised of the Chief Executive's use of her Urgency Powers to secure additional funding to enable the project to proceed.

Recommended:

That the use of the Chief Executive's Urgency Powers be noted to provide an extra £172,000 from Ashford Borough Council to help secure an extra £300,000 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and avoid a further increase in bidder's tender prices or delays to the project.

360 Economic Regeneration and Investment Board – 1st March 2022

Resolved:

That the Notes of the Meeting of the Economic Regeneration and Investment Board held on 1st March 2022 be received and noted.