
CABINET

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT on Wednesday, 7 February 2018 from 7.00pm - 8.06 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Mike Cosgrove, Duncan Dewar-Whalley, Alan Horton, Gerry Lewin (Vice-Chairman-in-the-chair), Ken Pugh and David Simmons.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Robin Harris, Charlotte Hudson, Jo Millard, Lyn Newton, Mark Radford and Nick Vickers.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Monique Bonney, Nicholas Hampshire, Harrison, Mike Henderson, James Hunt, Roger Truelove, Ghlin Whelan and Ted Wilcox.

APOLOGY: Councillor Bowles.

469 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chairman drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

470 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 December 2017 (Minute Nos. 376 – 383) were taken as read approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

471 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

Part A Recommendation to Council

472 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN AND 2018/19 BUDGET

Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Financial Officer and the above Cabinet Member, which set out the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the 2018/19 budget proposals.

The Cabinet Member introduced the report, referred to the localisation of business rates and thanked the Chief Financial Officer for his liaison and input. He advised that Cabinet would be recommending to Council an increase of £4.95p per annum on a Band D property but pointed out that Swale still had the second lowest Council Tax in Kent.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance referred to the investment in retail development, the multi-storey car park, hotel and cinema as part of the

Sittingbourne Town Centre Regeneration Scheme and advised that there was budget provision for £2million for Sittingbourne and Sheerness Leisure Centres and half a million pounds set aside for play equipment in the Borough. He added that viable housing options were being looked at.

Finally, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance drew attention to the tabled paper which contained an additional recommendation to include an extra £50,000 to be allocated from reserves for air quality initiatives.

In response to questions from a Member, the Cabinet Member advised that extra reserves were prudent so that Swale Borough Council (SBC) could be more secure in the future, and advised that the funds put aside for the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) being introduced in May 2018 was not detailed and was a precaution as SBC's responsibilities were not yet known. The same member highlighted that costs for the replacement swing bridge in Faversham had increased significantly and drew attention that the figure of £9k for Oare Gunpowder Works on page 24 of the report should be £19k. There was a discussion about the increasing costs into the future of the Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board (LMIDB), and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance advised that he sat on the Finance Committee of the LMIDB who worked hard to achieve reasonable rates. He added that he would like to see LMIDB itemised in Council Tax bills like the emergency services, so that the public could see the amount paid to the organisation.

Recommended:

- (1) That the 2018/19 revenue budget proposals be approved.***
- (2) That the medium term funding position be noted.***
- (3) That the draft capital budget be approved.***
- (4) That the additional amount of Council tax for parish precepts be noted.***
- (5) That the recommendations of Scrutiny Committee be considered.***
- (6) That the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement as set out in Appendix IX be approved.***
- (7) That, in light of the Council motion on air quality on 24 January 2018, within the budget provision be made for an extra £50,000 to be allocated from reserved for air quality initiatives.***

473 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2018/19

Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance

Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Financial Officer and the above Cabinet Member which set out the proposed Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators for 2018/19.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance highlighted the low risk on investments and explained that a good return would be received from investing to fund the Sittingbourne Town Centre Regeneration scheme.

Recommended:

(1) That the Treasury Management Strategy 2018/19 and the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators be approved.

Part B Reports for Decision by Cabinet**474 SOUTH THAMES GATEWAY BUILDING CONTROL PARTNERSHIP 2018-2021****Cabinet Member for Planning**

The Cabinet Member for Planning introduced the report and drew attention to the continuing success of the partnership, which would be joined by Canterbury City Council in April 2018.

Resolved:

(1) That the Draft South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership Business Plan for 2018 to 2021 be agreed.

475 VISITOR ECONOMY STRATEGY**Cabinet Member for Regeneration**

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration introduced the report and drew attention to the tabled paper which included a review of recommendations from the Policy Development and Review Committee (PDRC). The Cabinet Member highlighted that all recommendations had been considered and would be included as referred to in the tabled paper.

The Cabinet Member for Safer Families and Communities commended the discussion at the PDRC meeting, and for the suggested recommendations from that meeting.

A Member said he was pleased that the recommendations from PDRC had been considered and were now included, but reminded the Cabinet Member that other points had been raised within the discussion at the PDRC meeting that were not included. He added that the recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee's Leisure and Tourism review were also not included.

The same Member suggested that the budget should be increased by a further £50k per year, and that the £250k budget should be over 3 years instead of 5 years, and raised concerns for action in the longer-term. Finally he requested that the detail of the Visitor Economy Strategy should be further considered before it was adopted. In response, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration acknowledged the points that were raised and said that historically Leisure and Tourism had not been sufficiently funded to help balance the books. He added that whilst Swale did not have major tourist attractions, realistic achievement targets had been set and he did not wish to delay the adoption of the strategy.

A Member referred to the wealth of natural assets in the Borough and asked how the £250k would be monitored? She added that walking and cycling in the Borough should be a major part of the framework. In response, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration drew attention to paragraph 3.2 on page 48 of the report. A discussion ensued around the marketing of global and more local tourism and the Cabinet Member agreed that marketing needed to be looked at carefully.

A Member welcomed the document and the assurances that the PDRC recommendations would be included. He thanked the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and praised the PDRC. In response, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and the Vice-Chairman-in-the-Chair, thanked the Head of Economy and Community Services and the Economy and Community Services Manager for their work on the strategy.

The Vice-Chairman-in-the-chair suggested that the process of recommendations from PDRC to Cabinet should be considered in more depth.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Visitor Economy Framework 2018-2023 be adopted.**
- (2) That funding of £250,000 from the shared business rates pool with Kent County Council be used to contribute to the delivery of the framework.**

476 LANDHOLDINGS REVIEW - SALE OF VARIOUS SITES

Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance introduced the report which sought approval to dispose of freehold sites by auction. The Cabinet Member explained that that the sites had been considered for development by the Council but this was not appropriate.

In response to a Member's question on encouraging the use of self-build at the sites, the Chief Executive explained that whilst this would be encouraged, the best possible price at auction would be sought and there was no control over the highest bidder. He added that the nature of the site did lend itself to an individual approach.

A Cabinet Member welcomed the report, referred to the footpath access point and was pleased that longstanding lessees could bid on the land.

A Member asked whether PSP Facilitating Ltd, who SBC had entered into a joint partnership with in 2016, were interested in pursuing development of the land and whether building social housing had been considered? In response, the Chief Financial Officer explained that it was not economically viable to develop on this site but another site was being considered. He added that the Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing was looking at additional social housing elsewhere in the Borough.

Resolved:

(1) That, on behalf of the Council, Cabinet agrees in principle to dispose of the freehold of the site by auction at the reserve prices agreed with the auctioneers set out in Appendix III.

(2) That the Head of Property Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance be authorised to finalise the terms and the Head of Legal Services be authorised to complete the necessary legal formalities in due course.

477 MINUTES OF THE SOUTH THAMES GATEWAY BUILDING CONTROL JOINT COMMITTEE

Cabinet considered the recommendations from the South Thames Gateway Building Control Joint Committee held on 7 December 2017.

Resolved:

(1) That the resolutions from the South Thames Gateway Building Control Joint Committee of 7 December 2017 be noted.

478 MINUTES OF THE SWALE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD MEETING

Cabinet considered the recommendations from the Swale Joint Transportation Board meeting held on 18 December 2017

Resolved:

(1) That the recommendations in Minute Nos. 406, 407, 408, 409, 410 and 411 be noted.

479 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**Resolved:**

(1) That under Section 100 (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act: Paragraph 3: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

480 SALE OF LAND AT MINSTER CLIFFS ESTATE**Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance**

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance introduced the report which sought approval to transfer land at Minster Cliffs.

A Member asked whether any adjacent properties, that might provide access to the site, had been marketed? The Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance agreed to find out.

Members discussed the topology of the site and the ratio of the financial split. The Chief Executive advised that the valuation had been undertaken and was in accordance with the RICS red book.

Resolved:

(1) That, on behalf of the Council, Cabinet agrees to transfer the freehold interest in its land at Minster Cliffs Estate forming part of the proposed development site for the sum agreed.

(2) That the Head of Property Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance be authorised to finalise the terms and the Head of Legal Services be authorised to complete the necessary legal formalities in due course.

481 APPENDIX I: SOUTH THAMES GATEWAY BUILDING CONTROL PARTNERSHIP - BUSINESS PLAN 2018 - 21 - EXEMPT APPENDIX

There was no discussion on this item.

482 APPENDIX II: SOUTH THAMES GATEWAY BUILDING CONTROL PARTNERSHIP - SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2018 - 21 - EXEMPT APPENDIX

There was no discussion on this item.

483 LANDHOLDINGS REVIEW - SALE OF VARIOUS SITES - EXEMPT APPENDIX

There was no discussion on this item.

Chairman

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel