

---

## CABINET

---

**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT on Wednesday, 12 June 2019 from 7.00 - 7.42 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Mike Baldock (Vice-Chairman), Harrison, Ben J Martin, Richard Palmer, Roger Truelove (Chairman) and Tim Valentine.

**DEPUTY CABINET MEMBERS:** Councillors Derek Carnell, Alastair Gould, Hannah Perkin, Julian Saunders, Sarah Stephen, Eddie Thomas and Ghlin Whelan.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Katherine Bescoby, David Clifford, Estelle Culligan, Debbie Townrow, Nick Vickers and Emma Wiggins.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillors Lloyd Bowen, Elliott Jayes, David Simmons, Bill Tatton, Paul Stephen and Corrie Woodford.

**APOLOGY:** Councillor Monique Bonney.

### 45 **EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chairman outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

### 46 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 March 2019 (Minute Nos. 570 – 581) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### 47 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

### 48 **COALITION PRIORITIES: UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS (INFORMATION REPORT)**

The Chairman introduced the item by saying it was an interim report setting out the coalition's priorities, and invited each Cabinet and Deputy Cabinet Member to give an update on their respective areas. It was acknowledged that there were many cross-cutting issues.

#### **Constitution Review**

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning referred to the General Purposes Committee meeting that had been held earlier that day, the recommendations from which would be submitted to the Council meeting on 26 June 2019. He advised that there would be a report to the next Policy Development and Review Committee on constitution review and this would include consideration of returning to a committee system and the introduction of area committees.

Officers were working on papers for this and the intention was for a report to be considered at the October 2019 Council meeting.

### **Local Plan**

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning referred to the recent meeting of the Local Plan Panel where some good suggestions had been made on the future vision and approach to local plan-making. Work was ongoing and there would be further updates in due course.

### **Climate emergency**

The Cabinet Member for Environment advised that a motion would be considered at the next Council meeting on this topic and he outlined the detail of what was proposed. He gave an update on preliminary meetings that had been held, referring in particular to the carbon management plan and the potential for renewable energy. He referred to the positive impacts and benefits to everyday lives as a result of improvements such as reducing carbon emissions; insulating housing, particularly social housing; improving electric charging points for cars; and offsetting carbon emissions such as by planting trees and salt marshes. The positive impacts of this included reducing social exclusion and fuel poverty, and improvements to health as a result of improving air quality.

### **Housing**

The Cabinet Member for Housing advised that additional meetings had been held with officers and the draft strategy on housing, homelessness and rough sleeping was being reviewed further before being considered again by Members. Work was also being undertaken to review the department's structure. Close attention was being given to the temporary accommodation that was offered and the intention was to end use of bed and breakfast accommodation by December 2019. Meetings were being held with housing providers.

The Cabinet Member for Health referred to paragraph 3.8 of the report and in respect of Sheerness High Street, she suggested that residential options would be better utilised if the access was improved to a decent standard.

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing gave an update on visits made to temporary accommodation, and he hoped that housing associations would be able to help to increase provision in this area. He reiterated the need to stop bed and breakfast accommodation and welcomed the restructure in the housing department.

### **Community inclusion and safety**

The Cabinet Member for Community advised that the CCTV strategy was being reviewed and was being considered by the Cabinet in July 2019. He gave an update on a meeting he had attended which had highlighted anti-social behaviour and exclusion and he would be attending a safety partnership meeting the following day. He would give an update on his plans to improve inclusion at future meetings.

### **Health**

The Cabinet Member for Health gave an update on meetings she and her Deputy had attended with officers and externally. She advised that officers had been asked to undertake an audit of what the Council did and was involved in in respect of health and wellbeing, and a new post would be created to support work in this area.

The Cabinet Member emphasised that the intention was to add value, to identify gaps and duplication, and for services to be more joined-up to provide the best possible services for residents. This would also look at options to help promote events being held in the Borough which would help improve attendance and so promote health and wellbeing. Another Member advised of changes to NHS contracts which would encourage the use of 'social prescriptions'.

### **Economy and skills**

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Economy and Property advised that she had been working with the Cabinet Member on a range of priorities in respect of the town centre and tourism and they were looking at initiatives that would help to regenerate and brighten up areas. The Chairman advised that a meeting was scheduled with further education providers to look to move forward with the provision of a further education college in Sittingbourne, which was a key priority.

### **Public realm and open spaces**

The Cabinet Member for Environment advised that an initial meeting had been held with officers to look at options to improve public realm and open spaces.

The Chairman thanked Cabinet Members for their contributions and emphasised the cross-cutting nature of their priorities.

The Cabinet Member for Health advised that she had received an invitation to meet with a developer who intended to build a GP surgery in a development that would be subject to consideration by the Planning Committee in due course, and so she had declined to meet but would pass the information on to the Cabinet Member for Planning.

The Chairman invited a visiting Member to speak, who thanked them for their update. The Chairman advised there would be further updates at future meetings.

## **49 BUDGET UPDATE (INFORMATION REPORT)**

The Chairman introduced the report, referring to the revenue underspend of around £1m, and the £24m in reserves. He acknowledged that there would be pressure on the revenue budget in the future, but considered that the amount of reserves was too large and so some of it should be used to the benefit of the community.

He drew attention to paragraph 3.1 of the report which set out proposals for a Special Projects Fund and additional officer posts in health and housing. The Cabinet would also be exploring the option of implementing the living wage as employer, and to explore how this could be incorporated into employees in major contracts as they came up for renewal.

The Chief Financial Officer advised that the full outturn report, and requests for revenue and capital rollovers, would be considered by the Scrutiny Committee on 3 July 2019 and by Cabinet on 10 July 2019.

In response to a question regarding the level of detail in the budget book, the Chairman confirmed that more detail would be included in the future. The Chairman also acknowledged that there were two different 'living wages', one set nationally and the other by the Living Wage Foundation, and that this would be considered further.

#### 50 **QUEENBOROUGH AND RUSHENDEN REGENERATION SCHEME FUNDING INCREASE**

The Economic Development Officer introduced the report, referring to the successful bid in 2017 for £3.5m for land raising and remedial works, and the approval by Cabinet in December 2018 to enter into a grant agreement. There had been an increase in the estimated cost of the works and so Homes England had been asked for extra funds, and £5.1m had been approved.

**Resolved:**

***(1) That delegated authority be given to the Director of Regeneration and the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Property and the Cabinet Member for Finance to enter into the Homes England Grant Determination Agreement to provide £5.1million HIF funding to support the Queenborough and Rushenden regeneration scheme and staff resources allocated to administer the funds in line with requirements.***

#### 51 **OUTSIDE BODIES - NOMINATIONS TO BE MADE BY CABINET**

The Chairman introduced the report which set out nominations for outside bodies. As there were two nominations for the Optivo Kent General Panel, a vote was taken, and this was in favour of Councillor Ben J Martin.

**Resolved:**

***(1) That the Cabinet makes appointments to outside bodies as set out in Appendix I to the report, subject to Councillor Ben J Martin being nominated as the representative on Optivo Kent General Panel.***

Chairman

Copies of this document are available on the Council website <http://www.swale.gov.uk/dso/>. If you would like hard copies or alternative versions (i.e. large print, audio, different language) we will do our best to accommodate your request please contact Swale Borough Council at Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT or telephone the Customer Service Centre 01795 417850.

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