
CABINET

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT on Wednesday, 10 July 2019 from 7.00pm - 7.59 pm.

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

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

OFFICERS PRESENT: Martyn Cassell, David Clifford, Estelle Culligan, Steph Curtis, Charlotte Hudson, Jo Millard, Nick Vickers and Emma Wiggins.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Cameron Beart, Lloyd Bowen, Tim Gibson and Bill Tatton.

APOLOGY: Councillor Alan Horton.

119 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Leader outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

120 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 June 2019 (Minute Nos. 46 – 51) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Leader as a correct record.

121 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

122 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT YEAR END REPORT

The Leader introduced the report which set out the revenue and capital outturn position for 2018/19. He referred to the service rollovers, highlighted the increase in reserves and said that whilst not seriously depleting, some reserves were there to be spent.

The Leader explained that the Special Projects Fund would benefit local people and reserves would not be decimated but topped up by the growth of Business Rates and income from the North Kent Business Rate Plan. He said that that the administration would be promoting health and recreational activities and advised that concessionary parking at the Swallows Leisure Centre, Sittingbourne and the Sheerness Leisure Centre would be reinstated. The Leader advised that 22 staff would benefit from the implementation of the Real Living Wage.

The Leader invited the Chairman of Scrutiny Committee to speak. The Chairman of Scrutiny Committee asked for report headings to be clearer and for the report information to be more consistent, highlighting Real Living Wage/Living Wage and confusing information on whether the Sheerness Leisure Centre was included in the concessionary parking. He welcomed the Special Projects Fund and sought clarification on whether the £1m referred to in recommendation (3) included the Regeneration Fund or was in addition to it. The Scrutiny Committee Chairman advised that the Scrutiny Committee had proposed an additional recommendation:

That the Scrutiny Committee recommends that future consideration be given that the Economic Development Support Officer post be made a permanent role at Swale Borough Council.

The Scrutiny Committee Chairman thanked the Chief Financial Officer and his team for their hard work.

In response, the Leader confirmed that the £1m funding was on top of the Regeneration Fund and advised that the Real Living Wage was based on current figures and this would be reviewed in the future.

The Leader gave his support to the Scrutiny Committee's additional recommendation.

Resolved:

- (1) That the gross revenue underspend of £930,800 be noted**
- (2) That the revenue service rollovers of £722,500 and the setting up of new reserves as set out in Appendix I Table 11 for approval be noted.**
- (3) That a new fund called 'Special Projects' be set up to replace the Regeneration Fund and the topping up of this Fund by £1m per annum from reserves be agreed.**
- (4) That the car park concession at the Swallows and Sheerness Leisure Centres from July 2019 at an estimated cost of £90,000 in 2019/20 funded from the underspend in 2018/19 be reinstated.**
- (5) That the Real Living Wage for Swale Borough Council staff at a cost of £68,000 per annum funded from the underspend in 2018/19 be implemented.**
- (6) That the allocation of uncommitted underspends to reserve funds be delegated to the Chief Financial Officer.**
- (7) To note that the capital expenditure of £18,870,571, as detailed in paragraph 8 and Appendix I Table 14 be noted.**
- (8) That the capital rollovers of £2,862,822, as detailed in Appendix I Table 15 for approval be noted.**
- (9) That future consideration be given that the Economic Development Support Officer post be made a permanent role at Swale Borough Council.**

123 LIVING WAGE

The Leader introduced the report which sought to apply the Real Living Wage to Council employees and to investigate applying it to staff working on the Council's major contracts.

Resolved:

- (1) That the Real Living Wage be applied to Council employees immediately,***
- (2) That applying the Real Living Wage to staff working in the Council's major contracts be investigated.***

124 CCTV FUTURE SERVICE DELIVERY OPTIONS

The Cabinet Member for Communities introduced the report which sought Cabinet's approval on proposed changes to the monitoring delivery model for the Public Space CCTV service.

The Cabinet Member for Communities gave a background and explained the aims of the Public Space CCTV (page 55 of the report), and advised that a review of the Public Space CCTV had been completed. He added that the responses to the public consultation undertaken in May 2019 were supportive of the Council continuing to deliver a Public Space CCTV.

The Cabinet Member for Communities highlighted the benefits of the proposed Public Space CCTV monitoring delivery model which included the system control room being located within the new Multi-Storey Car Park in St. Michael's Road, Sittingbourne. He also drew attention to the proposed use of Town Centre Wi-Fi within Sittingbourne, Sheerness and Faversham to utilise the wireless CCTV infrastructure. He thanked the previous administration and Council staff for their work on the scheme.

Members welcomed the proposals. In the discussion that followed, Members spoke about the need to monitor rural and remote areas as well as the towns. A Member suggested that any foliage should be cleared from blocking the lenses of CCTV cameras. Another Member praised the report and suggested a proper audit of cameras was carried out after installation to ensure they could not be unplugged.

Resolved:

- (1) That the proposed Public Space CCTV monitoring delivery model be approved.***
- (2) That officers conduct a procurement exercise for the proposed upgrade to the Public Space CCTV Service and Town Centre Wi-Fi, which will be brought back to Cabinet for approval.***

125 ADOPTION OF THE HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS & ROUGH SLEEPING STRATEGY 2019-2023

The Leader praised the report and gave thanks to Officers for their hard work.

The Cabinet Member for Housing introduced the report which sought to adopt the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2023. He thanked the previous administration for the consultation carried out.

The Cabinet Member for Housing said that housing was one of the key priorities for the new administration and affordable housing was a particular focus. He

highlighted that homelessness figures were significantly increasing, there were long waiting lists for affordable housing and not enough affordable housing was being built within the current Local Plan. The Cabinet Member for Housing drew attention to the priorities on page 68 of the report and spoke of the complex needs of the homeless and rough sleepers. He said that other issues could be worked on if housing was delivered and said that the two main causes of homelessness in Swale were parental eviction and evictions from privately rented tenancies.

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing referred to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-23 on pages 67-163 and spoke about the detailed and comprehensive review of the issues that had taken place. He congratulated Officers for their hard work. The Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing drew attention to the main challenges identified at the bottom of page 63 of the report. He went on to highlight the four main proposed priorities at 2.5 on page 64 of the report and criticised the previous administration for their lack of action on addressing the housing issue.

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing went through the document highlighting information including the key priorities and objectives (page 70) and Swale's housing market (page 74). He paid particular attention to bullet point 5 on page 77 relating to Kent County Council's commissioning strategy. He commended the comprehensive report.

Members welcomed the report. A Member asked that Central Government was continually pressed to change the criteria of the Homelessness Reduction Act. The same Member said that more effort should be made to use Empty Dwelling Management Orders to help with homelessness. A Member thanked officers for their work on achieving funding for rough sleepers in 2019. A Member said that the housing market in the United Kingdom was dysfunctional, led to short-term tenancies and there was no security of tenure. A Member said that he hoped that the number of properties approved for loans and grants to assist with energy efficiency would increase in future.

In summing up, the Leader said the new administration were putting more resources into the housing sector, would put greater pressure on developers to provide affordable housing and had a readiness to intervene where the private sector did not provide housing and would have more responsibility for tenants in the private housing sector when they needed assistance. He asked the Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services how the documents would be shared and publicised? In response, the Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services explained there would be engagement with main stakeholders, publicising to residents, better engagement with tenants and liaising with main housing providers. A Member asked that the Kent Association of Local Councils and Parish Councils be included.

Resolved:

(1) That the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 – 2023 be adopted.

126 AUTHORITY TO COMPLETE CONTRACT DOCUMENTATION FOR TWO PARKING SERVICES

The Cabinet Member for Environment introduced the report and explained that the proper procurement processes had taken place and the contract was already in place, but because the cost of the tender was over £100k, authority was required by Cabinet.

Resolved:

(1) That the contract for cash collection services be awarded to Contract Security Services Ltd.

(2) That the contract for cashless parking solution be awarded to Cobalt Telephone Technologies Ltd.

(3) That authority be delegated to the Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure and Head of Legal, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment to complete the contract award.

127 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LOCAL PLAN PANEL MEETING HELD ON 6 JUNE 2019

Cabinet considered the recommendation from the Local Plan Panel meeting held on 6 June 2019.

Resolved:

(1) That the recommendation in Minute No.38 be agreed.

128 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SWALE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD HELD ON 24 JUNE 2019

Cabinet considered the recommendations from the Swale Joint Transportation Board meeting held on 24 June 2019.

Resolved:

(1) That the recommendations in Minute Nos. 77, 78, 79 and 80 be agreed.

Chairman

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