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## **CABINET**

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**MINUTES** of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT on Wednesday, 25 September 2019 from 7.00pm - 7.39pm.

**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, Julian Saunders, Sarah Stephen, Eddie Thomas and Ghlin Whelan.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Billy Attaway, David Clifford, Steph Curtis, Robin Harris, Zoe Kent, Charlotte Knowles, Jo Millard, Graeme Tuff, Nick Vickers and Emma Wiggins.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillors Cameron Beart, Tim Gibson, Alan Horton, James Hunt, Ken Rowles, Paul Stephen and David Simmons.

**APOLOGY:** Councillor Hannah Perkin.

### **242 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chairman outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

### **243 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 July 2019 (Minute Nos. 119 – 128) and the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 7 August 2019 (Minute Nos. 179 - 181) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **244 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor David Simmons expressed a non-pecuniary interest in Item 10, The Lodge, Faversham Recreation Ground – Lease to Faversham Rugby Club as he was Chairman of the Municipal Charities.

### **245 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2020/21**

The Leader introduced the report which simplified and recommended changes to the current scheme. He highlighted the proposed reduction in minimum payment from 25% to 20%, as at paragraph 3.3 on page 8 and said this was a more realistic figure to achieve. In response to a Member's question on the Alternative Options on page 9 of the report, the Leader said that the costs might be less as the scheme would be managed more efficiently.

**Resolved:**

**(1) That the work undertaken thus far and the options appraisals set out in Appendix I be noted, and that any new Council Tax Support Scheme be based on the current scheme but with a series of potential modifications upon which we consult.**

**(2) That a consultation be launched on the potential introduction of a range of modifications to the current Council Tax Support scheme for working age claimants as set out in paragraph 3.3.**

**(3) That through the consultation, views be sought on other ways of meeting the demands highlighted through the report other than changing the existing Council Tax Support scheme.**

**(4) That the first stage Community Impact Assessment be noted, and that a full Community Impact Assessment be prepared and considered prior to any final decisions being taken.**

**(5) That delegated authority be given to the Revenues and Benefits Manager and Chief Financial Officer to finalise the consultation material, in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance.**

**246 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT APRIL - JUNE 2019**

The Leader introduced the report which set out the revenue and capital projected outturn position for 2019/20 as at the end of June 2019. He drew Members' attention to the current revenue underspend of £254k and said that the expected income from retail units on the Sittingbourne Town Centre (STC) was over £200k, resulting in a near balance.

The Leader highlighted the capital expenditure of £3,559,972 and explained that this had been spent on funding the STC Regeneration scheme and other schemes such as the skate park. He added that the £20,110 in recommendation 3 was for the purchase of new equipment for the print room.

The Leader drew Members' attention to the forecast spending gap of £1.2million. He advised that bids were already being commissioned as part of the Special Projects Fund (pages 27-28 of the report). He thanked the Chief Financial Officer and the Financial Services Manager.

A visiting Member welcomed the news on the Special Projects Fund but asked what the process was and how bids could be submitted? In response, the Leader said that bids were welcome from all Members. The Chief Financial Officer added that bids could be submitted to him to bring forward.

**Resolved:**

**(1) That the projected revenue underspend on services of £254,000 (Table 1 refers) be noted.**

**(2) That the capital expenditure of £3,559,972 to end of June 2019 (Paragraph 3.14 and Appendix I Table 2 refers) be noted.**

**(3) That the £20,110 of funding for a new capital scheme as detailed in paragraph 3.16 be approved.**

**247 FOURTH DEED OF VARIATION TO THE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE COUNCIL AND SPIRIT OF SITTINGBOURNE**

The Cabinet Member for Economy and Property introduced the report which sought to extend the long stop date for the drawdown of land to the residential elements of Phase 1 of the Development Agreement between the Council and Spirit of Sittingbourne. She explained that the extension was necessary for the Council to be in the best position.

In response to a Member's question on whether a 3 month extension was long enough, the Cabinet Member for Economy and Property advised that there had been much background discussion and the time would be sufficient.

The Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing asked about future housing plans in the project. The Leader explained that sensitive discussions were ongoing. The Cabinet Member for Economy and Property reminded Members that Housing was a coalition priority.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That authority be delegated to the Director of Regeneration to agree a fourth Deed of Variation to the Development Agreement between the Council and Spirit of Sittingbourne to extend the long stop date for the drawdown of land to the residential elements of Phase 1 of the Development Agreement.***

**248 SAFEGUARDING POLICY 2019-20 REFRESH**

The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing introduced the report and in doing so thanked the opposition Leader for the previous work carried out on the Policy. She reminded Members that any concerns should be reported, and an investigation would follow. The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing thanked the Economy and Community Services Manager.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That the revised Safeguarding Policy and associated training plan be approved.***

**249 CONTRACT AWARD FOR THE SUPPLY OF WATER AND SEWERAGE SERVICES**

The Leader introduced the report which sought to approve the contract award for the supply of water and sewerage services.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That the appointment of Business Stream as water and sewerage services supplier from 1 December 2019 for an initial period of 5 Years with the option to extend by up to two years be agreed.***

**250 THE LODGE, FAVERSHAM RECREATION GROUND - LEASE TO FAVERSHAM RUGBY CLUB (EXEMPT APPENDIX)**

The Cabinet Member for Environment introduced the report which set out the proposals for a new lease of The Lodge at Faversham Recreation Ground, Faversham, to Faversham Rugby Club. He explained that that the refurbishment of Faversham Recreation Ground was proceeding well and new uses were being made of some of the buildings. The Cabinet Member for Environment added that the lease was required by the terms of the Heritage Lottery Fund.

A visiting Member spoke of the significance of the Faversham Recreation Ground on the community and said that it was not just a sports field. He said that it was important to get the balance of the use of the recreation ground right, and congratulated the Cabinet Member for Environment.

The Greenspaces Manager drew attention to paragraph 5.3 on page 75 of the report, and updated Members that lease terms had now been agreed at the Faversham Municipal Charities General Purposes Meeting the previous week.

The Cabinet Member for Housing congratulated Members and officers on such a reasonable lease term agreement.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That a new lease with Faversham Rugby Club be agreed.***

***(2) That delegated authority be given to the Head of Property Services to agree final terms in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Environment and the Cabinet Member for Economy and Property.***

***(3) That the Head of Mid Kent Legal Services be authorised to complete the necessary legal formalities in due course.***

**251 DISPOSAL OF 17/17A STATION STREET, SITTINGBOURNE (EXEMPT APPENDIX)**

The Cabinet Member for Economy and Property introduced the report and explained that there had been a delay in reporting it to Cabinet as other options for exploring opportunities with the building had been considered. She said that in order for the Council to achieve the most income from the sale, it would be sold with outline planning permission and the proceeds would be used for future development plans in Sittingbourne High Street.

A visiting Member supported the proposal but said his preference would be for the proceeds to be spent on the homeless. The Deputy Leader responded that money would be spent on the homeless anyway.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That the disposal of the freehold of 17/17A Station Street by auction with outline planning permission at the reserve price agreed with the auctioneers set out in Appendix II be agreed.***

***(2) That the Head of Property Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Property be authorised to finalise the terms and the Head of Legal Services be authorised to complete the necessary legal formalities and all agreements and deeds arising from or ancillary to the disposal in due course.***

**252 LANDHOLDINGS REVIEW - PROPOSED SALE OF LAND, NORTH ROAD, QUEENBOROUGH (EXEMPT APPENDIX)**

The Cabinet Member for Economy and Property introduced the report which sought to obtain approval for the freehold sale by auction of the Council owned plot in North Road, Queenborough as a potential building plot. She explained that selling the plot with outline planning permission would maximise the Council's return.

A visiting Member welcomed the report and said that the proposal was supported by Ward Councillors and Queenborough Town Council. He thanked the Head of Property Services and the Estates Surveyor. He stated that there was time to seek planning permission for a pair of semi-detached houses if necessary, but the Cabinet Member for Economy and Property said that outline planning permission would maximise the Council's return without full planning permission.

The Leader wished the Head of Property Services well after her recent accident.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That the disposal of the freehold of the site by auction with outline planning permission at the reserve price agreed with the auctioneers set out in Appendix II be agreed.***

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

**253 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SWALE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD MEETING - 9 SEPTEMBER 2019**

Cabinet considered the recommendations from the Swale Joint Transportation Board Meeting held on 9 September 2019.

The Deputy Leader raised objections to (b) of Minute No. 207 Formal objections to Traffic Regulation Order – Swale Amendment 7, as further information had been received. In the discussion that followed, Members agreed that the issue should be taken back to the next Swale Joint Transportation Board Meeting in December 2019.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That (a), (c), (d) and (e) of Minute No. 207 Formal objections to Traffic Regulation Order – Swale Amendment 7 be agreed.***

***(2) That (b) of Minute No. 207 Formal objections to Traffic Regulation Order – Swale Amendment 7 be considered further at the next Swale Joint Transportation Board meeting on 2 December 2019.***

**254 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There was no discussion on the exempt appendices, therefore the resolution to exclude the press and public was not passed.

**255 EXEMPT APPENDIX - LEASE TO FAVERSHAM RUGBY CLUB**

There was no discussion on Exempt Appendix – Lease to Faversham Rugby Club.

**256 EXEMPT APPENDIX - DISPOSAL OF 17/17A STATION STREET, SITTINGBOURNE**

There was no discussion on Exempt Appendix – Disposal of 17/17a Station Street, Sittingbourne.

**257 EXEMPT APPENDIX - PROPOSED SALE OF LAND AT NORTH ROAD, QUEENBOROUGH**

There was no discussion on the Exempt Appendix – Proposed sale of Land at North Road, Queenborough.

Chairman

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