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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, 30 October 2019 from 7.00pm - 7.30pm.

**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 Perkin, Sarah Stephen and Ghlin Whelan.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Billy Attaway, Martyn Cassell, David Clifford, Philippa Davies, Robin Harris, Nick Vickers and Emma Wiggins.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillors Cameron Beart, Steve Davey, Mike Dendor, Alan Horton, James Hunt, Ken Rowles and Corrie Woodford.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Julian Saunders and Eddie Thomas.

### **328 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chairman outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

### **329 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 September 2019 (Minute Nos. 242 – 257) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to recording in Minute No. 252, Landholdings Review – Proposed Sale of Land, North Road, Queenborough, that a visiting Member said that outline planning permission should be sought for the development of a pair of semi-detached houses, and the Cabinet Member for Economy and Property confirmed that the Council would be doing that.

### **330 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

#### **Part A Minutes for Recommendation to Council**

### **331 REVIEW OF FEES AND CHARGES**

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report which invited Cabinet to consider the proposals for the level of fees and charges to be levied for the next financial year 2020/21. He explained that, as far as possible, the Council was trying to maintain the status quo. The Cabinet Member highlighted the following: the proposal to increase the pre-application planning advice charges for large planning applications; that there was no inflationary increase proposed for

burial charges; and that the long stay multi-storey car park charges in Sittingbourne would be reduced from £15 per day to £7 per day.

In response to a question as to whether the Council could increase planning fees, the Chief Financial Officer explained that the pre-application planning advice charges, as set-out on page 7 of the report, were not laid down by statute. He advised that Swale Borough Council (SBC) were towards the top chargers within the Kent Councils, and the level of charge was down to Members' discretion. There had been a concern that if the charge was too high, it could cut off income coming to the Council.

A Member considered there should be an hourly charge for officers time in relation to pre-application planning advice. The Member also sought clarification that the proposed reduction of the multi-storey car park daily charge to £7 did not conflict with any agreement previously made with the hotel or cinema operators. The Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure confirmed that this did not conflict with the pre-lease agreement and the charge was in-line with other day car park charges in Sittingbourne.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing proposed the following amendment: that the charges for pre-application advice for very large major and major planning applications be increased in-line with the highest in Kent. The Chief Financial Officer said that officers would look into what other Kent authorities charged, prior to this report being considered by the Scrutiny Committee, and then forming part of the recommendation going to Full Council on 13 November 2019.

Members spoke in support of the proposal.

The Cabinet Member for Economy and Property also requested that an hourly rate for officers time be included on the schedule, in order to gain more income. A Member queried the impact this could have on Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) that had been negotiated.

The Director of Regeneration confirmed that more information would be sought to clarify the impact on PPAs.

***Recommended:***

***(1) That the proposed fees and charges 2020/21 as set-out in the report for submission to Council be approved, subject to the following amendments: that the charges for pre-application advice for very large major and major planning applications be increased in-line with the highest in Kent, and that an hourly rate for officers time be included on the schedule.***

**Part B Minutes for Decision by Cabinet****332 CONTRACT FOR THE EXTERNAL ENFORCEMENT AGENTS FOR MID-KENT SERVICES (EXEMPT APPENDIX)**

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report which considered the award of contract to four companies to collect unpaid Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates and Parking Fines.

**Resolved:**

***(1) That the decision to appoint four companies for the collection of Council Tax, National Non-Domestic Rates and Parking fine debts as per the restricted appendix be approved.***

**333 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE LOCAL PLAN PANEL MEETING HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2019**

Cabinet considered the recommendations from the Local Plan Panel meeting held on 17 October 2019.

**Resolved:**

***(1) That the recommendations in Minute Nos. 311 and 312 be agreed, subject to the deletion of the final part of recommendation (3) in Minute No. 312, so that it now reads:***

***That work on the proposed submission for Land at Ashford Road, South of Faversham (NS5) not be removed from further consideration.***

**334 SITTINGBOURNE TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION PROJECT**

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report which set out the background to the current relationship between the Spirit of Sittingbourne consortium, and the Council and considered the future of that relationship.

As Members might be minded to refer to the confidential report on item 10 of the agenda, linked directly to this item, they agreed that the two items should be considered at the same time.

**335 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).***

**336 SITTINGBOURNE TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION PROJECT**

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance introduced the report which set-out commercially sensitive information relating to the Development Agreement with Spirit of Sittingbourne.

Members spoke in support of Option B.

***Resolved:***

***(1) That delegated authority be given to the Director of Regeneration and the Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and the Cabinet Member for Economy and Property to determine a way forward based upon Option B in the restricted report.***

**337 EXEMPT APPENDIX I: PROVISION OF ENFORCEMENT AGENTS - RECOMMENDATIONS**

There was no discussion on the Exempt Appendix – Provision of Enforcement Agents – recommendations.

Chairman

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