
POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Wednesday, 4 January 2023 from 5.30 pm - 5.54 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Mike Baldock (Chair), Monique Bonney (Vice-Chair), Mike Dendor, Tim Gibson, Mike Henderson, Alan Horton, Ken Ingleton (substitute for Councillor Lloyd Bowen), Julian Saunders, David Simmons, Roger Truelove, Tim Valentine, Mike Whiting and Corrie Woodford.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Martyn Cassell, Lisa Fillery, Robin Harris, Jo Millard, Larissa Reed and Claire Stanbury.

OFFICERS PRESENT (Virtually): David Clifford, Kellie MacKenzie and Emma Wiggins.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors Cameron Beart, Carole Jackson and Tony Winckless.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE (Virtually): Councillors Steve Davey, Elliott Jayes, Richard Palmer and Hannah Perkin.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Lloyd Bowen and Bill Tatton.

549 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The Chair outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

550 **Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

551 **Allocation and approval of funding for Waste and Street Cleansing Fleet procurement**

The Head of Environment and Leisure introduced the report which proposed that the Committee recommends to Full Council that it approves the formal amendment to the capital programme to include the acquisition of the fleet required to support the Waste and Street cleansing contract agreed by the Environment Committee on 19 December 2022. He explained that the current Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) had enough funding in the 2024/25 budget to cover the contract award, but the purchase of the fleet was not in the capital programme and required approval. The Head of Environment and Leisure referred to the ever-changing economic situation and the need to secure the best deal for the Council and he drew attention that recommendation two sought delegated authority to the Section 151 Officer to achieve this. He advised that the extraordinary meeting was necessary to place the order so that the vehicles were available to use for the start of the contract.

In the debate that followed, Members made points including:

- owning the fleet was a big risk and a drain on resources;
- why buy the fleet now when Swale Borough Council (SBC) were trying to keep costs low whilst delivering the service?;

- both Ashford Borough Council and Maidstone Borough Council had agreed to the proposal;
- the benefits were clearly laid out in the report and showed cost savings;
- there would be more control over the assets, and it was clear how the risks were managed;
- expressed disappointment that the Council had not taken a 'greener' route; and
- acknowledged that the existing contract had led to limited options, but the proposal gave more flexibility.

Councillor Tim Valentine said that a more environmentally friendly contract was more costly and was not achievable at the moment, but carbon emissions had been reduced in other ways including re-routing the rounds, using electric street cleansing vehicles, and using electric lifts in vehicles to lift the bins.

In response to a member's request, it was agreed that voting on each recommendation would be taken separately.

Councillor Mike Baldock proposed recommendation (1) which was seconded by Councillor Monique Bonney.

In accordance with procedure rule 3.1.19 (2), a recorded vote was taken and voting was as follows:

For: Baldock, Bonney, Gibson, Henderson, Saunders, Truelove, Valentine, Woodford. Total equals 8.

Against: Dendor, Horton, Simmons, Whiting. Total equals 4.

Abstain: Ingleton. Total equals 1.

Councillor Mike Baldock proposed recommendation (2) which was seconded by Councillor Mike Henderson.

For: Baldock, Bonney, Gibson, Henderson, Horton, Saunders, Simmons, Truelove, Valentine, Whiting, Woodford. Total equals 11.

Against: Ingleton, Dendor. Total equals 2.

Abstain: 0.

Recommended:

(1) That the Committee recommends to Council to approve the fleet funding as outlined within the exempt appendix and it is included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and capital programme.

(2) That the Committee recommends to Council that delegated authority is given to the Section 151 Officer to adjust the detailed financing of the scheme if required to maximise the value for the Council.

552 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

There was no discussion on the exempt appendix and it was not necessary to exclude the press and public.

553 **Exempt Appendix**

There was no discussion on the exempt appendix.

Chair

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