

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2014 at 7.00 pm in Council Chamber,
Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillor Johnston (Chairman); Councillors Everitt, D Green,
E Green and Harrison

In Attendance: Councillors Bayford, Bruce, Edwards, King, Marson, D Saunders,
M Saunders, M Tomlinson, S Tomlinson, Wells and Wise

192. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Nicholson.

193. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

194. MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

Councillor Johnston proposed, Councillor E. Green seconded and Members agreed the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 17 July 2014.

195. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS SCHEDULED MEETING

Councillor Johnston proposed, Councillor Everitt seconded and Members agreed the minutes of the scheduled meeting held on 31 July 2014.

196. RAMSGATE PORT AND HARBOUR GOVERNANCE PROPOSALS

Cabinet confirmed the importance of the Ramsgate Port and Harbour for Thanet and the local region and agreed that the guidance developed by the government regarding the governance of municipal ports was a useful model that Council could use in designing an appropriate governance model for running the Ramsgate Port and Harbour.

In coming up with the proposed model, Cabinet took into account the experience of a number of municipal ports that adopted the approach recommended by government and also took note of the problems encountered by other local authorities that manage ports.

Cabinet acknowledged the need to ensure that there was sufficient accountability, capacity and capability in the management of the port and harbour. They expressed the need to bring external maritime expertise onto the Cabinet Advisory Group which would help the Executive decision making process.

Councillor Bayford spoke under Council Procedure Rule 24.1

Councillor Harrison proposed, Councillor Everitt seconded and Cabinet agreed the setting up of the Ramsgate Port and Harbour Cabinet Advisory Group under the terms set out in Annex 1 to the Cabinet report.

197. VATTENFALL - COMMUNITY PROJECT FUNDING

Vattenfall provided a grant to TDC of £100,000 in 2009 with the objective of delivering a project benefitting the local community and environment. The planning application for the initial project brief was for the provision of a raised walkway through the saltmarsh at

Pegwell Bay and was withdraw in June 2012 following environmental concerns raised by key stakeholders. Cliffsend play area and Eastcliff Gardens were the two alternative project options that had been identified for funding under the grant.

Councillor Bruce and Councillor Bayford spoke under Council Procedure Rule 24.1.

Councillor Harrison proposed, Councillor Everitt seconded and Cabinet agreed the following:

1. That £50k of the Vattenfall funding be allocated to the replacement of the play area in Cliffsend and that £40k be allocated to the Ramsgate Eastcliff and Westcliff Gardens project. The remaining £3k will be allocated to support the project management and delivery of the two projects.
2. To approve a variation to the use of the Vattenfall grant fund from that which was agreed in the 2010 budget report to allow for the above projects to be delivered. The original project proposal for a raised walkway will not therefore be taken forward.

198. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT GARAGES

Cabinet was advised that an audit of all the Council owned garages across the district had been undertaken and had established that there was currently a 50% vacancy rate across all the sites. Some of the sites had development potential to provide new affordable homes.

Sites which had development potential currently had planning consent to deliver up to 40 new affordable homes. If developed these new homes would be retained by Thanet District Council and let to households on the housing register. The Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) funding of £1.4m had been received to support this project.

Members agreed that in order to develop the sites, there was a need for Council to purchase-back some of the leaseholds and freeholds of garages which had previously been sold along with properties in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) through the Right to Buy. Individual valuations will be undertaken on each garage, and this cost had been factored into the project.

Councillor Marson spoke under Council Procedure Rule 24.1.

Councillor Harrison proposed, Councillor D. Green seconded and Members approved that the Director of Community Services be delegated authority to acquire leaseholds and freeholds on Housing Revenue Account land.

199. TO ADOPT FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2014-16

The food regulation service that Council provided faced some challenges over the last few months with the closure of the Designated Point of Entry and changes to guidance on the frequency of inspections of food premises.

To manage these changes Council refreshed the food law enforcement plan which sets the focus of the public protection team for the next 24 months leading to a consistent work programme as well as ensuring that Council complied with the statutory responsibilities.

Councillor Johnston proposed, Councillor Harrison seconded and Members approved the Food Law Enforcement Plan.

200. DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Cabinet received an update on the progress towards delivering the Destination Management Plan (DMP) for the Thanet District. Since the DMP was adopted Cabinet had allocated £500,000 in reserves to help deliver the priorities of the plan. It was hoped that this funding would deliver projects that supported the priorities of the DMP and that the projects were sustainable and would provide a lasting impact on the destination. In some cases match funding was provided from other sources.

Councillor Bayford spoke under Council Procedure Rule 24.1.

Councillor Johnston proposed, Councillor Everitt seconded and Cabinet noted the update report.

201. ROYAL SANDS DEVELOPMENT

Cabinet noted that on 20 February 2014 they made a number of decisions based upon the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Acting on the recommendations contained in the Cabinet report of the 20th February; the Council served Notice on the developers' legal advisor requiring remedy of the breach of the agreement. Members were advised that, following the serving of the Notice, the development agreement contractually provided for parties to enter into mediation. Accordingly, the Council Project Team with the support of external expert legal advisors met with the developer on a without prejudice basis on 10th July 2014.

At that meeting new information was made available to the Council Project Team. Cabinet carefully considered the information and were now being asked to authorise the Project Team to continue negotiations and bring back appropriate recommendations to an extraordinary Cabinet meeting on 16 October 2014 for final approval.

There was a commitment given by Cabinet to publish all the questions from members of the public and the Cabinet responses to these questions and queries within two weeks. Cabinet also gave a commitment to publish the detailed conclusions to the negotiations.

The following Members spoke under Council Procedure Rule 24.1:

Councillor Bayford;
Councillor Marson;
Councillor Wells.

Councillor Everitt proposed, Councillor D. Green seconded and Cabinet agreed the following:

1. To authorise officers to defer the recommendations of the Cabinet paper dated 20th February 2014 whilst positive negotiations continue;
2. That a report be brought back to Cabinet in October 2014, documenting the outcome of the negotiations for final decision.

202. DRAFT HOUSING ASSISTANCE AND DISABLED ADAPTATIONS POLICY - CONSULTATION

The Housing Assistance and Disabled Adaptations Policy is required under Article 4 of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 and provides the Council with the discretion to develop new schemes for providing financial assistance to deal with issues in privately owned housing.

Although a two week consultation was proposed starting on 11 August 2014 focusing on key stakeholders, following representation, this consultation was extended to five weeks to end on 15 September. However on the 19 August 2014 the Overview and Scrutiny Panel made the following recommendation for consideration by Cabinet:

“To request Cabinet to organise a well-publicised six week consultation period on the Draft Housing Assistance and Disabled Adaptation Policy 2014-16. That this consultation is focused on reaching disabled people and their carers and includes all those organisations which represent disabled people.”

Councillor D. Green proposed, Councillor Johnston seconded and Cabinet agreed the following:

1. To carry out a six week public consultation using an online survey that identifies the areas of the draft policy that can be consulted on;
2. To publicise the consultation online, through local press and social media;
3. To highlight the consultation to specific groups with an interest in the document and with access to disabled residents and their carers;
4. To extend the consultation with an end date of 24th October 2014.

Meeting concluded: 8.05 pm