

EXTRAORDINARY CABINET

Minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 19 February 2015 at 7.00 pm in Council Chamber, Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

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

In Attendance: Councillors Binks, Fenner, King, Marson, Poole, D Saunders, M Saunders and S Tomlinson

245. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor E. Green.

246. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

247. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT

The performance report was considered by the Corporate Performance Review Working Party who made some suggestions about the presentation of the performance data. These suggestions were taken on board by officers when they produced the report for Cabinet.

Some of the highlights are that twenty-three projects were being progressed to work towards Council's priorities, and twenty of these were on track. The report gave account of what officers were doing to mitigate any slippage. The main positive features of project performance were:

- Securing a £1.3 million grant for work on the North Thanet coast seawall;
- The creation of affordable housing units from long term empty properties within the district;
- On-going improvement of play facilities in the area over autumn and winter;
- Continuing improvement of the Yacht Valley facilities at the Royal Ramsgate Harbour;
- Construction has started on Thanet's 'Excellent Homes for all' sites.

The report also added for the first time more information on management of the business, including levels of staff sickness, freedom of information requests, complaints and compliments received, and quarterly figures for performance levels provided by all of the shared services.

Councillor D. Green proposed, Councillor Nicholson seconded and Members agreed to note the council's performance and consider the remedial actions listed (as set out in option 3.1 of the Cabinet report).

248. THANET DISTRICT PARKING POLICY

Cabinet Members noted that there was a need to come up with an effective parking policy for Thanet to cover business, leisure and residential areas and reconcile competing demands whilst achieving safe use of roads. A key aim was to support the local economy. The policy aimed to create space for residents who wanted to park near their properties and would also support the environmental agenda.

The new policy would take into consideration concerns raised by residents and Members regarding some areas in the district that were experiencing parking problems. The policy would also try to balance the challenges posed by balancing peak demand and under-utilised parking spaces in some parts of the district and to ensure that the council meets our statutory obligations.

Councillor King spoke under Council Procedure Rule 24.1.

Councillor Harrison proposed, Councillor Nicholson seconded and Members approved the Thanet District Council Parking Policy 2015-2020.

249. POLICY FOR SECTION 44A DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS RATE RELIEF

A review of the Council Tax and Business Rate Discretionary and Hardship Relief Policy was undertaken and the findings were outlined in the report. Members were advised that the proposed changes reduced the risk of financial loss to Council whilst at the same time supporting small businesses without creating a significant impact on the Council's overall financial position. The proposed would introduce a limit of £10,000 above which exceptional cases would be considered by the S151 Officer and appropriate Portfolio Holder.

Councillor Everitt proposed, Councillor Nicholson seconded and Cabinet agreed that the revised Section 3 of the policy as set out in Annex 1 to the Cabinet report be adopted.

250. PROPOSAL FOR THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL TO JOIN THE DEMENTIA ACTION ALLIANCE

Cabinet noted that Thanet had the highest number of people living with dementia in the whole of Kent. The Prime Ministers Dementia Challenge was launched in 2012 which recommended the development of local Dementia Action Alliances to bring together people with dementia, their carer's and key organisations.

The Kent Dementia Action Alliance was set up to transform the quality of life of people with dementia and their carers within Kent through promoting the National Dementia Declaration and delivering on the Action Plans submitted by Alliance members thereby informing commissioning decisions and development of services for people with dementia and their carers.

Officers researched joining Dementia Action Alliance to enable Thanet DC to work towards creating dementia friendly communities. They were currently working in partnership with Kent Housing Group, Joint Policy and Planning Board (JPPB) to implement a Dementia Housing Action Plan for Housing across Kent.

Councillor S. Tomlinson spoke under Council Procedure Rule 24.1.

Councillor Nicholson proposed, Councillor Harrison seconded and Members agreed the following:

1. That Thanet District Council joins the Dementia Action Alliance;
2. To approve the proposed action plan in Annex 1 to the Cabinet report.

251. SPORTS AND ACTIVE RECREATIONAL STRATEGY 2015-2019

Cabinet observed that the new Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2015-2019 set out the council's visions, priorities, actions and outcomes for the services it will provide over the next four years. The strategy would build on from the successful outcomes achieved

in the last 4 years, and identify new areas of action following recent consultation with residents and local and national partners.

The new strategy provided clear direction for delivering corporate priority that supported a broad range of sports and leisure and coastal facilities and activities but also link into other corporate plan priorities, thus meeting many of the wider social agendas outlined in the document including.

- Supporting economic growth
- Tackling disadvantage
- Supporting voluntary sector
- Safer communities
- Promoting open spaces

Thanet is currently one of the most deprived areas in the country and the local health inequalities are mirrored by a lack of basic physical activity participation amongst our residents. The strategy will work with local and national partners to change social attitude and implement effective strategies to enhance positive change in participation which in turn will support the health outcomes within our district.

Councillor Marson and Councillor King spoke under Council Procedure Rule 24.1.

Councillor Johnston proposed, Councillor Nicholson seconded and Members agreed the revised Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2015-2019 and endorsed the actions and priority outcomes to further enhance the provision of Sport and Active Recreation in Thanet.

252. REDRESS SCHEMES FOR LETTINGS AGENCY WORK AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT WORK

The statutes that came into force on 1 October 2014 stated that all lettings agents and property managers in England were under a legal obligation to become a member of a Government approved redress scheme.

This meant that tenants and landlords could from now onwards complain to an independent person about the service they received when dealing with lettings agents and property managers in the private residential sector. Thanet District Council now had a duty to enforce the provisions of The Redress Schemes for Lettings Agency Work and Property Management Work (Requirement to Belong to a Scheme etc) (England) Order 2014.

Councillor D. Saunders spoke under Council Procedure Rule 24.1.

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

1. To delegate the implementation and enforcement arrangements for The Redress Schemes for Lettings Agency Work and Property Management Work (Requirement to Belong to a Scheme etc) (England) Order 2014 (SI 2014/2359) to the Director of Community Services;
2. That the penalty for non-compliance with the Order be £5,000, unless extenuating circumstances apply;
3. To authorise the Director of Community Services, or an officer authorised by the Director of Community Services, to determine what are extenuating circumstances and to determine what alternative penalty is appropriate in each case.

253. PIERREMONT HALL AND PROPERTIES, BROADSTAIRS

Cabinet agreed the need to dispose of the Pierremont Hall and related properties through the current Council's asset disposal process in order to continue discussions with Broadstairs Town Council in relation to the latter's interest in acquiring these assets and its community right to bid.

Councillor Binks spoke under Council Procedure 24.1.

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

1. To take Pierremont Hall and properties, shown on Annex 1 (to the Cabinet report), through the asset disposal process;
2. That following agreement from Cabinet, to continue to progress through the asset disposal process; negotiations with the Town Council as part of their Community Right to Bid, following the timeframe and process documented in the Localism Act 2011;
3. That should the town council decide not to proceed within the timescales imposed under the Act then cabinet will be asked to consider progressing to a freehold sale on the open market.

254. RAMSGATE BEACH CLUB

Through the Destination Management Plan, Beach Management and Development was identified as a priority and an opportunity to make better use of Thanet as a destination for residents and visitors.

An understanding the feasibility of having a beach club in Ramsgate would help Council adopt a more effective marketing approach for this site in order to gain interest in a long lease with associated concession, to deliver something more relevant to Ramsgate's regeneration. This would allow the site to contribute positively towards a healthy lifestyle and leisure activities, by offering new facilities to attract people to visit and enjoy this part of the coast.

The ambition would be to have a facility that would provide new activities on the beach to be enjoyed by residents and visitors and will increase the use of the beach in shoulder months. The club would act as an attraction to the town and would need to have a sustainable business model that allowed long-term opportunities for people to enjoy the beach and the surrounding area.

It was also important that alongside providing a mix of activities and sports provision the proposals highlighted the need for commercial activity in order to make the scheme financially viable. This would include providing for a café, restaurant, meeting/club rooms, a treatment room and self-catering accommodation. The site provided a perfect space for café and restaurant facilities in relation to passing footfall and the sea views.

In taking this proposal forward Council expected to see the establishment of a facility that would enhance the beach and the Club's services and activities taking advantage of the location.

Councillor D. Saunders spoke under Council Procedure Rule 24.1.

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

1. To approve Option 4 to progress this site through the council's process of Asset Disposal and Procurement Policy to put the site out to the market, on a long leasehold, supplemented by a service concession to procure a viable beach club leisure facility supported by tourism holiday accommodation;
2. That following completion of a thorough procurement process, an assessment of the opportunities is made in consultation with the Cabinet Member of the Strategic Economic Development Services with the preferred option being brought back to Cabinet for decision;
3. That the preferred option will be supported by a comparative valuation to support due process under the terms of the Local Government Act 1972. If there is an undervalue Cabinet will be asked to make a decision on whether to proceed with the preferred option.

255. PROJECT MOTORHOUSE

Members noted the progress as reported in the Cabinet report and requested a further update in April 2015. Cabinet noted that additional professional advice was required before a final decision could be made by Members.

Councillor Marson spoke under Council Procedure Rule 24.1.

Councillor Everitt proposed, Councillor Nicholson seconded and Cabinet confirmed its support to Project Motorhouse and authorised the Head of Economic Development and Asset Management to procure independent advice, including a structural report and valuation advice, and provide an update on this matter at Cabinet in April 2015.

Meeting concluded: 7.53 pm