

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2020 at 5.00 pm in Online Viewing Only.

Present: Councillor Rick Everitt (Chairman); Councillors Helen Whitehead, Albon, Duckworth and Yates

In Attendance: Councillors Ashbee, Bailey, Game, Pugh, Garner, Hart and Rogers

671. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies made at the meeting.

672. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

673. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillor Everitt proposed, and Councillor Albon seconded and Members agreed the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on 30 July 2020.

674. PETITION REGARDING DOG RESTRICTIONS ON THANET BEACHES

Members considered the petition referred to Cabinet by Council and they were advised that the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 gave local authorities the power to make public space protection orders. The Secretary of State had also published statutory guidance on how public space protection orders were to be applied.

Failure to comply with the legislative requirements for a Public Space Protection Order would leave the local authority open to legal challenge in the Courts. The Dog Control Public Space Protection Order was adopted under the provisions of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 including public consultation and agreement at Council. In order to amend these as requested by the petitioners, a consultation and adoption process would need to be completed.

Having such restrictions for dogs in place is a condition of the Blue Flag and Seaside Awards that a number of Thanet beaches have been awarded. As the movement restrictions imposed in response to the global pandemic had been eased by government, the district experienced an unprecedented increase in summer visitors to enjoy Thanet beaches. The prolonged hot weather, an increase in UK holidays and short breaks also contributed to that increase in visitor numbers. In order to manage that situation it was important to keep the Dog Control Public Space Protection Order restrictions in place.

Councillor Everitt, Leader of Council expressed concern over the long time it took to process petitions under the current Council Petition Scheme. The Leader requested that a review be undertaken by the Constitutional Review Working Party that would lead to the expeditious processing of petitions in the future.

Councillor Albon proposed, Councillor Everitt seconded and Cabinet agreed recommendation 3.2 which was, not to change the current Dog Control Public Space Protection Order.

675. UPDATE ON POTENTIAL SITES FOR A TEMPORARY STOPPING SITE

The provision of processing temporary tolerated travel sites was a legal and moral obligation that the council had to undertake. Having permanent sites in full consultation

of all the local communities including the traveller community was an important consideration for the council.

Historically unauthorised encampments have used TDC land, KCC land and private land; however there has been a growing tendency over the last couple of years to use TDC land. The Travellers Review Group was set up at the Overview & Scrutiny Panel to review and report back to the Panel on understanding of and an approach to managing the impact of Traveller unauthorised encampments in the Thanet area.

The review group were asked to investigate the impact of unauthorised encampments in Thanet and make recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel on what the Council could do to mitigate the impact of the unauthorised encampments (if necessary) whilst still meeting its obligations to local residents and the Travellers. There has been significant interest from stakeholders and local residents regarding a temporary tolerated site including commentary on suitability of sites, level of need and other locations. In order to capture this information and understand the views of all those with an interest in temporary stopping sites a robust engagement process is required.

The Local Plan has recently been adopted and is now subject to a review process. This process would include a defined consultation and the ability to place a general call to landowners to put forward sites for specific uses. Any sites put forward would be assessed for suitability after which a set of sites would be proposed to Members for public consultation.

Councillor Pugh and Councillor Bailey spoke under council procedure 20.1.

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

1. That the identification of appropriate tolerated stopping sites becomes part of the Local Plan review;
2. That Officers continue with an officer and partner group, working with known groups of gypsies and travellers to address site access and behaviours.

676. ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW 2019-20

Cabinet considered a summary of the treasury management activity and prudential/treasury indicators for 2019-20. However, the council's 2019-20 accounts had not yet been audited and hence the figures in the report were subject to change. The meeting was advised that the council was required to operate a balanced budget, which broadly meant that cash raised during the year would meet cash expenditure.

Part of the treasury management operation was to ensure that this cash flow was adequately planned, with cash being available when it was needed. Surplus monies were invested in low risk counterparties or instruments commensurate with the council's low risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering investment return.

The second main function of the treasury management service was the funding of the council's capital plans. These capital plans provided a guide to the borrowing need of the council, which was essentially the longer-term cash flow planning, to ensure that the council could meet its capital spending obligations. This management of longer-term cash may involve arranging long or short-term loans, or using longer-term cash flow surpluses. On occasion, when it was prudent and economic, any existing debt would also be restructured to meet council risk or cost objectives.

Cabinet confirmed that it had complied with the requirement under the Treasury Management Code of Practice to give prior scrutiny to all of the above treasury

management reports by the Governance and Audit Committee before they were reported to the full council. Member training on treasury management issues was last undertaken during 2019/20 in order to support members' scrutiny role, and further training would be arranged as required.

Councillor Yates proposed, Councillor Everitt seconded and Cabinet agreed to:

1. Note the actual 2019-20 prudential and treasury indicators in this report;
2. Approve this Annual Treasury Management report for 2019-20;
3. Recommend this report to council.

677. PROCUREMENT OF FIRE SAFETY WORKS

Cabinet considered the report on the procurement of fire safety works for its housing stock. The safety of council tenants was an important priority for the council. The council owns approximately 3,400 tenanted and leasehold homes. The works included passive fire safety works, including fire doors and fire stopping and the installation of fire alarms, fire detection and smoke ventilations at Harbour Towers, Trove Court, Kennedy House, Brunswick Court and Staner Court.

Similar works had been completed at Invicta House in Margate and had been recognised by the Kent Fire & Rescue Service as best practice. The intention was to replicate these best practice works in all of the council's tower blocks to honour the council's commitment as a landlord given to the council tenants.

All costs, investment and income for these homes was managed through the council's Housing Revenue Account, and budgets for revenue and capital works were reviewed annually. In addition to the annual review of revenue and capital budgets, key decisions were also required for approval by Cabinet for any expenditure that is for:

- i. Works or services that exceed £250,000, or
- ii. A contract over a number of years with an expected value in excess of £750,000. The letting of the contracts detailed in this report are therefore considered to be key decisions.

The awarding of the contracts detailed in the Cabinet report was therefore considered to be key decisions which had to be taken at a Cabinet meeting. Works are anticipated to start on site during 2020/21 and take around four months to complete.

Councillor Whitehead proposed, Councillor Everitt seconded and Cabinet authorised:

1. The letting of the contract for the completion of passive fire safety works, as detailed in the Cabinet report;
2. The letting of the contract for the renewal of fire alarms, detection equipment and smoke ventilation as detailed in the report.

678. LIFT REFURBISHMENT CONTRACT UPDATE

Cabinet considered an initial report at its meeting on 30 July 2020 and agreed to approve the letting of the contract for the refurbishment of seven passenger lifts in council owned residential buildings. The conditions of the lifts had been an ongoing concern considering that a number of vulnerable residents who needed access to the building were living in these properties. The refurbishment of the lifts was therefore a top priority for the council to address the situation.

The report informed members of the blocks included in the programme, the method of procurement and the pre-tender estimated costs of £1.6m. The letting of the contract was

also subject to the approval of the required budget at full council on 10 September 2020. Submitted tenders were evaluated for both price and quality and a winning bidder identified. This report was an update to Members on the finally approved budget for the works.

The value of the winning tender was £1.865m, some £265k above the pretender estimate for the works. This was still considered to represent good value, as it had been thoroughly market tested by means of a full public tender process and the additional budget required was presented and approved by the full council at its meeting on 10 September 2020.

Councillor Whitehead proposed, Councillor Everitt seconded and Cabinet agreed to note the contents of the report.

Meeting concluded: 5.27 pm