

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2013 at 7.00 pm in Room C, Media Centre, King Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillor C. Hart (Chairman); Councillors Everitt, Fenner, D Green, Johnston and Poole

In Attendance: King and Watkins

61. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received at this meeting.

62. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

63. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

64. THANET COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN FOR 2013-2014

Each year the Community Safety Partnership is obliged to review past performance and draw up a new Plan for the following year. Key priorities are identified for actioning. The Plan is negotiated between the agencies that make up the Partnership and a public consultation process is undertaken to help identify local issues.

Councillor Wells and Councillor Moores spoke under Council Procedure Rule 24.1.

Councillor Johnston proposed, Councillor C. Hart seconded and Members agreed:

To recommend the priorities and actions in the Thanet Community Safety Plan 2013/14 as set out in Annex 1 of the officer's report to Council.

65. THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL REVIEW OF POLICIES & PROCEDURES - PROBITY AND REPUTATION

In order to improve corporate governance and in instances where problems are identified Council would be best advised to review the policies and procedures in order to ensure the reputation of Council is protected and assure the public about the integrity of the management systems in Council. These policies include the Asset Disposals Policy and Whistle-blowing Policy.

In the revised Asset Disposal Policy, all asset sales would be reported individually by name in the quarterly budget monitoring reports. The purchaser will also be disclosed. These policies and procedure would need to be reviewed regularly to ensure that they were fit for purpose.

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

Councillor Fenner proposed, Councillor C. Hart seconded and Members agreed the following:

1. That the report be received and noted;
2. That the outcome of the review of the Council's Asset Disposal Policies and Procedures be reported to the next meeting of the Cabinet;
3. That the Whistleblowing Policy and Contract Standing Order continue to be reviewed annually;
4. That the measures proposed in paragraphs 4.2.1 to 4.2.5 of the officer's report be approved and implemented with immediate effect. These measure are detailed below:
 - a) Officers to be made aware of risk areas in disposal and contract award decisions and will be reminded of the need for thorough and accurate records of all decisions as well as for the need to log member contact in relation to sales and contract negotiations;
 - b) To strengthen the detection controls for asset sales, all sales will be reported in the quarterly budget monitoring reports, where the sale values will form part of the capital receipts figures within the capital programme. The report will state which assets have been disposed of, by which sale method, for what price and give details of the purchaser;
 - c) Members are to be reassured that it is appropriate to continue to approach officers with concerns relating to their ward and for Cabinet Members to contact officers in relation to their portfolio responsibilities but that officers will make a record of all such contacts;
 - d) Members and Officers to continue to receive regular reminders about whistleblowing and the Whistleblowing Policy;
 - e) To strengthen transparency and accountability reports to Council, Cabinet or Committee that recommend the exclusion of the press and public from any part of a meeting to which the press and public would normally have access will in future describe the grounds of exclusion and set out why such a recommendations is in the public interest by reference to the factors that favour inclusion and those that favour exclusion. Members will be advised that where a decision whether or not to exclude the press and public is finely balanced; doubts should be resolved in favour of not excluding the press and public;
5. That main contractors would be encouraged to release the names of their sub-contractors;
6. To recommend to Council that where decision is made in private session, such decision is revisited after one year to determine if the decision can be published;
7. To recommend to Council that the rules concerning the audio and visual recording of Council meetings be reviewed.

66. AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN 2013

Thanet District Council is obliged under section 84 of the Environment Act 1995 to produce an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) that sets out measures to be taken by Council to lower pollutant concentration within the designated Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Council produced the draft Air Quality Action Plan for 2013 and went to public consultation. A finalised Plan would need to be submitted to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

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

Councillor Fenner proposed, Councillor C. Hart seconded and Members agreed:
That the Action Plan in Annex 1 of the officer report be approved.

Meeting concluded: 7.45 pm