

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2017 at 7.00 pm in Council Chamber, Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillor Christopher T Wells (Chairman); Councillors L Fairbrass, Brimm, Crow-Brown, Stummer-Schmertzing and Townend

In Attendance: Councillors: Bayford, Game, I Gregory, K Gregory, Savage, Taylor-Smith, Campbell, Connor, D Saunders and M Saunders

439. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received at the meeting.

440. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

441. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillor Townend proposed, Councillor Lin Fairbrass seconded and Members agreed the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on 15 June 2017.

442. POTENTIAL OUTSOURCING OF REVENUES, BENEFITS, DEBT RECOVERY AND CUSTOMER SERVICES FUNCTIONS (REVISION OF DELEGATIONS TO THE EAST KENT SERVICES COMMITTEE)

Cabinet was advised that the Director of Shared Services and his Management Team had been examining ways to ensure the current EK Services shared service functions remain relevant and viable. This included work to assess options to maintain cost effective service delivery with high levels of performance.

Cabinet was asked to consider the proposals that the East Kent Services Committee be given the authority to develop a business case that would enable consideration of the merits of a potential contracting out of Revenues, Benefits, Debt Recovery and Customer Services Functions currently operated by East Kent Services.

In order to undertake the business case for a potential outsourcing, amendments were required to the delegations made to the East Kent Services Committee by the three authorities, to give them authority to undertake this work.

Councillor Bayford spoke under Council Procedure Rule 20.1.

Councillor Crow-Brown proposed, Councillor Townend seconded and Members agreed the following:

1. To the extent that they are not already authorised to do so, the East Kent Services Committee be authorised and requested to discharge the powers and functions of the Council to develop a business case to enable the considerations of the merits of outsourcing the Council's functions in relation to the following:-
 - a. Council Tax Administration and Enforcement;
 - b. National Non-Domestic Rates Administration and Enforcement;
 - c. Housing Benefit and associated services;
 - d. Council Tax Reduction Scheme and associated services;
 - e. Debt Recovery;

f. Customer Services;
(together called 'the Revenues, Benefits, Debt Recovery and Customer Services Functions') and to determine the actions to be taken in connection therewith.

443. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT Q4 2016/17

A positive trend with improvements across a range of indicators was reported. The data presented was mainly for the period up to the end of March, but there was some evidence that, from April onwards, this trend had continued.

The following Members spoke under Council Procedure Rule 20.1:

Councillor I. Gregory;
Councillor Bayford;
Councillor Taylor-Smith;
Councillor K. Gregory;
Councillor Game.

Councillor Crow-Brown proposed, Councillor Wells seconded and Members noted the Council's performance for the period up to 31 March 2017.

444. 2016/17 PROVISIONAL OUTTURN AND ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW REPORT

Members noted that the General Fund net revenue expenditure was in line with budget, and there was a small increase in reserves over the year. This was encouraging, after years of having to draw down reserves to fund past mistakes.

The General Fund capital programme was £4.2 million underspent as capital projects were not progressed as quickly as planned. Many of these projects have external funding attached to them, which remains in place, despite the delays.

The Housing Revenue Account surplus of £1.4 million was largely due to reduced revenue funding of the capital programme. The HRA capital programme was underspent in the areas of Housing Intervention and New Builds.

Councillors I. Gregory and Councillor Bayford spoke under Council Procedure Rule 20.1.

Councillor Townend proposed, Councillor Stummer-Schmertzling seconded and Members agreed the following that:

1. The provisional outturn information for 2016/17 contained within this report is noted;
2. The capital programme carry forwards requested in Table 6 and 8 are approved;
3. The earmarked reserves as outlined in Paragraphs 1.5 and 2.7 be noted;
4. The Annual Treasury Management activity and information for 2016/17 is noted.

445. PETITION ON 2017 PARKING CHARGES AND RECOMMENDATION FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

During consideration of the petition on 2017 parking charges, Members confirmed that on 18 July Cabinet introduced a new resident only parking scheme to protect local residents and minimise the impact on local businesses. The meeting was advised that a review of the fees and charges for seasonal car parks in Albion Street, Chandos Square, Broadstairs Harbour, Joss Bay, and Marine Esplanade, has now been completed

following increases in parking charges for those seasonal car parks from the 1st April 2017.

It was reported that the new scheme will operate in exactly the same way as the current on-street parking peel and seal voucher scheme in that residents of the District only could buy a daily parking voucher or a book of vouchers that would allow them to park in any of the five seasonal car parks all day at a heavily subsidised rate.

The cost of the daily charge for residents will be £2.50 for the entire day instead of the current charge of £12. Also residents will be able to buy a book of 20 vouchers for £40, which further reduces the daily charge to just £2.00 per day. The new peel and seal voucher scheme will be in place from the 31st July 2017.

Councillor Campbell and Councillor Taylor-Smith spoke under Council Procedure Rule 20.1.

Councillor Brimm proposed, Councillor Wells seconded and Cabinet thanked the petitioner and noted the report.

446. ASSET DISPOSAL PROGRAMME 2017-18

The meeting was informed that there were no comments from ward members opposing disposals and in respect of Charlotte Court there was wide public support for a community asset transfer.

With regard to the western undercliff toilets and café, whilst these were to be sold, Cabinet was asked to give due consideration to find replacement toilets in a suitable location to support an aspiration to create another blue-flag beach.

Councillor Townend proposed, Councillor L. Fairbrass seconded and Cabinet agreed the following:

1. To proceed with the disposal of West Cliff Hall, Ramsgate and Western Undercliff Toilets and Café, Ramsgate with sale proceeds being used to fund the asset management and capital programmes;
2. To proceed with the transfer of the Playing fields, Lymington Road, Westgate-on-Sea and Charlotte Court and Albert Court, Ramsgate to Parish & Town Councils and eligible community groups to ensure their continued use for the benefit of the community.

Meeting concluded: 7.45 pm