

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2017 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllrs. Dickins, Hogarth, Piper and Scholey

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Firth and Lowe

Cllr. Pett was also present.

32. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 14 September 2017 be approved and signed as a correct record.

33. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

34. Questions from Members (maximum 15 minutes)

There were none.

35. Matters referred from Council, Audit Committee, Scrutiny Committee or Cabinet Advisory Committees

There were none.

36. Business Rates Retention Pilot 2018/19

The Portfolio Holder for Finance presented the report which advised Members that the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had invited local authorities to participate in a pilot of 100% Business Rates Retention in 2018/19. It was expected to be financially beneficial to have a Kent Pilot and discussions were continuing as to how gains could be shared and split between themes. The submission deadline was 27 October 2017. It was requested that authority be delegated to the Portfolio Holder whether the council should participate when the final proposals for the pilot scheme were known.

The Chief Finance Officer informed Members that the DCLG had advised that applications which cover a full county area were more likely to be looked on favourably and therefore all boroughs and districts, KCC and Medway would need to agree. Discussions were already underway, and following the presentation of a report a further proposal was requested and was considered at a meeting on 6

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October 2017. A further Kent Leaders meeting would take place on 19 October 2017 before the submission deadline on 27 October 2017.

The pilot scheme was only for one year and there was competition to become a pilot. Local Government Futures projected that £24.8m extra Business Rates would be retained and another estimate was £18m. The current proposal set out a 70% Financial Stability Fund (allocated to parties) which would result in all districts receiving at least an additional 2%. Regional growth funds would receive 30%. Based on the projected retention figures, the Council would receive an additional £560,000 or £410,000. All figures were dependent on the actual Business Rates collection next year, as well as appeals resolved and outstanding.

As part of the bid, it was necessary to state what would happen if the bid was not successful. KCC currently had a pool excluding the council and Dover District Council and had been advised they would like to join the pool as a backup bid. The money for the pilots had been set aside by the Government and, if successful would mean that other grants received from Government would be stopped.

Resolved: That authority be delegated to the Finance Portfolio Holder in consultation with the Leader to decide whether the council should participate in 100% Business Rates Retention in 2018/19 if a Kent Pilot is proposed.

37. Draft Housing Assistance Policy

The Housing Standards Team Leader presented the report which sought approval from Council for approval for the Housing Assistance Policy. The policy set out the way in which the funding provided by the Better Care Fund for mandatory disabled facilities grant and discretionary assistance for improved collaboration with Health and Social care services was administered; along with the Council's own discretionary assistance.

The Housing & Health Advisory Committee had considered the same report and were advised that further to writing the report it had become apparent that the repair or buying of furniture would also be useful to add to the Hospital Grant and this would include within Registered Social Landlord properties.

In response to questions he advised that the Council's maintenance team would be the ones to repair or fit new purchases. If the grant scheme was underspent in the year, the money is carried forward to the next financial year. It was anticipated that there would not be any overspend as the Housing Standards Team Leader had the ability to delay payments up to 6 months and therefore could be spent in the following financial year.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Council, to approve, subject to amendments to the Hospital Discharge Grant (HDG) to include 'the repair or

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buying of furniture' which would include within Registered Social Landlord Properties, the proposed Housing Assistance Policy in order to ensure increased funding provided via the Better Care Fund is delivered to those who have not previously been able to obtain financial assistance; and to update the criteria for the Council's own discretionary financial assistance.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 7.28 PM

CHAIRMAN

IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS

This notice was published on 16 October 2017. The decisions contained in Minute 36 take effect immediately. The decision contained in Minute 37 takes effect on 24 October 2017.