

## CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2017 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllr. Lowe (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Dickins, Firth, Piper and Scholey

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Hogarth

Cllrs. Hunter, Pett and McGarvey were also present.

### 48. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 9 November 2017 be approved and signed as a correct record.

### 49. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

### 50. Questions from Members

There were no questions from Members.

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

There were none.

### 52. Sale of Council owned land

The Chief Finance Officer presented the report which provided details on two areas of land that were owned by the Council and proposed to be sold. The report sought approval to the sale of the two areas of land with agreement of the final terms delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Finance in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Head of Economic Development & Property.

### Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

## Cabinet - 7 December 2017

- a) the areas of land detailed in the report be declared surplus to the Council's requirements and sold; and
- b) approval for the final terms of sale be delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Finance in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Head of Economic Development & Property.

### 53. Budget Update 2018/19

The Portfolio Holder for Finance introduced the report and explained that the Advisory Committees had discussed growth and savings suggestions and further growth had also been identified. Looking at the savings made in recent years he believed that services that were shared with other councils have not been impacted as much as other services. Therefore, he thought it would be sensible to have an emphasis on looking for savings in services that were currently shared with at least £50,000 being delivered from these services.

The Chief Finance Officer presented his report and a relevant minute extract from the Planning Advisory Committee held on 23 November 2017 was tabled for information as an addendum to the report.

The report set out progress made in preparing the 2018/19 budget and he explained that during the budget process the position remained fluid as more information became available.

Since the last report the Advisory Committees had been presented with savings proposals. If all of the proposals were accepted by Cabinet, the £100,000 net savings target would have been achieved. However, further information had been received and the Advisory Committees had suggested a number of other growth and savings proposals. These were likely to result in further savings being required to ensure that the Council continued to have a balanced 10-year budget and remain financially self-sufficient.

It was noted that some assumptions in the budget may change as it is expected that the staff pay award for 2018/19 and 2019/20 will be 2% rather than 1%. It is also expected that the Council Tax referendum limit will again be the higher of 2% or £5 for a Band D equivalent property.

The Cabinet would make its final recommendation on the budget at its meeting on 6 February 2018, after taking into account any updated information available at that date including the Local Government Finance Settlement.

### Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

## Cabinet - 7 December 2017

- a) Cabinet supports SCIAAs 1 to 8 as listed in Appendix D;
- b) the approaches below, to each suggestion from the Advisory Committees, be agreed:
  - i) the following be considered for this budget cycle and SCIAAs presented to Cabinet on 11 January 2018

### Growth

Vehicle Replacement Fund (Direct & Trading Advisory Committee (DTAC))  
Planning staffing (Planning Advisory Committee (PAC))

### Savings

Reduction in the cost of the leisure contract (Health & Housing Advisory Committee (HHAC))  
Planning application fees, Building Control fees, CIL monitoring income (PAC);

- ii) the following items be kept on the list for future investigation

### Growth

Broadband improvements (Policy & Performance Advisory Committee (PPAC))  
Reinstatement of the Big Community Fund or something similar (PPAC)  
Investment in skills training (PPAC but Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee (ECDAC) remit)  
Improved start up business accessibility, e.g. seed funding (PPAC but ECDAC remit)  
Improved district event and activity promotion (PPAC)  
Encourage development of derelict sites (PPAC but ECDAC remit)  
Redevelop housing in obsolete shopping centres (Finance Advisory Committee (FAC))

### Savings

Additional property acquisitions/developments (PPAC)  
Investigate further shared services opportunities within this portfolio's terms of reference (PPAC)  
External communications (social and online) (PPAC)  
Look at ways to reduce corporate management further (PPAC)  
Set up a bank (mobile/local) (PPAC)  
Become a social landlord for young workers  
Explore options regarding moving from Argyle Road to a lower cost site (FAC)  
Explore development potential at Sevenoaks Bus Station (FAC)  
Review Estates Management to increase net income (FAC);

- iii) no further action be taken on the following

### Savings

## Cabinet - 7 December 2017

More incentives for Members to go paperless (FAC);

- c) Officers identify further savings options to be included in the Budget Update report to Cabinet on 11 January 2018; and
- d) the Council Tax increase assumption for 2018/19 and 2019/20 be increased from 2% to £4.95 for a Band D equivalent property.

### 54. Treasury Management Mid-Year Update 2017/18

The Principal Accountant presented the report which gave details of treasury activity in the first half of the current financial year, recent developments in the financial markets and fulfilled the reporting requirements of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management.

It was confirmed that there was flexibility within the budget to adapt to the changing financial climate and it was advised by the Portfolio Holder for Finance that the Advisory Committee had considered and agreed to recommend the report to Cabinet.

#### Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the Treasury Management Mid-Year Update for 2017/18, be approved.

### 55. Financial Results 2017/18 - to end of September 2017

The Portfolio Holder for Finance introduced the report and the Acting Head of Finance explained that it set out the Council's 2017/18 financial results to the end of September 2017, which showed the year end position forecast to be a favourable variance of £103,000; this represented just under 1.0% of net service expenditure. Cabinet noted that it was pleased to have this variance under control.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance advised that the Advisory Committee had considered and agreed to recommend the report to Cabinet.

#### Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

- a) the report be noted; and
- b) the actions of the Finance Team and service areas be commended, as the outstanding debt levels had been reduced in line with targets as at the end of October 2017.

56. Pre Application Advice Fees

The Chief Planning Officer presented the report which proposed to increase charges for pre-application advice from 1 January 2018 as detailed in Appendix A to the report.

Members considered whether the increase in fees would lead to a fall in the use of the Pre-Application Advice service. The Chief Planning Officer confirmed that this would be monitored. Members discussed the impact of permitted development upon the need for pre-application advice and the need for such advice to be recorded well.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning advised that the Advisory Committee had considered and agreed to recommend the report to Cabinet.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the proposed changes to the pre-application charges as set out in Appendix A to the report be agreed for implementation from 1 January 2018.

57. Local Plan - issues and options- consultation update

The Portfolio Holder for Planning introduced the Planning Policy Team Leader who presented the report updating members on the findings of the recent Local Plan Issues and Options consultation which ran from 3 August to 5 October 2017 and would inform the production of the draft Local Plan. A further round of public consultation would be carried out next spring. It was noted that the consultation was the largest of its kind undertaken by the Council.

It was noted that the Council had received over 15,000 responses to the household survey, representing a 30% response rate. Members noted that the older demographic had responded in more significant numbers than other age groups.

It was noted that numerous events and workshops had been held over the nine-week consultation period to fully engage members of the public and other stakeholders. Members noted that the level of engagement was very encouraging

## Cabinet - 7 December 2017

and would allow a Plan to be drafted that reflected the views and aspirations of the local community.

Members noted the nature of the responses in respect of various proposals for development and considered the impact of specifying a proposed development density upon the operation of the Plan once adopted. Members also considered the necessity to communicate the findings of the consultation in an acceptable form.

The Chairman of the Planning Advisory Committee advised that the Advisory Committee had considered and agreed to recommend the report to Cabinet.

### Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the report be noted.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.30 PM

CHAIRMAN

### IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS

This notice was published on 8 December 2017. The decisions contained in Minutes 52 and 56 take effect on 18 December 2017. The decisions contained in Minutes 53, 54, 55 and 57 take effect immediately.