

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2015 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllrs. Dickins, Firth, Hogarth, Lowe and Searles

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Piper

Cllrs. Dr. Canet, Mrs. Hunter, Maskell, Parkin, Pett, Purves, Scholey, Miss. Stack, Horwood and Raikes were also present.

5. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 5 March 2015 and 19 May 2015, be approved and signed as a correct record.

6. Minutes of Advisory Committees

Resolved: That the minutes from the last meetings of the Cabinet Advisory Committees from the 2014/15 municipal year be approved and signed as a correct record.

7. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

8. Questions from Members (maximum 15 minutes)

The Deputy Portfolio Holder for Planning asked the Leader for an update of the two articles that had appeared in *The Chronicle*, one relating to parking fines and the other relating to the proposed car park.

The Leader reported that the article on parking fines referred to on-street parking and the majority of roads in the article were residential. The Leader clarified that whilst the number of tickets issued had increased by 40% income had not increased by 40%.

In relation to the proposed car park, the Leader reported that there had been a delay whilst Sevenoaks District Council spoke with KCC Highways following concerns that had been raised. Now these have been addressed he felt that a new planning application would be forthcoming.

9. Provisional Outturn 2014-15 and Carry Forward Requests

The Portfolio Holder for Finance introduced a report setting out the provisional outturn figures for 2014/15 and the requests to carry forward unspent budgets into 2015/16 for

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Revenue items. The item has previously been considered by the Finance Advisory Committee on 2 June 2015.

There were four requests totalling £204,090 to transfer unspent revenue budgets to earmarked reserves.

A provisional favourable variance of £743,400 was achieved and this variance arose for two reasons:

- (a) Net savings made during the year due to efficiencies, or where income receipts that have been greater than expected. (Where budget variances are expected to be ongoing, they were included as SCIA items for the 2015/16 budget).
- (b) Project activity, commonly time limited, originally scheduled to take place during 2014/15 which has been delayed or where the project start was deferred and the budget is still required to complete the project.

The variance that had been achieved was in line with the target set by Officers. A further £392,000 would be added to the budget stabilisation reserve.

With reference to recommendation (e), the Leader of the Council explained why there was a need to set aside the £60,000. Local Authorities had acted collectively through the Local Government Association (LGA) in defending against legal action that had been brought in relation to fees for personal searches, the LGA's Legal Representatives, Bevan Brittan, had managed to reduce the collective costs incurred by Councils.

With reference to recommendation (d), the Chief Executive explained that the Council's external auditors had recommended that an earmarked Health and Safety reserve be established following a prosecution against the Council that had been brought by the Health and Safety Executive.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

- (a) the Revenue 'carry forward' requests totalling £204,090 as set out in paragraph 14 of the report be approved, subject to any amendments suggested by the Finance Advisory Committee;
- (b) the Capital carry forward request totalling £140,000 as set out in paragraph 15 of the report be approved, subject to any amendments suggested by the Finance Advisory Committee;
- (c) A sum of £50,000 be transferred to the Housing Surveys earmarked reserve to enable a Stock Condition survey to be completed in 2015/16;

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- (d) a Health and Safety Earmarked Reserve be established, and a sum of £100,000 be transferred to that reserve as at the end of March 2015; and
- (e) A sum of £60,000 be set aside to provide for payment in respect of restitutionary claims and costs in respect of personal search fees.

10. Community Safety Action Plan

The Portfolio Holder for Economic and Community Development introduced a report seeking approval for the 2015-2016 Community Safety Strategy and Action Plan. The Plan responded to the community safety priorities identified in the recent Strategic Assessment.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health, who had previously had responsibility for Community Safety reported on the positive work undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership.

In response to a question, the Community Safety Manager explained that the Community Safety Partnership included Kent Police, Kent Fire & Rescue Service, Kent Probation, Health Services, West Kent Housing Association, Moat Homes, Kent County Council, Kenward Trust, Voluntary Action Within Kent and Domestic Abuse Volunteer. This represented a wide range of partner agencies that all work together to address the aims of the Community Safety Partnership. The Community Safety Manager explained that the Action Plan had been developed from an annual strategic assessment.

Members considered the issue of speeding and road safety across the District and expressed concern that Kent Police did not appear to be effectively enforcing speed limits, despite the work undertaken by dedicated volunteer Speed Watch Groups. It was agreed that the Police should be asked to take a more direct approach to speeding and road safety within the District. The previous Portfolio Holder had raised this issues with the Police and Crime Commissioner who had provided assurances that this would be made a priority for the Police.

Members also considered the issues of anti-social behaviour amongst Housing Association tenants. The Chief Executive explained that the Council had been working with West Kent Housing in a partnership approach to address these issues. However, Members expressed frustration that more decisive action was not being taken to address the concerns that were being raised. The Portfolio Holder stressed that he was keen to develop an effective action plan to address the issue of anti-social Housing Association tenants in order to ensure that clear, tangible and evidenced results could be achieved. The Portfolio Holder for Legal and Democratic reported that Moat housing had agreed to review the issue of life-time tenancies and it was suggested that it would be helpful for Members to be informed of the outcome of this review. The Portfolio Holder for Legal and Democratic also reported that she would be interested in working with the Portfolio Holder for Economic and Community Development on the powers conferred to the Council under the Anti Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014. Through the community trigger and community remedy victims and communities were empowered and given them a greater say in how agencies respond to complaints of anti-social behaviour. It was also possible for victims to pursue out-of-court sanctions for offenders.

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Members also discussed the issue of fly-tipping. It was agreed that more enforcement work had to be undertaken and that there should be incentives to encourage people to provide evidence that could lead to successful prosecutions for fly-tipping. Members considered that it had to be made easier for residents and businesses to legitimately dump waste and it was suggested that further work be undertaken with Kent County Council to improve the services at Dunbrik.

The Leader requested that Cabinet be provided with updates throughout the year on the progress of the Community Safety Action Plan. It was also suggested that the Council's Scrutiny Committee could also look at partner's delivery half way through the year.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

- (a) the Community Safety Strategy and Action Plan for 2015-16 be approved; and
- (b) A mid-year progress report be provided to Cabinet in October 2015.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 7.50 PM

CHAIRMAN