

**Formal Response from the Cabinet following matters referred by the Committee
and/or requests from the Performance and Governance Committee**

(a) Edenbridge Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (Cabinet 12.11.12 Minute 50)

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Improvement introduced a report seeking Member support for a new Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan for Edenbridge. The new plan had been prepared to meet local Best Value performance requirements and as part of background work which would contribute to the Local Development Framework.

The Group Manager, Planning reported that careful consideration had been given to the boundaries of the Conservation Area and in terms of planning decisions, the impact on the setting of the Conservation Area could be taken into consideration during the planning process where development is proposed adjoining the Conservation Area..

Resolved: That the Edenbridge draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, attached to the report as Appendices B (Appraisal and Management Plan) and C (Conservation Area Plan) be adopted as formal planning guidance.

(b) Annual Review of Car Parking Charges for 2012/14 and Christmas Parking 2012 (Cabinet 12.11.12 Minute 47)

The Portfolio Holder for the Cleaner and Greener Environment introduced the report and thanked the Environment Select Committee and Officers for working up the recommendations presented in the report. The increase in charges that were being proposed, 4.1% for car parks and 3.6% for on-street parking, met the budget plan increase for 2013/14 which was set at 3.5%. It was hoped that the proposed increases would cause as little pain as possible to the local traders.

The Portfolio Holder also recommended that free parking throughout the District be offered on Saturday 15th December and Saturday 22nd December and reported that all parking charges would be waived in all car parks and on-street parking areas in and around Sevenoaks town centre after 6pm on 30 November 2012 and in Westerham after 5pm on 29 November 2012 to support the annual events held for the switching-on of the Christmas lights.

Members noted that there was a low risk that any of the options considered would have an adverse impact on people with 'protected characteristics'. Free parking was offered for those with disabilities who held a Blue Badge and this remained unaffected by the proposals that were considered.

In response to a question surrounding whether the impact of the proposed increases would be monitored the Parking and Amenities Manager reported that the use of the car parks was monitored on a monthly basis and this was an on-going process.

Resolved: that

(a) free parking throughout the District be offered on Saturday 15th December and Saturday 22nd December;

(b) on-street parking charges for 2013/14 be raised by the following amounts:

SEVENOAKS TOWN CENTRE (High Street, London Road, South Park)		Proposed increase
Short stay	30 minutes	10p
" "	1 hour	
" "	2 hours	
SEVENOAKS TOWN COMMUTER AREAS (Plymouth Drive, Holly Bush Lane)		
Short stay	30 minutes	10p
" "	1 hour	
" "	2 hours	
long stay	all day	
SEVENOAKS RAIL COMMUTER AREAS (St Botolphs, Morewood Close)		
Short stay	30 minutes	10p
" "	1 hour	
" "	2 hours	
" "	4 hours	
long stay	all day	
SEVENOAKS COURT AREA (Morewood Close)		
Short stay	30 minutes	10p
" "	1 hour	
" "	2 hours	

" "	4 hours	
SWANLEY (Azalea Drive, Goldsel Road)		
short stay	30 minutes	10p
" "	1 hour	
" "	2 hours	
" "	4 hours	
long stay	all day	
WESTERHAM (The Green, Market Square, Croydon Road)		
short stay	30 minutes	10p
" "	1 hour	
" "	2 hours	

(c) car park charges for 2013/14 be increased by the following amounts:

SEVENOAKS TOWN CENTRE - Blighs		Proposed Increase
Short stay	30 minute	20p
" "	1 hour	20p
" "	2 hours	20p
" "	3 hours	40p
Buckhurst 1, Buckhurst 2, South Park, Suffolk Way & Pemboke Road		
Short stay	1 hour	10p
" "	2 hours	-
" "	3 hours	-
" "	4 hours	-
Buckhurst 2 & Pemboke Road		
Long stay	all day	-
Season tickets	year	-
SEVENOAKS STATION		
Long stay	all day	30p

Season tickets:		
Bradbourne	year	£10
Sennocke	year	£10
SEVENOAKS ST JOHNS HILL		
Short stay	30 minute	-
" "	1 hour	-
" "	2 hours	-
" "	3-4 hours	-
Long stay	all day	-
SWANLEY		
Short stay	30 minute	-
" "	1 hour	-
" "	2 hours	-
" "	3-4 hours	-
Long stay	all day	-
WESTERHAM		
Short stay	30 minute	-
" "	1 hour	-
" "	2 hours	-
" "	3-4 hours	-
Long stay	all day	-

(c) 2013/14 Budget and Review of Service Plans (Cabinet 06.12.12 Minute 61)

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Value for Money introduced a report setting out the progress made in preparing the 2013/14 budget and providing Members with an update on key financial information. The Cabinet would make its final recommendation on the budget at its meeting on 7th February 2013, after taking into account any updated information available at that date.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Value for Money reported that a list of growth and savings items resulting in net growth of £160,000 had been presented to the Select Committees who recommend that these items be included in the budget. Uncertainty over two major funding streams remained. Provisional Government Support figures were not expected until 19th December and the Council would need to decide on the level of

Council Tax for 2013/14 following the Government's announcement of another freeze grant being offered and a cap being set at 2%.

Due to these uncertainties, a further report will be presented to Cabinet in January which would hopefully contain a more complete picture including whether further savings would be required.

The Group Manager – Financial Services highlighted that whilst the Government settlement was not expected until 19th December, this date was by no means confirmed and there could be further delays in the process. There had been no further information as to what the reduction in funding was likely to be. Members noted that there was a statutory requirement for the budget to be set in February 2013.

In regard to Council Tax, from a financial perspective, the Group Manager – Financial Services stressed that it would be significantly advantageous if the Council Tax for 2013/14 was set close to the 2% cap instead of taking the grant being offered if it was frozen.

For the report to Cabinet in January 2013, Officers would update the 10-year budget with the settlement figure and any Council Tax decision as well as revisiting the other assumptions with any additional information that had become available. If a budget gap remained, difficult savings decisions would need to be made.

The Group Manager – Financial Services had sent an email to all Town and Parish Councils the previous week informing them of the effect of the Government changing their decision as to how the Council Tax Base was calculated for these authorities. The Government would be giving Sevenoaks District Council some funding to help address the effect on these councils which would be allocated proportionately based on the impact of the change to Council Tax Support.

The Chairman suggested that, as the Government grant became more marginal, Sevenoaks District Council would need to manoeuvre into a self-sustaining position in order to become less reliant on any future grant.

A Member suggested that the savings assumptions around partnership working be reviewed to ensure that they were realistic assumptions. Whilst acknowledging the point that was being made, the Chairman stressed that assumptions were constantly tested.

Members stressed the need to consider the £160,000 savings that the Council would need to make and the Chairman tasked each Portfolio Holder to have discussions around the options available before the Cabinet meeting in January.

Resolved: That

- (a) The comments and recommendations of the Select Committees as set out at Appendix E be noted;

(b) Officers and Portfolio Holders be requested to investigate further proposed solutions for the £160,000 budget shortfall.