

CABINET
04 June 2015 at 7.00 pm

Further to the recent despatch of agenda and papers for the above meeting, please find the following item(s) which were marked as 'to follow':

1. **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 12)

To agree the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 5 March 2015 and 19 May 2015, as a correct record.

a) Minutes of Advisory Committees (Pages 13 - 30)

To approve the minutes from the last meetings of the Cabinet Advisory Committees from the 2014/15 municipal year.

To assist in the speedy and efficient despatch of business, Members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the Agenda are asked to enquire of the appropriate Director or Contact Officer named on a report prior to the day of the meeting.

Should you require a copy of this agenda or any of the reports listed on it in another format please do not hesitate to contact the Democratic Services Team as set out below.

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The Democratic Services Team (01732 227241)

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CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2015 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllrs. Hogarth, Ms. Lowe, Piper and Ramsay

Cllrs. Edwards-Winser, Mrs. Hunter, Mrs. Parkin, Mrs. Sargeant, Scholey and Searles were also present.

79. Minutes

It was noted that the number of empty homes referred to in the last line of minute 77 (Adoption of the Allocations and Development Management Plan) should have been 300 rather than 300,000.

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

80. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

81. Questions from Members

There were no questions from Members.

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

- a) Referral from Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee – 12 February 2015 (Minute 28)

The Portfolio Holder for Economic and Community Development reported that the Advisory Committee had discussed the need for more lateral and creative thinking with regards to car parking fees and finding other sources of revenue and had decided to request that Cabinet consider a Council aspiration to move towards freezing parking fees where occasion allowed.

The Cabinet agreed that this would be looked at as part of the budget process for next year.

83. Authority to Establish a Local Authority Trading Company

The Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources introduced the report and outlined the background to the proposals and the rationale for establishing a local authority trading company which would assist with the Council's future funding position.

The Chairman welcomed the report, which was the culmination of nearly two years' work, and hoped that it might be possible to arrange a briefing for all Members before this was considered by the full Council on 31 March 2015.

The Chief Officer Communities & Business then took Members through each section of the report in detail. She explained that the proposal to set up a Trading Company, which would be a company limited by shares with the Council retaining a 100% shareholding as a single shareholder, would allow the Council to take advantage of the powers to trade for profit introduced under the Local Government Act 2003 and the Localism Act 2011, where opportunities arose in accordance with the Business Plan set out within the report. The Council had been advised by EC Harris Business Asset Consultancy throughout the process and the report reflected the consultants' recommendations building upon their skills and experience of this trading sector. It was stressed that in many cases it would still make sense for the Council to invest directly where this was more economically beneficial but that there were cases where the Council could not invest directly, such as for housing development, whereas a Local Authority trading company could do so. By establishing a trading company the Council would have greater flexibility in choosing its investment options and could either invest directly or through the trading company as appropriate. The Business Plan contained in the report established the need to set up a trading company to enhance economic development within the district as well as providing a valuable income stream.

EC Harris had identified key decisions to be taken by the shareholders as determining:

- the purpose and permitted activities of the company;
- the capital structure and how much finance to put into the company and on what terms;
- the distribution policy for trading profit, whether to return all profits to the shareholders or to retain them for future investment;
- to agree the composition of the Board and approve appointments; and
- to appoint auditors.

Once these decisions had been taken it was recommended that the Directors should develop and approve key matters such as:

- to develop an Annual and 5 year business plan, agreeing investment targets and associated budgets;
- specific investment transactions, including acquisitions, sales, borrowing and key transactions;
- to appoint service providers, lawyers, valuers, due diligence advisors, property managers and others; and
- reporting to Cabinet and Council committees.

Member involvement on the Board of Directors had been examined but it was felt that this could create a conflict of interest. It was therefore proposed that initially the Board of Directors would comprise of the following:

- Finance Director - The Council's Chief Finance Officer;

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- Managing Director - The Council's Head of Economic Development & Property;
- Director – A Council's Chief Officer to be recommended to Cabinet by the Chief Executive; and
- 2 Non Executive Directors - who will be approved by Cabinet and paid a small remuneration also to be approved by Cabinet.

It was also proposed that the Company Secretary, with no voting rights, should be the Council's Chief Officer Legal & Governance and that the Members' Communications Working Group be tasked with choosing the name of the Company. None of the Council Officers would receive additional payment for undertaking these duties and it was not anticipated that there would be any direct staffing implications for staff currently employed by the Council.

The report also detailed the governance arrangements for the new trading company and the many measures put in place to provide assurance to Members that the Council's position would be protected and that the company could be held to account by them as the shareholder. The Articles of Association would be produced in standard format and would be supplemented by a Shareholder Agreement and these could not be changed without the agreement of the shareholder. There was no requirement to include a business objects clause and this meant that the company would be able to make the same investments as any private individual, although initially the main activity would be property development.

The report also dealt with the tax liability of the new company and the need to ensure that there was no breach with the rules relating to "State Aid" and that the trading company was also mindful of its trading impact on the local economy. The report also asked for authority to make loans to the company to fund the Business Case(s). Where loans were made to the company this would come from the Property Investment Reserve and where loans were made in relation to property transactions the loans would be secured against company assets. However initial loans for working capital for setting up the company would be unsecured. EC Harris had also developed a Property Investment Strategy (PIS) and having examined past investment trends, the experiences of other trading companies, and the anticipated investment horizon, had concluded that the financial objective of the PIS to deliver a 6% return on investment was deliverable.

In response to questions from Members present it was confirmed that the shareholder was the Sevenoaks District Councillors rather than the Council as the body corporate, and the report confirmed that indemnity insurance would be in place for Members. It was noted that the report did not set out the capital and share structure at this stage and advice would be taken as to how capitalisation would work where there was a single shareholder. It was also re-iterated that no Councillor would be able to serve as a Non-Executive Director of the company as this could involve a conflict of interest.

A Member also questioned whether it might be more appropriate to express the investment return objective as "X% above the rate of inflation" rather than 6%. It was stressed that the 6% figure took into account the funding needs of the local authority against the background in the decline in Government funding and what was considered to be an achievable and realistic rate of return. It was stressed that the EC Harris recommendation of 6% took into account past and predicted returns on this type of investment. There might be some investments which would offer a higher rate of return

but also occasions where the Council might wish to invest in projects with lower rates of return where this might benefit local residents. The trading company would have the flexibility to do this but it was felt that it could do so within a balanced approach which would deliver a 6% return. The production of an annual and 5 year business plan would allow for a view to be taken on the balance of property investments each year. Reporting arrangements for Non-Executive Director's pay was also discussed and it was noted that this would be reported and agreed by Cabinet. It was also felt to be unnecessary to specify whether an Executive or Non-Executive Director should be the company chairman, as the Executive Directors would still form the majority on the Board and this would allow the Board greater flexibility to operate.

The Portfolio Holder for Local Planning and Environment also asked whether the wording of paragraph 17 of the report, describing the content of the Shareholder Agreement could be strengthened, so that words such as "could" or "might" should be changed to "will" and "would". It was agreed that this should be included in the report for Council.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

- a) the Chief Officer Legal and Governance be authorised to incorporate a company (the Company) wholly owned by the Council in consultation with the Chief Executive, Chief Financial Officer and Portfolio Holder for Finance so as to allow the Council to exercise the power to trade contained in the Local Government Act 2003 and the Localism Act 2011 and to settle the detailed arrangements for the establishment of the Company together with the Governance structure recommended by EC Harris Built Asset Consultancy (EC Harris);
- b) it be recommended to Council that the Chief Finance Officer be authorised to provide loan facilities to the Company in consultation with the Chief Executive, the Chief Officer Legal and Governance and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources in line with the rules set out in this report relating to State Aid;
- c) it be recommended to Council that a budget of £10,000 for set up costs of the Company be approved. This will be funded from Property Investment Reserve.
- d) the appointment of the initial Directors of the Company as set out in the report, be approved; and
- e) the Business Case for setting up the Company be approved.

84. Adoption of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) Timetable

The Portfolio Holder for Local Planning & Environment presented the report which sought approval of the latest Local Development Scheme (LDS) timetable. The LDS was a rolling

project plan that set the work programme for the development of Local Plan (formerly Local Development Framework) documents. It no longer had to be submitted to the Secretary of State for approval but did need to be made available and published on the Council's website. The last version was agreed by Cabinet in March 2012 and was out of date and the report sought approval of the latest Local Development Scheme timetable.

This matter had been considered by the Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee on 27 January 2015 who had recommended that the LDS timetable be agreed by the Cabinet.

The Chairman informed the Cabinet that he had just received an urgent communication from Brandon Lewis, Minister of State for Housing and Planning, about the allocation of land for "self-builders". The Chief Planning Officer confirmed that the Council had recently responded to a consultation on "self-build" objecting to the proposals but that he had not seen the Minister's communication. The Chairman said that he would forward the communication to him.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the Local Development Scheme (LDS) timetable be agreed.

85. Westerham Conservation Area Management Plan

The Portfolio Holder for Local Planning & Environment presented the report which sought Members' support for the adoption of the updated Westerham Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as a Supplementary Planning Document.

The report explained that the updated character appraisal and management plan for Westerham conservation area was considered to reflect the changing townscape in Westerham and would help local residents and other interested parties engage in the conservation and enhancement of the local historic environment and secure the long term preservation of the character of the area as an important heritage asset.

This matter had also been considered by the Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee on 27 January 2015 which had recommended that the updated Character Appraisal and Management Plan for Westerham Conservation Area be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. It was noted that the document had been updated since consideration by the Advisory Committee to reflect the Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP) and brought more up to date with corporate format.

The Chief Planning Officer informed Members that the version of the report contained in the agenda was slightly different to the final version of the report but that the difference was not material.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the updated Character Appraisal and Management Plan for Westerham Conservation Area be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

86. Local Enforcement Plan

The Portfolio Holder for Local Planning & Environment presented the report which introduced a Local Enforcement Plan which provided information to customers on how the Council would deal with enforcement and the powers available so that complainants and those subject to complaints would know what to expect from the service.

Members welcomed the enforcement powers described in the report, including the ability to serve section 215 notices requiring the improvement of untidy land or buildings and that fact that local Members would have more involvement and ownership of enforcement. Members also re-iterated that it was important that the serving of notices should be followed by action and received assurances from the Chief Planning Officer in this regard.

This matter had also been considered by the Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee on 27 January 2015 which had recommended the adoption of the Local Enforcement Plan.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the Local Enforcement Plan be adopted and published.

87. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Governance

The Portfolio Holder for Local Planning & Environment presented the report which set out recommendations arising from the Member and Officer workshops for the structure of a new board, guidance on the information that would need to be supplied to support bids for funding and the factors that the Council would need to take into account in making a decision. It also recommended that the Council prepare an Infrastructure Plan, which would inform the allocation of funding to schemes that supported development planned in the Allocations and Development Management Plan. It was not anticipated that the Board would meet until after May 2015. It was also noted that there should be an extra recommendation to the report for preparation of the Infrastructure Plan.

The Chief Planning Officer felt that the proposed governance arrangements were sensible and would provide a good structure for the distribution of CIL monies, once these had been received. The CIL Schedule placed the Council in a better position and would secure the affordable housing element.

Members noted that Parish and Town Councils would benefit by receiving 25% of CIL revenue, although some Members felt that Parishes would come under additional

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pressure from their residents to meet their aspirations for local infrastructure if the District and County Council were not able to deliver these.

It was also noted that the strong recommendation arising from two CIL governance workshops with members of the Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee was that all Members appointed to the CIL Spending Board must receive training before taking any decisions and that this was not covered in the report. It was agreed to add this to the recommendations.

This item had also been considered by the Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee on 27 January 2015 which had supported the recommendations to the Cabinet.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

- a) a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Spending Board be established to recommend to Cabinet how CIL funding should be prioritised with Terms of Reference consistent with the body of the report;
- b) the CIL pro-forma attached at Appendix A to the report be published setting out the information that bidding organisations, including Sevenoaks District Council, would need to provide;
- c) the guidance on the CIL decision making process attached at Appendix B to the report be published;
- d) all members of the CIL Spending Board be mandated to receive training before sitting on the Board.

88. Changes to Government Guidance on Planning Obligations - implications on SDC's Affordable Housing Policies

The Portfolio Holder for Housing & Community Safety presented a report which advised that the Government had recently published changes to the National Planning Practice Guidance and that a written ministerial statement had been issued on planning obligations. In most areas, contributions to Affordable Housing would not now be sought from developments of 10-units or fewer. In designated rural areas, local authorities could choose to seek financial contributions on developments of 6-10 dwellings in designated rural areas. In addition, where developments involved the conversion or demolition of existing buildings the contribution would be proportionate to the net increase in floorspace. Therefore developments that did not increase the amount of floorspace on a site would not have to make an Affordable Housing contribution. These changes would have a significant impact on the Council's ability to secure the delivery of Affordable Housing. At present there was not considered to be any opportunities for the Council to 'work-around' these changes to national policy. As a result, it was considered that the Council should lobby the Government to rescind or amend these policy changes.

This matter had also been considered by the Housing & Community Safety Advisory Committee on 10 February 2015, which had recommended lobbying against the policy changes.

The Chairman stated that he was happy to write a letter to the Government but doubted that it would have any chance of success given the Government's failure to deliver its housing targets and the fact that developers were seeking to blame local authorities' demands for financial contributions.

The Chief Planning Officer confirmed that the policy changes would make it very difficult to deliver the targets in the current Housing Strategy.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

- a) the Council lobbies Government to rescind or amend recent changes to national policy on the use of planning obligations for securing affordable housing; and
- b) the Council seeks financial contributions to affordable housing consistent with the percentages applied in Core Strategy policy SP3 on developments of 6-10 units in designated rural areas in the District.

89. Citizens Advice Bureaux 3 Year Service Level Agreement 2015-2018

The Portfolio Holder for Economic & Community Development presented the report which outlined progress on the work of the Citizens' Advice Bureaux during the current year and sought approval for the Service Level Agreements for the next three financial years. It was noted that the current SLA was with Sevenoaks & Swanley and Edenbridge & Westerham Citizens' Advice Bureaux but that the Sevenoaks & Swanley CAB was likely to merge with the Gravesham and Tonbridge CABx imminently.

Meetings had been held with the merging CABx and they had been told that any new SLA with them would be conditional upon their business plans demonstrating that the merger would be successful and including protection for the residents of Sevenoaks. Specifically undertakings would be required that:

- the level of service provided to clients would remain as set out in paragraph 2.2 of the SLA for the term of the agreement;
- the new merged Sevenoaks/Swanley/Tonbridge & Malling/Gravesham Citizens' Advice Bureau would include a proportionate or better geographic representation from the Sevenoaks & Swanley area, including at least one (and no fewer than another local authorities') representative, who should be nominated by Sevenoaks District Council;

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- SDC's funding would be ring-fenced for the benefit of clients in the Sevenoaks District and the annual accounts would show spend in the Sevenoaks District separately from spend elsewhere; and
- the pool of volunteers supporting the Sevenoaks and Swanley Bureau would include a proportionate or better percentage of volunteers from the Sevenoaks District.

It was noted that the local authorities concerned all had slightly different imperatives on the proposed merger but that it was important to ensure that any service delivered by the merged CABx met clients' needs and included the necessary safeguards. It was important not to withhold funding which could cause the service to collapse but likewise it was important to link funding to appropriate service delivery. For this reason Members might consider it appropriate to provide a full year's funding to the Edenbridge & Westerham Citizens' Advice Bureaux which were unaffected by the merger but to restrict payment to the first quarter only for the Sevenoaks & Swanley CAB with further payments being made conditional on them meeting the Council's requirements for the merger by demonstrating significant progress. This approach was agreed by the Cabinet.

Members noted that this matter had been considered by the Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee on 12 February 2015 which had recommended the agreement of the draft Service Level Agreement subject to the Portfolio Holder being satisfied with the proposed merger arrangements.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the draft Service Level Agreement for 2015/18 be agreed subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 12 of the report and the Chairman being satisfied with the proposed merger arrangements.

90. Grants to Voluntary Organisations 2015/16

The Portfolio Holder for Economic & Community Development introduced the report which set out information about the Community Grant Scheme and summarised applications received by the Council from voluntary organisations for funding during 2015/16. Applications received had been appraised according to the Council's Guidelines and those recommended for funding supported the aims of the scheme and represented value for money.

This matter had also been considered by the Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee on 12 February 2015 which supported the approval of the grants listed in the report.

The Cabinet commented that it had been unfortunate that some of the applicants had learnt that their applications were being recommended for refusal by being contacted by the local press, who had used the recommendations set out in the reports to contact them. Members said that there was a need to manage applicants' expectations.

The Cabinet paid tribute to the invaluable work carried out by local voluntary organisations and volunteers who gave so freely of their time and energy to the enormous benefit of the communities within the District and beyond.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the grants set out in Appendix C to the report be approved subject to the following conditions:

- i) that performance indicators as set out in the application forms are adhered to and monitored;
- ii) that appropriate Safeguarding policies and arrangements are in place, where necessary;
- iii) that appropriate recognition of this Council's funding contribution is made in all their publicity; and
- iv) where services are provided over a wider area than the District boundaries, organisations will be required to hold grant aid from this Council in a restricted fund for the benefit of Sevenoaks District residents.

IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS

This notice was published on 9 March 2015. All of the decisions contained in these minutes take effect immediately with the exception of the decisions contained in minutes 83, 89 and 90 which take effect on 17 March 2015.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.23 PM

CHAIRMAN

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2015 commencing at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllrs. Hogarth, Lowe, Piper, Dickins, Firth and Searles

Cllrs. Pett, Thornton and Mrs. Hunter were also present.

WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Cllrs Dickins, Firth and Searles to their first meeting as new Portfolio Holders.

1. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

2. To appoint representatives on Outside Organisations

Members considered the report which sought to confirm the Council's executive appointments to other organisations.

Resolved: That the appointments to other organisations for the municipal year 2015/16 as set out in the Appendix to the report, be confirmed.

3. To appoint the Membership of the Cabinet Advisory Committees for 2015/16

The Cabinet considered a report which proposed the membership of the Cabinet Advisory Committees and the terms of reference as set out in the Appendix to the report.

Resolved: That the memberships and terms of reference for the Cabinet Advisory Committees be agreed as set out in the Appendix to the report.

4. Community Infrastructure Levy Spending Board and Terms of Reference

Members considered a report setting out the Membership, Terms of Reference and protocol for speakers for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Spending Board.

Members noted that the CIL Regulations allowed surcharges to be imposed in certain circumstances, such as failure to submit a Commencement Notice, late payment and failure to submit a Notice of Chargeable Development. The Chief Planning Officer reported that the Authority did not have to apply surcharges in full or at all and there could be certain circumstances where it would not be considered appropriate or necessary to apply a surcharge. Members of Cabinet were therefore being asked to agree that, in discussion with the Portfolio Holder, the Chief Planning Officer may

exercise his judgement in whether or not to impose CIL surcharges on a case by case basis.

Resolved: That

- (a) The membership, terms of reference and protocol for speakers for the Community Infrastructure Levy Spending Board be agreed as set out in Appendices A and B to the report; and
- (b) In discussion with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, the Chief Planning Officer may exercise his judgement in whether or not to impose CIL surcharges on a case by case basis.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 7.50 PM

CHAIRMAN

STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2015 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllr. Dickins (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Abraham, Mrs. Bayley, Clark, Dickins, Eyre, Mrs. Parkin, Mrs. Purves, Raikes, Miss. Stack and Miss. Thornton

Cllrs. Fittock and Mrs. George were also present.

35. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Strategy & Performance Advisory Committee held on 2 December 2014 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

36. Declarations of Interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

37. Actions from Previous Meeting

There were none.

38. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Chairman and Portfolio Holder for Strategy and Performance advised that the Council had been looking at ways for the Council to be self financing and how it could promote and deliver the services it provided once central government grants had ended. Currently the Council was receiving less than 1% interest on reserves and it was anticipated the return would be increased by recent property investments. The Council had recently purchased a site in Swanley. In response to a question it was hoped that by Summer 2015 there would be a timeline in place for the property.

39. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were no referrals from the Cabinet or Audit Committee.

40. Customer Experience Update

The Customer Services Manager presented a report which detailed progress since the last update at the meeting in October 2014. The Customer Experience Project was one of the Council's key corporate projects including a new website and the building of a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System. The system would enable easier access to front line systems for staff that would be more effective to integrate with the

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new website. This would enable customers to complete simple straight forward self service tasks. The CRM system was due to go live in the first quarter of 2015/16 with the new website following in the second quarter.

The Committee were advised that the Council was continuing to work with the Kent Channel Migration team which was made up of 8 Local Authorities who were looking at 'Chanel Shift' which was providing more online self servicing. By providing more services online it would allow more resources for those who required additional help. In response to a question, the Customer Services Manager informed Members that one of the changes that had already been made to the current website was refuse collection information which allowed the public to search by road name for their collection date.

Members discussed the successes of other Local Authority websites. Members were advised that other functionality was being considered for the new website, to include webchat and customer log in accounts.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

41. 'Dementia Friendly' Update

Cllr. Miss Stack advised Members that the report had been brought to the Committee to discuss the strategic side of the Council's involvement in the Dementia Friendly Communities Project and the positive impact the work could have to improve access to services for people with disabilities. Cllr. Miss stack also gave a presentation which included a video from the Local Government Association titled 'Making a difference for those living with dementia'.

Members were advised that a lot of work was already taking place around Dementia within the Council and Cllrs Ms. Lowe and Mrs. Parkin were Dementia Champions. In total over 200 Officers, Members and the Council's partners had received Dementia training. Members discussed the importance of having the Civil Enforcement Officers and Refuse Collectors on the training.

Research had been undertaken into the number of people suffering with Dementia who used the Council's reception, however this was unquantifiable and instead in two weeks 144 people came to the reception area with a disability or with their carer. The benefits from the changes made for people suffering with Dementia would also benefit those with other disabilities. An audit would be taking place of the reception to see what could be improved. It was stressed that it would not be a complete refurbishment of the reception and an action plan would be looked into.

Members were advised that a stakeholder meeting had taken place which included people who were suffering with early Dementia and their carers. The Chairman used his discretion to allow Elaine from the Good Care Group to address the Committee.

Resolved: that the presentation and report be noted.

42. Members Communication Update

Cllr. Miss Stack updated the Committee on the Members Communication group. She advised Members the Governance Committee received a report on the Local Government (Electronic Communications) (England) Order 2015 which explained the new legislation for electronic delivery of agendas.

A guide was being created for Members which provided information on how the Switch and Save scheme worked. The Chairman advised Members that it was hoped the Council would take the lead and provide information on the website for how the scheme worked for the Council and how the money was being used.

In response to questions it was unknown how many people had switched but good feedback had been received and it was estimated that £9,000 in total had been saved. On average per switch £200 to £250 was saved. The scheme was not only for residents of Sevenoaks but country wide. There had been an energy surgery at West Kingsdown to encourage and help older people use the Switch and Save and another surgery would be taking place at New Ash Green. The Switch and Save could also be carried out over the phone. The Housing Team, who had been involved with the scheme, were thanked for their work.

Resolved: that the update be noted.

43. Work Plan

The Chairman thanked the Committee for their work over the year. The work plan for the next year was noted.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 7.50 PM

CHAIRMAN

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LOCAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2015 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Mrs. Hunter (Chairman)

Cllr. Searles (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Ball, Dickins, Horwood, Piper, Mrs. Purves, Mrs. Sargeant, Scholey and Williamson

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Butler and Gaywood

43. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 January 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

44. Declarations of interest

No additional declarations were made.

45. Actions from Previous Meeting

The action was noted.

46. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder reported that he had attended a 'Wider South East Summit' on 19 March 2015, which had been a meeting coordinated to initiate political dialogue around the wider South East. About 150 people were in attendance from as far as Norfolk, Dover and Portsmouth. There would be a further Summit in November 2015.

On 12 March 2015 he had attended the Kent Resource Partnership annual conference in Canterbury the theme of which had been 'What does it mean for customers to be at the heart of the resource agenda.' The Kent County Council administrative officers who coordinated the the partnership had now been located to the Sevenoaks District Council Argyle Road offices.

He had met with the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) team who had secured funding to make Darent Valley more accessible. He had understood from them that Bradbourne Lakes was the wrong side of the demarcation line.

After the elections Members would be asked to nominate 'grot spots', there would be further work on the Gypsy & Traveller Plan and Core Strategy. With regards to affordable housing and viability rules he was holding a meeting with the Principal Planning Officer on 1 April 2015, and if interested in attending to let the Chief Planning Officers secretary know. He also alerted Members to agenda item 11 and the consultations that had been responded to.

Finally he reported that he and the Chief Planning Officer had attended the Audit Committee to answer questions concerning the governance of CIL, and that the Council had issued its first CIL demand notice as the first chargeable development had commenced.

47. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

48. Affordable Housing Policy

The Planning Manager presented the report which reviewed the implementation of Core Strategy Policy SP3 on affordable housing, considered the outcomes in terms of delivery of affordable housing and financial contributions received, looked at the prospects for future delivery taking account of potential developments in the pipeline and changes to Government policy, including new thresholds for provision and the introduction of the Vacant Building Credit and noted that policy would be reviewed as part of the forthcoming review of the Core Strategy. The report also suggested that the target for delivery be reviewed in the next Authority Monitoring Report and recommended that the Affordable Housing SPD be updated to take account of current government policy guidance.

The Planning Manager advised that there needed to be a consultation exercise on the amendments, therefore the report's recommendation should be amended accordingly.

The Chairman moved the reports recommendation subject to recommended amendment.

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) subject to a public consultation exercise the Portfolio Holder be recommended to agree the amendments to the Affordable Housing SPD, as set out in Appendix A to the report.

49. Fly tipping

The Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services presented an information report on Fly-tipping. It advised that Kent County Council had recently undertaken a review of all fly-tipping clearance and with effect from 1 April 2015 would no longer accept responsibility for removing any fly-tipped waste on highway land, unless it was obstructing the carriageway. District Councils would therefore be responsible for the removal of any fly-tipped waste on the highway where it was not obstructing the

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carriageway (footpaths, verges and lay-by's) and public rights of way (PROW). KCC would still be responsible for the disposal costs of material.

From 1 April the Council would be the single point of contact for the public to report fly-tipping in the District and if not the District's responsibility it would be referred to Kent Highways by the District. The District Council would also lose the investigative and enforcement work previously carried out by the County's Clean Kent enforcement team and have to undertake its own enforcement action. However, other than using existing Direct Services and Environmental Health staff, the Council did not currently have any enforcement resource, therefore discussions were currently underway with Dartford Borough Council to see if they could provide any assistance with their enforcement team. These arrangements would be reviewed during the 2015/16 financial year to assess the operational and expenditure impacts with a future report to Committee if there were any cost implications.

The Chairman commented on the improvement to the average removal time especially in light of the increase in incidents, and hoped this would not be adversely affected by the changes but it was something the Committee may need to consider as a growth item for future budgeting.

In response to Members' concerns, the Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services explained that absolute evidence had to be available to be able to prosecute, and that was very often, difficult to obtain. However cautionary letters could be issued which may be a deterrent, and it was promoted to the public that they should always ask to see a waste carriers licence and waste transfer notice from anyone they were paying to remove their waste. CCTV surveillance was not readily available and covert surveillance was not allowed for fly tipping.

50. Local List Update

The report advised that the Sevenoaks Society was currently undertaking the survey work for the creation of Sevenoaks District Council's Local List for part of the Sevenoaks town area. This was a list of undesignated heritage assets that had been identified within Sevenoaks town as being of special local importance. They have been assessed against a devised criteria and the project has been managed and carried out by a team of local volunteers. The choice of buildings is subject to a scrutiny panel, which includes the Sevenoaks Conservation Officer. This project is being led by the Sevenoaks Society under the guidance and input by Sevenoaks District Council and English Heritage and would be carried out in two tranches with the first round of surveys and moderation (of St John's, Town and Kippington wards) to be completed by December 2015. The formal public consultation on the first tranche would be carried out in March 2016 and it was the intention to have the first local list SPD for the Sevenoaks town area is to be adopted by the end of 2016.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

51. Update on climate change matters

The Housing Policy Manager presented the report advising Members that in February 2015 the District Council had produced its first progress report against Climate Local

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Sevenoaks (CLS). In 2012, Climate Local Kent (CLK) was introduced and this had set out Kent's commitment to drive, inspire and support action to tackle climate change. The District Council had subsequently agreed to support CLK through action at District level and in 2013 had adopted Climate Local Sevenoaks (CLS) which set out scaled-down targets and commitments at District level which corresponded with wider county-wide objectives.

A Member asked whether any work was being carried out with West Kent Housing on installing solar panels, the Housing Policy Manager advised that it was being looked at but only on new builds but there was a reluctance to do anything more other than on pilot schemes.

The Chief Planning Officer advised that the retrofit scheme had many planning implications and praised the Housing Policy Manager and his team for doing an excellent job of managing expectation whilst maintaining good relations. The report did not do enough justice to the amount of work carried out.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

52. Verbal update on the implementation of the Enforcement Plan

The Chief Planning Officer reported that the Enforcement Plan had been adopted at Cabinet on 5 March 2015 and was up and running. The Planning Manager had attended the Town & Parish Clerks event where it had been well received. He had put it to those present to consider areas they believed suitable for a s.215 notice which could be made better use of.

53. Recent Government Consultations on Planning Issues

The report advised that the Council had responded to 8 government consultations on Planning related issues since November 2014.

The Chief Planning Officer provided an update on the Sustainable Urban Drainage system (SUDs), advising that from 6 April 2015 the lead authority (in this case Kent County Council) would have to be consulted on any major developments on the management of surface water and be satisfied that mitigation measures were adequate. There was not enough time to formally consult on necessary changes to the Validation checklist. Information for applicants was in the Kent design guide and enforcement was the responsibility of the District Council.

He further reported that he had attended a seminar with commentary from the market leaders in trees in landscaped areas who were branching out into surface water run off through filtration systems which could then be used to irrigate the urban green environment. He would circulate further information for Members who were interested, when available. A Member was concerned as to how maintenance of drainage systems could be enforced, the Chief Planning Officer advised that this could be looked at during the consultation process, but he would expect to see a maintenance regime as part of any application.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

54. Work Plan

The Chairman advised the following to the work plan:

- Summer 2015
Pest Control to be moved to a later meeting in order to have the figures on wasp removal
Gypsy & Traveller update
CIL infrastructure delivery plan - update
- Autumn 2015
CIL charging update
SHMA
- Winter 2016
Farningham conservation area
Flytipping.

Other items to be added at some point would be an update on Gatwick and Hartley conservation area.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.19 PM

CHAIRMAN

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2015 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Ms. Lowe (Chairman)

Cllr. Mrs. Clark (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Ayres, Mrs. Ayres, Ms. Chetram, Eyre, Mrs. George, Mrs. Parkin and
Towell

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Mrs. Cook, Gaywood and
Raikes

36. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10 February
2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

37. Declarations of Interest

No additional declarations of interest were made.

38. Actions from Previous Meeting

The completed action was noted.

39. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder's update was noted.

40. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS

With the Committee's agreement agenda item 8 was considered before the remaining
agenda items.

41. Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan 2015-16

The Chief Officer Communities & Business introduced a report which reminded Members
of the Council's obligation under the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 to undertake an audit of
crime and disorder in the district and to co-operate in the development and
implementation of a strategy and action plan to tackle it. The most recent Strategic
Assessment in November 2014 had identified the priorities as: domestic abuse; burglary;
anti-social behaviour including environmental offences; substance misuse; vehicle crime;

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road safety; theft; and young people's issues. The report sought approval for the 2015-16 Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan, which responded to these priorities.

Officers advised that the clearing of fly-tipping currently took place through the Clean Kent Campaign, which was being dissolved. The Chief Officer Environmental & Operational Services was investigating how fly-tipping would be approached in the future.

The Community Safety Manager explained that the Community Policing team would be proactive in visiting Speed Watch sites and assisting in enforcement. Although the number of speeding offences in the district was not high, it was a priority for residents and the district had the most Speed Watch volunteers in the county.

Although early intervention was not a separate heading in the Action Plan, the Community Safety Manager confirmed that early intervention was included in the actions found in the Plan and several projects were based around early intervention for young people on the cusp of offending. In response to a question, Officers added that the Council had worked to engage with the Gypsy and Traveller community in particular by establishing a weekly advice surgery at its Hever Road site, using the HERO project and the 8 to 12s project, while West Kent Housing was active, particularly in Swanley.

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 Cabinet that the Community Safety Strategy & Action Plan for 2015-16 be approved.

42. Report on Health

The Committee noted the report of the Chairman of the Health Liaison Board, which informed the Committee of its recent work. The Board had concerns at the increases in obesity, dementia in an ageing population and incidents of autism. It had particularly focussed on matters of child and adolescent mental health, autism and in looking at the work of those Health and Wellbeing Boards which covered the district. It was a forum to share ideas and findings. The report also highlighted the importance of integrating health and wellbeing with housing, leisure and arts.

43. Older/Vulnerable people update

Cllr. Mrs. Parkin tabled documents explaining the Dementia Challenge and how to become Dementia Friendly communities. The Committee viewed a video from the Local Government Association entitled "Making a difference for those living with dementia". Cllr. Mrs. Parkin drew Members' attention to the document concerning the Kent Wide Action Alliance which had a number of ideas for making an area more Dementia Friendly. She noted that although dementia was receiving a lot of attention, sufferers should not be stigmatised.

The Chairman updated the Committee on the Dementia Friendly initiatives the Council was taking forward and supporting. She was aware that Dartford and Gravesham Borough Councils were running a Shop Safe, Stay Safe card scheme. She hoped that the

Council could tie this with the Council's CCTV and the existing programme of radio contact between shops. Dementia Cafes were spreading. Although a Dementia Village may not be possible the Council was working closely with MOAT Housing Association to look at the possibility of having a dementia housing scheme. The Chief Executive was working to make the Council Dementia Friendly and training had taken place for Officers and Members

Members discussed the impact of dementia. The Chairman noted that support needed to be given to young carers of those with dementia. Several Members raised concern that some doctors appeared reluctant to diagnose dementia, that the tests used for diagnosis appeared to be inadequate and they considered that maybe mental health services were not given the same priority or financial support as physical health services. A Member of Sevenoaks Town Council suggested that 50 percent of older people lived alone and a high proportion in the town lived in private housing perhaps without the good support networks found in social housing and so were vulnerable to crime.

44. Joint Working Group with Planning

Cllrs. Mrs. Ayres, Ayres and Mrs. Parkin gave a presentation on the Housing Challenge within the Sevenoaks district and reconciling the planning restrictions with the need for additional affordable accommodation. There were shortages of appropriate housing for both older and younger people. The district's population was slightly older than the South East average and the period 2010 to 2026 would see a 31 percent increase in those residents over the age of 65 years. Housing generally needed to be made available to younger people and families for them to stay in the district. The report suggested four options to meet the challenge: the use of previously developed land in the Green Belt; increasing the density of new housing developments; the better use of land; and the development of retirement homes and villages to provide a better choice for older people to downsize and free up family homes.

The Committee had a wide discussion on the options available to the Council. Some Members indicated that any change to the Green Belt would be a "slippery slope" and any land removed would immediately rise significantly in price. Some said that empty rooms above shops would be good for housing because of their central location, although access could be a problem. Those looking to downsize would want to remain in their local area so they would not lose their existing support networks.

The Chief Housing Officer advised that potential homelessness was dealt with proactively to avoid eviction and as a result Bed & Breakfasts were hardly used for housing and the Housing Register had reduced from over 2,000 to about 700. A Strategic Housing Market Assessment was due to be carried out later in the year which would comprehensively identify types of housing needed in the district. To address under-occupation, The Council and West Kent Housing each funded half of the salary of an Under-Occupation Officer which had been very successful in providing more family homes. There was a financial incentive scheme too called Small is Beautiful. The KCC No Use Empty funding Scheme was accessed by the Council to help owners put empty properties back into use. Mutual swap-days were organised by West Kent Housing and under and over occupied tenants can consider swapping.

Action: The Chief Housing Officer to circulate to Members the number of family sized accommodation units which had been freed up.

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The Chairman considered that dementia and housing needs were the two top priorities within the remit of her Portfolio.

45. Work Plan

The Chairman reported that the Strategic Housing Market Assessment may be ready to present to the Committee at its meeting in early 2016. Cllr. Mrs. Parkin expressed interest in personally bringing further information about addressing housing needs to that same meeting.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.42 PM

CHAIRMAN

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2015 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Horwood (Vice Chairman in the Chair)

Cllrs. Ayres, Mrs. Ayres, Ball, Mrs. Bosley, Mrs. Cook, Maskell and Miss. Stack

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Hogarth, Mrs. Sargeant and Miss. Thornton

Cllr. Ramsay was also present.

35. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2015, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

36. Declarations of Interest

No additional declarations of interest were made.

37. Actions from Previous Meeting

There were none.

38. Update from Portfolio Holder

The Chairman advised that the main updates were already contained within the Economic Development Strategy report.

39. Referrals from Cabinet or the Audit Committee

There were none.

40. Update on Sevenoaks District Tourism Initiatives

The Health and Communities Service Manager provided an update on key tourism initiatives being undertaken by the Council. The Council had commissioned Visit Kent to work with their website developer to build a new tourism microsite to promote Sevenoaks District, and she was able to give the Committee first sight of the draft live site.

Members were positive about the site and made suggestions such as adding snapshots of what could be done in the District in a day, themed days out and diary of events. The Health and Communities Service Manager advised that some Councils had also done the top 20 free or almost free activities and was definitely something that could be looked at. A Member suggested that after May 2015 it may be a good idea to have local member workshops for 'story telling'.

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In response to a question the Health and Communities Service Manager advised that the site would avoid duplication of information by mainly signposting to further information which those sites would be keeping up to date. Visit Kent was also paid a small fee for keeping the site updated. She was also keen to keep an equitable footing with regards to advertising space for smaller and larger organisations.

It was noted that Visit Kent would be attending the next meeting of the Advisory Committee and Members were welcome to give advance notice of any questions they may have.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

41. Economic Development Strategy

The Head of Economic Development & Property presented a report updating Members on the Economic Development Strategy.

Since its approval in December 2014, the Council's Economic Development Strategy had been professionally typeset and published on the Council's website and was available as a hard copy. The Strategy had been formally launched by the Portfolio Holder at a meeting of the Sevenoaks Chamber of Commerce held at the District Council offices on 4 March 2015, and promoted at a number of other events including the West Kent B2B on 27 March and the Sevenoaks Business Show on 17 April 2015.

With regards to the Economic Development team, the recruitment of an Economic Development Officer was under way with a decision hopefully being made the following week. An Administrative Assistant was already in place and the process of appointing a replacement Graduate Trainee was underway.

There would be quarterly reports with six month formal reports on progress against the Action Plan.

Members discussed the need to encourage more private retirement/downsizing properties.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

42. Work Plan

Members agreed to add the following items:

June 2015

- Visit Kent
- Officer introduction and role of the Committee
- New Parking Manager to attend with the topic impact of parking provision and charges on ability to attract and retain businesses (Parking for: commuters using stations to travel elsewhere; staff commuting into towns to work; and shoppers and visitors)

October 2015

- Economic Development Strategy Update

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.04 PM

CHAIRMAN

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