

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2021 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllr. Dickins (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. McArthur, Dyball, Maskell and Thornton

Cllrs. Osborne-Jackson and Purves were also present.

9. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 27 May 2021, be agreed and signed as a correct record.

10. Declarations of interest

There were none.

11. Questions from Members

There were none.

12. Matters referred from Council, Audit Committee, Scrutiny Committee, CIL Spending Board or Cabinet Advisory Committees

There were none.

13. Provisional Outturn 2020/21

The Finance & Investment Portfolio Holder presented the Provisional Financial Outturn figures for 2020/21, which showed an unfavourable variance of £321,000. The net unfavourable impact of COVID-19 had been £336,000 and therefore excluding COVID-19 there would have been a favourable variance of £15,000 for the year.

The Head of Finance answered questions on the item and he advised that the Finance & Investment Advisory Committee had noted the same report.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the provisional outturn report for 2020/21 be noted.

Cabinet - 8 July 2021

14. Sevenoaks District Community Plan Annual Report

The Portfolio Holder for People & Places presented the report highlighting the work of the Sevenoaks District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) throughout 2020/21. She advised that the People & Places Advisory Committee had noted the same report.

The Health & Communities Manager outlined the work of her team on this item and Cabinet thanked her for her work.

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.

15. Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership - Annual Report

The Portfolio Holder for People & Places presented the report highlighting the work of the Community Safety Partnership throughout 2020/21. She advised that the People & Places Advisory Committee had noted the same report.

The Health & Communities Manager outlined the work of her team on this item and Cabinet thanked her for her work.

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.

16. Re-profiling Capital Programme 2021/22

The Cabinet considered the report which sought prioritisation of the Bevan Place Project within the Capital Programme.

The Strategic Head - Commercial & Property set out that in November 2020 the Council had agreed a three-year capital Programme part of which was to facilitate the development of new regeneration schemes for the Council. At the time of preparing the recommendations, high level assumptions were made as to potential projects, indicative costs and pace of delivery. This resulted in a list of potential projects and envisaged funding allocations, and a projects approval protocol was put in place.

In establishing the Capital Programme it also required the approval of a funding pot that would facilitate the rapid development of funds towards projects. However, with different schemes moving at different pace, there was a greater need to draw funds towards Schemes that were maturing faster. The realignment

Cabinet - 8 July 2021

would provide officers with greater flexibility in delivering the Bevan Place Project at pace.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That £400,000 be vired within the approved Capital Programme to facilitate the delivery of Bevan Place project as follows:

- £330,000 from Edenbridge (this project to be postponed to 2022/23 and be profiled as part of the 2022/23 Budget setting process)
- £20,000 from the Sevenoaks Town Centre Regeneration Project
- £50,000 from the “Other Feasibility” allocation.

17. Air Quality - Update on the Development of a new Air Quality Action Plan

The Portfolio Holder for Cleaner & Greener presented the report that demonstrated a trend of improvement of Air Quality in Sevenoaks District and as a result the council could now consider revoking up to 5 of the 9 existing Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA).

The Acting Environmental Health Manager advised that whilst the improvements were encouraging, it was recognised that there was no safe exposure level to pollution, and so would continue to identify and implement measure to reduce pollution in the remaining AQMA. A new Air Quality Action Plan was being developed, and it would provide a commitment to undertaking measures and actions to improve air quality within the designated AQMA.

Members asked questions of clarification and agreed that a Working Group of up to 20 Members and Officers should be constituted, with a quorum of 10. The purpose of the group would be to develop a shortlist of workable measures to be tested (scenario testing) to quantify their impact upon Air Quality within the AQMA, to explore possible measures which could be included in the Action Plan and to report to the next Cleaner & Greener Advisory Committee.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

- a) officers request to DEFRA for the revocation of the M20 AQMA on the basis of the assessment undertaken by BV, be agreed;
- b) officers request to DEFRA for the revocation of the M25 AQMA (PM10) on the basis of the assessment undertaken by BV, be agreed;

Cabinet - 8 July 2021

- c) subject to additional monitoring demonstrating that NO2 levels do not exceed objective levels at the roundabout at London Road, Westerham and residential properties along the A224 and B221 near to the M25, officers request to DEFRA for the revocation of the M25 AQMA (NO2), be agreed;
- d) subject to additional monitoring demonstrating that NO2 levels do not exceed objective levels at receptors along the A224 London Road flyover, officers request to DEFRA for the revocation of M26 AQMA, be agreed;
- e) subject to additional monitoring demonstrating that NO2 levels do not exceed objective levels as residential properties at Phillip Avenues / Ladds Way / Cyclamen Road, Swanley, officers request to DEFRA for the revocation of the A20 AQMA, be agreed;
- f) following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Cleaner & Greener, the Deputy Chief Executive & Chief Officer of Planning & Regulatory Services' constitution of a Working Group of up to 20 Members and Officers (with a quorum of 10) to develop a shortlist of workable measures to be tested (scenario testing) to quantify their impact upon Air Quality within the AQMA, explore possible measures which could be included in the Action Plan and report to the next Cleaner & Greener Advisory Committee, be authorised; and
- g) the District Council's withdrawal from the 'Air Alert' scheme as provided by Sussex Air and Imperial College and alternate and comparable 'Air Alert' information be made available on the Council's website, be agreed.

18. Net Zero 2030 Update - Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy

The Portfolio Holder for Cleaner & Greener presented the report which outlined the Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy (LEEVS) as part of the Council's commitment to be Net Zero by 2030. The Cleaner & Greener Committee had considered and recommended the report.

The Principal Planning Officer (Policy) advised that Transport remained the largest carbon emitting sector in the UK and Sevenoaks District had the highest level of registered electric vehicle ownership in Kent. The Strategy would aim to help the Council promote low carbon travel, improve the electric vehicle charging network across the district and continue to transition to a zero-carbon emissions vehicle fleet wherever possible.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the Low Emission and Electric Vehicle Strategy be agreed.

19. Adoption of Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plans

The Portfolio Holder for Development and Conservation presented the report which sought the adoption of management Plans for the Kent Downs and High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which the Council was legally required to do. The role of the management plan was to set out the key components, characteristics and qualities of the AONB and to identify ways and opportunities to conserve and enhance the landscape. The Kent Downs AONB Management Plan review (2021-2026) was approved by the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) of the AONB unit on 26 January 2021.

The Development & Conservation Advisory Committee had also considered the report and recommended that the Management Plans be adopted.

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 that the Kent Downs and High Weald AONB Management Plans be adopted.

20. Leisure Provision in Sevenoaks District - external review

The Portfolio Holder for People & Places presented the report providing an update on the work commissioned by the District Council and Sencio Community Leisure, and undertaken by Max Associates, an external leisure consultant, to review Sencio's operating model, recovery plan and financial appraisal.

The Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer for People & Places advised that the consultant's report would enable Members to make an informed decision on future options for supporting Council owned leisure facilities. The Leisure sector across the country had been massively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and it was expected this impact would be felt not only in the short term, but also for the medium to long term nationally. Council's across the country were working hard to keep supporting leisure providers and facilities during the Coronavirus crisis.

Despite the Council's own finances being hit hard, the authority had supported Sencio with £376,950 in the past year with grants and paying its annual management fees up front. It also agreed to delay loan repayments from Sencio to the Council of £88,000 up to March 2021. Sencio had also benefited from a £235,000 grant from the National Leisure Recovery Fund, following a joint application with the Council and £144,362.29 from various business grants administered by the Council. It had also been assisted through the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. The Chairman confirmed that the Council would continue to support leisure provision in the District.

Cabinet - 8 July 2021

Despite receiving over £756,300 of public money, the trust was currently facing a budget shortfall of £2 million, which included a pre-Covid trading deficit.

Members noted that Sencio operates as an independent leisure trust and its business is directed and managed by the Sencio management team and its Board of Trustees.

Members considered the information before them, noting the information that had been provided in the exempted appendices. In response to a question from a Member, the Chairman explained that it was not in the gift of the Council to take the Sencio operation in-house.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

- a) the report and appendices be noted;
- b) taking into account the significant risk and recommendations summarised in section 6.4 of Max Associates report (Appendix A), no further financial support be considered;
- c) in the event that Sencio ceases to trade, delegated authority be given to the Chief Officer - People & Places and Chief Officer - Finance & Trading to investigate an interim shorter term leisure operator for temporary leisure delivery to the community and enter into a contract subject to consultation with the Cabinet Member for People & Places and Cabinet Member for Finance & Investment.

IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS

This notice was published on 9 July 2021. The decisions contained in Minutes 13, 14, and 15 take effect immediately. The decisions contained in Minutes 16,17, 18 and 20 take effect on 19 July 2021. The decision contained in Minute 19 is a recommendation to Council.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 7.52 PM

CHAIRMAN