

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2022 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllr. Dickins (Vice Chairman)

Cllrs. Dyball, Maskell, McArthur and Thornton

Cllrs. Pender and Reay were also present.

42. Minutes

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2022, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

43. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest made.

44. Questions from Members (maximum 15 minutes)

A Member asked questions about the use of certain Chinese made CCTV cameras. The Chairman replied that since 2018 the Council had not made any further purchases from the suppliers in question. He also stated that it was not illegal to maintain such cameras and that their use remained widespread across government departments and elsewhere.

The Leader of the Council said that the Council would not purchase either Hikvision or Dahua cameras in the future. The Leader said the council has no Dahua cameras and would remove Hikvision cameras from its network in the event that advice from central government recommended this, or if central government started to remove their own Hikvision cameras.

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

There were none.

46. Local Plan - Regulation 18 - Consultation

The Portfolio Holder for Development & Conservation presented the report which set out the draft of the Local Plan to be issued for consultation. The Plan covered the period up to 2040 and emphasised making best use of land in existing settlements. The report had been considered by the Development & Conservation Advisory who recommended the report to Cabinet.

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The Planning Policy Team Leader further advised that the Plan focused on the key themes of promoting health and well-being, delivering Net Zero and supporting high quality design. She advised that the draft Plan listed three tiers of development density, but that these would be further refined in each case to ensure development respects local character and the environment.

She outlined the Community Involvement measures of the Consultation. In addition to the Council's website, mailing list, and social media accounts, the Plan would be publicised on a new consultation portal. Three drop-in sessions would be held in person in the urban centres of the District, with an additional session over Zoom. Commuters and secondary schools would be specifically targeted also to ensure the Council received feedback from those demographics, as they had previously been under-represented in responses.

The Strategic Planning Manager updated the Committee on the evidence base for the Local Plan. The Character Study had been completed and was due to be published shortly. The Strategic Transport Study baseline stage was complete and junction modelling was currently underway where the gap analysis had identified data gaps. The second stage of assessing the impact of the planned growth across the District, would take place in 2023.

Officers further updated the Committee on the discussions with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities (DLUHC). The Draft did not contain finalised policies, but instead aimed to establish whether the scope and coverage of the plan was sufficient. This allowed the Council to respond to changes in national planning policy as they occurred. In response to questions, they outlined the measures to make the Plan accessible and prevent technical knowledge from being a barrier to participation in the Consultation.

They further explained the role of the Character Study in evidencing local context and density. It would allow the Council to take an active role in assessing the capacity of sites for development, by identifying sensitivity to change within an area.

Members discussed the options for response to the question relating to a balanced strategy for growth (Policy ST1) and the Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Planning & Regulatory Services made clear that textual amendments could be made to clarify the options available to respondents further.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the

- a) content of the "plain text version" of the Regulation 18 Consultation Draft Local Plan at Appendix 1, be approved for public consultation purposes;

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- b) presentation and formatting style of the consultation document, as reflected in the Indicative Formatted Version at Appendix 2, be agreed;
- c) the authority to approve the final formatting and presentation of the Regulation 18 Consultation Draft Local Plan and any minor pre-consultation text changes, be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Planning & Regulatory Services and the Development & Conservation Portfolio Holder; and
- d) the withdrawal of the December 2018 Regulation 19 Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan, which was submitted to the Secretary of State in April 2019, be recommended to Council before the Regulation 18 Consultation Draft is issued for consultation.

47. Leader Programme Closure Report

The Portfolio Holder for Improvement & Innovation presented the report on the closure of the LEADER programme. The national programme was due to end this year, and the Council had been managing the closure of the West Kent program. The West Kent programme had been awarded £1.8 million, and had gained £2.7 million in match funding.

The Strategic Head of Property and Commercial advised that lessons learned from the Leader programme would inform how future rural funding systems would be managed locally. This would involve a local-led decision making body drawn from the private, public, and the third sector, and a simple application process for smaller projects and gave a presentation on some of the successfully funded projects. The Strategic Head of Property and Commercial also advised that the Council was awarded c. £500,000 funding from the Rural England Prosperity Fund and this would be the subject of a future report.

Members asked questions of clarification.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the

- a) findings of the report and the on-going auditing requirements regarding post-payment monitoring and file retention, be noted;
- b) 2014 LEADER programme's successful awarding of £1,812,550 of grant funding to rural businesses in West Kent, which in turn leveraged over £4.5m of investment into the sub-region's economy, be noted; and
- c) Government's awarding of Rural England Prosperity Funding to Sevenoaks District Council, and the Council's plan to apply the good practices learnt from the LEADER Programme and build on its Legacy, be noted.

48. Capital Schemes Programme Update

The Portfolio Holder for Improvement & Innovation presented the report and updated the Committee on the Council's Capital Schemes.

The Strategic Head for Commercial and Property advised on the report structure highlighting that it was divided into two key parts; the first outlining the arrangements that the council had put in place to manage and direct projects; and the second part listed the key projects officers were working on and provided their respective statuses.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That the Council's progress in establishing and delivering a 10-year capital schemes programme that would generate new homes, regenerate the District's town centres, improve the public realm and provide new civic amenities, which promote health and well-being, and support the District's economy, be noted.

IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS

This notice was published on 14 October 2022. The decisions contained in Minute 47 and 48 take effect immediately. The decisions contained in Minutes 46 (a), (b) and (c) take effect on 24 October 2022. The decisions contained in Minute 46 (d) are references to Council.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.34 PM

CHAIRMAN