

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2013 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllrs. Bosley, Hogarth, Ms. Lowe and Ramsay

Cllrs. Mrs. Bosley, Brookbank, Dickins, Firth, Fittock, Horwood, Mrs. Hunter, Mrs. Parkin, Piper, Searles and Miss. Stack were also present.

4. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 11 April 2013 and 14 May 2013 be approved and signed as a correct record.

5. Declarations of interest

There were no further declarations of interest.

6. Questions from Members (maximum 15 minutes)

There were no questions.

7. Matters referred from Council

There were no matters referred from Council.

8. Matters referred from the Audit Committee, Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet Advisory Committees (Paragraph 5.20 of Part 4 (Executive) of the Constitution)

(a) Big Community Fund Review – Finance Advisory Group, 23 April 2013, Minute 52.

This item was considered at Minute 9.

(b) Provisional Outturn 2012/13 and Carry Forward Requests – Finance and Resources Advisory Committee, 4 June 2013, Minute 8.

This item was considered at Minute 10.

9. Review of Big Community Fund Guidelines

Members considered a report outlining the results of a review of the Council's Big Community Fund. The Fund was set up in 2011 to help Members to work with their communities to improve the local area. A summary of the grants made to February 2012 was appended to the report. The review included an analysis of the monitoring information received from Members who had completed projects. Members who sat on

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the Appraisal Panel and Members who had applied to the Scheme had also been consulted by survey.

The Head of Community Development introduced the report and provided an updated concerning the unspent balance of the Fund which was currently £69,796.

The Head of Community Development also reported that more than half of the Councillors consulted had thought that it should be mandatory to have support from all Members in multi-Member wards. However, many had commented that this would disadvantage some wards where Members may not be able to agree. It was therefore being recommended that the applicants should continue to seek support from fellow-Members. However, where this was not forthcoming, Officers should ensure that any Member in a Ward who has not signed the application form is made aware of the application and given an opportunity to comment.

The changes suggested by Members through the consultation process had been incorporated into the Guidelines at Appendix A to the report.

A visiting Member suggested that it would be helpful to emphasise on the application form that the supporting statement should be from the Local *Ward* Member.

Members noted that no additional monies would be added to the Big Community Fund and therefore the Scheme would end when the Fund was exhausted. It was agreed that a further review should be undertaken in a year, or when the remaining funds in the scheme had been allocated.

Resolved: That

- (a) The guidelines be amended to include specific mention that the work involved is additional to the usual maintenance and responsibilities of the landowner or delivery organisation.
- (b) The appraisal score sheet be revised to place most importance on physical improvements and even more than the current emphasis on whether an application should more appropriately be funded elsewhere; and
- (c) The application form be revised to ask applicants specifically to address how a proposed application is additional to usual maintenance arrangements and responsibilities to help Members during the appraisal process; and
- (d) Applicants should continue to seek support from fellow-Members. However, where this was not forthcoming, Officers should ensure that any Member in a Ward who has not signed the application form is made aware of the application and given an opportunity to comment.

10. Provisional Outturn 2012/13 and carry forward requests

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources introduced a report setting out the provisional financial outturn figures for 2012/13. The report also set out requests to carry forward unspent budgets into 2013/14 for Revenues and Asset Maintenance items. 2012/13 was the second year of a four-year savings plan, which set out to achieve savings of £4 million over that period. The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources reported that at the end of the year there was a favourable outturn of £294,000. A financial prospects report would be presented to a future Cabinet meeting.

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The Finance Manager reported that the provisional outturn of £294,000 was better than the original forecast given to Members in February 2013. A significant reason for the change from the earlier forecast was a re-negotiation of the cost-sharing arrangements for the Revenues and Benefits service resulting in Dartford increasing their contribution by £100,000. In response to a question the Finance Manager confirmed that the deal negotiated with Dartford was for one year but Officers hoped that it would set a precedent for future years.

The Finance Manager also reported that following the Finance and Resources Advisory Committee Officers had investigated the capital carry forward requests relating to vehicles and had confirmed with the Transport Manager that it was no longer needed as the capital budget approved for 2013/14 was sufficient for the proposed purchases.

In response to a question, the Finance Manager confirmed that the final accounts would have to be completed by 30 June 2013.

Resolved: That the Revenue 'carry forward' requests totalling £35,066 as set out in paragraph 13 of the report be approved.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 7.21 PM

CHAIRMAN