

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET ADVISORY COMMITTEES

(items marked to follow)

- d) Pest Control Service – results of competition exercise (*Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee – 1 July 2014, Minute 9*)

The Chief Officer Environmental and Operational Services introduced a report which explained that, following the decision of Cabinet on 5 December 2013, the Pest Control Service had been exposed to competition for a possible three year contract. Quotations were invited for return on 4 June 2014 and were opened on the same day. A quotation was submitted by the Direct Services in-house Pest Control Team.

The Head of Direct Services confirmed that the tender submission from the in-house Direct Services Team had been the most economically advantageous based upon the weighting of 60% financial and 40% other factors including technical merit.

One of the submissions proposed payments to Council per treatment and so would require additional contact monitoring costs to ensure the contractor reimbursed the Council correctly. That submission also included the raising of fees for customers by up to 30% for certain treatments, which could reduce the use of the service and therefore the income received. The Chairman noted that the current service charges included multiple visits until the pest was eradicated.

The Chief Officer Environmental & Operational Services brought Members' attention to the work of the Strategy & Performance Advisory Committee's Communications Working Group, which had proposed a targeted marketing campaign from the Pest Control Service to improve income.

It was proposed by Cllr Gaywood and duly seconded that a Members' working group be established to consider the quotations further. The Portfolio Holder for Local Planning & Environment reminded the Committee that the service had not carried out any active marketing in the past. The Chief Officer Environmental & Operational Services was confident the marketing would generate additional income. The motion was lost.

An alteration to the recommendation was agreed that a report on the income of the service following the marketing of the service be reported back to the Committee in 12 months with a review to take place in 3 years. Members noted the income was heavily based on seasonal variations.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: That

- a) it be recommended to Cabinet that, following the evaluation of the competition exercise for the Pest Control Service, the service continue to be delivered by Sevenoaks Direct Services;
 - b) a report on the income of the Pest Control Service be presented to the Advisory Committee in 12 months' time; and
 - c) a further review of the Pest Control Service be undertaken in 3 years' time.
- e) Update on the Allocations and Development Management Plan (Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee – 1 July 2014, Minute 10)

The Joint Planning Policy Team Leader presented a report, together with supplemental papers, which updated Members on the Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP). It was examined by the Planning Inspector in March 2014 and the Inspector's initial findings were set out in the report. The principal modifications would need to be subject to six weeks of public consultation.

An update on proposed amendments to Policy EMP3 on Fort Halstead were tabled for Members consideration. The Planning Policy Team Leader confirmed that the Inspector had requested that 12 main amendments be made to the ADMP, for it to be found sound. The vast majority of these were fairly minor with three more significant. In Policy MM6 there was to be the release of strategic land in Edenbridge which would make a contribution towards meeting the District's housing needs and was in neither the Green Belt nor an AONB. In Policy MM8 the Inspector sought clarity on the mix of development at Fort Halstead as 450 residential units was found be required to make the employment land viable. The Inspector also sought the Council's opinion on the impact of a recent court case. The Council had sought legal advice concerning the case and the Inspector's recommendation following this was that the Council should begin a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), which could trigger a review of the Core Strategy. All proposed changes would be sent for consultation.

In response to a question, the Chief Planning Officer confirmed Officers could be made available for drop-ins in Edenbridge, Sevenoaks and Swanley during the consultation to deal with questions from members of the public. It was confirmed that the modifications were proposed by the Inspector rather than the Council.

Members raised concerns that developers may try to avoid requirements for social housing and infrastructure development. Officers confirmed that they used section 106 agreements to achieve these but legislative changes meant that arguments of viability could be used to reduce developers' obligations. From 4 August 2014 developments would be subject to CIL payments, which were not subject to flexibility due to viability considerations.

A Member raised concerns that development of Fort Halstead together with any crematorium and any Gypsy and Traveller site would mean excessive density was being proposed for the Polhill area until the infrastructure was improved. The roads in the area were moving and were subject to flooding.

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

- a) the main modifications to the ADMP be agreed and published for consultation (along with the Sustainability Appraisal) during a six week period to be agreed by the Portfolio Holder;
 - b) the Portfolio Holder be authorised to agree minor presentational changes and detailed amendments to the consultation document to assist their clarity; and
 - c) the consultation document be published on the Council's website and made available to purchase in hard copy at a price to be agreed by the Portfolio Holder.
- f) Local Development Scheme Review (*Local Planning & Environment Advisory Committee – 1 July 2014, Minute 11*)

The Joint Planning Policy Team Leader presented a report that explained that the Local Development Scheme (LDS) set the work programme for the development of Local Plan (formerly Local Development Framework) documents. The latest formally adopted version of the Local Development Scheme was agreed by Cabinet in March 2012 and was out of date. Given current uncertainties over the timetables for the preparation of the Allocations and Development Management Plan and the Gypsy and Traveller Plan, it was recommended that the Council postpone the agreement and adoption of a new Local Development Scheme until Autumn 2014. It was recommended that the Council now undertake a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment to begin the process of addressing concerns expressed about the Core Strategy housing target through the Broom Hill appeal decisions and the ADMP examination (as in item 10).).

The Joint Planning Policy Team Leader further advised that Brandon Lewis MP, at the Department for Communities and Local Government had advised that national policies relating to Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Green Belt may be amended and so Officers were unsure of the impact these changes would have on the preparation of the Gypsy and Traveller Plan. The Committee was advised that Cabinet would be considering the proposed Gypsy and Traveller plan after the consultation on 11 September 2014 and so an extra meeting of this Advisory Committee could be arranged to advise the Cabinet.

The Inspector for the ADMP would be more confident of finding the Plan sound were the Council to commit that a new SHMA be undertaken. This could be the first step to a review of the Core Strategy, if necessary.

A Member proposed that the Timberden Farm, Shoreham site be removed from the Gypsy and Traveller Consultation due to the burden comments were putting on Officers' workload. The Chairman advised that any alterations would prejudice the

consultation process and that the Committee had already made its recommendations to the Cabinet. It was not the only site which had been recommended for removal. The Portfolio Holder for Local Planning & Environment added that the consideration of the consultation was already being brought forward from November to September 2014.

A Member queried whether the Council could adopt Government guidance of providing a five year supply rather than the proposed 15 years. Officers indicated that the plan would need to show a rolling five year supply and so the consultation process would need to take place each year. Absence of an appropriate supply would amount to a material consideration in future planning applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites.

Members and the public were reminded that all comments on the Gypsy and Traveller Site Consultation could be submitted into the formal consultation.

Public Sector Equality Duty

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

Resolved: It be recommended to Cabinet that

- a) the Council undertake a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) to identify its objectively assessed housing need, following the publication of new Government household projections later in Autumn 2014, and that this, and its comparison with the Core Strategy housing target, form the first step in considering the need to review or partially review the Core Strategy; and
- b) the Local Development Scheme be reconsidered in Autumn 2014, once the likely timetable for the adoption of the Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP) was clear and once the Gypsy and Traveller Site Options consultation was closed and an initial assessment of comments had been carried out.