

Minutes

Cabinet

Held at:	Council Chamber - Civic Centre Folkestone
Date	Wednesday, 24 November 2021
Present	Councillors John Collier, Ray Field, David Godfrey, Mrs Jennifer Hollingsbee (Vice-Chair), David Monk (Chairman), Tim Prater, Lesley Whybrow and David Wimble (minutes 47 to end)
Apologies for Absence	Councillor Stuart Peall
Officers Present:	Andy Blaszkowicz (Director of Housing and Operations), Alastair Clifford (Chief Officer - Operations), Gavin Edwards (Performance and Improvement Specialist), Cheryl Ireland (Chief Financial Services Officer), Amandeep Khroud (Assistant Director), Jyotsna Leney (Health, Wellbeing and Partnership Senior Specialist), Sue Lewis (Committee Services Officer), Fred Miller (Transportation Lead Specialist), Hazel Sargent (Low Carbon and Sustainability Specialist) and Charlotte Spendley (Director of Corporate Services)

NOTE: All decisions are subject to call-in arrangements. The deadline for call-in is Tuesday 7 December at 5pm. Decisions not called in may be implemented on Wednesday 8 December.

43. **Declarations of Interest**

It was noted that all members are on the Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Grounds Charity – Board of Trustees which is referred to in the addendum to agenda item 10.

44. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2021 were submitted, approved and signed by the Chairman.

45. **Safeguarding Policy**

The Council is part of the statutory safeguarding role within the wider public sector, with responsibilities to children, young people and vulnerable adults. The children, young people and vulnerable adults safeguarding policy of the Council has been updated and is attached at Appendix 1. Cabinet are advised that the safeguarding policy is refreshed every two years and that the changes made to the 2019 policy include new legislation and changes to practice that are incorporated in the 2021 policy.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee
Seconded by Councillor John Collier and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note report C/21/42.**
- 2. To endorse the refreshed Folkestone & Hythe District Council Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy and recommend to Full Council for approval.**

(Voting: For 7; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

Reason for Decision:

Cabinet was asked to approve the refreshed policy as safeguarding is a statutory requirement and the Policy advises the Council how we meet these obligations.

46. **District owned street lighting**

The proposals will contribute to the council's carbon reduction options plan by converting street lights to low cost/ low carbon LED lighting. The report details issues arising through forced maintenance changes to the council's street lighting stock and proposes the most cost effective long term management of the assets.

Proposed by Councillor Lesley Whybrow
Seconded by Councillor Ray Field and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note report C/21/44.**
- 2. To agree to proceed with upgrading all district owned highway lights, and transferring assets to KCC where possible including the payment of the commuted sum of £70,034.**
- 3. To approve funding from the years 21/22 and 22/23 from the Climate Change Reserve of £478,369 to cover the costs of the LED conversion for all assets and the commuted sum to KCC for adoption of 340 assets.**
- 4. To seek full Council approval for a capital budget of £745,000 for the two phases of street lighting works outlined in section 3 of the report to be funded from the Climate Change Reserve (£408,335) and the Capital Receipts Reserve (£336,665).**
- 5. To reduce the revenue maintenance budget from £71,300 to £20k in the financial year 2023/24 in light of savings made from the upgrade.**

6. To replenish the climate change reserves with the first year of savings from the project.

(Voting: For 7; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

Reason for Decision:

The conversion of street lights to LED is included in the council's immediate actions/measures to reduce carbon emissions, and is part of the Carbon Action Plan. The long term provision and maintenance of the district council's street light stock poses a significant capital and revenue cost risk. Agreeing to the proposed upgrade and asset handover limits the total expenditure to the council, significantly reduces carbon emissions, and will ensure the safety of all street lights.

47. Key Performance Indicators review 21/22 and Half Year performance report (Q1 and Q2)

The report provides an update on the Council's performance for the first two quarters of the year covering 1st April 2021 – 30th September 2021. The report enables the Council to assess progress against the approved key performance indicators arising from the Council's new Corporate Action Plan.

Key performance indicators will be monitored during 2021-22 and reported to CLT and Members quarterly.

Proposed by Councillor David Monk
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note report C/21/50.**
- 2. To note the performance information for Quarters 1 & 2 2021/22 in Appendix 1.**

(Voting: For 7; Against 0; Abstentions 1)

Reason for Decision:

- a) The Council is committed to monitoring performance across all of its corporate service ambitions to ensure progress and improvement is maintained.
- b) The Council needs to ensure that performance is measured, monitored and the results are used to identify where things are working well and where there are failings and appropriate action needs to be taken.

48. Queen's Green Canopy

The report explores the opportunity to take part in a nationwide tree planting campaign, known as The Queen's Green Canopy. The purpose of this campaign is to mark the occasion of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee that takes place next year. It introduces the proposed donated tree policy and the resources necessary to deliver this.

Proposed by Councillor Lesley Whybrow
Seconded by Councillor John Collier and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note report C/21/49.**
- 2. To agree that the council:**
 - a. Signpost individuals and community groups to the Queen's Green Canopy and the Woodland Trust websites to purchase individual trees, to apply for free trees and for aftercare advice;**
 - b. To plant commemorative trees in Cheriton Recreation Ground and provide a plaque to commemorate the occasion;**
 - c. To adopt the donated tree policy.**

(Voting: For 8; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

Reason for Decision:

The Queen's Green Canopy is an opportunity for the Council and the District's citizens to mark an historical event and to show appreciation for the Queen's service. The recommendations will contribute to a legacy that will benefit the future.

49. HRA Budget Monitoring Quarter 2

The monitoring report provides a projection of the end of year financial position for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) revenue expenditure and HRA capital programme based on net expenditure to 31 August 2021.

Proposed by Councillor David Godfrey
Seconded by Councillor David Monk and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note Report C/21/46.**

(Voting: For 8; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

Reason for Decision:

Cabinet was asked to agree the recommendations set out below because Cabinet needs to be kept informed of the Housing Revenue Account position and take appropriate action to deal with any variance from the approved budget and be informed of the final 2021/22 position.

50. General Fund Revenue Budget Monitoring - 2nd quarter 2021/22

The monitoring report provides a projection of the end of year financial position of the General Fund revenue budget, based on expenditure to the 31 August 2021.

Proposed by Councillor David Monk
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee and

Resolved:

1. To receive and note Report C/20/48.

(Voting: For 8; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

Reason for Decision:

Cabinet was asked to agree the recommendations set out below because it needs to be informed of the council's General Fund revenue budget position and take appropriate action to deal with any variance from the approved budget.

51. **General Fund Capital Programme Budget Monitoring 2021/22**

The monitoring report provides an initial projection of the current financial position for the General Fund capital programme profiled for 2021/22, based on expenditure to 31 August 2021, and identifies variances compared to the latest approved budget.

An addendum was circulated to members in respect of the Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Grounds Charity which took place prior to this meeting.

Proposed by Councillor David Monk

Seconded by Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee and

Resolved:

1. To receive and note report C/21/45.

(Voting: For 8; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

Proposed by Councillor David Monk

Seconded by Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee and

Resolved:

2. To receive and note the addendum to Report C/21/22, which is appended to these minutes.

(Voting: For 6; Against 1; Abstentions 1)

Reason for Decision:

Cabinet was asked to agree the recommendations set out below because it needs to be kept informed of the General Fund capital programme position and take appropriate action to deal with any variance from the approved budget.

52. **Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23 to 2025/26**

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is the Council's key financial planning document. It puts the financial perspective on the council's Corporate Plan priorities, expressing the aims and objectives of various plans and strategies in financial terms over the four year period ending 31st March 2026. It covers both revenue and capital for the General Fund. Also included are the

Council's reserves policies. The MTF5 is a key element of sound corporate governance and financial management.

Proposed by Councillor David Monk
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee and

Resolved:

Cabinet is asked to recommend to Council:

- 1. To receive and note Report C/21/52.**
- 2. To recommend that the Medium Term Financial Strategy, as appended to this report, is adopted by Full Council.**
- 3. To adopt the Reserves Policy outlined in appendix 2 of the report.**

(Voting: For 8; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

Reason for Decision:

Cabinet was asked to recommend the recommendations set out below because:-

- (a) The MTF5 is the council's key financial planning document.
- (b) The strategy defines the financial resources needed to deliver the council's corporate objectives and priorities and covers the financial implications of other key strategies.
- (c) The council needs to be able to carry out an early assessment of the financial implications of its approved policies and strategies and also external financial pressures facing the authority to ensure that it has robust budgeting and remains financially viable.

53. Biggins Wood - Development Update

The report (with redaction to cover commercially sensitive matters) provides an update to Members regarding the current position of the Biggins Wood site. Following the last Cabinet report in July 2019 (C/19/12) the report updates on the sale of the housing land as previously agreed and asks Members to consider new offers made for the commercial element of the site. The report provides details of the Council's successful bid to One Public Estate's, Brownfield Sites Release Fund and outlines the forward programme for ecology, remediating the site, and delivering the associated infrastructure. Members are also asked to note that Officers will be publishing a tender for the remediation and infrastructure works in order to commence works as early as possible in 2022.

Proposed by Councillor John Collier
Seconded by Councillor David Godfrey and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note report C/21/51.**
- 2. To note that legal work has progressed with [REDACTED] for the disposal of the residential land as previously agreed by Cabinet in July 2019.**

- 3. To agree that offer One 'A' from [REDACTED] for the commercial element of the site represents best value to the Council and provide delegated authority to the Director, Housing & Operations to commence legal work to conclude the deal.**
- 4. To note acceptance of the Brownfield Land Release Fund of the sum of £1.15m.**
- 5. To agree that the Council deliver the site via a Design & Build contract to bring forward a clean, serviced site ready for disposal and provide delegated authority to the Director, Housing & Operations in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Property Maintenance and Grounds Maintenance to enter into the contract following appropriate procurement processes.**
- 6. To agree that the funding in the existing Capital Programme totalling [REDACTED] (for Biggins Wood) is to be used with the Brownfield Land Release Fund of £1.15m to undertake the remediation and servicing of the site.**
- 7. To seek Full Council approval to increase the budget for the scheme by [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] and to provide a further contingency budget of [REDACTED] to meet any further costs associated with remediating and servicing the site from the Business Rates Growth Fund held in the Economic Development Reserve.**
- 8. To agree that the Director for Housing & Operations be authorised with the agreement of the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Property Management and Grounds Maintenance and in consultation with the Director of Corporate Services to undertake any further activity to conclude the agreements set out in this paper and dispose of the site.**
- 9. To approve that [REDACTED] of the capital receipt from the anticipated sale of the overall site is used to reduce the Capital Financing Requirement to offset the prudential borrowing incurred for the General Fund element of the original acquisition costs and fees.**

(Voting: For 7; Against 0; Abstentions 1)

The council has received two new offers for the commercial element of the site which need to be considered by Members. The report also updates Members of the Council's success in obtaining funding from the Government's One Public Estate – Brownfield Land Release Fund and outlines a clear way forward including tendering a new Design and Build contract to bring forward a clean, serviced site ready for disposal to the Council's delivery partners.

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Cabinet 24 November 2021

Addendum to Agenda Item 10 - Report C/21/45 General Fund Capital Programme Budget Monitoring 2021/22

Following a meeting of the Trustees of Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Grounds today (24 November 2021), Cabinet are asked to note the following and agree the recommendation.

Report C/21/45 makes reference to the anticipated overspend in the capital programme for the Lower Sandgate Road Beach Huts project in section 2.2.

The cost of the scheme has increased due to significant increases in material costs due to Covid and additional costs for unidentified asbestos removal required as part of the demolition and concrete works.

The Trustees have therefore resolved to request an additional loan of £26.5k from the Council to cover the additional costs. It is not anticipated that this will have a material impact on the charity over the ten year payback period of the loan, given the long-term income generation that the scheme will deliver.

Cabinet are asked to agree an additional loan (on the same terms as the initial loan) in respect of the scheme to the Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Grounds Charity.

Recommendation

1. To agree to provide the Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Grounds Charity an additional loan of £26.5k in respect of the Lower Sandgate Road Beach Huts Scheme.

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