

Cabinet

Held at:	Council Chamber - Civic Centre Folkestone
Date	Wednesday, 15 December 2021
Present	Councillors John Collier, Ray Field, David Godfrey, Mrs Jennifer Hollingsbee (Vice-Chair), David Monk (Chairman), Stuart Peall, Tim Prater, Lesley Whybrow and David Wimble
Apologies for Absence	None
Officers Present:	Kate Clark (Case Officer - Committee Services), Alastair Clifford (Chief Officer - Operations), Ellen Joyce (Democratic Services Trainee), Sue Lewis (Committee Services Officer), Susan Priest (Chief Executive), Jo Robinson (Senior Corporate Debt Officer), Andrew Rush (Regulatory Services & Corporate Contracts Lead Specialist) and Charlotte Spendley (Director of Corporate Services)
Others Present:	None

NOTE: All decisions are subject to call-in arrangements. The deadline for call-in is Friday 24 December 2021 at 5pm. Decisions not called in may be implemented on Wednesday 29 December 2021.

54. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Lesley Whybrow made a voluntary announcement as her husband is a member of Hythe Town Council. This related to Agenda Item 8 (Hythe Town Council Grounds Maintenance Contract Tender), Councillor Whybrow remained in the meeting and voted on this item.

Councillor Tim Prater made a declaration of significant interest in that he is a member of Hythe Town Council. He left the meeting prior to the presentation of Agenda Item 8.

55. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2021 were submitted, approved and signed by the Leader.

56. **Budget Strategy 2022/23**

The Budget Strategy set out the guidelines for preparing the 2022/23 Budget. It supports the Corporate Plan and aligns with the direction and objectives of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

The Budget Strategy took account of current and future financial issues, set out the underlying assumptions and initial budget-setting proposals and provided a timetable for delivering a balanced budget in 2022/23.

Councillor Prater raised a point with regard to Council car parking pay and display machines. He proposed that an amount of funding is added to the 2022/23 Capital Programme Growth Proposals to enable contactless payment facilities for car parking in the district. Councillor Field supported this and proposed that over the short, medium and long term, other methods of payment could be explored, such as ANPR.

Proposed by Councillor John Collier
Seconded by Councillor David Godfrey; and

Resolved:

1. **To receive and note report C/21/54.**
2. **To recommend to Full Council the adoption of the Budget Strategy for 2022/23 set out in this report.**
3. **To approve the General Fund revenue growth & savings proposals for 2022/23 (Appendix 2).**
4. **To approve the General Fund capital growth proposals for 2022/23 (Appendix 3).**
5. **To agree the proposed timetable for preparing 2022/23 budgets (Appendix 4).**
6. **To agree the proposed arrangements for consultation.**

(Voting: For 9; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

Proposed by Councillor Tim Prater
Seconded by Councillor Ray Field; and

Resolved:

That £60,000 is allocated to the 2022/23 Capital Programme Growth Proposals to upgrade payment options for car parking in the district in the context of a short, medium and long term strategy.

(Voting: For 9; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

Reason for Decision: Cabinet was asked to agree the recommendations set out because:

- (i) The Budget Strategy provides the framework for compiling the detailed 2022/23 budgets;
- (ii) The Budget Strategy will support the delivery of the MTFS; and

- (iii) The Budget Strategy enables the publication of initial proposals, timescales and provides details of the arrangements for consultation as required by the constitution.

57. Fees & Charges 2022/23

The report focussed on the proposed fees and charges for 2022/23 which will contribute towards meeting the council's 2022/23 budget objectives and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The Council's Fees and Charges Policy was revised and agreed by Cabinet on 15 November 2017 (Report C/17/54).

Councillor Prater sought clarification under the Discretionary Fees and Charges 2022/23 with regard to Town Centre Commercial Booking, in that there is a need to be explicit that this charge is not applicable to charities. He proposed an amendment in that Hythe Swimming Pool Off Peak charge is reinstated as he thought it was unreasonable for swimmers at off peak times to be charged at the standard rate.

Officers provided members with usage figures for Hythe Swimming Pool pre and post pandemic and commented that there would only be a small impact to income if off peak charges remained for 2022/23.

Councillor Prater turned to parking charges at Castle Road and Wilberforce Road in Sandgate and proposed that the increase in charges for up to two hours is reduced to £1.20. This proposal was not seconded.

Proposed by Councillor Tim Prater
Seconded by Councillor Lesley Whybrow; and

Resolved:

That the off-peak fee for swimming at Hythe Swimming Pool is reinstated under Discretionary Fees and Charges 2022/23.

(Voting: For 6; Against 0; Abstentions 3)

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

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note report C/21/55.**
- 2. To approve:**
 - (i) The 2022/23 fees and charges which are set at the discretion of the council for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account, as outlined in Appendix 2;**
 - (ii) The parking charges in Appendix 3;**
 - (iii) The statutory charges subject to discretionary charges in Appendix 4.**

(Voting: For 8; Against 0; Abstentions 1)

Reason for Decision:

Cabinet agreed the recommendations set out because the fees and charges are essential to support the delivery of the MTFs and Budget Strategy.

58. Discretionary Rate Relief Policy review

The report was seeking approval from Cabinet to bring the Discretionary Rate Relief policy up to date and insert information on Section 44a partially occupied relief.

Proposed by Councillor David Monk

Seconded by Councillor Stuart Peall; and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note report C/21/58.**
- 2. To agree the revised Discretionary Rate Relief Policy.**

(Voting: For 9; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

Reason for Decision:

Cabinet was asked to approve the recommendations.

59. Update to the Contaminated Land Strategy

The council has a duty under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to manage contaminated land within the district. The council is expected for this purpose to prepare a Contaminated Land Strategy. The strategy must cover a number of objectives notably how contaminated land is identified, risk assessed and remediated if required. Legally, only land where contamination is assessed as a significant risk is considered under the strategy. Land where contamination is present is routinely considered under the Planning Regime for new developments. There have been no major changes to legislation or statutory guidance since the strategy was last reviewed in 2017. The latest version of the strategy was a general update on progress since the last review.

During discussion of this item Councillor Whybrow requested that the council web page for the strategy be updated to explain that the Contaminated Land Strategy only considers sites where contamination is considered a significant risk and that sites affected by contamination are generally considered within the planning system for new developments.

Proposed by Councillor Stuart Peall

Seconded by Councillor John Collier; and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note report C/21/53.**
- 2. To approve the new strategy for the period 2021 to 2026.**

(Voting: For 9; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

Reason for Decision:

It is a statutory requirement of the council to have a Contaminated Land Strategy. The current strategy needs to be reviewed and updated.

Councillor Tim Prater left the meeting prior to the presentation and conclusion of the following item.

60. **Hythe Town Council Grounds Maintenance Contract Tender**

The report gave an overview of Hythe Town Council's Grounds Maintenance Contract and sought permission to submit a tender for this work, and if successful enter into contract for the 5 year period.

Proposed by Councillor John Collier
Seconded by Councillor Stuart Peall; and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note report C/21/57.**
- 2. To approve that Officers submit a tender for the contract as per the detail set out in the report.**
- 3. To approve that delegated authority is provided to the Director of Housing and Operations to enter into contract if our bid is successful and conclude the contractual arrangements.**

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

Reason for Decision:

The Council currently undertakes the grounds maintenance contract on behalf of Hythe Town Council. The contract works well within the teams operating area and specialties providing a small surplus that helps to offset the labour and revenue costs of the Council's grounds maintenance service.