

# Public Document Pack

## FOLKESTONE AND HYTHE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### **Minutes for the meeting of the Council held at the Council Chamber - Civic Centre Folkestone on Wednesday, 23 February 2022**

**Present:** Councillors Mrs Ann Berry, Danny Brook, Miss Susan Carey, John Collier, Laura Davison, Ray Field, Gary Fuller, Peter Gane, Clive Goddard, David Godfrey, Anthony Hills (Vice-Chair), Mrs Jennifer Hollingsbee, Nicola Keen, Michelle Keutenius, Jim Martin, Philip Martin (Chairman), Connor McConville, Jackie Meade, Ian Meyers, David Monk, Terence Mullard, Stuart Peall, Tim Prater, Patricia Rolfe, Rebecca Shoob, Georgina Treloar, Lesley Whybrow, David Wimble and John Wing

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Douglas Wade

#### **58. Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Gane, McConville, Mullard and Rolfe declared DPI's in respect of the agenda item General Fund Budget and Council Tax 2022/23 as they are Directors of Oportunitas, but had received a dispensation, therefore they remained in the meeting during discussion and voting on this item.

Councillors Fuller and Keutenius declared DPI's in respect of the agenda item Draft Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital Original Budget. They left the meeting during discussion and voting on this item.

#### **59. Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 29 September, 24 November 2021 and 10 February 2022 were submitted, approved and signed by the Chairman.

#### **60. Chairman's Communications**

Since our previous Council I have continued to move around the district visiting local businesses to see how they are progressing and it would seem there is lots more going on now, with positive vibes from local traders so the news is encouraging.

Events I have attended on behalf of the council included:

4 November – Charity Dinner with the Chairman of Sevenoaks

5 November – Civic Service at All Saints, Maidstone

11 November – Memorial Service, Machine Gun Corps, Cheriton Cemetery

17 November – Visit to Maidstone Distillery

3 December – Signing of the Armed Forces Covenant on behalf of FHDC at Westenhanger Castle

6 December – Visit with the Mayor of Dartford

27 January – Holocaust Memorial Service, Garden of Remembrance

28 January – Dinner with the Sheriff of Canterbury

#### **61. Petitions**

There were no petitions presented.

62. **Questions from the Public**

There were no questions from the public.

63. **Questions from Councillors**

The questions asked, including supplementary questions (if any), and the answers given are set out in Schedule 1, appended to these minutes.

64. **Announcements of the Leader of the Council**

The Leader gave the following announcements:

Thank you Chairman and Good Evening to you all.

Tonight, I am going to talk about the government's tax rebate scheme and KCC's Helping Hands Scheme.

Starting with the Helping Hands Scheme this scheme run by KCC will offer fuel vouchers towards heating bills and essential items related to keeping warm to support households facing financial hardship as a direct result of the Coronavirus pandemic. This is a separate scheme to the one Kent Support and Assistance Service provide. They provide crisis funding to lower income households whereas this scheme is aimed at householders who require help with their fuel costs.

There are 4 eligibility requirements

- 1) Must be earning below £30,000 within the household
- 2) Be aged 16 or over
- 3) Live in Kent
- 4) Have no savings or support from other sources and whilst not an absolute requirement, loss of earnings as a direct result of covid 19 will be a contributing factor on deciding eligibility.

If eligible they can apply for up to 3 vouchers towards their heating bill or essential items such as boiler repairs, temporary heaters thick curtains or blanket.

If you need to refer someone for this support please direct them to the 'Household Support Fund' on the council's web pages in the first instance.

Coming onto the Govt Council Tax rebate to help households with the increased cost of energy bills. This will apply, with a few exceptions, to all Band A – D households. A government leaflet has been provided for inclusion with the 21/22 tax bills which will be going out shortly.

How we will pay back the rebate has not yet been fully established although for those that pay by DD that is around 28,000 properties, will be reimbursed through that system. The rest, about 14,000 properties, will be paid probably by BACS transactions to their bank account. As I say we are still working out the details of this, the system will be in place for April this year. The reason it is not in place yet, is that we are awaiting confirmation of the system to use from the Government.

Finally, I am pleased to say that our bid to the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund has been successful to the tune of £2 million.

This will enable over 100 of the poorest performing homes to be made more efficient and save 358 tonnes of carbon emissions per year.

Councillor McConville responded on behalf of the opposition. I think the social housing decarbonisation fund is an essential fund to the root cause, the larger reason why we are having to give out this additional money where we can get our social housing, ideally all our housing to a greener standard and to reduce peoples fuel bills can only be an amazing thing.

Any funding we can get to give to our residents is going to be so welcome this year with the current state of the world this year and it doesn't look like it will get any better anytime soon in terms of people paying for their bills, heating and general living. I would welcome those funds.

I would also like to say the recent website where it is showing quite clearly on the homepage linking to all the financial support the council provides is brilliant and should stay on the homepage of the site permanently to allow people who find it hard to navigate websites, easy to check and get that financial support. Thank you to officers for putting that front and centre.

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

**Resolved: That the announcements of the Leader be noted.**

(Voting: For 29; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

65. **Opposition Business**

There was no opposition business.

66. **Motions on Notice**

There were no motions on notice.

67. **General Fund Budget and Council Tax 2022/23**

The report concludes the budget setting process for 2022/23. It set out recommendations for setting the council tax after taking into account the district's council tax requirement (including town and parish council requirements and special expenses in respect of the Folkestone Parks and Pleasure Grounds Charity), the precepts of Kent County Council, the Kent Police & Crime Commissioner and the Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue Service.

Proposed by Councillor David Monk

Seconded by Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee and

**Resolved:**

1. **To receive and note Report A/21/33.**
2. **To approve the District Council's budget for 2022/23 as presented in Appendix 1 to this report and the council tax requirement for 2022/23, to be met from the Collection Fund, of £13,591,730.**
3. **To approve that the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2022/23 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (the Act):**
  - a) **£104,738,915 – being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) (a) to (f) of the Act (as in Appendix 2).**
  - b) **£91,147,185 – being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) (a) to (d) of the Act (as in Appendix 2).**
  - c) **£13,591,730 – being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year (as in Appendix 2).**
  - d) **£346.97 – being the amount at 3(c) above divided by the tax base of 39,172.25 calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year.**
  - e) **£3,240,855 – being the aggregate of all special items (including parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.**
  - f) **£264.24 - being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by the tax base of 39,172.25 calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates, ie Old Romney and Snargate.**

**g) Part of the Council's area**

<b>Folkestone</b>	<b>363.18</b>	<b>Being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3(f) above the special items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council area mentioned here divided in each case by the appropriate tax base calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.</b>
<b>Sandgate</b>	<b>343.61</b>	
<b>Hythe</b>	<b>324.18</b>	
<b>Lydd</b>	<b>324.30</b>	
<b>New Romney</b>	<b>395.25</b>	
<b>Acrise</b>	<b>266.46</b>	
<b>Elham</b>	<b>334.88</b>	
<b>Elmsted</b>	<b>275.85</b>	
<b>Hawkinge</b>	<b>372.57</b>	
<b>Lyminge</b>	<b>340.94</b>	
<b>Lympne</b>	<b>318.95</b>	
<b>Monks Horton</b>	<b>274.19</b>	
<b>Newington</b>	<b>312.31</b>	
<b>Paddlesworth</b>	<b>275.00</b>	
<b>Postling</b>	<b>294.00</b>	
<b>Saltwood</b>	<b>292.36</b>	
<b>Sellindge</b>	<b>334.36</b>	
<b>Stanford</b>	<b>316.17</b>	
<b>Stelling Minnis</b>	<b>290.59</b>	
<b>Stowting</b>	<b>280.61</b>	
<b>Swingfield</b>	<b>321.97</b>	
<b>Brenzett</b>	<b>307.17</b>	
<b>Brookland</b>	<b>340.38</b>	
<b>Burmarsh</b>	<b>301.99</b>	
<b>Dymchurch</b>	<b>328.81</b>	
<b>Ivychurch</b>	<b>316.97</b>	
<b>Newchurch</b>	<b>306.67</b>	
<b>Old Romney</b>	<b>264.24</b>	
<b>St Mary in the Marsh</b>	<b>303.12</b>	
<b>Snargate</b>	<b>264.24</b>	

**(h) Part of the Council's area**

Parish	Valuation Bands							
	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Folkestone	242.12	282.47	322.83	363.18	443.89	524.59	605.30	726.36
Sandgate	229.07	267.25	305.43	343.61	419.97	496.33	572.68	687.22
Hythe	216.12	252.14	288.16	324.18	396.22	468.26	540.30	648.36
Lydd	216.20	252.23	288.27	324.30	396.37	468.43	540.50	648.60
New Romney	263.50	307.42	351.33	395.25	483.08	570.92	658.75	790.50
Acrise	177.64	207.25	236.85	266.46	325.67	384.89	444.10	532.92
Elham	223.25	260.46	297.67	334.88	409.30	483.72	558.13	669.76
Elmsted	183.90	214.55	245.20	275.85	337.15	398.45	459.75	551.70
Hawkinge	248.38	289.78	331.17	372.57	455.36	538.16	620.95	745.14
Lyminge	227.29	265.18	303.06	340.94	416.70	492.47	568.23	681.88
Lympne	212.63	248.07	283.51	318.95	389.83	460.71	531.58	637.90
Monks Horton	182.79	213.26	243.72	274.19	335.12	396.05	456.98	548.38
Newington	208.21	242.91	277.61	312.31	381.71	451.11	520.52	624.62
Paddlesworth	183.33	213.89	244.44	275.00	336.11	397.22	458.33	550.00
Postling	196.00	228.67	261.33	294.00	359.33	424.67	490.00	588.00
Saltwood	194.91	227.39	259.88	292.36	357.33	422.30	487.27	584.72
Sellindge	222.91	260.06	297.21	334.36	408.66	482.96	557.27	668.72
Stanford	210.78	245.91	281.04	316.17	386.43	456.69	526.95	632.34
Stelling Minnis	193.73	226.01	258.30	290.59	355.17	419.74	484.32	581.18
Stowting	187.07	218.25	249.43	280.61	342.97	405.33	467.68	561.22
Swingfield	214.65	250.42	286.20	321.97	393.52	465.07	536.62	643.94
Brenzett	204.78	238.91	273.04	307.17	375.43	443.69	511.95	614.34
Brookland	226.92	264.74	302.56	340.38	416.02	491.66	567.30	680.76
Burmarsh	201.33	234.88	268.44	301.99	369.10	436.21	503.32	603.98

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Dymchurch	219.21	255.74	292.28	328.81	401.88	474.95	548.02	657.62
Ivychurch	211.31	246.53	281.75	316.97	387.41	457.85	528.28	633.94
Newchurch	204.45	238.52	272.60	306.67	374.82	442.97	511.12	613.34
Old Romney	176.16	205.52	234.88	264.24	322.96	381.68	440.40	528.48
St Mary in the Marsh	202.08	235.76	269.44	303.12	370.48	437.84	505.20	606.24
Snargate	176.16	205.52	234.88	264.24	322.96	381.68	440.40	528.48

Being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 3(f) and 3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

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4. To note that for the year 2022/23 Kent County Council, Kent Police and Crime Commissioner and the Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue Service have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Kent County Council	974.16	1,136.52	1,298.88	1,461.24	1,785.96	2,110.68	2,435.40	2,922.48
Kent Police Crime & Commissioner	152.10	177.45	202.80	228.15	278.85	329.55	380.25	456.30
Kent Fire and Rescue	54.90	64.05	73.20	82.35	100.65	118.95	137.25	164.70

Major preceptor amounts remained subject to confirmation at the time of preparing this report.

5. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3(h) and 4 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of council tax for the year 2022/23 for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:

(i) Part of the Council's area

Parish	Valuation Bands							
	A £	B £	C £	D £	E £	F £	G £	H £
Folkestone	1,423.28	1,660.49	1,897.71	2,134.92	2,609.35	3,083.77	3,558.20	4,269.84
Sandgate	1,410.23	1,645.27	1,880.31	2,115.35	2,585.43	3,055.51	3,525.58	4,230.70
Hythe	1,397.28	1,630.16	1,863.04	2,095.92	2,561.68	3,027.44	3,493.20	4,191.84
Lydd	1,397.36	1,630.25	1,863.15	2,096.04	2,561.83	3,027.61	3,493.40	4,192.08
New Romney	1,444.66	1,685.44	1,926.21	2,166.99	2,648.54	3,130.10	3,611.65	4,333.98
Acrise	1,358.80	1,585.27	1,811.73	2,038.20	2,491.13	2,944.07	3,397.00	4,076.40
Elham	1,404.41	1,638.48	1,872.55	2,106.62	2,574.76	3,042.90	3,511.03	4,213.24
Elmsted	1,365.06	1,592.57	1,820.08	2,047.59	2,502.61	2,957.63	3,412.65	4,095.18
Hawkinge	1,429.54	1,667.80	1,906.05	2,144.31	2,620.82	3,097.34	3,573.85	4,288.62
Lyminge	1,408.45	1,643.20	1,877.94	2,112.68	2,582.16	3,051.65	3,521.13	4,225.36
Lympne	1,393.79	1,626.09	1,858.39	2,090.69	2,555.29	3,019.89	3,484.48	4,181.38
Monks Horton	1,363.95	1,591.28	1,818.60	2,045.93	2,500.58	2,955.23	3,409.88	4,091.86
Newington	1,389.37	1,620.93	1,852.49	2,084.05	2,547.17	3,010.29	3,473.42	4,168.10
Paddlesworth	1,364.49	1,591.91	1,819.32	2,046.74	2,501.57	2,956.40	3,411.23	4,093.48
Postling	1,377.16	1,606.69	1,836.21	2,065.74	2,524.79	2,983.85	3,442.90	4,131.48
Saltwood	1,376.07	1,605.41	1,834.76	2,064.10	2,522.79	2,981.48	3,440.17	4,128.20
Sellindge	1,404.07	1,638.08	1,872.09	2,106.10	2,574.12	3,042.14	3,510.17	4,212.20
Stanford	1,391.94	1,623.93	1,855.92	2,087.91	2,551.89	3,015.87	3,479.85	4,175.82
Stelling Minnis	1,374.89	1,604.03	1,833.18	2,062.33	2,520.63	2,978.92	3,437.22	4,124.66
Stowting	1,368.23	1,596.27	1,824.31	2,052.35	2,508.43	2,964.51	3,420.58	4,104.70

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<b>Swingfield</b>	<b>1,395.81</b>	<b>1,628.44</b>	<b>1,861.08</b>	<b>2,093.71</b>	<b>2,558.98</b>	<b>3,024.25</b>	<b>3,489.52</b>	<b>4,187.42</b>
<b>Brenzett</b>	<b>1,385.94</b>	<b>1,616.93</b>	<b>1,847.92</b>	<b>2,078.91</b>	<b>2,540.89</b>	<b>3,002.87</b>	<b>3,464.85</b>	<b>4,157.82</b>
<b>Brookland</b>	<b>1,408.08</b>	<b>1,642.76</b>	<b>1,877.44</b>	<b>2,112.12</b>	<b>2,581.48</b>	<b>3,050.84</b>	<b>3,520.20</b>	<b>4,224.24</b>
<b>Burmarsh</b>	<b>1,382.49</b>	<b>1,612.90</b>	<b>1,843.32</b>	<b>2,073.73</b>	<b>2,534.56</b>	<b>2,995.39</b>	<b>3,456.22</b>	<b>4,147.46</b>
<b>Dymchurch</b>	<b>1,400.37</b>	<b>1,633.76</b>	<b>1,867.16</b>	<b>2,100.55</b>	<b>2,567.34</b>	<b>3,034.13</b>	<b>3,500.92</b>	<b>4,201.10</b>
<b>Ivychurch</b>	<b>1,392.47</b>	<b>1,624.55</b>	<b>1,856.63</b>	<b>2,088.71</b>	<b>2,552.87</b>	<b>3,017.03</b>	<b>3,481.18</b>	<b>4,177.42</b>
<b>Newchurch</b>	<b>1,385.61</b>	<b>1,616.54</b>	<b>1,847.48</b>	<b>2,078.41</b>	<b>2,540.28</b>	<b>3,002.15</b>	<b>3,464.02</b>	<b>4,156.82</b>
<b>Old Romney</b>	<b>1,357.32</b>	<b>1,583.54</b>	<b>1,809.76</b>	<b>2,035.98</b>	<b>2,488.42</b>	<b>2,940.86</b>	<b>3,393.30</b>	<b>4,071.96</b>
<b>St Mary in the Marsh</b>	<b>1,383.24</b>	<b>1,613.78</b>	<b>1,844.32</b>	<b>2,074.86</b>	<b>2,535.94</b>	<b>2,997.02</b>	<b>3,458.10</b>	<b>4,149.72</b>
<b>Snargate</b>	<b>1,357.32</b>	<b>1,583.54</b>	<b>1,809.76</b>	<b>2,035.98</b>	<b>2,488.42</b>	<b>2,940.86</b>	<b>3,393.30</b>	<b>4,071.96</b>

**6. To determine that the District Council's basic amount of council tax for 2022/23 is not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.**

The motion was put to a recorded vote in accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 as set out below:

**FOR:** COUNCILLORS MRS BERRY, BROOK, MRS CAREY, COLLIER, FIELD, GANE, GODDARD, GODFREY, HILLS, MRS HOLLINGSBEE, P MARTIN, MEYERS, MONK, MULLARD, PEALL, ROLFE, SHOOB, WHYBROW, WIMBLE and WING (20).

**AGAINST:** COUNCILLORS DAVISON, FULLER, KEEN, KEUTENIUS, J MARTIN, MCCONVILLE, MEADE, PRATER AND TRELOAR (9)

**ABSTENTIONS:** NONE (0).

(Voting: For 20; Against 9; Abstentions 0)

**68. Draft Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital Original Budget 2022/23**

The report sets out the Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital Budget for 2022/23 and proposes an increase in weekly rents and an increase in service charges for 2022/23.

Proposed by Councillor Laura Davison  
Seconded by Councillor Connor McConville to vote on each recommendation as follows:

**1. To receive and note Report A/21/30.**

(Voting: For 27; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

**2. To approve the Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2022/23. (Refer to paragraph 2.1 and Appendix 1 of the report).**

(Voting: For 23; Against 4; Abstentions 0)

**3. To approve the increase in rents of dwellings within the HRA on average by £3.52 per week, representing a 4.1% increase with effect from 4 April 2022 (Refer to paragraph 3.2 of the report).**

(Voting: For 22; Against 5; Abstentions 0)

**4. To approve the increase in service charges. (Refer to section 3.5 of the report).**

(Voting: For 22; Against 5; Abstentions 0)

- 5. To approve the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme budget 2022/23. (Refer to paragraph 4.1 and Appendix 2 of the report).**

(Voting: For 27; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

Please note that Councillors Keutenius and Fuller left the room during this item.

**69. Capital Strategy 2022/23 and Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2022/23**

The report sets out the Council's proposed strategy in relation to capital expenditure, financing and treasury management in 2022/23 to be approved by full Council. The report also sets out the Prudential Indicators for capital expenditure and the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement for 2022/23 to be approved by full Council.

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

**Resolved:**

- 1. To receive and note report A/21/31.**
- 2. To approve the 2022/23 Capital Strategy, including the Prudential Indicators, set out in appendix 1 to this report.**
- 3. To approve the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement for 2022/23 set out in appendix 2 to this report.**

(Voting: For 17; Against 12; Abstentions 0)

**70. Investment Strategy 22/23**

The report sets out the Council's proposed strategy for its service and commercial investments in 2022/23 to be approved by full Council.

The Leader read out the following statement:

As part of the investment strategy for 21/22 it was agreed that all new investment made will be assessed to ensure they are in line with a shift to zero carbon by 2030. Although this decision is not specifically referred to in the proposed investments strategy for 22/23 members should note the carbon impact of investment schemes forming part of the council's capital programme are assessed when they are considered for approval.

The position for treasury investment is considered by the treasury management strategy statement that the council will be considering this evening.

In summary, CIPFA's revised treasury management code issued very recently now requires local authorities to have regard for environmental or social and governance PSG considerations when making treasury investments. However CIPFA has recognised that ESG considerations is a developing area and further time is required to embed this by local authorities. Following advice from the council's treasury advisor Arlingclose it is felt impractical to overlay ESG considerations for new treasury investments in 22/23, however this will start to be addressed from 23/24.

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

**Resolved:**

- 1. To receive and note report C/21/32.**
- 2. To approve the 2022/23 Investment Strategy, including the Investment Indicators, set out in the appendix to this report.**

(Voting: For 17; Against 12; Abstentions 0)

**71. Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2022/23**

The report sets out the proposed strategy for treasury management for 2022/23 including Treasury Management Prudential Indicators.

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

**Resolved:**

- 1. To receive and note Report A/21/29.**
- 2. To approve the strategy for treasury management in 2022/23 set out in the report is adopted.**
- 3. To approve the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators for 2022/23 set out in the report.**

(Voting: For 24; Against 5; Abstentions 0)

**72. Amendment of delegation arrangements by the Leader of the Council**

Under the Council's constitution the Leader of the Council decides on the delegation of cabinet functions. The Leader may amend the delegations at any time by giving written notice to the Head of the Paid Service. Where such a notice is received the Head of the Paid Service must submit a report on the amendments to the next ordinary meeting of the Council. The report sets out the amendments made by the Leader.

Proposed by Councillor David Monk

Seconded by Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee and

**Resolved:**

**To receive and note report A/21/24.**

(Voting: For 29; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

73. **Report to Council on a decision made in accordance with the constitution's call-in and urgency rule**

The constitution provides that, when an urgent decision is made by the Cabinet or Cabinet Member, for which any delay in implementation, likely to be caused by the call-in process, would seriously prejudice the Council's or public interest, then the 'Call-in Rules of Procedure', Part 6.3, rules 1-6 do not apply. Decisions, taken as a matter of urgency, must be reported to the next available meeting of the Council, together with the reasons for urgency.

Proposed by Councillor David Monk

Seconded by Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee and

**Resolved:**

**To receive and note report A/21/23.**

(Voting: For 29; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

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**Council – 23 February 2022**  
**Councillors' Questions with Answers:**

**1. From Councillor Jim Martin to Councillor David Monk, Leader of the Council**

Can the Leader explain how the calculation for the affordable housing provision equates to 30% when the affordable housing allowance was moved from Imperial Green onto Princes Parade?

**Answer:**

Thank you Cllr Martin for your question.

The s106 contribution of £1.4m from Imperial Green was designed to provide Affordable Housing off site within the locality of Hythe.

The publically available planning committee report for the Princes Parade Development highlights that a funding gap existed due to the enabling development aspect of the proposal, i.e. providing a leisure centre. This funding gap could have resulted in no affordable housing being provided on Princes Parade at all, whilst still enabling the leisure centre aspects to be developed.

Rather than have development at Princes Parade with no affordable housing, and as the District Council needs to find a site to deliver the Imperial Green s106 contribution, the decision was taken to deploy the £1.4m Imperial Green contribution into affordable housing provision at Princes Parade. This provides the affordable housing from Imperial Green on a site within close proximity to its original location.

Princes Parade is required to provide 30% affordable housing. Following reserved matters approval 30% of the approved units will be affordable.

**Supplementary Question:**

Can the Leader explain how he will ensure that this moveable of affordable housing allocation will simply not get moved on again and actually deliver the much promised affordable housing on Princes Parade at 30% plus the 1.4 allocation from Imperial Green?

**Answer:**

I will seek to clarify the 1.4 allocation.

*After the meeting, the following response was provided:*

*The 30% provision is secured by the s106 and includes the provision provided for by Imperial Green as set out in the Committee report and clarified in earlier responses. A variation of the s106 agreement would need formal approval by the Council.*

**2. From Councillor Jim Martin to Councillor David Monk, Leader of the Council.**

We understand that both Prince's Parade and South Rd have been sold to a mystery buyer for £26.6M. Can the Leader explain how this figure was derived?

**Answer:**

Thank you for your question.

I would draw Councillor Martin's attention to section 2.6 of Cabinet paper C/21/75 of 26 January 2022 which sets out the process for the marketing of the residential land. To repeat, this was through a wide scale marketing exercise whereby the final bids were evaluated and a successful bidder selected. We are now in discussion with the selected purchaser and are drawing up the Heads of Terms with a view to agreeing these shortly. As is normal with these commercial considerations, there is commercial confidentiality that needs to be observed until the contract is finally signed. This is normal process and I can reassure Cllr Martin there is no question of it being a "mystery buyer".

The figure of £26.6 million refers to the value of the offer from the selected provider for both Princes Parade and the South Road site. I can inform Councillor Martin that the split between those figures was £20 million for Princes Parade (including hotel and commercial space) and £6.6 million for South Road (including a replacement café, toilets and beach huts) and, as the council is required to do, I can also confirm that this offer represented the best value for the council.

**Supplementary Question:**

Why has the site been given away?

**Answer:**

It hasn't been given away we followed all correct procedures, we as a public body have procedures we have to follow including getting a surveyor to give us the land values that are applicable, you are in fact impugning their professional integrity.

**3. From Councillor Jim Martin to Councillor David Monk, Leader of the Council.**

Everyone will have seen the photographs of the badgers on Prince's Parade. Can the Leader tell us how a badger sett was completely missed by the Council's Environmentalists on Prince's Parade?

**Answer:**

Thank you again Councillor Martin for your question.

You will be aware that the council's consultants had previously identified a badger sett on Princes Parade and as part of the development we sought to relocate those badgers to a new badger sett away from the development. This has been

carried out successfully under licence from Natural England, and supervision of our consultants, and the good news is that the new sett is being actively used by the badgers.

However, Councillors will be aware that much of the site is covered by thick tangled and deep scrub which means it is not always apparent what is there until it is cleared. Lloyd Bore, who are the council's ecologists for the development, carry out regular checks of the site and identified the potential of what could be another badger sett. This has been monitored for some time to establish if there is further badger activity in and around these setts and they have identified there is some potential movement. At all stages Natural England have been notified of any new potential activity and are satisfied with our response and strategy moving forward.

In the meantime, appropriate measures are being put in place to protect the areas around all the existing badger setts with exclusion zones and the development is being undertaken in a way so as to not disturb any potential new setts. At a later stage a further licence will be sought from Natural England to relocate any remaining badgers from the development site to a suitable location in line with the terms of the licence from Natural England.

**Supplementary Question:**

As the licence to relocate these badgers cannot be applied for to Natural England until 1 July what will the impact of the delay to the project be?

**Answer:**

None.

**4. From Councillor Lesley Whybrow to Councillor David Godfrey, Cabinet Member for Housing and Special Projects.**

As a result of the clearance work on Princes Parade last week there has been a lot of concern from local residents about the health risk from the contamination and from airborne particles in particular. There has also been ongoing concern about this since the works carried out in the reptile area in the autumn which has clearly exposed items from the former landfill. In order to reassure local residents would you please ask the contractors to install the active dust monitoring immediately?

**Answer:**

Thank you for your question.

On a number of occasions I have sought and been given assurances from BAM that the appropriate health and safety measures will be put in place including any monitoring requirements. Councillor Whybrow will recall the information provided at the Cabinet meeting of 26 January from the specialist within the project team with regard to pollutant monitoring, including air pollutant monitoring, and the

measures to be put in place. This will of course become more crucial once the construction work commences and greater levels of excavation are taking place.

In addition to the measures outlined previously around the site, officers and BAM have been in discussion with senior representatives of Seabrook School with a view to putting in additional air quality monitoring on the school site. At all points, where and when needed, we will ensure measures are put in place to have effective monitoring and actions over matters which may cause health and safety issues.

**Supplementary Question:**

Will you ask them to do so immediately and do you not consider the wellbeing of the people isn't just their health and safety but on their mental health and the worry this is causing them?

**Answer:**

I do not argue with that and am confident measures will be put in place as and when required but not simply to address those perceptions but we can address those issues with Lord Bore and you can ask them yourself directly when you are with them at the site visit on Friday and hopefully they can give you assurances other than the ones I have already given.

**5. From Councillor Laura Davison to Councillor Mrs Jenny Hollingsbee, Cabinet Member for Communities.**

Please could you provide a list of the dates and times that SWEP (the severe weather emergency protocol) has been activated in our district since Jan 1st 2022?

**Answer:**

Thank you for your question Councillor Davison.

I can confirm that the Council's Severe Weather Emergency Protocol has been activated on 5 nights since the 1<sup>st</sup> January of this year. The dates are as follows:

- Firstly on the 20<sup>th</sup> January for one night.
- Secondly from the 17<sup>th</sup> February until the 20<sup>th</sup> February for 4 nights.

Accommodation is made available from the afternoon that policy is implemented until the following morning. Four people were assisted over the 5 nights that SWEP has been activated this year.

**Supplementary Question:**

It would be helpful to have the breakdown of how many people were accommodated on each of these occasions that have been referred to.

**Answer:**

I will ask for that information and get back to you.

*After the meeting, the following response was provided:*

*“The 4 people assisted through SWEF were accommodated on the night of the 20<sup>th</sup> January . Although SWEF was activated from the 17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> of February inclusive, due to the adverse weather conditions, no one requested accommodation during this period. Also, our outreach team did not locate any clients sleeping rough and in need of accommodation through SWEF during the period 17-20<sup>th</sup> February”.*

**6. From Councillor Laura Davison to Councillor David Monk, Leader of the Council.**

Residents around the Leas pavilion development continue to have concerns about the impact of construction across a range of issues. They don't feel listened to. What can be done to address this?

**Answer:**

Thank you Councillor Davison for your question.

The Council's Planning and Environmental Health Teams have, to date, carefully considered all local resident issues raised regarding the construction phase. An example of this is the Planning team seeking and agreeing different hours of construction with the developer post approval through the conditions process. A Construction Management Plan (CMP) was approved with "Good Neighbour Policy" provisions included such as: informing residents about construction commencement or changes, resident workshops and complaints tracker. Full details are on the planning website.

We have encouraged the developer to have a community liaison in place during construction to ensure communication with local residents is in place. The developer has agreed to act on our suggestion.

The developer also agreed that the contractor will issue a monthly newsletter which will be posted on the site hoardings.

**Supplementary Question:**

Thank you for your answer I think the reality is that people are submitting queries and questions across a range of different bodies and they are not always getting the timely responses their looking for so can there be a commitment from the council to respond to the residents queries within a fixed period of time, that is a reasonable period of time.

**Answer:**

I will see if that can be done.

*Following the meeting, the response below was given:*

*There are no fixed time periods for responses to enquiries however Officers do seek to respond as quickly as possible and encourage the contractor and other agencies to do so as well.*

**7. From Councillor Connor McConville to Councillor John Collier, Cabinet Member for Property Management and Grounds Maintenance.**

Could the council please provide an update on the work being undertaken with regards to the Ship St site? Our website states that work will begin in late 2021 and be completed by 2024.

**Answer:**

Thank you Cllr McConville for your question.

The site was purchased in March 2021 following a lengthy negotiation process with Southern Gas Networks.

FHDC went out to the market in April 2021 to gauge interest from potential development partners. In July 2021 responses indicated that it would be necessary to carry out additional site investigation work to further de-risk the site. The procurement process for site investigation works has now taken place and we are currently out for clarifications. We will look to appoint a contractor for this work week commencing 7<sup>th</sup> March.

Capacity studies have been undertaken by architects so that we can consider housing numbers, tenure mix and site viability. Early conversations have taken place with Homes England and One Public Estate regarding funding opportunities that may be available for the site.

A project plan is being developed that will provide a full understanding of the site conditions, a detailed development brief, selection of a development partner and a planning submission. This will include a detailed communications plan covering further public consultation expected to commence in the next two months. The detail of the project plan will be shared more widely once agreed, and the Ship Street page on our website will be updated.

**Supplementary Question:**

It would be amazing if the ward councillors could be involved in the development of the project plan so that they have as much information as possible for the site in their ward moving forward before the plan is going to be shared more widely.

**Answer:**

No objection to this and sounds like a suitable way forward and I will ensure our officers do maintain contact with ward councillors as requested by Councillor McConville.

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