



Lewes District Council

Cabinet

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet** held in the **Ditchling Room, Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes** on **Thursday, 20 November 2014** at 2.30pm

Present:

Councillor R Blackman (Chair)

Councillors P L Franklin, P A Howson, A T Jones, R K Maskell, E C Merry and A X Smith.

In Attendance:

Councillor S J Osborne (Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group).
Councillor I Eiloart (Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee).

Ms D Twitchen (Tenants' Representative).

Minutes

40 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2014 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

41 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Smith declared his non-prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 9.1 (Finance Update).

Action

42 Finance Update

The Cabinet considered Report No 159/14 which provided an update on financial matters that affected the General Fund Revenue Account, the Housing Revenue Account and the approved Capital Programme.

Appendix 1 to the Report provided details of Treasury Management activity between 13 September 2014 and 31 October 2014 which was consistent with the Council's approved Treasury and Investment Strategies for 2014/2015.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Code of Practice recommended that all councillors were informed of Treasury Management activities at least twice a year. A Mid-year Report for 2014/2015, which covered the period 1 April 2014 to 30 September 2014, was set out at Appendix 2 to the Report which confirmed that the key elements of the approved Treasury and Investment Strategy had been complied with during the first half of the year.

Cabinet was requested to recommend that Council approves the Mid-year Report. The Audit and Standards Committee would be presented with the Report on 1 December 2014 and any comments that it might wish to pass to Council would be reported orally thereto.

Section 5 of the Mid-Year Report highlighted the limited number of investment counterparties which were available to officers when carrying out day to day treasury management activity and the need to extend the range of investments made within the remit of the current Strategy in response to banking reforms. A potential counterparty, that met the Council's agreed lending criteria, which was subject to continual review by the Council's Treasury Advisor, Arlingclose, was the Swedish bank. Svenska Handelsbanken. In accordance with Council Financial Procedure Rule 4.3, Cabinet was requested to approve that an account be opened with that bank in order that deposits could be made therewith.

At its meeting in February 2014, Council had set the General Fund budget for 2014/2015 in the context of the financial outlook through to 2019/2020. The outlook, which required savings of £2.9m by 2020, was confirmed in June 2014 when Cabinet adopted the Council's Organisational Development Strategy.

Appendix 3 to the Report provided an update to the outlook which took account of the latest business rates retention projections, together with the progress on delivering the current year's savings target. It had also been updated to lower the tax rises from 2016/2017 onwards to be the same as the estimated rate of Consumer Price Index inflation of 2% which reflected the referendum criteria issued by the Secretary of State for the last two years. It was too early to include within the outlook adjustments for the possible impact on recurring or non-recurring expenditure of the devolution of assets to Town and Parish Councils.

Paragraph 4.4 of the Report set out details of changes and commentary made at the mid year point of the financial outlook.

The overall message was that the Medium Term Finance Strategy remained robust and would be fairly accurate in the short term through to 31 March 2016 which marked the expiry of the indicative funding window provided by the Government. Taking account of the latest information the revised savings target through to 2020 was now £3.2m. An independent commission had been tasked with making recommendations for the reform of local government finance and finding better ways to fund local services and promote economic growth in England, further details of which were set out in paragraphs 4.7 and 4.8 of the Report.

Paragraph 7 of the Report explained that the approved 2014/2015 Capital Programme included provision of £12,640 in respect of work at Lewes Cemetery Chapel which was currently closed to public use pending remedial work to the plaster therein.

A building survey of the Chapel had been undertaken which identified an underlying problem with damp for which the estimated cost of work required was in the region of £45,000. The Report therefore recommended that an additional £32,360 be released from the unallocated balance held in the Capital Programme for Asset Backlog Repairs, so that the work could be undertaken.

Paragraph 8 of the Report set out details relating to increasing the Council's housing stock in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). At its meeting on 28 September 2014, Cabinet had received an update on the Lewes District Property Portfolio for which the negotiations and Heads of Terms were making good progress and their completion was anticipated before the Cabinet meeting in January 2015.

An element of the contract was the delivery of rented housing into the Council's HRA. Furthermore, there was the opportunity to secure significant grant funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) for new homes to be built. The preferred bidder had committed to applying for the HCA grant funding prior to conclusion of negotiations and legal formalities.

Once the Heads of Terms had been agreed, the contracting partner aimed to immediately commence work on submission of planning applications and procurement of information to support planning applications, on the Council's behalf. However, until a scheme received approval, the expenditure was chargeable to the HRA. Consequently, Cabinet was requested to authorise that up to £300,000 be utilised from the Special Projects element of the HRA Working Balance. Once a planning application was approved and the scheme commenced, the expenditure could be classified as Capital Expenditure.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate Services reported that, since the preparation of the Report, he had approved a quotation for the Independent Peer Review of Special Expenses which addressed the decision taken by the Council at its meeting in July 2014 following its consideration of the Special Expenses Petition and related motions. A single fixed price quotation was sought and obtained from a qualified practitioner which

enabled the review to be completed prior to consideration of next year's budgets by Cabinet at its meeting in February 2015. The cost of the Review was in the order of £6,000.

Resolved:

- 42.1** That it be noted that Treasury Management activity since the last Report to Cabinet has been consistent with the Council's approved Treasury and Investment Strategy, as detailed in Report No 159/14;
- 42.2** That the mid-year position for the Council's 2014/2015 Treasury Management and Investment Strategy be noted;
- 42.3** That an account be established with Svenska Handelsbanken for investment purposes; DF
- 42.4** That the latest Medium Term Finance Strategy Forecast through to 2020 and the savings target delivery update, be noted and approved; DF
- 42.5** That a variation to the 2014/2015 Capital Programme in respect of work at Lewes Cemetery Chapel, as explained in paragraph 7 of the Report, be approved; DF
- 42.6** That the use of up to £300,000 from the Special Projects Element of the Housing Revenue Account Working Balance be approved to progress proposals that will increase the Council's Housing Stock; and DF
- 42.7** That the remainder of the Report, together with the oral Report of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services relating to the approval of a quotation for the Independent Peer Review of Special Expenses, be noted.

It was further

Recommended:

- 42.8** That the Mid-Year Treasury Management Report 2014/2015 be approved. DF (to note)

Reasons for the Decisions:

A Report on funding issues in relation to the Council's General Fund Revenue Account, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme is made to each meeting of the Cabinet to ensure that the Council's financial health is kept under continual review. It is essential to ensure that the Council has a sound financial base from which to respond to changing activity levels and demand for statutory services and to ensure that, when appropriate, its finances are adjusted in response to reducing income levels and inflationary pressures on expenditure.

The Council's Treasury Management function deals with very large value transactions on a daily basis. It is essential that the Council is satisfied that appropriate controls are in place and in accordance with the Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services prepared by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and adopted by the Council.

(Note: Councillor Smith declared his non-prejudicial interest in this item as he was the Council's representative on the Big Parks Project in his capacity as the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and, therefore, took part in the consideration, discussion and voting thereon).

43 Community Infrastructure Levy Governance

The Cabinet considered Report No 160/14 which sought agreement for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) governance framework that would inform the delivery of District-wide strategic infrastructure and the distribution of a 'meaningful proportion' of the CIL income to communities to fund localised improvements within the District.

The CIL was a mechanism that had been introduced by Government in 2010 to allow local planning authorities to raise funds from some forms of development in order to pay for the infrastructure that was, or would be, needed as a result of that new development.

The levy was applied on a £'s per square metre basis and replaced the existing tariff-based approach for collecting most planning infrastructure contributions. From April 2015, CIL would be the only significant means by which local authorities could collect and 'pool' developer contributions to deliver infrastructure improvements. Section 106 obligations would still exist alongside CIL, but generally as one-off agreements to mitigate the impacts of larger developments and to secure on-site developer requirements, such as the provision of affordable housing.

It was estimated that total CIL receipts for the Council for CIL liable planned residential development within the Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy, up to 2030, was in the region of £15m. However, it was just one funding stream that could be used in conjunction with others to fund infrastructure projects.

The Council had submitted its Draft Charging Schedule to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination on 16 September 2014. Following the successful negotiation of the examination into the Charging Schedule, its adoption by the Council would be recommended to Cabinet and Council for implementation in April 2015, or soon after.

The introduction of CIL necessitated the development of new governance arrangements for spending the collected money, the key reasons for which were set out in paragraph 3 of the Report.

Details relating to the proposals for new governance arrangements were set out in paragraph 4 of the Report which included a diagram of the associated framework at Figure 1. One of those proposals related to the appointment of

an Executive Board which would make spending recommendations to Cabinet. It was proposed that the Board would comprise several Officers and Members of the Council, details of whom were set out in paragraph 4.7 of the Report.

A close working relationship with Town and Parish Councils would be beneficial to the delivery of local infrastructure priorities. In light of their guidance, the Council must work with those Councils to ensure the effective use of CIL revenue to support development within communities.

The Cabinet Member for Strategy and Development drew Cabinet's attention to paragraph 4.6 of the Report and requested that the following text be added at the end of that paragraph in order to make it clear that, as part of approving the CIL governance framework, a key element was the proposed predetermined pot system. Furthermore, it also made it clear that there would be a degree of flexibility applied to the system and that the Council was committed to reviewing its effectiveness a year after the CIL Charging Schedule had been adopted and implemented:

"It should be noted that the figures in figure 1 are only indicative and it maybe the case that higher or lower contributions are sought and distributed to the infrastructure providers (the exception will be the admin pot, where the contribution towards it cannot exceed 5%, and the town/parish pot where the contribution towards it cannot be less than 15% or 25%). After a period of 12 months the Council will review the need for the predetermined pot system and the percentages to be applied."

With regard to paragraph 4.7 of the Report, it was requested that, in order to allow for a degree of flexibility in determining the composition of the Executive Board, reference in the final bullet point to "Chair of Scrutiny" be amended to read "Chair of Scrutiny or Leader or Shadow Lead Member that is responsible for Planning of the Minority Group".

Resolved:

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| 43.1 | That the Community Infrastructure Levy governance framework, as set out in Report No 160/14 as amended by the provision of the additional text to paragraph 4.6 of the Report as set out in italics above and by the revised text to paragraph 4.7 of the Report as set out above, be taken forward and form the basis upon which the Council will manage the spending of Community Infrastructure Levy receipts; | DBSD |
| 43.2 | That the appointment of the Community Infrastructure Levy Executive Board, be agreed; and | DBSD |
| 43.3 | That a pilot be undertaken whereby percentages that are an approximate of those figures set out for the County, District/Parish, Community and Admin pots in Figure 1 of the Report be used in the initial operation of the Community Infrastructure Levy scheme. Such percentages to be reviewed after a period of 12 months. | DBSD |

Reasons for the Decisions:

To ensure that the use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies is appropriately managed in accordance with the requirements placed on Lewes District Council as the CIL Charging Authority through the CIL Regulations and to support the delivery of Lewes' Core Strategy.

To enable Officers to prepare detailed guidance; 1) for infrastructure providers on applying for CIL funding for infrastructure projects; and 2) for the Infrastructure Delivery Officer and Executive Board when reviewing bids from infrastructure providers.

The CIL Executive Board would ensure that elected Members play a central role in shaping priorities and delivering improvements in the district.

44 Photovoltaic (PV) Panels to Housing and Other Properties

The Cabinet considered Report No 161/14 which related to progress to install Photovoltaic (PV) panel systems on up to 1,700 housing properties.

At its meeting in June 2014, Cabinet had agreed that Officers should conclude discussions and contract with Access Energy and Carillion Construction through the Sussex Energy Savings Programme Contract 2013 to provide PV Panels to approximately 694 identified properties as the first phase of the project. Furthermore, that in parallel, the Officers explore other sources of funding for the second phase of the project including the use of the borrowing 'headroom' of the housing revenue account for PV panel systems so that the whole PV scheme could be delivered by 31 March 2017.

Whilst commencing the process to conclude discussions through the Sussex Energy Savings Programme Contract, an improved opportunity had arisen from the joint working initiative with Eastbourne Borough Council. In any event, further analysis of the detail for proceeding with the Access Energy and Carillion offer had identified technical reasons why the procurement could not proceed.

Eastbourne Borough Council was a pioneer in developing a financial modelling tool and an alternative procurement and funding route for the installation of PV panels on council owned housing. That provided an additional financial benefit for the Council that would otherwise have accrued to a private contractor.

Eastbourne Borough Council's model was applied during the 2011/2012 financial year and the annual accounts had received an unqualified audit opinion.

The alternative procurement route involved working with an existing public sector procurement club, namely Fusion 21, which had been created ten years ago by seven social landlords in order to generate savings by collaborating in their procurement. It was currently a national social enterprise which worked with social landlords who used a range of

compliant frameworks of the Official Journal of the European Union that created financial and time savings.

Fusion 21 had a PV framework in place that would allow the Council to use its Number 1 contractor and be on site within eight weeks of contract award.

Paragraph 3 of the Report set out a financial appraisal of the opportunity to work with Fusion 21 on the project.

The representative of the Tenants of Lewes District (TOLD) organisation reported that TOLD welcomed the PV panel initiative.

Recommended:

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| 44.1 | That a budget be approved in the sum of £2.7m within the General Fund non-housing capital programme in respect of the installation of Photovoltaic (PV) panel systems on up to 700 council-owned homes on the basis of the business case presented in Report No 161/14; and | DSD (to note) |
| 44.2 | That the financing of the PV panel systems from General Fund prudential borrowing, be approved. | DSD (to note) |

It was further

Resolved:

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| 44.3 | That, subject to the approval of the capital programme allocation, Officers be authorised to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Conclude discussions with Fusion 21 to appoint a contractor from its PV Framework to initially install PV panel systems on up to 700 council homes; (b) Conclude a call-off contract under the Fusion 21 framework subject to the Director of Service Delivery being satisfied as to completion of due diligence by Finance and Legal, including approval of the framework contract and procurement documentation received from Fusion 21; (c) Seek and access an alternative Framework, subject to the same conditions as in (b), in the event that it is not possible to conclude negotiations with Fusion 21; and (d) Review the business case at completion of the initial 700 panel installation programme to consider extending to a further 1,000 properties; and | DSD |
| 44.4 | That the Officers be thanked for the work that they had undertaken in respect of the PV panel initiative. | DSD |

Reasons for the Decisions:

This is an opportunity to invest up to £2.7m in the installation of Photovoltaic (PV) Panel systems on Council-owned homes in the Lewes District which

will reduce the cost of electricity for tenants, create an annual net income of approximately £49,000 for the General Fund, produce a potential 2.5GWh energy which would reduce CO2 emissions by up to 1,500 tons per year, over the next 20 years.

45 Procurement of New Service Delivery Model Technology and Consultancy Services

The Cabinet considered Report No 162/14 which related to the recommend investment of £2.25m in the Organisational Development Strategy, in order to deliver a technology-enabled end-to-end customer service model and generate recurring efficiency savings amounting to £1.2m, phased over 4 years from 2015/16 to 2018/19.

The Nexus Transformation Programme oversaw the projects that had been established to deliver the Organisational Development Strategy:

- (a) Corporate Shared Services Project;
- (b) New Service Delivery Model Project; and
- (c) Customer Contact Projects (Website Refresh and Telephony Phase 2).

The purpose of the New Service Delivery Model Project was to develop the technology and business change specifications which had been authorised by Cabinet at its meeting on 2 June 2014 and undertake a procurement exercise to select a supplier which would work with the Council from 2015 to 2018. It was proposed to go out to tender in February 2015; select a supplier in June 2015 and sign contracts by September 2015, the reasons for which were set out in paragraph 3.3 of the Report.

The technology to be procured was expected to include several elements including those set out in paragraph 4.1 of the Report.

The implementation of the technological improvements required the replacement of some existing Information Technology (IT) systems, the acquisition of systems that were not currently used by the Council, change management consultancy, intensive staff training and a targeted communications campaign.

The procurement process would be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, and would include a period of at least five weeks for the detailed technical evaluation of the tenders received to ensure that the required quality standards were met. That period was expected to require demonstrations of technology and site visits, as well as evaluation of tender documents.

A Project Team had been formed to drive the New Service Delivery Model Project forward, operating under the umbrella of the Nexus Transformation Programme. That team included staff from the Council and Eastbourne Borough Council. Support would also be obtained from external

procurement specialists in respect of developing the requirements specification and managing the procurement in a robust and European Union-compliant manner.

Recommended:

- 45.1** That a budget of £2.25m be allocated to the Nexus Transformation Programme, to be funded from New Homes Bonus receivable in 2015/16 and 2016/17, along with a contribution from the Housing Revenue Account, as detailed in Report No 162/14. Trans Mgr (to note)

It was further

Resolved:

- 45.2** That the procurement exercise being undertaken as part of the Nexus Transformation Programme to select a supplier to deliver the necessary technology and business change management to implement the Council's Organisational Development Strategy, be endorsed; Trans Mgr
- 45.3** That the Chief Executive and Director of Service Delivery, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, be authorised to award a contract to the supplier selected by the procurement process set out in 45.2 above; CE/DSD/ Trans Mgr
- 45.4** That the Assistant Director of Corporate Services be authorised to engage appropriate external specialist lawyers to draw up appropriate contract documentation, and that it be noted that this may require expenditure of c. £60,000 and is a cost associated with developing the specification, as authorised by Cabinet in June 2014 (Minute 7.2 refers); and ADCS/ Trans Mgr
- 45.5** That the use of the unallocated balance of New Homes Bonus currently held in the Change Management and Spending Power Reserve be authorised to fund necessary expenditure in support of the procurement process (for example, the engagement of specialist Information Technology contract lawyers and procurement advice from iESE) during 2014/2015. Trans Mgr

Reasons for the Decisions:

The Organisational Development Strategy was adopted by Cabinet on 2 June 2014 (Report 76/14, Minute 7.1 refers).

The updated Medium Term Financial Strategy (as set out on the Agenda for this meeting of Cabinet) requires savings of approximately £3.2 million by 2020. Although good progress has already been made, there is an efficiency savings requirement of £1.2m phased over the next 4 years (2015/16 – 2018/19).

The June 2014 Report set out how investment in a multi-skilled end-to-end customer service model at an estimated cost of £2.25m is expected to generate 15% annual efficiency savings of £1.2m, thereby fulfilling the

savings requirement and meeting customer expectations for more flexible and responsive Council services.

The estimate of £2.25m for the investment required to deliver technology and business change management was based upon the previous experience of Eastbourne Borough Council and West Devon and South Hams Councils, which have already undertaken procurement exercises of this type. The New Service Delivery Model Project is drawing upon their expertise in developing the technology and business change specification.

Upon consideration of the Report, Cabinet endorsed the development of technology and business change specifications to support the implementation of the Organisational Development Strategy and new ways of working by the Service Delivery unit (Minute 7.3 refers).

The recommendations in Report No 162/14 will enable the procurement process to keep up the current pace, which is further advanced than anticipated, in order to select a supplier to deliver the technology and business change specification set out in paragraph 1.5 thereof.

46 LEAP – Employment and Skills

The Cabinet considered Report No 163/14 which provided an overview of the progress with the Local Enterprise and Apprenticeship Platform (LEAP) pilot programme and set out the options for the Council's continued contribution to the local employment and skills landscape.

The LEAP initiative was first taken to Cabinet in May 2012 (Report No.90/12) and approval was given to work up a detailed business plan for the project which was subsequently reported to Cabinet in November 2012 (Report no.188/12) and sought approval for the delivery programme.

The targets set in the Report in May 2012 were:

- (a)** Between 50 and 80 completed apprenticeships
- (b)** 15 – 30 new businesses started and supported;

and in November 2012, £150,000 worth of funding for LEAP was committed via a combination of Section 106 (£50k) and New Homes Bonus (£100k).

Match funding had been secured from East Sussex County Council's Rural Growth and Employment Fund (RuGEF), although that was based on much higher targets than those which had been approved by Cabinet. To date, LEAP had accessed approximately £41,000 of funding from East Sussex County Council to support project delivery.

Paragraph 3.6 of the Report set out details relating to LEAP's achievements up until the end of October 2014.

To date, LEAP had achieved a success rate of more than 80% for apprenticeships which compared favourably with 74% across East Sussex.

Paragraph 4 of the Report set out details relating to the LEAP Business Start Up Programme and paragraph 5 set out details of LEAP Apprenticeships.

Since approval of LEAP in November 2012 and the project's subsequent launch in February 2013, the wider employment and skills landscape had changed considerably, although some of the key issues remained. In particular, the lack of a centralised careers advice and support service had created significant challenges in raising awareness of apprenticeships amongst young people, as well as challenges in dealing with secondary education providers.

The National Apprenticeship Service and the Skills Funding Agency had been facing funding and staffing cuts. Therefore, LEAP had played a key role locally, including the provision of advice to neighbouring local authorities as a model of effective partnership working and resource management within employment and skills.

Furthermore, the Government was also expected to bring about changes to apprenticeship funding whereby employers received funding for the delivery of apprenticeships rather than training providers which was the current arrangement. The impact of such change had not yet been fully assessed.

LEAP continued to accord with the principles of "Building a Brighter Future", the Council's Regeneration Strategy 2012-2015, which placed a high level of importance on 'Promoting Enterprise' and 'Inspiring Learning' as key ingredients for securing sustainable economic growth.

Paragraphs 6.6 to 6.10 of the Report set out details of future options for the LEAP programme and suggested that Option 4a (Contract out LEAP Entrepreneur) was the preferred option as it reduced operational risk and placed targets with contractors to reduce Officer time in delivery. Further details relating to the options were set out in Appendix C to the Report.

Cabinet's attention was drawn to the table of options in paragraph 6.10 of the Report and, in particular, to the column headed "Anticipated Outputs per Year" in respect of Option 4a. It was reported that reference, in the second bullet point, to "New businesses started." should have read "6 new businesses started."

Resolved:

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| 46.1 | That the continued promotion and signposting of apprenticeships and business start-up support under the Local Enterprise and Apprenticeship Platform (LEAP) brand, as referred to in Report No 163/14, be supported; | DBSD |
| 46.2 | That the Director of Business Strategy and Development be authorised to prepare a tender for the provision of training for new entrepreneurs seeking to start their own business within the District in accordance with Option 4a as set out in the Report; | DBSD |
| 46.3 | That up to £10,000 be allocated from the Change Management and Spending Power Reserve as funding for the continuation of LEAP | DBSD |

for a further 12 months in accordance with Option 4a as set out in the Report;

46.4 That the Officers be authorised to explore opportunities for the continued delivery of apprenticeship support under the LEAP brand, initially through discussions with key partners including Plumpton College and Sussex Downs College; and

DBSD

46.5 That the Officers be authorised to explore opportunities for joint working and collaboration with neighbouring authorities in East Sussex and within the Greater Brighton City Region in respect of employment and skills, subject to agreements on financial contributions.

DBSD

Reasons for the Decisions:

The Local Enterprise and Apprenticeship Platform (LEAP) was launched as a two-year pilot initiative in February 2013. The programme is due to finish at the end of February 2015. After a slow start, LEAP has made significant progress in raising awareness of apprenticeships and the provision of free training and support for business start-ups.

LEAP has obtained a good level of brand awareness around apprenticeships and business support, which helps to demonstrate the added value that LEAP offers within the local employment and skills landscape. Withdrawing LEAP's support for local activities would lose that awareness and reverse the positive work the Council has done on enterprise and apprenticeships. There is therefore a need for some form of continuity for LEAP to evolve and continue to deliver new opportunities for local residents and businesses.

47 Property Report – Part 1

The Cabinet considered Report No 164/14 which set out the terms of proposed property transactions in respect of 6-12 Ashington Gardens, Peacehaven, for lease surrender and re-grant; and 22 Harvard Close, Lewes, for the disposal of garden land.

Details relating to the proposed transactions were set out in paragraph 3 and in the Exempt appendices to the Report.

6-12, Ashington Gardens, Peacehaven, comprised two retail units which had been knocked through to form one larger unit which operated as a newsagents, general store and off-license. There were also two self-contained flats the use of which was limited to the lessee or a person employed by the lessee in connection with the shop.

The lease had commenced in May 2003 and was due to expire on 24 May 2018. The tenant was protected under the Landlord and Tenants Act (1954) and had a right to a new lease under the existing terms.

Negotiations on the rent review due in 2013 had not yet been concluded however, the tenant had advised the Council that the proposed increase was not affordable and would cause hardship. At the same time, the tenant had indicated that she wished to retire but that there was insufficient time left on the lease to make it attractive to a purchaser.

The Report recommended that the tenant be allowed to surrender the existing lease and that a new lease be granted on the basis that only one flat was included and that it be extended to 25 years. The remaining flat would then be available to let to a housing tenant.

The representative of the Tenants of Lewes District (TOLD) organisation reported that TOLD supported the recommendation that the remaining flat be let to a housing tenant.

22 Harvard Close, Lewes, was a former Council house which was located on the Malling Estate. The property backed onto a piece of Council owned amenity land and the current owner occupier had moved their boundary fence beyond the official boundary line in order to increase the size of their garden.

As of September 2014, the owner of 22 Harvard Close had been attempting to sell the freehold of the property. A prospective purchaser had approached the Council to request purchasing the additional land which was not currently registered on the deeds.

Resolved:

- 47.1** That authority be delegated to the Director of Corporate Services to grant a lease or to dispose of land in respect of the properties outlined in Report No 164/14 based on the heads of terms appended thereto together with any terms required by the Director of Finance and the Assistant Director Corporate Services.

DCS

Reason for the Decision:

Report No 164/14 deals with an outstanding rent review in the form of a surrender and re-grant of the lease and a garden land disposal requiring approval by Cabinet under the scheme of delegation.

48 Property Report – Part 2

The Chair reported that Report No 165/14 which related to a proposal to amend the Scheme of Delegations in relation to non-housing property matters, had been withdrawn from consideration at this meeting and that a similar Report would be considered at a future meeting of Cabinet, possibly on 5 January 2015.

Resolved:

- 48.1** That it be noted that Report No 165/14 relating to a proposal to amend the Scheme of Delegations in relation to non-housing

DCS

property matters, had been withdrawn from consideration at this meeting and that a similar Report would be considered at a future meeting of Cabinet, possibly on 5 January 2015.

Reason for the Decision:

To enable Cabinet to consider a similar Report at a future meeting, possibly on 5 January 2015.

49 East Sussex Councils' 'Open for Growth' Peer Challenge Update

The Cabinet received Report No 166/14 which provided an update on the progress of, and activities resulting from, the East Sussex Councils' 'Open for Growth' Peer Challenge.

Peer Challenge was a tool that helped councils review their performance and was developed by local authorities and the Local Government Association to replace the previous national performance framework of inspection and assessment.

Resolved:

- 49.1** That the progress and activities resulting from the Peer Challenge and Action Plan areas requiring input and on-going support from the authority, as detailed in Report No 166/14, be noted.

Reasons for the Decision:

Report No 166/14 details the background and the work to date on the Peer Challenge recommendations and highlights how the majority of them are already being progressed, or explains how they will be.

Continued support from authorities in carrying through the recommendations independently and collectively will ensure the positive working relationships already well-established further enable growth.

50 Ward Issues Raised by Councillors at Council

The Cabinet considered Report No 167/14 relating to responses to ward issues which had been raised by Councillors at the Council Meeting held on 15 October 2014.

Resolved:

- 50.1** That the Officer action in respect of Ward issues raised by Councillors at the Council Meeting held on 15 October 2014, as detailed in Report No 167/14, be noted and agreed.

Reason for the Decision:

To ensure that appropriate follow up action is taken in respect of Ward

DSD

issues raised by Councillors at Council Meetings.

The meeting ended at 3.37pm.

R Blackman
Chair