

## **Cabinet**

**Minutes of meeting held in Court Room at Eastbourne Town Hall, Grove Road, BN21 4UG on 20 March 2019 at 6.00 pm**

### **Present:**

Councillor David Tutt (Chair)

Councillors Alan Shuttleworth (Deputy-Chair), Margaret Bannister, Jonathan Dow, Stephen Holt, Colin Swansborough and John Ungar

### **Officers in attendance:**

Robert Cottrill (Chief Executive), Brian Mew (Interim Deputy Chief Finance Officer), Philip Evans (Director of Tourism & Enterprise), Ian Fitzpatrick (Director of Regeneration and Planning), Tim Whelan (Director of Service Delivery), Becky Cooke (Assistant Director for Human Resources and Transformation), Peter Finnis (Assistant Director for Corporate Governance), Catherine Knight (Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services), Jo Harper (Head of Business Planning and Performance) and Simon Russell (Committee and Civic Services Manager)

### **69 Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2019**

The minutes of the meeting held of 6 February 2019 were submitted and approved and the Chair was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

### **70 Apologies for absence**

None were reported. The Chair welcomed Brian Mew, Deputy Chief Finance Officer to his first meeting of the Cabinet.

### **71 Declaration of members' interests**

None were declared.

### **72 Corporate performance - quarter 3 - 2018/19**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning updating members on the Council's performance against Corporate

Plan priority actions, performance indicators and targets over quarter three period for 2018/19 (1 October to 31 December 2018).

Significant achievements reported during the quarter included the opening of the Beacon on 30 November, waste mobilisation, rough sleeping initiative with Hastings Borough Council and project to reduce single use plastics in council buildings. Further details were contained in the report.

4.2 of the report detailed two areas where the Council had missed their targets for the quarter three period, including housing (emergency accommodation) and call handling.

Councillor Swansborough provided up to date statistics to the Cabinet on the average time to answer customer calls (29 seconds as at 15 March 2019) and praised the Customer Contact Centre team for their significantly improved performance.

The Cabinet discussed the national issue of homelessness and the steps the Council were taking to tackle the number of households living in emergency accommodation. The Director of Service Delivery advised the Cabinet that last week, the Council had reduced the number by 19, leaving 110 households in emergency accommodation.

The Housing Needs team set weekly targets on the number of households leaving emergency accommodation within 28 days, number of households under investigation and the average number of days in emergency accommodation. A landlord liaison scheme had been launched to incentivise private landlords. Unfortunately the private sector market was buoyant with professional tenants that was not only increasing rental cost but impacting on families most at need.

Alternative solutions were sought to assist in the supply of properties both for temporary accommodation and affordable homes. The Cabinet unanimously agreed an additional recommendation to tackle the scale and level of demand and this was detailed below.

Part B of the report detailed the Council's financial performance for the same quarter. The Deputy Chief Finance Officer reported that the general fund and housing revenue account were scheduled to be on target by the end of the financial year. Councillor Holt and the Cabinet expressed their thanks to staff at the Bandstand for their outstanding work and being above target for income.

**Resolved (Non-key decision):**

- (1) To note the achievements and progress against Corporate Plan priorities for 2018/19, as set out in Part A of the report.
- (2) To agree the General Fund, HRA and Collection Fund financial performance for the quarter ended December 2018 as set out in part B of this report
- (3) To agree the virements and transfer to/from reserves as set out at appendix 4 to the report.
- (4) To agree the amended capital programme as set out at appendix 5 to the report.
- (5) To agree the Treasury Management performance as set out in section 5 in part B of the report
- (6) To approve the write offs as set out in the exempt appendix.
- (7) To authorise officers, in consultation with the Leader and relevant Portfolio holder to accelerate the supply of suitable properties by Eastbourne Housing Investment Company Limited (EHICL) to mitigate the use of temporary and emergency accommodation, subject to business case. Any decisions/action taken by officers would be reported to the next available Cabinet meeting.

**Reason for decisions:**

To enable Cabinet members to consider specific aspects of the Council's progress and performance.

**73 Equality and fairness annual report 2018 and action plan 2019**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Executive setting out progress against the Council's current equality objectives and 2018/19 action plan and sought approval of an action plan for 2019/20. The Head of Business Planning and Performance was in attendance to present the report.

Councillor Swansborough expressed his thanks to the Head of Business Planning and Performance and Devan Briggs, Policy and Engagement Co-ordinator for their work in co-ordinating and bringing together members from a range of protected groups across Eastbourne and Lewes to attend the Equality and Fairness Stakeholder Group.

**Resolved (Key decision):**

- (1) To note the Annual Report of activities carried out in 2018, set out at appendix A to the report.
- (2) To approve the Action Plan proposed at appendix B to the report.

**Reason for decisions:**

To promote equality and fairness and eliminate discrimination, ensuring fair access to services and opportunities and comply with the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

**74 Acquisition of land in Old Orchard Road**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Planning setting out proposals for the acquisition of land currently in the ownership of Homes England and Ministry of Justice. The land consisted of the former Magistrates Court and adjoining property at 35 Old Orchard Road.

The Director of Regeneration and Planning recommended a slight revision to officer recommendation two, including the option to allocate from the housing revenue account fund and this was detailed below.

**Resolved (Key decision):**

- (1) To delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration and Planning in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Housing and the Chief Finance Officer to take all steps to complete the purchase of Magistrates Court site and 35 Old Orchard Road, Eastbourne on terms equivalent or better than set out in the report.
- (2) To approve a corresponding Eastbourne Borough Council general fund or housing revenue account fund allocation in the 2018/19 capital programme as set out in the exempt appendix to the report.

**Reason for decisions:**

To enable the acquisition of land to deliver new homes and facilities for the town.

**75 Exclusion of the public****Resolved:**

That the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting as otherwise there was a likelihood of disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. The relevant paragraph of schedule 12A and a description of the exempt information was shown below. (The requisite notice having been given under regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.)

**76 Acquisition of land in Old Orchard Road - Appendix 1**

The Cabinet considered the exempt appendix to agenda item 11.

**Resolved (Non-key decision):**

That the appendix be noted.

**Reason for decision:**

As detailed in minute 74 above

*Notes: (1) The appendix remained exempt. (2) Exempt information reason 3 – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).*

**77 Corporate performance - quarter 3 - 2018/19 - Write-off of irrecoverable debts**

As detailed in minute 72 above.

*Notes: (1) The appendix remained exempt. (2) Exempt information reason 3 – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).*

**78 Vote of thanks**

As this was the last Cabinet meeting of the municipal year, Councillor Tutt expressed his thanks and appreciation to fellow members and officers for their work over the last 12 months.

The meeting ended at 6.28 pm

Councillor David Tutt (Chair)