

Cabinet



Minutes of meeting held on Monday, 1 June 2015 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Councillors **David Tutt** (chairman and leader of the council), **Gill Mattock** (deputy chairman and deputy leader of the council), **Margaret Bannister**, **Alan Shuttleworth**, **Troy Tester** and **Steve Wallis**.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Alan Shuttleworth to membership of the Cabinet. He would assume responsibility for housing and community services. Councillor Margaret Bannister would take over tourism and leisure services from former Councillor Carolyn Heaps.

1 Minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2015.

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2015 were submitted and approved and the chairman was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

2 Declarations of interests by members.

2.1 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) by members as required under section 31 of the Localism Act and other interests as required by the council's code of conduct and regulation 12(2)(d) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

2.2 No declarations were made.

3 Dates of future Cabinet meetings 2015/16.

Dates of future Cabinet meetings were agreed as follows:

8 July 2015
 2 September 2015
 21 October 2015
 9 December 2015
 3 February 2016
 23 March 2016
 25 May 2016

4 Delegation of executive functions.

Resolved: (1) That that the delegation of executive functions to officers be as set out in the Scheme of Delegation to Officers (Section 3, Part D of the Council's Constitution) and noting that relevant lead Cabinet members are to be consulted by officers when exercising their delegated powers where required to do so.

(2) To note that delegations to individual Cabinet members in respect of executive functions have not been made at this time.

5 Corporate performance - Quarter 4 2014/15 (KD).

5.1 Councillors Freebody, Jenkins and Di Cara addressed the Cabinet with comments and questions on the performance information.

5.2 Cabinet considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Senior Head of Corporate Development and Governance. Updated pages in respect of the devolved ward budget programme were circulated.

5.3 Resolved (key decision): (1) That the performance against national and local performance indicators and actions from the 2010/15 corporate plan (2014 refresh) be agreed.

(2) That the provisional general fund outturn on services expenditure for 2014/15 of £16.395m, a net underspend of £216,000 against the revised budget be agreed.

(3) That the transfers to and from reserves, as set out at appendix 3 to the report, be agreed.

(4) That the provisional balances on non-earmarked revenue reserves as at 31 March 2015 as shown in paragraph 5.1 of the report, be agreed.

(5) That the provisional housing revenue account surplus for 2014/15 (of £494,000) be agreed.

(6) That the final capital programme and outturn for 2014/15 of £17.5m, a variance of 8.35% against the final programme, be agreed.

6 Wish Tower Restaurant - Development and Marketing Programme (KD).

6.1 Councillor Freebody addressed the Cabinet welcoming the government's grant assistance for this scheme. He expressed his hopes for an iconic building and also that the new venture would have a broad appeal as a café/restaurant and prove popular with a wide section of Eastbourne's residents and visitors.

6.2 Cabinet considered the report of the Senior Head of Regeneration, Planning and Assets. The council had opened a temporary catering facility in 2013 following the demolition of the old cafe. The council was now in a position to move forward with the development of a permanent top quality venue that offers an exceptional dining experience, boosted by high end interior and exterior design values. The unique location of the site presented the council with an unparalleled opportunity to secure an iconic development; the intention being that the new scheme would prove attractive to both visitors and residents. It was also imperative that the new development was financially viable generating an income to the council.

6.3 Funding of up to £1.2m for the new development would come from money awarded by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). This would form the largest element of the total £2m fund granted by DCLG which was providing support to a range of other economic development activities across the town.

6.4 The new building would retain its original standing as a memorial to the civilians of Eastbourne, killed in World War II. The council had safeguarded the original commemorative plaque, previously displayed at the former café (which had originally been built with the assistance of funds donated by the Foyle family in the 1950s) and it was the council's firm intention that this would be reinstated and form part of the integrated design of the successful scheme.

6.5 An updated planning brief had been prepared to support the marketing exercise to be launched on 15 June 2015. In addition, the Council had obtained a 'soft market test', undertaken by an international leisure market and investment appraisal specialist. The results of this study and how this had informed the proposed marketing strategy were detailed in the report.

6.6 The eventual level of investment by both the council and the future operator would be informed by the outcome of the marketing campaign and subsequent negotiations in respect of tenure. At this stage, it was envisaged that construction would follow a 'traditional approach' as opposed to say 'design and build' with the council responsible for the design of the facility and a contractor to be appointed to deliver the scheme. Internal fit out would be the responsibility of the tenant.

6.7 A services of an appropriately qualified project manager would need to be secured whose role would include the appointment of an architect to draw up concept plans to RIBA stage C within the parameters of the planning guidance note and reflecting the council's aspiration for this iconic site. It was envisaged that these plans would assist potential operators visualise the scale and form of the new facility, in turn assisting them in submitting bids for the future operation of the new café/restaurant.

6.8 Significant interest from the public in respect of the future development of this important site was anticipated and following the marketing campaign, it was proposed that shortlisted proposals be considered by the Strategic Property Board as a pre-requisite to a wider stakeholder consultation on the preferred scheme. This consultation would include public, heritage, commerce and tourism stakeholders with a report on the outcome to a future Cabinet meeting.

6.9 Resolved (key decision): (1) That the recommendations for the marketing and future development of the site set out in the report be agreed.

(2) That the appointment of a project manager to assemble the project team and prepare concept designs to support the marketing of the site be agreed.

(3) That the Senior Head of Regeneration, Planning and Assets, in consultation with the Strategic Property Board, be given delegated authority to market the site to secure a cafe/restaurant operator and agree the final design.

(4) That the £1.2m from the Department for Communities and Local Government grant is allocated to the new Wish Tower development.

7 Downland Management Plan 2015 - 2022 (KD).

7.1 Cabinet considered the report of the Senior Head of Communities proposing a new Downland Management Plan covering the years 2015 to 2022. It would introduce important new management methods designed, in agreement with Natural England, to enhance and sustain the rare chalk grassland and heathland habitats, control scrub regeneration and improve the visitor experience. All management operations could be implemented within existing staff and budget resources.

7.2 A 10 year Higher Level Stewardship Agreement (HLS) was entered into with Natural England on 1st May 2012. The new agreement entitled the council to financial support to enhance the management of those parts of the Downs included in the new stewardship arrangements. This amounted to an annual payment of nearly £50,000. A requirement of the agreement was a new management plan. The new plan was appended to the report and would provide a single reference source for future downland operations. The plan's objectives and targets were summarised in the report and included:

- Measures to prevent loss of chalk grassland to scrub encroachment.
- Removal of grass cuttings to reduce soil nutrient levels and thus encourage the less vigorous small herbs favoured by bees and other insects.
- The use of Exmoor ponies to graze areas of poor pasture or steep slopes where commercial livestock are unsuitable.
- Reintroduce rotational coppicing of scrub blocks to create a varied age structure.
- Scrub cover within grassland/scrub areas should be between 20-50% by 2020 and dense scrub blocks should contain no more than 50% mature scrub by 2020.

7.3 The objectives and targets would be reviewed annually by the Downland Forum. Forum members included councillors, officers of Natural England and the South Downs National Park, RSPB, the Ramblers Association and others.

7.4 A wide range of organisations and individuals had been consulted on the draft plan (details were given in the report).

All the responses received were positive and gave useful feedback and were broadly in agreement with the aims and objectives of the new plan. All feedback was given due consideration and incorporated into the final document.

7.5 Resolved (key decision): That the Eastbourne Downland Management Plan 2015 – 2022 be adopted.

8 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 paragraphs of schedule 12A and descriptions of the exempt information are shown beneath the item below. *(The requisite notice having been given under regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.)*

9 Redundancy and redeployment policy - activity update

9.1 Cabinet considered the report of the Senior Head of Corporate Development and Governance and noted that one employee was subject to the procedure at present. They noted the actions taken to manage implications of change for displaced individuals through support, redeployment and assistance with self marketing under the redundancy and redeployment procedure and the use of the procedure in managing the change resulting from implementation of Phase Two of Future Model.

*(Notes: (1) Exempt information reasons 1 and 2 – Information relating to an individual or likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
(2) The above minute was made public, however the Cabinet's deliberations thereon and the submitted report remain confidential.)*

The meeting closed at 6.42 pm

**Councillor David Tutt
Chairman**