



Cabinet

Minutes of meeting held in Remote meeting (Microsoft Teams) on 15 July 2020 at 2.00 pm

Present:

Councillor David Tutt (Chair)

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

Officers in attendance:

Robert Cottrill (Chief Executive), Homira Javadi (Chief Finance Officer), Philip Evans (Director of Tourism & Enterprise), Ian Fitzpatrick (Deputy Chief Executive and 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), Jo Harper (Head of Business Planning and Performance), Mark Langridge Kemp (Head of Property, Delivery and Compliance), Millie McDevitt (Performance and Programmes Lead) and Simon Russell (Committee and Civic Services Manager)

Also in attendance:

Councillor Robert Smart (Opposition Leader)

1 Minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2020 were submitted and approved and the Chair was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

2 Apologies for absence

None were reported.

3 Declaration of members' interests

Councillor Holt declared a personal interest in agenda item 8 (Recovery group update) as an employee of the Business Improvement District and Director of Chamber of Commerce. He remained in the meeting and took part in discussions.

4 Financial assessment of Covid-19 update

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Office updating them on the financial impact of Covid-19 and associated budgetary implications.

Visiting member, Councillor Smart, addressed the Cabinet on this item.

The report detailed that Covid-19 was currently estimated to leave the council facing a budget deficit of around £9.9 million for the financial year and this projection was under regular review.

The council had to date received emergency funding of £1.09 million from the government for their response to Covid-19. The government had announced further help for local authorities and the council was awaiting further information.

The Chief Executive advised that the impact of Covid-19 and future uncertainty around the potential of a second wave meant that it was unlikely that the council's theatres would re-open before the middle of next year. Colleagues would be consulted shortly to put resources in place to ensure the future culture, theatre and leisure offer from the council was sustainable.

Resolved (Non-key decision):

(1) To note the initial financial impact of Covid-19 and associated vulnerability of the authority's budget.

(2) To note the assumptions being made about the ongoing financial impact of Covid-19.

Reason for decisions:

The Council's response to Covid-19 has been and continues to be fast paced. Budgetary assumptions are liable to change and are only given as an indication. This report provides a position statement at this time to keep Cabinet informed.

5 Recovery group update

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Tourism and Enterprise informing them and seeking their support for the initiatives recommended and facilitated by the Eastbourne Recovery Group.

Thanks were conveyed to the cross party Recovery Group and wider community for the work undertaken thus far.

Councillor Holt declared a personal interest in this item. He remained present and took part in discussions during this item.

Resolved (Non-key decision):

Cabinet is recommended to note the report and in particular;

(1) The work to establish a PPE Buying Consortium.

(2) The East Sussex Colleges Group Million Pound Pledge to provide accredited Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications.

(3) Providing an online shopping platform for independent businesses in Eastbourne.

(4) Development of a COVID Ready Quality Standard.

(5) Development of a Love Eastbourne destination marketing campaign.

Reason for decisions:

The Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdown has resulted in a significant downturn in the local economy, especially on the tourism and retail sectors and has had a subsequent impact on local people. This report sets out what actions are being taken by the Recovery Group in Eastbourne, including representation on the group by Eastbourne Borough Council.

6 Corporate performance - quarter 4 - 2019/20

The Cabinet considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning, considering the Council's progress and performance in respect of key projects and targets for the fourth quarter of the year, as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report.

It was detailed in the report that performance outturn had been affected to a degree at the end of the performance quarter due to the Covid-19 pandemic however services for the most part were able to maintain their performance levels. The Cabinet welcomed a number of performance achievements during the quarter and the year including answering 87% of calls to the contact centre within 60 seconds and processing of disabled facilities grants, benefit claims and planning applications.

The Cabinet conveyed thanks to all staff for their work across the Council for the year and in their extraordinary response during Covid-19. Headline achievements as part of the Council's response were detailed in the report.

Resolved (Non-key decision):

To note progress and performance for Quarter 4.

Reason for decision:

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

7 Downland Whole Estate Plan Approval

The Cabinet considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning seeking their agreement to adopt the final Downland Whole Estate Plan and prioritisation of possible future projects.

Councillor Dow stated that engagement with stakeholders will take place throughout the process. Cabinet expressed their thanks and appreciation to the Trustees of the Countryside Centre for their work over the years.

Reason (Non-key decision):

(1) To agree the adoption of the Downland Whole Estate Plan, as attached at Appendix A to the report, noting the summary of main changes to the document outlined at Appendix B to the report

(2) To agree prioritisation of future possible projects outlined within the Downland Whole Estate Plan, as attached at Appendix C to the report.

(3) To agree that initial work should focus on changes to the Beachyhead Countryside Centre and re-purposing redundant farm buildings at Black Robin Farm to reflect the Downland Whole Estate Plan priorities, subject to a business case.

Reason for decisions:

Public consultation on the Downland Whole Estate Plan has completed and the Plan is now in its final form. The Plan requires formal adoption by the Council prior to endorsement by the South Downs National Park Authority.

The meeting ended at 3.05 pm

Councillor David Tutt (Chair)