

Cabinet

Minutes of meeting held in Ditchling and Telscombe Rooms at Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes, BN7 1AB on 24 March 2022 at 2.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Zoe Nicholson (Chair).
Councillors James MacCleary (Vice-Chair), Matthew Bird, Julie Carr, Chris Collier, Johnny Denis, Stephen Gauntlett and Ruth O'Keeffe.

Officers in attendance:

Robert Cottrill (Chief Executive), 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), Ola Owolabi (Deputy Chief Finance Officer (Corporate Finance)), Simon Russell (Head of Democratic Services) and Kate Slattery (Solicitor).

Also in attendance:

Councillor Liz Boorman (Vice-Chair of Policy and Performance Advisory Committee)

60 Minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2022 were submitted and approved and the Chair was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

61 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence was reported from Councillor Meyer and visiting members, Councillors Linington and Peterson.

62 Declarations of interest

None were declared.

63 Portfolio progress and performance report quarter 3 - 2021-2022

The Cabinet considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning, asking it to consider the Council's progress and performance in respect of service areas for the third quarter of the year (October-December 2021), as shown at Appendix 1 to the report.

Councillor Denis updated the Cabinet with regards to his portfolio and reported that the reception area at Southover House had now re-opened for customers and the Council had recently gone live with its new chatbot ELLIS (Eastbourne Lewes Live Intelligent Source) on its website, to enable to council to better serve its customers 24/7. The current top queries for ELLIS were in relation to

garden waste and payments. The Director of Service Delivery advised that any customer unsatisfied with an answer from ELLIS had the option to connect with a Customer Advisor directly. In response to a question from Cabinet, the Director of Service Delivery agreed to contact the Chair of the Tenants of Lewes District (TOLD), to address any feedback they had received in relation to the launch of ELLIS.

Highlights for the quarter included average days to process new claims/change of circumstances for housing/council tax benefits and sign ups to Council social media channels. Thanks were conveyed to staff for their performance during this quarter.

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee (PPAC), held on 17 March 2022, considered the report and was supportive of the officer recommendation in full. Councillor Boorman, Vice-Chair of Policy and Performance Advisory Committee, was in attendance to present PPAC's discussion. In response to comments raised around waste and recycling, Councillor Carr reported that the Council was looking at deploying more CCTV cameras to catch fly-tippers.

Resolved (Non-key decision):

To note progress and performance for Quarter 3.

Reason for decision:

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

64 Finance update - performance quarter 3 - 2021-2022

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Finance Officer, updating it on the Council's financial performance in quarter 3 for 2021/22. Further details were contained within the report.

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee (PPAC), held on 17 March 2022, considered the report and was supportive of the officer recommendations in full. Councillor Boorman, Vice-Chair of Policy and Performance Advisory Committee, was in attendance to present PPAC's discussion.

Resolved (Non-key decision):

(1) To note the General Fund, HRA and Collection Fund financial performance for the quarter ended December 2021.

(2) To agree the amended capital programme as set out at Appendix 2 to the report.

Reason for decision:

To enable Cabinet members to consider specific aspects of the council's

financial performance.

65 Lewes District Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022 - 2027

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Service Delivery, introducing a new homelessness and rough sleeping strategy, and asking it to approve the strategic goals, objectives, and associated action plan.

The strategy was driven by a review, undertaken in autumn 2021, to provide an up-to-date picture of the current and likely future levels of homelessness across Lewes District, activities carried out and support available to prevent homelessness and those experiencing it and the level of resources made available locally to tackle homelessness. A summary of the main outcomes from the review was set out in section 1.4 of the report.

Many of the actions and intended outcomes presented in the action plan highlighted the importance of partnership working. Further details were set out in section 2.7 of the report.

The Cabinet welcomed the Strategy and associated action plan. In response to a question from the Cabinet, the Director of Service Delivery agreed to explore pulling the key metric data from the action plan, to assist with identifying key learning and improvement points going forward as part of performance monitoring.

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee (PPAC), held on 17 March 2022, considered the report and was supportive of the officer recommendations in full.

Resolved (Key decision):

(1) To consider the final draft of the Lewes District Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2022 – 2027, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

(2) That subject to there being no requirement for significant amendments, to authorise the Director of Service Delivery to adopt the strategy and produce a formatted version for public release.

Reason for decisions:

To secure Cabinet approval for a new homelessness and rough sleeping strategy for the District, which local authorities have a statutory obligation to review and publish every five years.

66 Local Connection Eligibility Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register

The Cabinet considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning, seeking its approval to include Local Connection Eligibility on the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register.

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee (PPAC), held on 17 March 2022, considered the report and was supportive of the officer recommendations in full. Councillor Boorman, Vice-Chair of Policy and Performance Advisory Committee, was in attendance to present PPAC's discussion.

Resolved (Non-key decision):

(1) To authorise the incorporation of a Local Connection Eligibility Test on the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register.

(2) To authorise the start of a re-registering process for all individuals and associations currently on the Register.

Reason for decision:

(1) The proposal to implement a Local Connection Test to the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register is important in informing the emerging LDC Local Plan.

(2) The proposal would meet the requirements of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016) and subsequent Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Regulations 2016.

The meeting ended at 3.00 pm

Councillor Zoe Nicholson (Chair)